Analysis of Cricket: Violence, Nationalism, ‘Race’ and Imperial Relations

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Contents

Summary and Critical Overview IV

Reading 1
The Marylebone Cricket Club 1

Reading 2
Cricket Spectator Disorder: Myths and Historical Evidence 6

Reading 3
Cricket and Civilizing Processes: A response to Stokvis 29

Reading 4
Cricket: Civilizing and De-civilizing Processes in the 51
Imperial Game
in E. Dunning, D. Malcolm and I. Waddington (eds) Sport Histories:  
Figurational Studies in the Development of Modern Sports

Reading 5
Stacking in Cricket: A Figurational Sociological Re-appraisal of 69
Centrality

Reading 6
"It's not Cricket": Colonial Legacies and Contemporary 90
Inequalities

Reading 7
“Clean Bowled”? Cricket, Racism and Equal Opportunities 114

Reading 8
England’s Barmy Army: Commercialization, Masculinity and 134
Nationalism
with M. Parry, International Review for the Sociology of Sport,  
Appendices

Appendix 1


Appendix 2

Appendix 3

Appendix 4

Appendix 5
Female Incursion into Cricket’s ‘Male Preserve’: Cricket, Gender and Elias’s Theory of Established-Outsider Relations, with P. Cook, Paper presented at the 25th meeting of the North American Society for the Sociology of Sport, Montreal, Quebec, Canada October 29- November 1 2003.
Summary and Critical Overview

This summary and critical overview is divided into three parts. First, I offer some brief biographical notes, in which I discuss the context in which this work was developed. Second, I present summaries of the publications submitted and delineate the connections between them. Finally, I attempt to locate my work within the current state of knowledge in the field and attempt to situate this work, and myself as a researcher, within the 'Leicester School' in the sociology of sport.

Some Biographical Notes

The published work drawn together for this thesis represents research conducted between 1996 and 2003 and published between 1997 and 2004. During this time I was firstly a Research Associate (1992-99), then Research Fellow (1999-2000) and latterly Lecturer (2000- ) at the University of Leicester's Centre for Research into Sport and Society (CRSS). My main tasks within the Centre were to contribute to the distance learning and latterly the campus-based masters programmes in the sociology of sport. Whilst exposed to the work of Elias during my own time as a Masters student at Leicester (1990-91), as a student I would have considered myself more closely aligned with Marxist thinkers. However, working at the Centre, known for its distinctive 'Leicester School' approach, and alongside colleagues who had worked with Elias, I became increasingly persuaded of the merits of a figurational or process sociological approach. As the title of the thesis suggests, this theoretical framework came to inform my research programme and is a central thread which guides the publications submitted for consideration here.

The sport of cricket, of course, is the other central theme. My choice of cricket as the empirical focus of my research was undoubtedly partly influenced by my
personal interest in the sport, but also by a more instrumental desire to develop a distinct research profile within the particular employment context (figuration, perhaps?) in which I found myself. Whilst initially I worked on some small scale, externally funded projects at the Centre, in the early to mid 1990s, senior members of the Centre staff were, in sharp contrast to the more RAE-driven university culture post-2001, largely concerned with, and under pressure to generate, income through distance learning activities. As a consequence of performing certain key roles in the Centre’s economically driven venture, my continuing employment was (seemingly) not contingent upon my developing an academic career along conventional teaching and/or research lines. The possibility of registering for a PhD was never seriously discussed but I became frustrated with my relatively limited and static role within the Centre, and sought to alter this through publishing in journals. The impetus behind my first piece of published work was almost entirely my own; indeed few colleagues were aware that I was actively researching until the paper was more-or-less complete.

Most would probably consider working so closely with the internationally renowned scholars of the ‘Leicester School’, who had contributed ground breaking studies in football (see, for instance, much of the work contained in Elias and Dunning, 1986a), rugby (see Dunning and Sheard, 1979),¹ and football hooliganism in particular (e.g. Dunning et al., 1988), as a considerable boon to a young academic’s career. My association with Leicester has undoubtedly enabled the development of my reputation within the sociology of sport (both because of Leicester’s prominence in the field as well as the polarization of opinions on the merits of the figurational perspective), but at this early stage, and in the absence of a structured research programme or specified mentor, I found it difficult to develop a distinctive intellectual role within the Centre. Cricket was a sport about which colleagues had written relatively little (though Eric Dunning had supervised Christopher Brookes’ PhD, ‘Cricket as a Vocation’). Consequently, cricket provided me with an area in which I could research relatively independently, and at my own pace, which in turn helped my confidence in my intellectual ability to grow. ‘Stacking in Cricket: A Figurational Sociological Re-appraisal of Centrality’, (Reading 5) is the product of these initial labours.²
Following the publication of ‘Stacking in Cricket’ in 1997 there were discussions about developing this work and registering for a PhD, but having to some extent ‘proved myself’, and with no supervisor with an obvious interest in this area, no momentum was established. Instead, I continually took detours away from this research, collaborating in only partly related research avenues, albeit that these sojourns were profitable in a publishing sense (see Waddington et al. 1997, 1998a, 1998b; Malcolm 2000; Malcolm et al. 2000a, 2000b; Garland et al. 2000). With a good flow of published output, and given the broader economic context of the Centre, the idea of embarking on a PhD programme fell by the wayside.

If many of my early publications grew out of convenience and opportunism, so too did my movement into the study of violence and cricket. As noted, violence and spectator disorder have historically been central to the work of the ‘Leicester School’ and, indeed, Elias’s work more generally. As a consequence of Leicester’s reputation for work on football hooliganism, when outbreaks of disorder at cricket matches occurred in 1998, the media and the sports industry looked to the Centre (and thus me) for input. This initially led me to examine the existing published work on cricket disorder and violence – all of it essentially historical, i.e. Guttmann, 1986, Sandiford, 1994; Vamplew, 1980 - which, from my Eliasian perspective, I found problematic but also stimulating (Reading 2 contains a critique of this literature). I also consulted Christopher Brookes’ aforementioned PhD thesis (1974). Brookes subsequently produced a figurationally-informed social history of cricket (1978) yet, peculiarly, neither work devotes much attention to the role of violence in the development of cricket, or any explicit reference to Elias and/or civilizing processes. An ‘obvious’ research opportunity opened up, a field of research which allowed me to work relatively independently, whilst simultaneously engaging the interest (and support) of senior colleagues.

The literature review threw up other themes which would subsequently be developed in the research, most notably, the close relationship between the game and notions of national identity, and the imperial context of the game more
broadly. It became clear that these ideas played a significant role in contouring contemporaneous reactions to a demographically changing subculture of cricket spectatorship (a key factor, I hypothesized, contributing to cricket disorder in the 1990s). Other public controversies, such as the Tebbit cricket test and Henderson's 'Is it in the Blood' article (1995), highlighted the increasingly multicultural character of cricket participation and spectatorship in the UK. It became clear to me that, informed by an Eliasian framework, I had much to offer to the sociological understanding of cricket and, as a by-product, this would expand the application of figurational work on the sociology of sport. It is in the focus on cricket spectatorship that the sub-themes of this work - 'race', violence and nationalism - most closely converge and why the 'bookends' to the thesis are historical and contemporary analyses of this phenomenon. It was at this point that I began to pursue this research agenda in a more conscious and structured manner; in Elias's terms, where unintended outcomes laid the foundations for more purposive action.

The Thesis: summaries and themes

The main focus of the figurational sociological literature on sport in the late 1990s was violence (as noted in Reading 3, there has been a notable increase in the number and range of figurationally-informed, non-violence-orientated studies in recent years, a trend not unrelated to the establishment of the CRSS in 1992) but the figurational dynamics of my specific research field meant that notions of class, 'race', ethnicity, nationalism, and latterly gender and commercialization were needed to provide a more reality-congruent body of work. The published work drawn together for this thesis is not presented in chronological order but, rather, arranged in an attempt to demonstrate how these themes build upon each other and intersect to form a coherent picture of the way cricket has developed and is structured in contemporary Britain.

The first reading is a brief, largely organizational, history of cricket. The context in which this piece was published militated against a more overtly theoretical discussion but the main tenets of the sociological approach which underpins this thesis are evident in a) the reference to the folk antecedents of cricket which
draws upon the work of Dunning and Sheard (1979) and Brookes (1978), b) the stress upon the connection between sportization and parliamentarization as originally identified by Elias (1986), c) the centrality of class, status-exclusivity and power, and d) the argument that cricket was seen as a vehicle through which to 'civilize' the Empire. This piece also gives an initial airing to, and highlights the connections between, many of the ideas re-visited in greater detail later; in particular, the significance of the introduction of round-arm and over-arm bowling (Reading 4), and the role of cricket within the Empire (Readings 4-7 in particular).

Framed within a discussion of the ideological nexus of cricket and 'Englishness', Reading 2 seeks to map changes in the pattern of recorded evidence of cricket spectator disorder in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and outlines reasons why the recording of such instances is likely to be inaccurate. The explanations of leading sports historians are then critiqued, with special attention paid to the dominance of essentialist views of cricket, and the tendency to explain social conflict with reference to (unsubstantiated) notions of class tensions generated through industrialization. Finally, the paper argues that a more adequate explanatory framework would highlight cricket's growing social exclusivity in the nineteenth century, as well as certain structural changes to the game, which led cricket to more closely resemble a modern sport form. The degree to which this study might support Elias's theory of civilizing processes is raised, but a lack of empirical data means that little of a conclusive nature can be said (this is an issue which I address below).

Readings 3 and 4 build on this analysis of spectator disorder to address more explicitly how the development of cricket contains evidence which supports Elias's theory of civilizing processes. Structured as a response to Ruud Stokvis' (1992: 121) critique of figurational sociologists (whose approach, he claims, 'is too limited', and too centrally focused on 'matters of violence and its control'), the focus of Reading 3 is the emergence of cricket as a modern sports form, its codification and standardization, and the implications of this for violence and its
control within the game. In contrast to Reading 2, there is considerable (and I would say compelling) empirical evidence which demonstrates that early cricket was characterized by high levels of violence, physical contact and injury relative to today and, moreover, that the codification of cricket illustrates that there were explicit attempts to reduce violent incidents in the game in the eighteenth century.

Reading 3 ends by raising the question directly addressed in Reading 4; that is to say, how can we account for apparently de-civilizing trends which have occurred in cricket since the game’s initial codification? Subsequently, in Reading 4, I argue that the development of round- and over-arm bowling, and the ways in which it has latterly been employed (most notably in relation to the 1932-33 ‘Bodyline’ series, and by the West Indian teams of the 1970s and 1980s), is indicative of a series of relatively short lived de-civilizing spurts within a longer term civilizing process. Central to the explanation of these de-civilizing spurts is the notion of ‘functional democratization’ and especially the way in which balances of power within the British Empire moved in an equalizing direction during the twentieth century.

Readings 5 to 7 continue with the theme of imperial relations in an attempt to understand aspects of the experiences of cricket playing minority ethnic groups in contemporary Britain. Whilst critical of some of the overly descriptive, atheoretical work in this area, the first of these readings develops out of an idea prominent in writings on sport and race, that is to say, ‘stacking’. I argue that cricket is a particularly interesting case study of this phenomenon because of the close association of the game with notions of Englishness, and the multi-ethnic participation in the game as a consequence of its diffusion throughout the British Empire. The paper concludes by attempting to explain the pattern of ‘stacking’ in contemporary cricket with reference to class relations in nineteenth century England, and the contrasting Imperial relations evident in the Caribbean and the Indian sub-continent.
Reading 6 is more narrowly focussed on cricket's diffusion and development in the Caribbean. Once again, stacking, Englishness and Imperial Relations are important, but this paper builds on the previous two by providing a more in-depth discussion of the links between Caribbean 'national' self-assertion and fast bowling and thus violence (discussed in Reading 4). By recognizing that nineteenth and early twentieth century developments in the Caribbean cannot be understood in abstraction from developments in England, and by identifying certain playing roles and styles as inseparable from broader dominance-subordinance relations, this paper provides a theoretical reinterpretation of existing literature which furthers our understanding of the development of cricket in the Caribbean (see Appendix 2 in this regard).

Reading 7 is an attempt to develop this analysis by reviewing my own and others' empirical data within the context of equal opportunities policies in cricket. An inherent problem with existing policies, I argue, is their failure to address, or even acknowledge, the central underlying reason for resistance to change; that is to say, the prevalence of notions of the cultural separateness (which in part are based on the different ways in which the game has developed across the Empire). In particular, I identify the desire of the British cricketing establishment to cling to romanticized notions of Englishness and 'village cricket' (see Reading 2 and 8) and the perception that cricketers from minority ethnic groups pose a threat to this status quo.

The final reading brings the work back full circle in that it returns to cricket spectatorship and, more specifically, a particular group of English cricket spectators - the Barmy Army - contending that they embody a new variant of English national identity. The paper seeks to provide answers to who? what? and why? in relation to the Barmy Army. Key to understanding the distinctiveness of the group, I argue, is an understanding of the historical context of cricket spectatorship. This leads to a discussion of the connections between cricket and Englishness which builds on and refines ideas discussed in previous publications. Significantly, the Barmy Army define themselves and their actions in direct opposition to these traditions. The paper goes on to describe the demographic
make up of the Barmy Army, their style of support and motivations for participating in this group. Finally, the paper highlights the convergence of various social processes which helps to explain how and why the Barmy Army have emerged at this particular point in time and space, concluding with a discussion of what the analysis of the Barmy Army tells us about power balances in contemporary sport more broadly. Though Elias is not regularly cited in the text, the paper, to borrow van Krieken’s (2001: 353) description of Elias’s *The Civilizing Process*, is an ‘analysis of the historical development of emotions and psychological life … in relation to the connections … with larger scale processes such as state formation, urbanisation and economic development’.

**Contribution to the Field**

In the final section of this overview, I say something more explicit about the theoretical framework employed for this, I would argue, is closely tied to my contribution to the figurational sociology of sport and thus the sociology of sport more broadly. Before this, however, it might be useful to say a few words about how this body of work has contributed to the historical and sociological investigation of cricket.

When I entered this field, the literature on cricket was a peculiar mixture of high quantity and, from a sociological point of view, low quality. Jack Williams in discussing the appeal of cricket in the inter-war period notes that, ‘cricket literature .... was without parallel in other sports and was, in itself, a major reason why cricket was regarded as more than a game’ (1999: 71). Indeed, there are a number of thoroughly researched texts on cricket history (e.g. Altham and Swanton, 1948; Birley, 1999; Rait Kerr, 1950; Sandiford, 1994; Williams, 1999; Wynne-Thomas, 1997) and whilst they are useful sources of information, their focus is quite distinct from research informed by an Eliasian or process-sociological approach. Although some sports history in the UK is relatively well informed theoretically (I am thinking of Jeff Hill, Richard Holt, and Wray Vamplew in particular) historians of cricket have a tendency towards both empirical absolutism (see my review of Williams (2001), Appendix 3), and a conservative or ‘establishment’ interpretation of cricket’s past (discussed in
Reading 2). Brookes' work (1974; 1978) is the exception, and indeed I have drawn upon his work extensively in places, but as noted above, Brookes neglects issues of violence and its control. Such issues have been central to my own historical/developmental research and consequently I would argue that I have produced a distinctive and different interpretation of the history of the game and one which, I believe, is less influenced by romanticism and mythology (Readings 2, 3, 4 and 6 make this point most forcefully).

However, whilst there may be an extensive historical literature on cricket, the sociological study of the sport is at an emergent stage. On the one hand, the sociology of sport in general has, since its inception in the 1960s, been largely dominated by North American academics (see the General Introduction to Coakley and Dunning, 2000; Donnelly, 2003) and hence a cultural milieu in which cricket is, at best, marginal. There has been sociological research on cricket in Australia (Burroughs et al., 1995; Cashman, 1981; Harriss, 1990; Lawrence, 1986; Lawrence and Rowe, 1986), the Indian subcontinent (Appaduria, 1995; Cashman, 1980; Corrigan, 2001; Guha, 1997; Ismail, 1999; McDonald, 1998, 1999), and most notably, starting with CLR James (1963), the Caribbean (e.g. Beckles, 1998; Beckles and Stoddart, 1995; Stoddart, 1995; St. Pierre, 1995; Yelvington, 1990). Yet as a number of commentators have noted (see Tomlinson, 1983; Duke, 1991; Waddington et al., 1998b), British sociology of sport has been dominated by the study of football, and for much of its existence, football hooliganism in particular. Consequently, the sociological study of cricket in the UK has been largely neglected.

Early sociological work which featured the sport of cricket include the aforementioned work of Brookes (1974; 1978), Dunning and Sheard's 'The Bifurcation of Rugby Union and Rugby League: a Case Study of Organizational Conflict and Change' (1976) and Yates', 'Rule Change and Style as Gestalt Phenomena to be understood: The case of cricket' (1982). It was, however, as a consequence of the development of British research on sport and race (Cashmore, 1982; Maguire, 1988, 1991; Jarvie, 1991) that the sociological study of cricket, received rather more impetus (Fleming, 1991a, 1991b; Parry and Parry, 1991;
Toms and Fleming, 1995). The aforementioned Tebbit and Henderson controversies, flamed by 'rebel' tours to South Africa, claims of Pakistani ball-tampering and the perceived exclusion of black and Asian cricketers from Yorkshire and Lancashire County cricket sides in particular, led to a series of articles providing political comment (see Searle 1990; 1993; 1995; 1996), the development of the anti-racist cricket pressure group, *Hit Racism for Six* (1996), and Mike Marqusee's publicly and academically acclaimed *Anyone but England: Cricket, Race and Class* (1994). As noted, aspects of my research also partly developed as a consequence of these public debates.

Maguire (1993, 1994) was perhaps the first sociologist of sport to capitalize on the literature stemming from these cricketing controversies, drawing upon Marqusee in particular in his work on national identity and globalization. With Stead, this work expanded to address the experiences of, and reaction to, cricketing migrants to the UK (Maguire and Stead 1996, 1998), a subject tackled from a 'sports law' perspective by Greenfield and Osborn (1996a, 1996b). Following this there have been a number of studies of the importance of cricket to particular British minority ethnic communities (Williams, 1994; Werbner, 1996; Stuart, 1996; Carrington, 1998) as well as two studies which more centrally highlight the existence of racism in 'grass roots' cricket (Long et al., 1997; McDonald and Ugra, 1998. See also Carrington and McDonald, 2001b for an overview of these two studies). Finally, Crabbe and Wagg (2000) have discussed the marketing of the 1999 Cricket World Cup which was promoted as a 'carnival of cricket', largely in order to increase ethnic minority spectatorship. They argue, however, that this presentation clashed with the reality of the dominant cricket culture in the UK (e.g. the enforcement of a relatively pacified form of cricket spectatorship and the racist and exclusionary attitudes of some fans).

In broad terms, my work is theoretically similar to and compatible with Maguire's, but in terms of specific emphasis, and also empirically, there are some notable differences. Maguire discusses media and political discourse about the contestation of English/UK sovereignty and influence, which stemmed from moves towards greater European integration and rising Australian republicanism
and national self-assertion in the late 1980s, early 1990s. In contrast, the
empirical body of my work (readings 5-7 in particular) has focused on the
Caribbean and the Indian sub-continent. Whilst the emphasis of Maguire's
analysis is the formation of national identities through international
interdependency ties, my discussion of identity issues focuses equally on intra-
national conflicts (Readings 5 and 8 in particular) and international relations.
Moreover, my work is rather more closely tied to 'race relations' literature,
whereas Maguire's is located within globalization debates.

Empirically, if not theoretically, there are perhaps more similarities between my
own work and that of Carrington and McDonald. The publication of their edited
text, 'Race', Sport and British Society (2001c) provides Carrington and
McDonald – and Carrington in particular - with a reasonable claim to being the
leading British sociologists of sport and race. Their status in the field, and
because cricket has been a central feature of their collaborative and individual
research, means that an assessment of their work, relative to my own, is
warranted. Whilst this is not the place for an in-depth and sustained critique, their
work contains certain weaknesses/omissions which need to be highlighted.

The impact of their research is implicitly recognized in Reading 7, where I draw
heavily on their work, twinning their empirical findings with a broader
assessment of equal opportunities policies in cricket. Curiously, however, in their
overview of race and cricket studies, they assert that the county cricket game is
not a 'key site for the articulation of racism' (Carrington and McDonald, 2001b:
50). The rationale for this is not clear, and indeed I would argue, as evidenced by
my work on stacking in cricket, that they are mistaken in this judgement.
Moreover, Carrington and McDonald also draw few distinctions between black-
British and British-Asian experiences (see Birrell, 1988 for a discussion of the
importance of this). The work represented in this thesis, therefore, arguably
constitutes an empirically more comprehensive analysis of race and cricket,
particularly in terms of the various aspects of the game which are addressed
(Reading 7 in particular), as well as offering a more rounded analysis, illuminated
by the focus on a broader range of minority ethnic groups.
However, my theoretical reliance on a developmental approach leads to the key differences between our respective works. Carrington and McDonald have confined themselves rather more to the role of cricket in contemporary relations and, in Carrington's case in particular (1998), the formation of black masculinity. For Carrington and McDonald, racial stereotypes simply exist and how they emerged is either not examined, or is accepted to be part of the broader development of ideas about separate 'races'. However, I would argue that a better understanding of the racial prejudice currently experienced in grassroots cricket in Britain, can only be gleaned from an understanding of the historical development of imperial relations. In conjunction with class and economic power, sport, and cricket in particular, played a significant part in the development of ideas of relative physical ability and the mainstream of 'race relations' literature can be criticized for paying too little attention to the importance of sport. Data developed by sociologists of sport can play an important part in improving understanding of these processes; indeed, comparing the black-British and British-Asian cases brings these lessons into sharper relief. McDonald's conceptualization of Englishness is similarly static. For McDonald in particular, the stereotypical notion of Englishness and cricket simply exists, and exists in monolithic terms. In contrast to this, being faithful to the principles of the Eliasian framework (see below), I would argue that an attempt to demonstrate the socio-genesis of notions of Englishness (see Reading 2), is a prerequisite to understanding the enduring nature of such ideas.

Carrington and McDonald have been singled out here because, between them, they have provided the most significant contribution to the UK sociological literature on both race and sport, and race and cricket in particular. In evaluating the race and cricket literature as a whole, however, one would have to conclude that it is neither as large, nor as vibrant, as the potential sociological interest of the sport suggests, nor its social significance demands. Literature on cricket in the Caribbean may be more extensive but, arguably (see Appendix 2), it is too narrowly focused on the link between the game and national self-assertion. The literature on cricket in the Indian sub-continent is also almost entirely focused on
the growth of nationalism and, with the exception of Burroughs et al. (1995), the Australian literature is myopic in its focus on 'commercial crisis' and the Packer revolution. The emerging sociological literature on cricket in the UK is similarly one-dimensional in that, Maguire's and some of my work apart, it is narrowly focussed on 'race' issues. That said, given the distinctiveness of the figurational approach, it can justifiably be argued that the work on 'race' and cricket included in this thesis has made a specific empirical contribution to knowledge.

As a consequence of the narrow focus of the 'sociology of cricket', the cricket violence and disorder research presented here (Readings 2-4) constitutes a more original and more significant contribution to the sociology of sport; Reading 3, for instance, has already been reproduced in readers on the sociology of sport (Dunning and Malcolm, 2003) and on Elias and figurational sociology (Dunning and Mennell, 2003) and will feature in an extended debate in a forthcoming issue of the International Review for the Sociology of Sport. In empirical terms, there is little sociological literature which one can cite by way of comparison with my work on cricket and violence. More generally, as Dunning et al. (2004) note, few other sociologists of sport have undertaken this kind of detailed developmental analysis. Of those that have, most notably Hargreaves (1986) and Gruneau (1983), the approach has been different to the distinctively Eliasian research questions which focus on the specific rules of such sports and violence in sport more generally (see Appendix 4 for a critique of Hargreaves' and Gruneau's respective approaches). Consequently, in assessing the originality and contribution of this work more broadly, it is appropriate to address the specifics of the theoretical framework used in the thesis, how it relates to debates about Elias's work more generally, and how it relates to figurational sociology of sport in particular.

There is, it should be noted, a degree of debate over what constitutes the Eliasian approach. The Civilizing Process is the most well-known of Elias's nineteen books and, for many, the theory of civilizing processes is seen as synonymous with figurational sociology. However, the chapter entitled 'Some Principles of Process Sociology' in Stephen Mennell's much respected Norbert Elias: an
introduction, makes no reference to civilizing processes (1989: 251-270).\textsuperscript{11} \textit{Ipso facto}, figurational sociology could exist separately from the theory of civilizing processes (if, e.g. the latter was proven to be empirically false). Dunning and Mennell (2003: xxviii-xxx) note, however, that Elias viewed the theory of civilizing processes as a central theory, that is to say, as a theory ‘couched at a level of synthesis sufficiently high to be applicable to a range of different subjects yet which (is) simultaneously sufficiently down to earth to be clearly related to ... the real-life experiences of real human beings’ (xxx). Similarly, Jarvie and Maguire refer to the theory of civilizing processes as ‘a crucial building block or guiding theory’ (1994: 131).

The lack of clarity over what constitutes a figurational approach is exacerbated in the empirical work focusing upon sport. Recent monographs by key figurational sociologists show considerable diversity. Maguire, for instance, frequently cites civilizing processes in the theoretical chapters of Global Sport (1999), but for Waddington, in Sport, Health and Drugs (2000), the civilizing process merits just two brief mentions (for a discussion of this varied approach in relation to gender see Appendix 5). Moreover, authoritative accounts of figurational sociology and sport (see for instance Rojek, 1985; Dunning 1986a; Dunning, 1992; Jarvie and Maguire 1994; Murphy \textit{et al}, 2000; Dunning, 2002) consistently provide ample discussion of the broader principles of the approach (e.g. Elias’s notion of the ‘figuration’, the importance of process, Elias’s conception of power, involvement and detachment, etc.) prior to discussing the theory of civilizing processes. Other contributions from Dunning (1989; 1993) have placed civilizing processes more centre stage, and indeed it is the case that Dunning, more than anyone, has forwarded the civilizing process as a central explanatory model in his work. It may be, therefore, that Dunning’s longevity and status in the field is what has led many critics (see, e.g., Curtis, 1986; Horne and Jary, 1987; Taylor, 1987; Hargreaves, 1992; Stokvis 1992; Giulianotti, 1999) to focus on civilizing process at the expense of other aspects of Elias’s theoretical framework. Elias’s theory of civilizing processes attracts much attention because it clashes with many ‘commonsense’ ideas about the role of violence in modern societies, but the degree to which it features within sociology of sport debates can only be
understood, I suggest, with the recognition that, for many, Dunning is viewed as the physical embodiment of figurational sociology. As a consequence, many of these debates have been motivated by personality clashes and characterized by personal animosity.₁²

Those familiar with the ‘Eliasian community’ will be aware of debates over the ‘one’ or ‘true’ meaning of Elias’s work, and there is not scope to become embroiled in such a debate here. However, it is of note that whilst the work presented in this thesis demonstrates a commitment to utilizing the theory of civilizing processes, it is more consistently underpinned by a commitment to a historical, developmental, or in more precise Eliasian terms, a process sociological approach. This thesis demonstrates that whilst civilizing processes have a marginal role to play in explaining certain cricketing phenomena (e.g. ‘race’ relations and supporter subcultures), an examination of other phenomena, for instance the emergence of modern sport forms (certainly some sport forms, if not all), would be incomplete without reference to the role of violence and its control (the sociological study of pain and injury in sport provides another case in point, see Appendix 1). As Reading 3 in particular shows, I am cognisant of criticisms that figurational sociologists too readily resort to explanations based on the theory of civilizing processes, without the necessary empirical data to support such contentions (Stokvis, 1992). In certain instances (and Dunning’s (1992) response to Stokvis is a good example of this), this criticism seems valid (to paraphrase Elias (1987), we can see ‘the retreat of figurational sociologists into the civilizing process’), even if such criticisms have not, ultimately, undermined the validity of the perspective more generally. More exactly, the position taken in this thesis is that whilst the analysis of civilizing processes has often proved particularly useful in explaining social phenomena (and could thus justifiably be called a ‘central theory’), figurational sociology should not be seen as synonymous with the theory of civilizing processes because it is not always necessary, relevant or justified for this body of theory to inform empirical research. In this respect, I hope to have remained true to Elias’s belief in the desirability of the interplay of theory and empirical evidence, and Dunning’s
methodological advice that one should always relate one’s observations to a body of theory, and one’s theories to a body of observations (Dunning, 1992: 187).

However, in the relatively narrow context of the analysis of sport, the pronounced emphasis on civilizing processes has particular validity. The significance of sport in modern societies largely stems from the ‘controlled de-controlling’ of emotional controls (developed as part of the civilizing process) which players and spectators experience (Elias and Dunning, 1986b). In sporting contexts, relatively high degrees of emotional expression and violence are afforded relatively high degrees of social tolerance. Consequently – and the role and personality of Dunning aside - it is not entirely surprising that this misconception over the relationship between the theory of civilizing processes and figurational sociology more broadly exists, for reference to this work is a key underlying theme which distinguishes figurational sociology from all other sociological approaches to the study of sport, and the development of sport in particular. However, whilst Dunning in particular has regularly stressed that civilizing processes are not unilinear or irreversible (1999: 41-47), only a limited number of attempts to illuminate upon de-civilizing processes in sport have yet been made (Dunning 1986b; Sheard, 1997; White, 2004). It is, I would argue, behoven on figurational sociologists to ensure that their work does not further fuel these two misconceptions (that is to say, that figurational sociology is solely concerned with civilizing processes, and that civilizing processes are unilinear). Through the judicious use of reference to civilizing processes and a willingness to examine de-civilizing processes, it has been my intention to be faithful to this point.

As a consequence of this particular position *vis-a-vis* civilizing processes, an important characteristic of my work has been the attempt to exploit a broader range of Elias’s theoretical tools. Consistent with the four ‘principles of process sociology’ cited above, I have already mentioned of the ‘primacy of process’ in my work, but throughout (though most explicitly in Readings 5, 6 and 8) I attempt to conceptualize power as a ‘structural characteristic’ of social relationships, the sources of which are ‘polymorphous’ and ‘multi-polar’ (Elias, 1978: 92-94). Though the nomenclature might be slightly different, this
conception of power is central to Elias’s notion of functional democratization, which underpins the arguments presented in Readings 4 and 8. In Reading 5, I made an early attempt to use Elias’s theory of Established-Outsider relations, a theory which I have re-visited more recently (see Appendix 5). My aim, therefore, has been to avoid a slavish use of Elias’s work, without necessarily becoming eclectic; to remain true to the central principles, whilst evoking the more explicit use of key terms (e.g. civilizing process) only where sufficient evidence exists to support the point.

Where then does the work of Dominic Malcolm encapsulated in the publications presented in this thesis stand in the ‘academy’ of figurational sociology of sport? Eric Dunning in his most recent overview of the field (2002), identifies five generations of researchers (i) Elias, (ii) Dunning; (iii) Murphy, Sheard and Waddington; (iv) Jarvie and Maguire and (v) Colwell, Curry, Mansfield, Roderick, Smith and myself. One might question whether Dunning and Elias constitute separate generations, for whilst in terms of their respective ages this may be correct, they embarked on research in this area simultaneously and often together (Dunning, I think, is overly modest about his role in working with Elias, for it was he who inspired Elias to consider sport as a social phenomenon, just as Elias’s theoretical model underpinned Dunning’s analysis of sport). Moreover, Jarvie’s continued and/or explicit commitment to a figurational approach might also be questioned. Of the third generation, Murphy’s work has almost entirely been in collaboration with Dunning whilst Sheard, both in collaboration with Dunning (Dunning and Sheard, 1979) and singularly (Sheard, 1997), has produced seminal work in the area but has not been prolific in terms of quantity of output. Waddington’s contribution, also, has been relatively narrowly confined to the area of drugs, health and injury in sport. In contrast, after Dunning, Maguire has produced the most wide-ranging, and theoretically innovative figurational work in the field but, it should be noted, Maguire has undertaken little of the historical primary research which is central to the figurational approach. Of the most recent generation cited by Dunning, Louise Mansfield, who has made a number of interesting contributions to the study of sport and gender (2002; Maguire and Mansfield, 1998), and myself have perhaps
had the greatest impact. Mansfield, it is fair to say, is empirically narrower than me and, through the development of what she calls a ‘feminist-figurational’ perspective, is perhaps more of a ‘neo-figurationalist’ than myself. Through the interweaving of violence, race, nationalism and cross-cultural imperial relations, my aim has been to develop a distinct empirical and theoretical contribution to the figurational sociological analysis of sport. Whilst perhaps closer to Dunning’s approach than others in the latest generation of figurational sociologists, it has been my aim to demonstrate the differences between our respective approaches. Augmented by its empirical contribution, my aim has been to expand the traditional base of the ‘Leicester School’ and subsequently to suggest that the Eliasian perspective may be of broader or greater interest than realized in the past. It is on this basis that I hope my reputation has developed within the ‘academy’ of figurational sociologists of sport.

In contrast to what Elias called *homo clausus* sociological models, which view people as closed and individualistic, Elias’s figurational approach is designed to convey the greater object-adequacy of the notion of humans as *hominis aperti*; that is to say, as open, mutually oriented and interdependent: ‘Since people are more or less dependent on each other’ Elias noted, ‘… they exist … only in pluralities, only in figurations’ (Elias, 1978: 261). The earlier biographical section to this summary and overview sought to contextualize my research within the enabling and constraining effects of working in the CRSS at the University of Leicester. The timing of the submission of this thesis is poignant, presented as it is just months after the announcement of the cessation of this intellectual and economic project. The establishment of the CRSS has, I would argue, been a highly significant factor in the development of the sociology of sport in the UK in recent years, both in terms of the broadening of the figurational perspective (all but one of the latest generation of figurational sociologists, identified by Dunning, worked or studied at the CRSS and it is amongst the latter generation that non-violence oriented research has developed most), and more generally in the supply of young academics to the recently expanded ‘sports studies’ employment market (I have in mind people such as Daniel Bloyce, Daniel Burdsey, Paul Dimeo, Ken Green, Ian Jones, Gavin Mellor, Alex Twitchen, Jason
Tuck). The impact of the work presented in this thesis is both a product, and a significant constituent, of this broader social process. In evaluating the contribution to knowledge made by this thesis, a failure to recognize this broader social context would constitute a betrayal of the central principles of the figurational approach, out of which this work has emerged.

Notes

1 Indeed, rugby might have been a more 'natural' research area for me in that it was the sport which I have a longer background of playing and spectatorship. However, my research interests in this respect developed slightly after those relating to cricket (See Appendix 1), probably because of Ken Sheard's undoubted expertise in this area.

2 The history of the 'Leicester School' would be incomplete without mention of the early input, and subsequent 'defection' of John Williams. There may be certain similarities between the career trajectories of myself and Williams. Williams' decision to reject an Eliasian approach (Williams, 1991) may well have been part motivated by a similar desire to develop a distinctive and independent research profile.

3 In this regard, I undertook some consultancy work as a match day observer for Warwickshire County Cricket Club in 1998, and provided an overview of cricket's experiences and some advice on policing and disorder strategies to the Inaugural Meeting of the Rugby Football Union's Safety Officers in 2000.

4 I argued this point in a paper presented at the Warwick University in October 1998, but as no electronic copy of it now exists, have been unable to include a copy of it here.

5 Stacking is the idea that athletes from minority ethnic groups tend to be disproportionately over-represented in certain roles whilst remaining somewhat excluded from others.

6 Carrington and McDonald (2001: 17-18) are dismissive of studies of stacking, which they describe as 'quantitative and descriptively atheoretical' (sic). Whilst I agree with this broader point, I would argue that the distinctively figurational approach utilized makes this article the exception to this more general rule.

7 This publication – the only joint authored work in the thesis - arose from a Masters dissertation which I supervised. The student was responsible for the vast majority of the data gathering, whilst I helped develop the analytical framework employed, and many of the broader theoretical points.

8 It might be noted that the British sport and race literature has lagged behind its US counterpart somewhat. Again, this is largely a consequence of the concentration in the UK on hooligan studies.

9 Marqusee's work was short-listed for the William Hill Sports Book of the Year Award and won the British Society of Sports History 1994 Aberdare Prize for the best sports history book of the year.

10 Elias makes this point in relation to the development of football, but it is more generally applicable. He notes that: 'In studying the development of a sport, one is often guided by the wish to establish for it a long and respectable ancestry. And, in that case, one is apt to select as relevant for its history all data about games played in the past which bear some resemblance to the present form of the particular sport whose history one is writing ... But, by thus treating the leisure activities of the fairly distant past as more or less identical with those of one's own time – the 'football' of the twelfth century with the football of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries – one is prevented from placing at the centre of one's inquiry the questions of how and why playing with a large, leather ball grew into this
particular form? One is prevented from asking how and why the particular rules and conventions developed which now determine the conduct of players when they play the game and without which the game would not be 'football' in our sense of the word. Or how and why the particular forms of organization developed which provided the most immediate framework for the growth of such rules and without which they could not be maintained and controlled' (1986: 152-3).

11 Mennell's chapter focuses upon 'The Primacy of Process'; the role of unintended consequences and power relations demonstrated through Elias's Games Models approach; Elias's use of personal pronouns to correct the reifying and egocentric tendencies in sociology; and Elias's epistemology and sociology of knowledge.

12 Nowhere is this animosity more pronounced than in the area of hooligan studies. Moreover, the Leicester School work on football hooliganism is a good example of the way the figurational approach has been misrepresented, with the relegation of the broader principles of the approach to a secondary role behind the theory of civilizing processes. In the trilogy of books which constitute the core of the Leicester School work on football hooliganism, there is no mention of the theory of civilizing processes in either Hooligans Abroad (Williams et al., 1984) or Football on Trial (Murphy et al., 1990) and, in The Roots of Football Hooliganism (Dunning et al., 1988), discussion of the theory of civilizing processes is confined to the concluding chapter.

13 Elias uses the term functional democratization 'to denote the process by which every individual is enmeshed in longer and denser webs of interdependence with more and more others, leading to greater reciprocal dependency and more multi-polar control within and amongst groups' (Mennell, 1989: 109)

14 Mennell (1989: 116) argues that although the theory of civilizing processes has rather overshadowed the theory of established-outsider relations, one is essentially an extension of the other; that is to say, both are centrally concerned with connections between 'changing power ratios between groups ... (and) the social habitus of group members'.
References


An Eliasian or Process Sociological Analysis of Cricket


An Eliasian or Process Sociological Analysis of Cricket


Reading 1

The Marylebone Cricket Club

in

E. Cashmore (ed.),


London: Routledge, 2000,

pp. 258-261
MCC

The origins of cricket

Once described by Lord Hawke as “the Parliament House of Cricket, not only in Great Britain but of Overseas Dominions,” the Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC), was formed in 1787. The club grew out of the White Conduit Club, which itself was formed out of the Je ne sais quoi or Star and Garter Club, the perpetual chairman of which was the then Prince of Wales, subsequently George IV. Established by men of high status, the club has throughout the years been dominated by titled, upper-class men educated at public schools and Oxford or Cambridge universities.

The origins of cricket itself can be traced to a number of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century bat and ball games such as “stoolball,” “trap-ball,” “tip cat” and “cat and dog.” Rules were relatively few and simple, often transmitted orally rather than in written form. Variations were such that identical games could have a variety of different, locally specific names, or such that an identical name could be given to a number of games played under a variety of localized rules. The common thread, however, is that all these games consisted of a stationary batter, who struck a ball or piece of wood away from his/her body and who could subsequently score (points, notches, runs) by running between two or more fixed points. Cricket, in a manner similar to other sports such as football and golf—though in contrast to basketball—was not therefore invented but, rather, emerged from a cluster of folk antecedents.

After the English Civil War, the activities of the aristocracy became increasingly focused around the twin focal points of government and social life, around Parliament in London and the country estate. By 1700 adverts for cricket matches appeared regularly in the local press and indicate that cricket was being played by aristocrats for whom gambling was both significant and common. Although incipient levels of organized cricket existed in rural areas (most notable in this regard was the Hambledon Club in Hampshire), it was not until the aristocracy adopted the game and began to organize its playing that cricket took on its specifically modern form.

The MCC’s emergence out of a number of similar, overlapping clubs (such as the White Conduit Club) indicates what the MCC was originally designed to be: a loosely structured association of high-status gentlemen whose main purpose was to facilitate cricket playing. The founding of the MCC and the establishment of Lord’s as the club’s home (though not at this stage its property) marked a significant turning point for cricket. The White Conduit Club, named after the White Conduit Fields where games were normally played, staged matches on common land. As it proved impossible to save games from outside interference, Thomas Lord, acting on the advice of the Earl of Winchilsea, leased a piece of land in Dorset Fields in London in 1786. The establishment of a private playing area, which was subsequently enclosed, marks the beginning of one of the major characteristics of both English cricket and the MCC, namely, status exclusivity. In 1808, Lord's, as it was to become known, moved to North Bank in Regents Park, and finally in 1812 it moved to its current location in St John's Wood.
As the MCC was to become the "Parliament House of Cricket," so Lord's was to become cricket's "spiritual home."

Gentlemen and players

It would be a mistake however to conclude that the MCC assumed the role of the supreme authority of cricket at this early stage. During the early 1800s, members of the MCC were happy just to turn up and play cricket. Members held influence over the game simply because they were part of the elite of society, but until the 1830s the MCC had no formal or coherent administrative structure. Despite regular law revisions (for example, in 1811, 1817, 1821, 1823 and 1825), 1828 was the first time that proposals were put to a general MCC meeting. Even though the three great matches - Eton vs Harrow, Oxford vs Cambridge and Gentlemen vs Players - became annual events in this period, the MCC might well have disappeared entirely had it not been for the efforts of James Darke. He purchased the leasehold for Lord's in 1835 and, driven mainly by profit, transformed the stadium facilities and upgraded the MCC fixture list. MCC minutes record that, in 1850, Lord's was drained at Darke's "sole expense" and in 1853 that "Mr Darke receives all subscriptions and Entrances and undertakes the expenses of all matches made by the Committee." At this point Darke was the MCC's day-to-day administration.

What the MCC did manage to organize in these early days was the employment of its first professionals. In 1825 the club employed four groundsmen to act as bowlers and two boys to act as fielders. In 1835, this was increased to five bowlers and five boys. This move helped to establish the two-tier amateur-professional status of players, which remained until the distinction was abolished in 1962. With one exception, before the Second World War, all captains of county sides were amateurs. Playing roles were informally divided into professional bowlers (mostly working class) and amateur batsmen (gentlemen-players from the upper classes). Various status-emphasizing practices were employed to symbolize the division, including the use of separate gates for entering and exiting the field of play, separate and usually inferior travel and changing facilities for professionals, and the use of professionals to help prepare the playing area, doubling up as gatemen and bowling to the amateur batsmen in the "nets" to provide them with practice. Professionals addressed amateurs as either "Mr" or "sir," and on scorecards the professionals' initials were listed after their surname while the amateurs' initials were listed before.

However, the continuing weak structure of the MCC at this time is evident from its role in the major cricketing controversies of the nineteenth century; the introduction of first round-arm (1835) and then over-arm (1864) bowling. Both introductions were the initiatives of professional players, partly seeking to improve their employability and partly seeking to advantage the bowler in the face of increasingly smooth, and therefore batsman-friendly, pitches. Such was the weakness of the MCC that they failed in their attempts to stop either innovation. So disillusioned was the influential journal The Sporting Life with the MCC's role that it fostered a campaign, albeit unsuccessful, to establish a new administration to oversee the running of the game.
The golden age

By the end of the century, however, the MCC had become, in Lord Harris's words, "the most venerated institution in the British Empire" in what is generally considered the "Golden Age" of cricket. Two factors were important: the fractured nature of the county clubs and the changing composition of the MCC. The County Championship, which remains the premier first-class cricket competition in Britain, was first competed for in 1873 by nine counties (there are now eighteen). However, there was no administrative body for the competition and the scoring system was so complex that the press were normally left to decide the winner. The major obstacle was one of definition: which counties could be deemed "first class"? It took twenty-one years for the MCC eventually to succumb to pressure and make a ruling. The 1894 "Classification of Counties" marks the beginning of the MCC's reign as the central administrative body for cricket in Britain. The establishment of a coherent County Championship was closely followed by establishment of the Minor Counties Cricket Association (1895), the Board of Control to administer test matches in England (1898) and the Imperial Cricket Conference or ICC (1909).

The changing composition of MCC membership facilitated this process. Between 1860 and 1914 the dominance of Eton–Harrow and Oxford–Cambridge old boys among the membership waned (although the proportion of titled aristocratic members remained static at around 45–50 per cent). The new MCC leaders were more businesslike than their predecessors, and more committed to the idea of empire. Many, like Lord Harris (Under-Secretary for India) and Henry F.S. Jackson (Governor of Bengal), took up administrative posts in foreign countries. Many felt that Britain's world dominance was attributable to team games and influential MCC members such as Lord Harris and Lord Hawke explicitly argued that cricket could "civilize" the Empire and strengthen its bonds. As the premier cricket body, as the MCC had by this time become, it was natural that its President should assume the chair of the ICC; this protocol existed until 1989. Despite changing its name to the International Cricket Conference in 1965 (and International Cricket Council in 1989), cricket remains a game dominated by nations of the former Empire, or Commonwealth. Indeed, 35 of the 74 current member nations have been part of the British Empire or Commonwealth at some time.

The role of the MCC has somewhat reduced in recent years. Indeed, from 1993, the ICC was no longer administered by the MCC and became an independent body. As other nations have become more powerful in the ICC, the County Clubs, the Test and County Cricket Board and the National Cricket Association have increasingly taken responsibility for the running of the game in Britain. The establishment of the England and Wales Cricket Board in 1997 centralized cricket's administration further, and what power the MCC retains is largely symbolic and resides mainly in tradition and emotional attachment.

International cricket

In the late 1990s, nine nations were afforded "test match" (that is, full
international) status. These were (in chronological order of their being granted this status) England, Australia, South Africa, West Indies, New Zealand, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Zimbabwe. At first sight, North America appears to be a striking omission from this list. In fact, the first international cricket match was between the United States and Canada in 1845, and the first tour by an England XI, in 1859, encompassed both countries. The failure of the sport to sustain interest in North America is generally attributed to the Civil War (1861–65) and the subsequent growth of Major League Baseball. Baseball is thought to have more closely equated to American culture and to have satisfied desires for developing an American national identity. A small amount of cricket is still played in the USA, in the Philadelphia area, and in California, where there remains a small cricket league started in the 1920s and featuring a Hollywood XI. It is also played in Canada, mainly by migrants and their offspring. In recent years India and Pakistan have attempted to popularize the game in North America by playing a number of international one-day matches under floodlights in Canada.

Of related interest


DOMINIC MALCOLM
Reading 2

Cricket Spectator Disorder: Myths and Historical Evidence

in

The Sports Historian

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CRICKET SPECTATOR DISORDER: MYTHS AND HISTORICAL EVIDENCE

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Cricket Spectator Disorder: Myths and Historical Evidence

Although it has become a somewhat hackneyed way to start a paper on cricket, it remains almost impossible to discuss the sport without some reference to its role as the quintessentially "English" game. As far back as 1857, Thomas Hughes in Tom Brown's Schooldays, described cricket as "the birthright of British boys old and young, as habeas corpus and trial by jury are of British men". More recently, in the wake of the perceived threat posed to English sovereignty by the increasing power of the European Parliament, John Major attempted to reassure the British electorate by evoking images of Britain as "the country of long shadows on county (cricket) grounds, warm beer, invincible green suburbs, dog lovers and pool fillers". Yet such descriptions remain common precisely because they are identifiable for such large sections of the population as a whole. In a recent survey, Daily Telegraph readers defined "English character" as "tolerant, reserved, self-deprecating, cheerful in adversity, having a strong sense of fair play and prone to side with the underdog". Above all, Daily Telegraph readers noted, "an Englishman will appreciate and understand the game of cricket". Asked also to list the "cultural items" which most accurately signify "Englishness", village green cricket came second only to fish and chips but above pubs, church bells and the last night of the Proms. It is perhaps no exaggeration that, as Maguire and Stead have argued, "Cricket is seen to represent what 'England' is and gives meaning to the identity of being 'English'".
Many of the images connecting cricket with English national identity relate to a notion of the way the game is played. The common use of phrases such as “playing with a straight bat”, “going in to bat” and “it’s not cricket” are just three examples of the crossover. Yet, in the context of this paper, it is significant that the connection between cricket and “Englishness” is also based on ideas about the behaviour of spectators. The 19th century accounts of John Nyren and Mary Mitford are typical of an imagery of spectatorship as pastoral and passive and inclusive of all sections of a community. For example Mitford, in Our Village, (1879) wrote:

I doubt if there be any scene in the world more animating or delightful than a cricket match .... (the spectators are) retired cricketeers, the veterans of the green, the careful mothers, the girls, and all the boys of two parishes .... There was not a ten-years-old urchin, or a septuagenary woman in the parish, who did not feel an additional importance, a reflected consequence, in speaking of “our side”.

Early 20th century works like Selincourt’s The Cricket Match (1924) and Sassoon’s Memoirs of a Fox-Hunting Man (1929) provide very similar accounts. Indeed, reviewing cricket at the turn of the century, Dobbs concludes that,

mental images of Edwardian England seem almost incomplete unless somewhere in the background white-flannelled men run to and fro, or just off-stage, the sound of willow on leather and polite applause filters through the noise in the foreground of the tinkling tea-cups and the horses’ hoofs.

Just as notions of how the game is, was, and “should” be played influence our understanding of what it is to be “English” today, so too do notions of how cricket is, was, and “should” be watched.

This paper reviews some of the historical sources in this area and is presented with a view to shedding some – albeit limited – light on the accuracy of this depiction of cricket spectatorship. As will be seen, the majority of data is derived from secondary sources. Partly because of this, and partly because of the nature of the recording of cricket disorder
(something which will be discussed later), is not my intention, even if it were possible, to present a comprehensive or definitive record. Although this paper seeks to improve the understanding of this phenomenon by drawing together diverse empirical data, in many ways this paper contributes just as much to the theoretical interpretation of sports disorder. This paper does not, as such, set out to prove that particular trends in cricket crowd disorder can be demonstrated but, rather, seeks to provide a more adequate framework for interpretation than currently exists. To this end, in the first section of the paper a brief overview of some instances of 18th and 19th century cricket disorder is presented. In the second, some of the existing theories of cricket crowd disorder are reviewed and finally, in the third section, some recommendations for a more adequate approach to understanding cricket spectator disorder are made.

A Brief Overview of Recorded Cricket Disorder

In contrast to the common depiction of cricket spectatorship as peaceful and non-problematic, those who have examined cricket crowds in the 1700s have stressed their violent nature. Guttmann, in *Sports Spectators*, notes that there were frequent disorders at 18th century matches, whilst Ford goes somewhat further in arguing that "when there was not some sort of commotion it seemed to be thought unusual". Ford cites the example of the 1783 match between Nottingham and Melton. Despite attracting "an incredible number of spectators" the game was, "to the honour of both parties", conducted with "the utmost harmony". Similarly, in covering the 1787 match between the White Conduit Club and All England, *The Times* reported: "Upwards of 2000 persons were within the ground, who conducted themselves with the utmost decorum; the utility of the batten fence was evident, as it kept out all improper spectators".

These instances of peacefulness stood in sharp contrast to the way in which cricket matches were often conducted. During the 18th century cricket matches were some of the largest social events staged and, partly through the gambling opportunities which games presented, caused considerable local excitement. A match between the parish of Slindon in Surrey and an XI of London played in 1742 was publicised in the press as "the greatest match at cricket that has been played for many years" and a call for spectators to remain calm and orderly was made:
as ‘tis expected that there will be the greatest crowd that was known on the like occasion ‘tis to be hoped, nay desired, that gentlemen will not crowd in by reason of the very large sums of money which is laid if one of the Sussex gentlemen gets 40 notches himself.\textsuperscript{11}

The scale of these events was such that it was not unusual for crowds of several thousand to assemble. A game in 1751 attracted 10,000 spectators to London's Artillery Ground which Brookes estimates approximated to around 1 in 50 of London’s population at that time. The introduction of a clause penalising teams for arriving late and delaying the start of play can be taken as an indication of the seriousness of the threat posed by impatient and potentially disorderly spectators.\textsuperscript{12}

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\caption{Early Instances of Cricket Crowd Disorder}
\begin{tabular}{cl}
1693 & Thomas Reynolds, Henry Gunter and Elenor Lansford. fined for their part in riot and battery. \\
1731 & Duke of Richmond and his team assaulted by a mob after turning up late for a match. \\
1731 & Match on Chelsea Common terminated in a gambling-related “free fight” among spectators. \\
1744 & Kent v England, Artillery Ground, London. There was “great disorder so that it was with difficulty that the match was played out”. \\
1747 & Charlton v Westdean & Chilgrove at the Artillery Ground, London. Match abandoned due to fighting. \\
1750 & The Prince of Wales awards a woman ten guineas as compensation for a broken leg which she received in a “crush” at London’s Artillery Ground. \\
1765 & Surrey v Dartford at the Artillery Ground, London. The first so-called “great” match to be abandoned. \\
1770s-80s & Disorder among spectators at Hambledon halts play. Nyren described this group of spectators as “the best behaved in the country”. \\
1777 & Crowd prevent Stowmarket winning a match, probably due to gambling interests. \\
1778 & Duke of Dorset, impeded by the “Hampshire people”, injures one of them with his bat in attempting to play a stroke. \\
1779 & Clapham v Battersea. “A battle was fought between spectators”. \\
1785 & White Conduit Club players clash with some “spirited citizens”. \\
\end{tabular}
\end{table}
1788 Leicester vs Coventry. “A scene of bloodshed .... scarcely to be credited in a country so entirely distinguished by acts of humanity”.

1789 Leicester vs Coventry. Match cannot be played to a finish due to a dispute between the players.

1792 Following a cricket match, a man fires shots over the heads of Westminster boys who were breaking local residents' windows.

1796 Greenwich pensioners playing at Montpelier Gardens. Fighting and “one or two” arrests.

1802 Gangs of between 20 and 30 pickpockets operating at Lord's. Those who resisted the thefts were threatened at knife point.

Table 1 provides an overview of pre-19th century disorder and highlights a number of characteristics of cricket spectator disorder during this period. Firstly, all but one of the incidents from 1731 to 1777 involved matches being halted or abandoned. More minor disturbances, if they occurred (and the logic of Ford and Guttman’s arguments would indicate that they did), often went unrecorded. It seems likely that the one exception in the list was publicly recorded because it involved the Prince of Wales. Moreover, the 1693 case of Thomas Reynolds, Henry Gunter and Elenor Lansford may be enlightening in this regard. Fined for their part in riot and battery, the convicted three sent a petition to the Queen seeking remission from their fines on the basis that, they were “only spectators at a game of cricket”. The basis of this appeal, therefore, would appear to be that the imposition of fines was unfair because disorderly behaviour in this context was perhaps seen as socially acceptable. This gives some indication that disorder was relatively frequent and supports the assertion that less severe examples often went unrecorded. Consequently, any attempt at an accurate portrayal of the scale and extent of disorder is impossible.

A second significant characteristic is the varied social mix of those who were involved in disorder. In 1731 the Duke of Richmond and his team were assaulted and in 1778 the Duke of Dorset was involved in an incident where he accidentally struck a spectator whilst batting. "The Hampshire people", The Morning Post records, crowded the Duke such that he felt inhibited from playing a stroke: "his Grace gently expostulated with them on this unfair mode and pointed out their dangers, which having no effect, he, with proper spirit, made full play at a ball and in so doing brought one of the Gentlemen to the Ground". Other incidents like that involving
members of the White Conduit Club in 1785, boys from Westminster School in 1792 and at Lord’s in 1802, illustrate that disorder was not confined solely to the lower classes. Similarly, the Reynolds et al. case is also revealing in that it highlights the involvement of women in cricket disorder. This cross-gender, cross-class character of cricket disorder, as we will see, is a continuing theme which sets it apart from spectator disorder at other sports which tends to be largely working class and male based.

Such a class and sexual mix at 18th century cricket is both a reflection of, and a reason why, fixtures were such large social events. Furthermore, as Ford argues, the dangers to law and order which large crowds posed, affected all levels of society: “it was a reasonable fear of anyone who had something to lose, for the crowds had few social responsibilities and such sanctions as the law had were difficult to apply when large groups rather than individuals were the transgressors”. Partly because of the large number of spectators, and partly because of the anonymity which this provides, cricket fixtures often attracted a criminal element. For example, an estimated crowd of 5000 people attended a match at Montpelier Gardens in London between 11 players with one-arm and 11 with one-leg. Following the match,

the nimble-fingered gentry endeavoured to draw a crowd in order to follow their trade, and for a short time these fellows were never more dextrous; they had a long cord, and threw people down over it as they passed. A scuffle ensued, and several persons lost their watches and money. One or two of the crew were secured, and sent to Newington watch-house (The Times, 10th August 1796).

Similarly, at Lord’s in 1802, gangs of pickpockets numbering between 20 and 30 were in operation. Those who resisted the theft were threatened with violence. Thus, the limited data available suggest that 18th century cricket crowds were characterised by regular and serious disorder which affected people from all levels of society. It would, therefore, appear that spectatorship at this time was far removed from both the way it was portrayed in 19th century accounts (such as Nyren’s and Mitford’s) and the way that it is commonly perceived today.
Yet when we move to the 19th century, we can see that "historians agree that crowd control was not a problem". Guttmann, citing the descriptions of Mitford and Nyren as evidence, concludes that by the mid 19th century cricket crowds could be described as "usually quite civilized". Sandiford agrees with this view. Victorian cricket crowds, he claims, "behaved very well indeed. They were certainly less rowdy than contemporary gatherings at other sports".

Table 2. 19th Century Instances of Cricket Crowd Disorder

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1866</td>
<td>Dispute over a boundary at Lords. &quot;So great was the uproar and confusion&quot;, that play was abandoned for the day. The Prince of Wales, who had been watching the match, left the ground immediately.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1870s</td>
<td>Reports of trouble at Bacup vs Haslingden matches in Lancashire.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1873</td>
<td>The MCC committee calls for old and young members of Eton and Harrow schools to prevent future disorder.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1878</td>
<td>Old Trafford. &quot;The people so inconveniently encroached on the fielding ground so as to stop play&quot;.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1883</td>
<td>Old Trafford. Police deployed to control crowd.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1885</td>
<td>&quot;The Secular Club&quot; of Leicester are stormed by a Christian mob.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1887</td>
<td>The Oval. The large crowd encroaches upon play.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1896</td>
<td>Lords. The deliberate bowling of byes to avoid forcing the opposition follow-on leads to &quot;a very hostile demonstration&quot;.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Such conclusions seem reasonable as there are — especially given developments in the scale of newspaper publishing — relatively few accounts of disorder during the 19th century. Following the 1802 incident at Lord's (see Table 2), there is a gap of some 60 years until the next recorded incident when disorder, resulting from a dispute over the calling of a boundary, led the Prince of Wales to flee from Lords. However, despite this break in evidence, from the reports which we have, we can see elements of both continuity and change. Most notably, the incident involving the Prince of Wales illustrates the continuing role of the aristocracy (and, indeed, royalty) in cricket disorder. Similarly, at the Eton v Harrow Match of 1873, various incidents around the ground led the Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC) to call for old boys to ensure order at
future matches. For the 1874 game, the MCC warned against "undue exhibitions of party feeling, hoisting being prohibited".26

Yet there are also significant changes in the character of disorder evident from these reports. If we compare the 18th and 19th century evidence, we can see that incidents from the later period are significantly smaller in scale. As in the 18th century, 19th century disorder often involved the encroachment of spectators on to the field of play but, significantly, unlike the cases from the 1700s, later games were rarely abandoned. A number of incidents towards the end of the 19th century (e.g. at Old Trafford in 1878 and 1883; at the Oval in 1887), were variously attributed in the contemporary press to the increase in cups and leagues, over-crowding or a larger than anticipated turnout as a result of the presence of the so-called "football element",27 or a "non-cricketing", "holiday" crowd.28 Vamplew notes that, because of this spate of events, by the 1890s, "there were numerous allegations that crowd behaviour worsened".29 Yet, even at this supposedly heightened level, reports of disorder are both fewer and of a less serious nature than those of the previous century.

Finally in this section, and although strictly speaking not an instance of disorder, the collapse of a stand holding several thousand in Sheffield in 1822 is useful in portraying something of the attitude towards disorder and resultant injury at this time. Although initial reports about the number of people injured proved to be exaggerated ("It is with painful feelings that we have to add, that two persons were killed on the spot, and between 40 and 50 more or less maimed"30), the stand was re-used the following day when, incidentally, a false alarm led to further panic and a crush. Interestingly, this illustrates a less severe reaction, and a greater tolerance towards the witnessing of injury and bloodshed, than would be the case today.31 Furthermore, this incident also re-affirms the impression that women continued to be present at cricket in relatively large numbers. The revised reports noted that nineteen men and four women were admitted to hospital following the collapse of the stand.

Theories of Cricket Crowd Disorder

A number of theories – characterised by varying degrees of depth and sophistication – have been proposed in order to explain levels of cricket
spectator disorder at various times through history. Ford links 18th century disorder to the “spirit” of the age but cites “an unprecedented increase in drinking and gambling among the lower classes” as particularly important factors. Guttmann, the only person previously to have attempted an 18th/19th century comparison, argues that as a consequence of the so-called “character” of the game, spectators had to be patient and, by implication therefore, passive and non-violent. He states that, “the length of Victorian and later matches symbolised the pace of life in a rural society not yet dominated by an industrial sense of time”. The research problems of Vamplew and Sandiford are slightly different yet the explanations they propose are very similar to Guttmann’s. Vamplew attempts to explain the relative peacefulness of cricket crowds at the end of the 19th century compared to their counterparts at football and race meetings. He cites a number of relevant factors, namely: the relative absence of gambling; the proportion of seating which reduced the amount of spectator contact; and the high proportion of middle class spectators for whom “structural strains” would have been relatively low (structural strains, according to Vamplew, are frustrations linked to the deprivation of power and esteem as a result of working conditions). However, like Guttmann, Vamplew cites the drawn out nature of cricket which leads to reduced levels of tension amongst the spectators. Sandiford draws heavily on Vamplew’s explanation but, citing the similarities between disturbances at Bacup-Haslingden and Eton-Harrow matches in the 1870s, argues that it is difficult to accept that the more socially respectable spectators were less frustrated than their working class counterparts. Sandiford’s alternative thesis, as Guttmann’s and Vamplew’s before him, seeks to explain disorder in relation to the character of the game. Urban workers in an industrialised society, Sandiford claims, do not generally go to a sports event for “quiet and decorum”; rather they seek a release from the tedium of industrialism and an opportunity to vent their emotions.

When we attempt to look at disorder comparatively we can see that parts of each of these explanations are problematic. Guttmann, Sandiford and Vamplew all propose a theory that spectator behaviour is, to some degree, derived from the character of the game. Guttmann’s explanation is, in fact, contradicted by his own evidence. If Victorian matches were orderly because they “symbolized the pace of life in a rural society not yet
dominated by an industrial sense of time”, why would pre-Victorian matches have been more violent? If, as Sandiford and Vamplew claim, the so-called character of the game neither attracts urban workers nor generates levels of excitement high enough for disorder, how can we explain 18th century crowd disorder or spectator violence on the Indian subcontinent, in Australia and the Caribbean, or even at Test Matches at the Edgbaston ground in Birmingham in 1993 and 1998? Counter to these explanations, cricket does not have a character but is played in a variety of contexts, attracting people from different social groups for whom the game’s meaning will vary. Aside from being factually incorrect (urban industrial workers in England have, throughout history, been attracted to cricket in large numbers35), Sandiford is mistaken to argue that it is the game which makes cricket spectators quiet and orderly. Rather it is the behaviour of the spectators which makes for the quiet and decorum stereotypically characteristic of the English game. Explanations based on a supposedly identifiable “essence of cricket” must be rejected. These theories are both the product and the producers of notions of cricket and “Englishness” and, as such, should be treated with considerable caution.

Table 3. Early Crowd Control Measures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1726</td>
<td>Fearing that a cricket crowd would cause a rebellion, a Justice of the Peace in Essex, has the spectators dispersed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1744</td>
<td>George Smith employed to ensure control at the Artillery Ground, London.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1744</td>
<td>Captain Vinegar, “with a great many of his bruisers and bull dogs” employed at Walworth Common, London.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1748?</td>
<td>Prices at the Artillery Ground, London are increased to deter “the poorer sections of society”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1764</td>
<td>Westminster Magistrates “considering ridding the fields adjacent to the metropolis” of those playing cricket and other games.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1777</td>
<td>Entrance fees of 6d per person at Artillery Fields, London are introduced “to prevent the players being interrupted”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1796</td>
<td>The Headmaster of Eton (Dr. Keate), having banned the annual match against Westminster, flogged the entire team after his instructions were ignored.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1826</td>
<td>Cooper “and two principal officers of Queen-square” employed to preserve order at the Westminster Town Boys vs Westminster King’s</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
An Eliasian or Process Sociological Analysis of Cricket

Scholars match.

1835-42 Thomas Bennett “using his long leash” keeps order during a series of matches between Kent and England.

1842 Thomas Cramp records post match singing and rioting in his diary. “Such is the usual ending of cricket matches”.

1864 MCC employ off duty policemen during fixtures.

Pre-1900 All County Committees introduce regulations similar to those at Lords.

Yet whilst the limited data which we have available suggest that cricket disorder reduced from the 18th to the 19th centuries, there are grounds for thinking that neither the scale nor the trends of disorder are accurately portrayed in historical sources. Table 3 charts various crowd control attempts made by cricketing authorities. As one might expect from the pattern of recorded disorder discussed above, attempts were made in the early to mid 1700s (including the raising of entrance fees and the employment of hired hands) and further, more systematic moves were made at the end of the 19th century. However, similar measures were introduced between the 1820s to ‘40s and we might also note that the Headmasters of Eton and Harrow, emulating their Winchester and Eton predecessors, continued to attempted to ban games between the schools in the 1820s. Given the continuity of crowd control measures it would appear that cricket spectator disorder continued in the early 1800s but ceased, temporarily, to be an issue which was addressed in the press.

To explain why disorder was not addressed by the media, we should perhaps pay some attention to the practicalities of cricket reporting. Viewing facilities for the press were so poor that, for instance, Lord’s did not have a press box until 1868 and even as late as 1893 Wisden records that there were complaints about the adequacy of the viewing facilities for the press. Consequently, Altham and Swanton argue, “the accounts of the big matches were extremely meagre”. In contrast to this, it might be hypothesised, the later development of football grounds meant that the reporting of both games and spectator behaviour could be done with a relatively high degree of accuracy. Additionally, even if such viewing problems were overcome, there was only very limited space available in individual newspapers for match reports. For example, in *The Times* during the early 1800s coverage was often limited to just a scorecard and
a single line of comment. Furthermore, the reporting of matches tended to be haphazard rather than comprehensive in nature. William Denison, "the father of daily cricket reporting", wrote the bulk of the cricket coverage for *The Times* from the 1820s until his death in 1856 and for much of this period doubled up as a parliamentary reporter. Inevitably, as a result of this dual role, Denison would miss large parts of the games on which he was reporting and thus to reproduce the scorecard, with little or no further comment, would have been both convenient and expedient.

More importantly however, there were "social" reasons why cricket disorder was not defined in the press as a problematic issue during this "middle" period. Early recorded incidents of disorder tended to be so significant that they simply had to be commented upon; hence the predominance of incidents involving the abandonment of play. Later incidents were recorded in a non-judgmental manner and rarely, if ever, was any blame apportioned. Journalists, it would appear, were very sympathetic towards any instances of crowd disorder. Initially this may have been partly due to the role of the aristocracy in many of the matches covered. Ford, for instance, notes the "unctuous sycophancy" with which local papers recorded the cricket of local gentlemen in the 1750s. Later, however, this sympathy may have derived, not from the fact that cricket crowds were peaceful *per se*, but merely because, as Vamplew and Sandiford argue, they were viewed as peaceful in comparison to their counterparts at other sports. For instance, this would explain why late 19th century incidents were often attributed to a "holiday" or "footballing" crowd.

Furthermore, it is also instructive to look at who, specifically, has chronicled and reported on cricket. Cricket's major historical works have been authored by people such as Warner, Rait-Kerr, Bowen, Altham and Swanton who have held various levels of office in the administration of the game. Similarly Denison, amongst his many roles, was the first secretary of Surrey County Cricket Club and a member of the MCC. Such was his prominence in the organisation that it was he who responded on behalf of the club to the calls for the legalisation of round arm bowling in the 1830s. As establishment figures each of these men may have had a vested interest in portraying a particular image of cricket and, consequently, would be unlikely to have emphasised problems like disorder. This, in
conjunction with the practical problems of reporting, may explain why spectator disorder was not considered a particularly pressing issue during the early to mid 19th century.

**Attempting a More Adequate Approach to Cricket Spectator Disorder**

In the previous sections we have looked at the historical evidence relating to cricket crowd disorder and discussed some of the theories which have been proposed to explain it. In summary, although there are grounds for arguing that the reporting of incidents may have served to underplay the phenomenon, the limited evidence which is available would seem to suggest that between the 18th and 19th centuries cricket crowd disorder declined. In this final section an attempt will be made to understand this pattern. Two keys points would appear to be particularly significant in this regard: the changing structure of the game and the changing composition of those who played and administered it.

Because of the early codification of cricket – 1727 and 1744 being particularly significant dates⁴³ – it is often assumed that the game was fixed into its modern form at an early stage. One example of why this is false – and the development of round- and over-arm bowling is another – is the use of boundaries. Dunning and Sheard, for example, note how one of the differences between folk games and modern sports is the move towards a clear distinction between playing and spectating roles.⁴⁴ Boundaries are significant in terms of this process, but also in terms of spectator disorder; not only do boundaries mark the playing area but they also serve to separate the game’s participants from its non-participants. The absence of boundaries in early matches, therefore, might partly explain why so many of the early instances of disorder involve the abandonment of games due to spectator invasion. Prior to the 19th century the respective captains pitched the wicket in an unprepared field (Altham and Swanton state that this could be anywhere within a 30 yard radius of an agreed spot)⁴⁵ and the game began. With no boundaries, and no clear idea of exactly where the pitch would be, spectators watched from whatever vantage point they could. The informal nature of this arrangement meant that the demarcation of playing and spectating areas was neither clearly established, nor widely accepted, in cricket’s early years. Hence, in 1744 we see Captain Vinegar,
his bruisers and dogs, "make the ring" – a term also used in boxing – in an attempt to separate the players from the spectators.

This informal, unstandardised, use of boundaries continued for many years and at all levels of the game. A report in *The Times* in 1929, makes reference to some of the earliest Eton-Harrow matches (the first match was in 1805, the next in 1818 and the fixture became an annual event from 1822) and indicates the significance of boundaries for understanding levels of spectator disorder. The author of the piece writes,

> those early matches were very haphazard affairs. There were, of course, no boundaries, and a fieldsman pursuing a ball hit into a hostile patch of the crowd would have to play a frenzied game of hide-and-seek before recovering it (12 July, 1929).47

Although this may provide an indication as to why the schools' headmasters attempted to ban these early fixtures we can see that, gradually, the playing area became more standardised. In 1823 the responsibility for selecting the pitch moved away from the two captains and was placed in the hands of the umpires. Boundaries, note Altham and Swanton, were gradually introduced from the 1860s (for instance the first boundaries in matches between Eton and Harrow were used in 1864) and became included within the laws of the game in 1884. Indeed, the playing area in cricket, in comparison to other sports, remains relatively unstandardised. Although the dimensions of the wicket were first outlined in the 1744 code of laws, there remains no minimum or maximum specifications for the positioning of the boundaries. It is no coincidence that some of the oldest grounds have some of the “poorest”, or most irregular, playing areas; for instance the famous slope at Lord’s or the lime tree within the playing area at Kent’s St. Lawrence Ground, Canterbury.

However, not only did cricket change in terms of its structure, there was also a shift in terms of those who played and controlled the game. During the 1700s the game – certainly those games which were reported in newspapers – was notable for two particular features: firstly, though led by members of the aristocracy, games were characterised by a considerable social mix of participants; and secondly, gambling was common amongst both players and spectators of all classes. By the end of the 18th century,
however, these features were beginning to change. Even though, as amongst others Holt has suggested, a distinctive feature of early English cricket was that the aristocracy and commoners played alongside each other, in many ways the establishment of the MCC in 1787 was symptomatic of the beginning of a process towards greater exclusivity in the game. The incident involving the White Conduit Club in 1785 nicely highlights one of the possible motives for this change. The following report is the first ever reference to cricket to appear in *The Times* and refers to a clash between the club's members and some unnamed others using the same area of the White Conduit Fields on which the club members played.

It is recommended to the Lordling Cricketers who amuse themselves in White Conduit Fields, to procure an Act of Parliament for inclosing their play ground, which will not only prevent their being incommoded, but protect themselves from a repetition of the severe rebuke which they justly merit, and received on Saturday evening from some spirited citizens whom they insulted and attempted *vi et armis* to drive from the foot path, pretending it was within their bounds (22nd June, 1785).¹⁰

Two phrases from this report serve to illustrate the severity with which this incident was viewed. Firstly, *vi et armis* is a legal term for a kind of trespass; literally meaning by force and arms. Secondly, the reference to "citizens" is perhaps significant because this event occurred between the American (1776) and French (1789) Revolutions, when the use of the word "citizen" would have been particularly revealing of the strength of disdain felt. From this quotation it would appear that social distances were relatively small at this time and, as a manifestation of this, these high status men did not feel it necessary to shun direct, physical confrontation with those "citizens" who, we must presume, were of lower status. But, significantly, if even the aristocrats who formed the MCC could not protect their game from the interruptions caused by outsiders — that is, from a form of "spectator" disorder — then it is doubtful whether others would have been able to do so either. The year following the incident in the White Conduit Fields, Thomas Lord, acting on the advice of the Earl of Winchilsea, leased a piece of land in Dorset Fields, enclosed a private playing area, and established Lord's Cricket Ground. Although the location of Lord's cricket ground has subsequently changed on two occasions, it has re-
mained the headquarters of the MCC ever since. This example shows how the introduction of boundaries and a move towards greater social exclusivity are inter-related and it would seem likely that interruptions such as that discussed here provided part of the motivation for this change.

However, to return to our central point, a distinct shift is identifiable in terms of the social make-up of those controlling and playing cricket in the early 1800s. During this period the British aristocracy, who had dominated cricket in the previous century, underwent a process of considerable change as industrialisation and the emergence of an increasingly wealthy capitalist class served to modify the established social order. As Cannadine has noted, "the new rich sought to catch up with the old" by adopting typically aristocratic social practices acquiring such things as land, art work, titles and honours. By incorporating this group, the aristocracy expanded. Between 1776 and 1830, 209 new peerages were created and the number of seats in the House of Lords increased from 199 to 358. For their part, aristocratic land holders responded by making agriculture "more rational, more efficient, and more capitalistic" and increasingly became involved in commercial enterprises such as transport, urban development and property rental. More and more, members of the aristocracy moved into political positions (both at home and in the Empire more broadly), the civil service, the armed forces and the church. In effect, many of these practices led the aristocracy to become more "middle class", but the richest, most well-established, and powerful in this group, "looked on with disdain as their inferiors and the parvenus fought it out". Although Cannadine does not mention the sport specifically, it is clear that such changes also occurred in the organisation of cricket. Although established largely by titled men, by 1833 the MCC, in terms of membership and administration, could "scarcely be described as an aristocratic institution since only twenty-five, out of a total membership of 202, possessed titles." As Bradley’s work on the composition of MCC committee members from 1860-1914 has shown, this trend continued throughout the remainder of the 19th century; "the whole feeling of the general committee was more upper-middle class than aristocratic". However, underlining Cannadine’s point that there was a large degree of incorporation of other social classes into the aristocracy at this time, Bradley notes that even "those who were not aristocrats certainly moved with ease in that milieu".
The new, wealthy, middle classes— the elite of whom, through the acquisition of land and titles could properly be described as having broken into the aristocracy— adopted cricket in an attempt to aggrandise themselves and to aid their movement and assimilation within society’s changing elite. The expanded upper class was the target for much criticism and, Cannadine claims, one of the few concessions made in this respect was to relinquish some of the traditional aristocratic practices the most notable of which, in this instance, was gambling. Thus the social mix and widespread betting which characterised the aristocracy-patronised games of the 1700s began to die out as a new, re-constructed upper class emerged in which the influence of the newly arrived and the aspirant upper-middle classes was increasingly being felt. Despite being a less exclusive group than it once was (indeed, perhaps as a direct consequence of this), the new elite became increasingly exclusionary in practice. To secure their status, they sought to (re-)present themselves not as something new, recent or novel, but as “something old”. A cricketing manifestation of this was not only the adoption of the traditional amateur-professional distinction, but the placement upon it of far greater significance than had previously been the case. For this reason it is at this time that being a professional cricketer came to mean more than just payment for playing and began to acquire a whole gamut of other meanings. Similarly it was also during this period that the match between amateurs and professionals began to be played as an annual fixture and to assume its place— alongside the Oxford and Cambridge boat race and cricket match, Royal Ascot, the Henley Regatta and so on— in the calendar of British sporting events.

As cricket began to take on a more class-exclusive character, there appears to be a noticeable decline in both disorder and cricket-related gambling. Though no exact record survives, Wynne-Thomas concludes that bookmakers were excluded from the pavilion at Lord’s during the 1820s. By 1851 James Pycroft in The Cricket Field described gambling as “A Dark Chapter in the History of Cricket”. Clauses relating specifically to gambling, which had been so influential in the early codes of cricket laws, were retained until 1884 and indicate that in some settings the practice may have remained common. However, we can see that gambling was not only beginning to decline, but also that it was becoming increasingly disapproved of by those who administered the game. Whilst Ford and Vamplew
are right to note the role of gambling as a relevant factor in early disorder, gambling waned because of the changing social composition of those who played the game. Gambling did not, as such, cause disorder; rather gambling and disorderly incidents were forms of behaviour characteristic of certain groups of spectators. As cricket became increasingly exclusive and the lower classes ceased to attend the more prestigious – and therefore press covered – matches, so disorder seems to have reduced (though, clearly, this is not to say that it disappeared entirely).

Conclusion

As noted in the introduction, the purpose of this paper has been both to draw together diverse empirical data as well as to attempt to improve the theoretical frameworks through which we view such phenomena. Although it is true to say that cricket became more socially exclusive at the beginning of the 19th century it is important for us not to exaggerate the homogeneity of people involved in the organising, playing and spectating of the game. Fixtures involving the touring Professional XIs became particularly popular, attracted spectators from all levels of society and were widely reported in the press around this time. Furthermore, these touring teams normally played against sides which represented particular cities. Given this mixture of lower classes and local identification one would expect crowds to be relatively disorderly and for this disorder to have been reported. It is perhaps surprising, therefore, that there appears to be little recorded evidence of crowd disturbances at these games and an investigation of these matches may prove a fruitful line of enquiry. Other research might focus on the establishment of leagues (with a largely democratic ethos) in the Midlands and the North of the country, the establishment of county clubs (with a largely elitist ethos), and the effects of an increasingly efficient local and national state apparatus able to put more civilised standards of behaviour into effective action (including, for instance, the establishment of the Metropolitan Police in 1829). Similarly, the amplifying and de-amplifying consequences of the press coverage of cricket disorder are, as yet, unclear as, indeed, is the extent to which the historical data might support Elias’s theory of civilising processes.61

However, despite the limited data in this context, it seems to be no coincidence that the mid 19th century is the era in which what Guttmann
describes as the "pastoral myth" of cricket – part of what we might describe as the stereotypical notion of cricket and "Englishness" – began to become firmly established. Nyren wrote *The Young Cricketeers' Tutor* in 1833, and Mitford wrote *Our Village* in 1879, and the form of spectatorship which is discussed in these works is far removed from the evidence of the 1700s which shows that cricket was characterised by regular interference with play and widespread gambling and drinking. In Hobsbawm's terms, there appears to be an invention of cricketing tradition at this point in time. Cricketing disorder probably did reduce in the 19th century, largely because of the changing social composition of spectators and the changing way in which the game was played, but during this period new cricketing customs were introduced and the characteristics of the older game were "forgotten". This is the invented tradition of cricket spectatorship; an invention which influences the way we think that cricket crowds have behaved historically and, for some, should behave today.

References


Ford, J. *Cricket: A Social History, 1700-1835*. (Newton Abbot, Devon: David and


Mitford, M. Our Village (1879).

Nyren, J. The Young Cricketers' Tutor (1833).


Notes

1 Maguire, 1994, p. 414.
2 It is interesting to note how easily and uncritically national characteristics are assumed to be the characteristics of men.
4 Maguire and Stead, 1996, p. 17.
5 Cited in Guttmann, 1986, p. 78.
8 Guttmann, 1986, p. 79.
10 M. Williams, 1985, p. 4.
13 Scott, 1989, p. 177.
15 The White Conduit Club, out of which the MCC was formed in 1787, had an overlapping membership with the Star and Garter Club (which was sometimes known as the Je ne sais quoi Club) to the extent that they are often confused with one another. Indeed such was this overlap that Wynne Thomas, 1997, concludes that they were one and the same club.
16 See for example, Dunning et al., 1988; Smith, 1981.
17 Ford, 1972, p. 121.
18 One would presume that “nimble-fingered gentry” referred to pickpockets.
19 Cited in M. Williams, 1985, p. 11.
20 The term pickpockets in this context might be somewhat different to its contemporary usage. Given that these perpetrators were known both to their victims and to the authorities, “muggers” might be a more accurate, contemporary equivalent.
22 Nyren’s The Young Cricketeers Tutor reflected upon the period when of the Hambledon Cricket Club was at the forefront of English cricket. However his book was first published in 1833, some fifty years after the most influential patrons of the club had withdrawn and the club’s influence began to wane. Because of this Guttmann is perhaps unwise to place too much emphasis on the reliability of his account.
23 Guttmann, 1986, p. 79.
25 The significance of boundaries in the context of crowd disorder is discussed below.
26 Warner, 1946, p. 69.
27 Vamplew, 1980, p. 15.
29 Vamplew, 1980, p. 15.
31 Norbert Elias, within the broader theory of "civilising processes", used the term "threshold of repugnance" to describe changes in people's attitudes towards incidents such as this. See for instance, Elias and Dunning, 1986, and Elias, 1978.


33 Guttmann, 1986, p. 79.

34 Sandiford, 1994, p. 125.


36 Brookes, 1978, p. 72 notes that the frequency with which the headmasters of public schools attempted to ban games of cricket is an indication of their lack of power over the boys and the ineffectual nature of their rulings.


38 Altham and Swanton, 1949, p. 130.


40 Ford, 1972, p. 71.


42 To some extent, this pattern continues today. Leading cricket journalists such as Christopher Martin-Jenkins, Henry Blofeld, Mark Nicholas and David Gower are rather more closely aligned to the administrators of sport than, for instance, are their footballing counterparts.

43 For a fuller discussion of the development of the laws of cricket see Rait Kerr, 1950, and Brodribb, 1953.

44 Dunning and Sheard, 1979, pp. 33-34.


46 The idea of making the "ring" was probably first used in boxing where it became common practice to make an inner ring for the fighters and the seconds, and an outer ring for the referee and fight backers. Spectators stood outside this outer ring and hence it also performed the function of a barrier which was designed to stop spectators - perhaps with a betting interest - from interfering with the "playing area". See Sheard, 1992, p. 205.


48 Altham and Swanton, 1949, p. 130.

49 Holt, 1989, p. 25.

50 M. Williams, 1985, p. 2.

51 After its initial founding in Dorset Fields, Thomas Lord moved his ground twice: in 1808 to North Bank in Regents Park and again in 1812 to its current location in St John's Wood.

52 Cannadine, 1994, p. 25.


54 Cannadine, 1994, p. 31.


58 Cannadine, 1994, p. 33.


60 Wynne Thomas, 1997, p. 56.

Reading 3

Cricket and Civilizing Processes:
A response to Stokvis

in

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CRICKET AND CIVILIZING PROCESSES
A Response to Stokvis

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Abstract This article examines Ruud Stokvis’s contention that the tendency of figurational sociologists to focus on violence and its control would be unproductive in the study of the development of non-contact sports such as cricket and that the formal organization and standardization of modern sports are their defining features. Following a brief outline of Elias’s theory of civilizing processes, the relatively violent tenor of early (pre-1850s) cricket is demonstrated. An examination of the development of the game’s structural features (laws, customs, physical environment) illustrates that processes relating to the standardization and national diffusion of cricket are highly interdependent with measures to control the level of violence in the game. Thus, previously described characteristics of the developmental processes of relatively violent sports such as football, rugby and boxing have parallels in, and similarities with, the non-contact sport of cricket.

Key words • civilizing processes • cricket development • Elias • violence

Introduction

It is a tribute to Ruud Stokvis that his critique of figurational studies of sport has been taken seriously by the advocates of this perspective. In a recent survey of figurational sociology and its critics, for instance, Murphy et al. (2000) devote more space to responding to Stokvis than they do any of the other general or sport-specific criticisms cited. The present paper continues in a similar vein, providing an empirically based case study of a single sport — cricket — to re-examine Stokvis’s arguments and to reopen the debate.

Stokvis’s critique consists of two main strands; first he questioned the empirical basis of Elias’s (1986a) work on foxhunting and, indeed, many now accept that Elias’s work on foxhunting may be empirically flawed, due largely to its reliance on too few contemporary sources (Franklin, 1996; Murphy et al., 2000: 102). Second, however, Stokvis introduced a wider ranging theoretical critique which, while not questioning Elias’s theory of civilizing processes itself, questioned the approach taken by figurational sociologists — including Elias himself — who have used the perspective to study sport. Stokvis argued that figurational sociologists tend to view modern sport as representative of a ‘specific stage in the process of civilization’ and that this tendency ‘is too limited’, and thus ‘leads sociological research on sports too often to matters of violence and
An Eliasian or Process Sociological Analysis of Cricket

its control’ (1992: 121). Not all popular pastimes, according to Stokvis (and he cites cricket as one such pastime) were characterized by relatively high levels of violence prior to being developed into modern sports. Such sports, Stokvis contends, provide a particular challenge for the traditional, figurational approach. A richer seam of research, he argues, would be to concentrate on what Stokvis defines as the distinguishing characteristics of modern sport: namely their formal organization, standardization and national and international diffusion, and not, as figurational sociologists have tended to study, violence and its control.

In recent years there has been a considerable increase in the number and range of figurationally informed, non-violence-orientated studies. Moreover, Murphy et al. (2000) argue that Stokvis exaggerates the stress figurational sociologists place on the role of violence in the development of sports, noting that Dunning and Sheard’s work on football and rugby, for instance, is far broader in scope than Stokvis implies. Dunning and Sheard (1979: 33–4) list 15 characteristics through which one can differentiate between folk games and modern sports, only one of which relates to violence and its control. Dunning and Sheard also demonstrate that, of the 37 laws contained in the earliest surviving written football rules (The Laws of Football as Played at Rugby School, produced in 1845), seven dealt with the control of physical force (1979: 91–3). As Murphy et al. (2000: 102–3) note, Dunning and Sheard include ‘reference to many aspects of the informal and formal organization of folk games and modern sports’, addressing ‘many of the very issues which Stokvis identifies as “more important areas” for research’.

This notwithstanding, it remains the case that a large, albeit diminishing, proportion of the work produced by figurational sociologists of sport has focused not only on violence, but on those sports which are relatively violent; that is to say, contact sports, as witnessed by Dunning’s work on football (1979), Dunning et al.’s studies of football hooliganism (e.g. 1988), Dunning and Sheard’s examination of the development of rugby (1979) and Sheard’s work on boxing (1997). These studies do not provide a representative sample of sports, Stokvis argues, because ‘violence was only involved in those pastimes whose competition brought the participants into close physical contact’ (1992: 126). Violence was not an issue, he states, in the national organization and standardization of cricket, rowing and horseracing, while in boxing, as illustrated by the rules proposed by Jack Broughton in 1743, ‘standardization and the control of violence went together’ (Stokvis, 1992: 128). Counter to Stokvis, it is my contention that, while violence and its control do not appear to have acquired issue status during the initial codification and organization of cricket (though, as noted in the conclusion, it was to in subsequent times), the development of cricket has been characterized by the implementation of rules which served to reduce violent conduct and, in particular, which served to separate the participants from the spectators, and the participants from each other. That is to say, while we cannot — nor should we attempt to — explain the development of cricket solely in terms of the control of violence, a more adequate account cannot be produced without considerable focus on such issues. I will attempt to demonstrate this first by providing a brief outline of Elias’s theory of civilizing processes, second by demonstrating the relatively violent tenor of early cricket, and third by
examining the role of violence and its control in the initial standardization of the
game.

Before proceeding to the case study, it is important to raise one further point. As Dunning (1992: 271) notes, Stokvis partly misunderstands the nature of the game of cricket, which is best described as 'a quintessential example of a war-game' which involves a hard ball being hurled, often between 80 and 90 miles per hour, at a mock castle, 'the wicket', and the batter. Indeed, UK Sports Council (1991) data rank cricket as the sport with the fifth highest rate of injury in Britain (behind rugby 59.3, soccer 39.3, martial arts 36.3 and hockey 24.8) at 20.2 persons per hundred participants per four weeks. The reasons why a non-cricket-playing 'foreigner' should make such a mistake are complex and cannot be entered into here but, in many ways, Stokvis's mistake is to have accepted the prevalent ideological nexus of cricket, Englishness and passivity. Despite Stokvis's mistaken impression of cricket, an examination of the sport's development remains enlightening. Cricket is not one of those games in which, to cite Messner (1990: 203), human bodies are literally used as weapons, but cricket is a sport in which the basic equipment, the bat and the ball, may quite literally and, within the game's rules, quite legitimately be used as weapons. Given the fact that cricket may be described as a potentially physically dangerous non-contact sport, this study provides a rather different sort of examination of civilizing processes than has previously been undertaken.

Elias's Theory of Civilizing Processes

Briefly stated, Elias (2000) argued that, in Western Europe since the Middle Ages, there has taken place an empirically observable decline in people's propensity for obtaining pleasure from participating in, and witnessing acts of, physical violence. Concomitantly with processes of state formation (especially the monopolization of the means of violence and the means of taxation), argues Elias, there have been observable long-term changes in patterns of human behaviour. More particularly, there has been a 'dampening of Angriffslust'; literally translated, a decline in the lust for attacking. This socially generated change in personality structure or 'habitus' has primarily entailed two features: a lowering of the 'threshold of repugnance', such that, for instance, people in modern societies would be likely to express disgust at forms of behaviour which were more readily acceptable in the Middle Ages; and a socially generated, psychologically internalized, stricter taboo on violence which is characterized by the generation of feelings of guilt and anxiety on the breaking or infringement of such taboos. The significance of sport in modern societies is partly due to the 'controlled de-controlling' of these processes of emotional control which players and spectators experience (Elias, 1986b). In sporting contexts, relatively high degrees of emotional expression and violence are afforded relatively high degrees of public tolerance.

Although much of the sport-related work which has developed out of Elias's theory of civilizing processes has been undertaken by others (most notably Eric Dunning), Elias himself did contribute a number of empirically based studies to
An Eliasian or Process Sociological Analysis of Cricket

the field. In keeping with Elias's stress on the importance of historical comparison in sociology (hence the terms 'process sociology' and 'figurational sociology' are often used synonymously), Elias's sole-authored works include examinations of the relative levels of violence in the Ancient Greek 'sports' and Roman games (Elias, 1971), and connections between the 18th-century formalization of political conflict in England and the formalization of folk games into early modern sport-forms, processes he termed 'the parliamentarization of political conflict' and 'the sportization of pastimes' (Elias, 1986a). In this context Elias focused on foxhunting but other sports in which he thought these twin processes could be observed were boxing, horse racing and, significantly for present purposes, cricket.

Early Cricket and Violence

In his counter-critique to Stokvis, Dunning stresses that the standardization, national unification and internationalization which Stokvis argues are defining characteristics of modern sport presuppose a prior existence of at least a degree of non-violent cooperation among participants. Further, he describes the notion that many sports developed from non-violent pastimes as 'clearly adequate to a certain degree' (1992: 270). However Stokvis, in Dunning's opinion (1992: 270),

... overlooks the fact that aggressive feelings are liable to be aroused in any competitive activity and can lead to violent outcomes where norms demanding self-control over violent impulses have not been deeply internalized. In a word, it seems reasonable to suppose that the level of violence even in non-contact sports is likely to depend, ceteris paribus, on the level of civilization of the participants and of the societies to which they belong.

Dunning's phrase, 'it seems reasonable to suppose', is, of course, an implicit acknowledgement of a lack of empirical evidence at the time of writing. In the following section, I will attempt to provide that empirical evidence and, more particularly, I will argue that early forms of 'folk' cricket were characterized by relatively high levels of violence.

At this point it is important to identify the broad definition of violence used in this article. Commonly violence is defined in relatively narrow terms — Smith (1983: 7) for instance defines violence as 'physically assaultive behaviour that is designed to, and does, injure another person or persons physically' — and examined in the sociology of sport in situation-specific, sport-specific or behaviour-specific cases (Young, 2001). Yet, as Young has argued, such a decontextualized approach can be unhelpful. More usefully, we should locate such behaviour in the broader social formations, the figurations, or the networks of interdependency from which participants in sports-related violence derive, and which they themselves form. This paper attempts to examine violence 'in the round' and, as such, distinctions between player and spectator violence, between violence 'within' cricket and that associated 'with' the game, will not be drawn. As will be shown, such distinctions are historically variable, and the emphasis in this paper is upon the broader behavioural mores which characterize particular people and the societies they form.
Early evidence of the close association of cricket with violence and injury can be drawn from a variety of sources. Etymologically the *Oxford English Dictionary* links the first two recordings of the use of the phrase ‘cricket ball’ to injuries (‘Would my eyes have been beat out my head with a cricket ball’, ‘Sometimes an unlucky boy will drive his cricket ball full in my face’)
and Brasch (1972: 51) argues that ‘the original bat was a primitive club, used for attack and defence’ and hence smugglers in the South of England who carried cudgels were referred to as ‘the Sussex batsmen’. The 1815 poem, *The Kentish Cricketer*, by Philip Norman (cited in Frewin, 1964) recalls how, ‘I broke so many heads, arms, legs, bats, and wickets, de gam was nation soon oum. An t’other chapts then were all hospital men.’ Some players, notably Hambledon’s David Harris in the 18th century, were notorious partly for the injuries their bowling inflicted (Altham and Swanton, 1948: 49). The fact that newspaper coverage of severe injuries and deaths was patchy and largely passed with little comment, indicates the lack of newsworthiness of such incidents: ‘Mr Coulson . . . unfortunately had his eye entirely struck out of the socket by the ball’ (*The Times*, 11 August 1796); ‘Corderoy went in, and made seven runs; he again hit the ball, and ran, but on arriving at the wicket he fell down and expired’ (*The Times*, 22 October 1805).

*Curiosities of Cricket from the Earliest Records to the Present time, by an Old Cricketer* (1897), drew on published sources such as newspapers. In this text 29 player deaths, some relatively violent, some which might more simply be described as ‘natural causes’, are listed and, while only the date of recording rather than the date of the incident appear (see Table 1), this collection does shed light on the relative acceptability of such accidents in pre-20th-century cricket.

This is not to say, of course, that there was no criticism of cricket’s potential for injury. A leading article in *The Times* (5 August 1925) cited an 1802 encyclopaedia which argued that,

> . . . we strongly reprobate that of cricket, which is in all respects too violent, and, from the positions into which players must necessarily throw themselves, cannot fail to be productive of frequent injury to the body. Indeed we have witnessed several melancholy accidents . . . We trust the time is not very remote when this game, like pugilism, will be utterly exploded by all who possess a correct taste.

Not only was injury a danger inherent in playing the game, many have referred to the frequency of disorder which accompanied the ‘great matches’ of the 18th century (Altham and Swanton, 1948: 39; Yates, 1982: 2). Ford (1972: 131) argues that, largely because of the problems associated with gambling and heavy drinking, ‘when there was not some sort of commotion it seemed to be thought unusual’. The Riot Act was read at a match in Writtle, Essex, in 1726 and a women’s match between Charlton and Westdean & Chilgrove (Sussex) was abandoned in 1747 due to a pitch invasion (Brooke and Matthews, 1988: 133). Leicester’s victory over Coventry in 1788 led to ‘a scene of bloodshed . . . scarcely to be credited in a country so entirely distinguished for acts of humanity’ (*Coventry Mercury*, cited in Brookes, 1978: 69), and the *Birmingham Gazette* commented on the same incident, ‘At present we have not heard of any lives being lost, though the weapons used in the contest were the most dangerous and
### Table 1  Deaths listed in Curiosities of Cricket from the Earliest Records to the Present Time, by an Old Cricketer, 1897

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Where Recorded</th>
<th>Particulars of Incident</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Batsmen</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dennison</td>
<td>Scores and Biographies, v. xiv, p. 1042</td>
<td>from ball bowled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W. Hyde</td>
<td>September 1879</td>
<td>from ball bowled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G. Summers</td>
<td>Scores and Biographies, v. xi, p. 333</td>
<td>from ball bowled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T. Toms</td>
<td>Crickie, by C. Box, p. 336</td>
<td>from collision with umpire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. J.W. Sharpe</td>
<td>Sportsman, 31 May 1890</td>
<td>from heart disease</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W. Blonden</td>
<td>Scores and Biographies, v. xiv, p. 1036</td>
<td>while running</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bowlers</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H.P. Lighton</td>
<td>Cricket, by C. Box, p. 335</td>
<td>from ball hit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W. Beedham</td>
<td>Scores and Biographies, v. i, p. xvii</td>
<td>from over exertion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Walker</td>
<td>Scores and Biographies, v. i, p. 90</td>
<td>from over exertion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fielders</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thos Friend</td>
<td>Sportsman, 7 Aug. 1891</td>
<td>from being hit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tucker</td>
<td>Scores and Biographies, v. xiv, p. 1055</td>
<td>from collision with other fielder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anon.</td>
<td>Scores and Biographies, v. xiv, p. 1031</td>
<td>from falling on stump when putting down the wicket</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Bennett</td>
<td>Times, 1 Aug. 1896</td>
<td>from collision with other fielder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.E. Stow</td>
<td>Scores and Biographies, v. xiv, p. 1051</td>
<td>from collision with other fielder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goddard</td>
<td>Scores and Biographies, v. ix, p. 305</td>
<td>from falling on stump when putting down the wicket</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anon.</td>
<td>Graphic, 20 Feb. 1886</td>
<td>from falling over a cliff whilst following the ball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W. Beresford</td>
<td>Sportsman, 15 July 1891</td>
<td>from heart disease</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corderoy</td>
<td>Scores and Biographies, v. i, p. xvii</td>
<td>from over exertion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anon.</td>
<td>Cassells Saturday Journal, 13 June 1894</td>
<td>from snake bite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wicketkeeper</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Littlefield</td>
<td>Scores and Biographies, v. xiv, p. 1100</td>
<td>from heart disease</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Misc.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prince of Wales</td>
<td>Scores and Biographies, v. i, p. xvii</td>
<td>abscess caused by blow from a ball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R. Prestwich</td>
<td>Scores and Biographies, v. i, p. xvii</td>
<td>from ball thrown by wicketkeeper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W. Jupp</td>
<td>Scores and Biographies, v. xiii, p. xxviii</td>
<td>from blow on the head whilst attempting a catch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T. Billam</td>
<td>Scores and Biographies, v. xiv, p. 1037</td>
<td>from blow on the knee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Males</td>
<td>Scores and Biographies, v. i, p. xvii</td>
<td>from blow on the nose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H. Hounsome</td>
<td>Scores and Biographies, v. i, p. xvii</td>
<td>from blow on the side</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R. Howarth</td>
<td>Echo, 26 May 1891</td>
<td>from blow on the thigh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Umpires</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G.C. Cottrell</td>
<td>Cricket, by C. Box, p. 365</td>
<td>from ball hit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anon.</td>
<td>Scores and Biographies, v. xii, p. 91</td>
<td>from ball hit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
alarming' (cited in Lambert, 1992). Admission prices at some matches were raised to keep undesirables out, and individuals or groups (sometimes using dogs, whips, etc.) were employed to keep the peace. Indeed, Underdown (2000: 114) argues that 'recent violence' was the reason why the Corporation of London prohibited cricket matches at the Artillery Ground (prior to the establishment of Lord's, London's premier cricket venue) from 1780 onwards. (For a more detailed discussion of spectator disorder at 18th and 19th century cricket and the attempts made to control it, see Malcolm, 1999.)

Although Brookes (1978: 53) claims that members of the aristocracy exerted a calming influence at matches, disorder was evident at fixtures involving society's elite. In the 18th century, teachers at Westminster and Eton frequently attempted to prohibit boys from playing cricket (Brookes, 1978: 72), the recurrence of such attempts indicating that such bans were probably ineffectual. In 1792, a man fired shots over the heads of Westminster boys who were breaking local residents' windows and in 1796 the Eton headmaster flogged an entire team after his ban on the annual match against Westminster was ignored. A letter by Lord Byron depicts the aftermath of the 1805 Eton vs Harrow match when the players got drunk and went to the Haymarket Theatre 'where we kicked up a row . . . and we nearly came to a battle royal' (cited in Wynne Thomas, 1997: 39).

Such incidents were not solely the product of youthful excess. A game in 1731 between '11 of London' and '11 of Brompton' ended when 'several engaged on both sides for nearly half an hour, and most of the Brompton Gents were forced to fly for quarter, and some retired home with broken heads and black eyes, much to the satisfaction of the other side' (Wagham, 1906, cited in Brookes, 1978: 53). A dispute over a catch during a match between Kent and Surrey in 1762 led to the players coming 'to blows, several heads were broken and a challenge issued between “two persons of distinction”' (Altham and Swanton, 1948: 39; see also Scott, 1989: 6–7 on cricket related duels). Similarly, Ford cites a report from the 1776 London Chronicle when, at a Kent vs Essex match at Tilbury Fort, a dispute over a player's eligibility led to 'a battle'. One of the Kentish men,

... ran into the guard-house, and getting a gun from one of the invalids, fired and killed one of the opposite party. On seeing this, they all began running to the guard-house, and there being but 4 soldiers there, they took away the guns and fell to it, doing a great deal of mischief. An old invalid was run through the body with a bayonet, and a sergeant . . . was shot dead. (Ford, 1972: 45)

There is evidence that the legal authorities considered prohibiting cricket (Ford, 1972: 39) though the game escaped the sort of restrictions imposed on prize fighting and horseracing by Acts of Parliament in 1744 and 1750, or indeed anything approaching the more than 30 occasions on which football and its folk antecedents were prohibited by state and local authorities between 1314 and 1667 (Dunning and Sheard, 1979: 23). Some disputes were, however, referred to the emerging legal system. Wynne Thomas (1997: 27) records a legal case concerning Thomas Hatter in 1648 who died having been struck by a cricket bat. In 1693 Thomas Reynolds, Henry Gunter and Elenor Lansford sent a petition to the Queen seeking remission from their fines which had been imposed for riot and
battery, 'they being only spectators at a game of crickett' (cited in Scott, 1989: 177). Underdown (2000: 14) is probably correct to interpret this plea as 'implying that violence at matches was common enough to be excusable'. The reporting of four separate court cases in *The Leeds Mercury* (15 September 1775) is also revealing (cited in Scott, 1989: 4). In the first case, two men received death sentences for stealing sheep. In the second, one man received seven years transportation for grand larceny, and in the third a man was burnt on the hand and imprisoned for a year for bigamy. In the final case William Waterfall was found guilty of manslaughter for unlawfully killing George Twigg in a cricket match at Bakewell and was burnt in the hand, and imprisoned for nine months. Hence, the sentence for manslaughter in this case was less than for any of the other offences mentioned, again implying a relatively high degree of tolerance towards violence in sporting contexts.

Taken together, these incidents suggest that early forms of cricket were characterized by displays of relatively high degrees of violence and a relative lack of emotional control. Underdown's (2000: 122) interpretation that 18th-century cricket, 'at Hambledon or elsewhere, was still part of that vibrant, if violent, rural culture' seems to concur with Dunning's argument that behaviour will 'depend, ceteris paribus, on the level of civilization of the participants' (1992: 270). Moreover, these data highlight the potential dangers of assuming, as Stokvis does, that only contact sports are characterized by violence. Yet while the demonstration of this is significant in itself, in the next section I wish to advance the argument somewhat further. Stokvis is also mistaken in assuming that the folk antecedents of what are, today, relatively non-violent sports, displayed similar characteristics in the past. On the contrary, the following discussion of the early codification of cricket illustrates a conscious and explicit attempt on the part of 18th century aristocrats to reduce the extent of injury and violence within the game.

**The Early Codification of Cricket**

Elias (1986b: 26–40) argues that the 18th century in Britain saw an end of a 'cycle of violence' as, post-Civil War (1642–9), the state became more effective in curbing the violence characteristic of the previously ruling 'warrior nobility'. This, it is argued, also had significant implications for the sportization of many folk pastimes as the activities of the aristocracy became increasingly centred around the twin foci of government and social life; around Parliament in London and the aristocrats' country estates. Although incipient levels of organized cricket existed in rural areas, it was not until the aristocracy adopted the game that cricket began to resemble its modern form. Parliamentarization and sportization were, then, correlative processes which not only occurred at roughly the same time but also involved largely overlapping groups of people.

The 1727 Articles of Agreement between the Duke of Richmond and Mr Broderick (presumably a member of the gentry, that is, an untitled landowner) is the oldest document relating to cricket laws, and was largely an attempt to standardize and clarify the result of the game and hence also the outcome of bets.
placed on the particular match. However, the earliest version of what could be called a ‘full’ and systematic set of laws was published in *The New Universal Magazine* in 1752 and described as ‘The Game of Cricket, as settled by the cricket club, in 1744 and play’d at the ARTILLERY-GROUND LONDON’ (Rait Kerr, 1950: 13). Subsequently a set of rules, ‘As Settled by the several cricket clubs, particularly that of the Star and Garter in Pall Mall’ (cited in Rait Kerr, 1950: 91, emphasis added) was published in 1755 which, in all respects, agreed with the 1744 rules except for what counted at that stage as some modernization of the wording. These early rules were the products of gentlemen and aristocrats meeting at their London clubs. Like many other politically active noblemen of this time (e.g. the Duke of Newcastle, the Earl of Middlesex Charles Sackville, Thomas Sergison), the Duke of Richmond used cricket matches to entertain allies, attract new followers, and publicly confront political opponents. Sometimes such meetings resulted in violence. When Sergison’s supporters chanted insults at Sackville at a match between Slindon and Portslade in 1741, ‘“a bloody battle” ensued in which a lot of heads were broken’ (cited in Underdown, 2000: 61).

The early rules defined the standard size of the wicket and some of its markings, though no reference to boundaries or the care and maintenance of the wicket was included. The maximum and minimum sizes of the ball were included in these rules but no restrictions were made relating to the width or length of the bat. The number of balls per over and what constituted legal and illegal bowling deliveries were outlined, as was the scoring of fair and unfair ‘notches’ (a term not superseded by runs until about 1811). In addition to this the, at this time, nine methods of dismissal were described and individual sections were devoted to laws for the wicketkeeper and laws for the umpire. As already noted, seven of 37 rules in the earliest surviving football code made direct reference to violence and injury and, in comparison, there were significantly fewer references in the earliest cricket laws to potentially violent features of the game.

The 1755 set of rules is also significant, however, in that it marks the beginning of the Marylebone Cricket Club’s (MCC) influence over the game. The Star and Garter Club (sometimes known as the *Je ne sais quoi* (I don’t know what) Club), whose members were significant among the framers of the 1755 rules, had an overlapping membership with the White Conduit Club (to the extent that they were often mistaken for each other). In 1787 members of the White Conduit Club were central in forming the MCC (Birley, 1999: 47; Brookes, 1978: 67; Wynne Thomas, 1997: 34). The crossover between this emerging administrative structure for the game and the gentry and aristocratic, political elite, provide a further demonstration of the validity of Elias’s linkage of parliamentarization and sportization processes. The Prince of Wales, later King George IV, was the perpetual Chairman of the Star and Garter Club. Lord Frederick Beauclerk, the Earl of Winchilsea and the Duke of Dorset (Ambassador to France, later Steward of the Royal Household) were among the most prominent founding members of the MCC.
Gambling

By 1700 adverts for cricket matches appeared regularly in the local press and further indicate that the game was widely played by aristocrats and gentlemen but that gambling, and the associated ramifications of violence and disorder, had a central role in games. It is Ford’s (1972: 38) contention that gambling led to ‘constant disputes between the players . . . But more seriously still there was a strong possibility of conflict among the spectators’. In 1731, a match on Chelsea Common terminated in a free fight among the spectators due to a disputed wager. In delivering judgment on the case, a London magistrate observed:

It [cricket] is a manly game, and not bad in itself, but it is the ill-use that is made of it by betting above £10 that is bad and against the law, which ought to be constructed largely to prevent the great mischief of excessive gambling. (Harris, 1907, cited in Brookes, 1978: 76; Altham and Swanton, 1948: 39)

Ford also records how the Duke of Richmond and his team were assaulted by a mob in 1731 because they turned up late for the resumption of a match, so depriving their opponents of the opportunity to win the game, and how, in 1777, the crowd ‘prevented the Stowmarket gentlemen from going in’ in order to save their side from losing and hence their money (1972: 131-2).

As in boxing (Sheard, 1997), many early rules were introduced into cricket to exert some sort of control over gambling-related practices. Brookes (1978: 42) notes that such was the prevalence of and consequences that followed gambling that, in one sense, the 1727 Articles of Agreement drawn up between the Duke of Richmond and Mr Broderick were an attempt to avoid physical conflicts over deciding the outcome of the game. The issue was a long-standing one which perhaps reached its height with The London Club’s 1774 code of laws which contained an additional section with three clauses relating specifically to the resolution of gambling disputes. These were:

If the notches of one Player are laid against another, the Bet depends on both Innings, unless otherwise specified.

If one party beats the other in one Innings, the Notches in the first Innings shall determine the Bet.

But if the other Party goes in a Second Time, then the Bet must be determined by the numbers on the score. (Rait Kerr, 1950: 19)

The potential for disorder and violence stemming from gambling at matches was also identified by a later correspondent in The Times (14 June 1887), who wrote of cricket at Lord’s in the early days, ‘playing for heavy stakes naturally led to much betting and certain quarrels’.

Dismissal of the Batter

Yet perhaps more significantly in terms of the standardization of the game, its central core, namely the manner in which batters can be dismissed, was significantly influenced by attempts to limit the scope for injury to participants. Nine
ways of dismissing a batter were outlined in the 1755 code: caught; bowled; stumped; run out; hit wicket; handled ball; hit ball twice; obstruction of a fielder; and ‘retirements’ (such as timed out, etc.). The other major alteration to the game in this respect, leg before wicket (LBW) laws, was introduced in 1774. As discussed below, the implementation and modification of four of the original nine — obstruction, hit ball twice, run out and stumped — have occurred, not necessarily because of, but certainly with some reference to, issues of violence and injury. That is to say, in what is perhaps the most fundamental part of the game, there is a high level of interdependency between the standardization of the game and the control of violence and injury.

One of the most obvious consequences of restrictions relating to obstruction was the reduction in contact between the players on each side. This worked in two ways. One of the laws in the 1755 code refers specifically to the batters obstructing the fielding side:

When the Ball is hit up, either of the Strikers may hinder the Catch in his running Ground; or if it is hit directly across the Wickets, the other Player may place his Body any where within the Swing of the Bat, so as to hinder the Bowler from catching it; but he must neither strike at it, nor touch it with his Hands. (Cited in Rait Kerr, 1950: 95)

Thus the batter would only be dismissed if, in attempting to obstruct a fielder, he/she left his/her ‘running ground’; defined, presumably, as the area between the two wickets. Within the running ground, however, either batter could prevent the catch so long as they did not use their bat or hand, a practice called ‘charging down’. In 1787 the wording of this law was changed such that any contact with a fielder attempting a catch would result in dismissal and again, in 1884, this was revised such that the batter would be out if the umpires judged the fielder to have been intentionally obstructed at any time during the game. Green (1988: 29) has interpreted this practice in the following way: ‘this terrifying weapon in the batter’s armoury . . . sheds a lurid light on the original spirit in which the game was played . . . the clear implication being that up to now the conventional tactic had been to wallop the fielders with the bat’. Restrictions were, however, also imposed on the fielding side. A second law in the 1755 code made provision for the umpire to penalize the fielding side for obstructing a batter: ‘They [the umpires] are the sole Judges of all Hindrances; crossing the Players in running, and standing unfair to strike, and in case of Hindrance may order a Notch to be Scor’d’ (Rait Kerr, 1950: 98). A version of this law remains today.

Similarly, hitting the ball twice appears to have been prohibited partly in order to prevent injury. Under ‘The Laws for the Strikers’ in the 1755 code, ‘If a Ball is nipp’d up, and he strikes it again wilfully, before it came to the Wicket, it’s out’ (Rait Kerr, 1950: 94). One of the consequences of this law was to contribute towards the spatial separation of the fielding and batting sides, for in matches where the batter was allowed to hit the ball twice, at which point fielders might legitimately try to gain control of the ball, the potential danger to participants would have been considerable. An example of this danger is illustrated by an inquest held at West Hoathly in Sussex in 1624. The inquest heard how Edward Tye hit the ball into the air and attempted to hit it a second time before it landed. Meanwhile Jasper Vinall attempted to catch the ball. Tye either
did not see Vinall or did not care and hit him on the front of the head with his bat. Vinall died two weeks later as a consequence of this injury. The inquest passed the verdict that Vinall had died, not feloniously, but by misadventure and through his own carelessness (Scott, 1989: 2; Wynne Thomas, 1997: 27). Nowadays the batter is prohibited from hitting the ball twice, except to protect his/her wicket.

Rule changes concerning attempted run outs and stumpings were introduced with more explicit reference to the reduction of injury. Contained within the specifications for the layout of the pitch in the 1744 code is a particular reference to the popping crease which, Rait Kerr states, was a relatively new development at this time. To complete a run, a batter had to get from his/her batting position in front of the wicket to the bowler’s end before the fielding side could return the ball to the bowler or wicketkeeper while his/her batting partner ran to the opposite end. By 1744, to be ‘in’ (i.e. to have successfully completed the run), the batter had to cross the popping crease before the fielding side could ‘break’ the wicket with the ball. Prior to this it appears that a run out was awarded if the fielding side put the ball into a ‘popping hole’ before the batter could fill that hole with his/her bat (Rait Kerr, 1950: 67). Subsequently the rule was changed so that a run was deemed to have been completed if the batter touched a stick held by the umpire (see below) before the fielding side could touch the stick with the ball. Altham and Swanton (1948: 29) record a further variation, noting that William Goldwin’s poem *In Certamen Pilae* (c.1700) implies that the batter completed his/her run by touching the umpire’s body. These various rules/customs clearly had differing consequences for the safety of the fielders, batters and umpires, and Rait Kerr argues that the 1744 development — whereby the popping hole or stick was replaced by the bat crossing the popping crease and the ball breaking the wicket — was linked to the desire to reduce injury through the spatial separation of the batter and fielder. Rait Kerr (1950: 67) cites Nyren’s *The Young Cricketers’ Tutor* (1833) in which it is stated that, when the popping hole was used, ‘Many severe injuries of the hands was the consequence of this regulation; the present mode of touching the popping crease was therefore substituted for it’ (see also Harris, 1975: 41).

While the law relating to hitting the ball twice appears to have been influenced by a concern to limit the movement of the batter which could potentially lead to the injury of opponents, laws relating to stumpings appear to have been influenced by attempts to protect the wicketkeeper from his/herself. The batter was deemed stumped out if, as in the case of a run out, the wicket was put down when both feet were outside the popping crease. However, the wicketkeeper was restricted to standing a ‘reasonable Distance behind the Wicket, and shall not, by any Noise, incommode the Striker; and if his Hands, Knees, Foot, or Head, be over, or before the Wicket, though the Ball hit it, it shall not be out’ (Rait Kerr, 1950: 96–7). When preparing to strike, the batter would normally stand behind the popping crease which, in 1744, was specified at 46 inches from the wicket (increased to 48 inches in 1821). Until 1835, when a limit of 38 inches was introduced, there was no restriction on the length of the bat which could be used. The prohibition on wicketkeepers being ‘over or before’ the wicket suggests that such a tactic was used and, given the above dimensions, it would appear that this
would have been somewhat hazardous. Altham and Swanton’s (1948: 53) interpretation of this is that, ‘there must, it seems, have been some lusty “obstruction” between batsmen, wicket-keeper and the bowler in the old days’. Indeed the stumping law has since been refined further such that the batter will be deemed ‘in’ with just part of the bat, rather than part of a foot, behind the popping crease. Such a change serves to further separate, and therefore reduce the potential for contact between, batter and wicketkeeper. This law may, of course, relate back to the previous practice which we saw in relation to run outs whereby the batter was dismissed if the ball was placed in the ‘popping hole’ before the batter could fill it with his/her bat.

The Playing Area

In addition to the actual structure of play, the physical environment in which the game was played was highly significant in terms of the potential for injury to players. Consequently, this issue was also addressed by a number of the early law changes. Initially there was little preparation of the playing area and no formal drawing of boundaries. The two teams turned up and the players pitched the wicket ‘to embrace such hillocks as favoured their particular methods’ (The Times, 4 September 1908). John Bowyer recalling playing for All-England at Lord’s in 1810, noted that, ‘it was no joke to play without pads and gloves on a bumpy down . . . The rough ground made the long hops so difficult. First you had to mind the shooter and if the ball pitched short and rose she would be on your knuckles’ (cited in Wymer, 1949: 162–3). By 1788, however, with the mutual consent of the captains, the laws allowed for the rolling, covering, watering, mowing and beating of the pitch during the match. The 1823 edition of the laws saw the first moves towards standardization of pitch selection with this responsibility transferring from the respective captains to the umpires. Also introduced in 1823 was the provision for moving the pitch or introducing a fresh wicket at any time during the match if the old one became unsuitable. Prior to 1900 this appears to have been a fairly usual practice (Rosenwater, 1970: 131). By 1849 the rolling or sweeping of the wicket between innings would be granted by the umpires if requested by either side within a minute of the end of an innings.

To improve the quality of the pitch surface further, covers protecting the wicket from the weather were introduced. Although from 1788 the laws allowed for coverings to be used with the mutual consent of the captains, it was not until 1872 that pitch covers were used on a regular basis at Lord’s, England’s premier ground (Rosenwater, 1970). Even as late as 1820, batters at Lord’s, it was thought, were deliberately getting themselves dismissed due to a fear of injury (Altham and Swanton, 1948: 59–60). Sandiford highlights the efforts of David Jordan in the 1860s and Percy Pearce from 1874 onwards as making major contributions to developing the Lord’s playing surface into ‘the envy of every county club’ (1994: 136) and Pearce’s writings on the subject helped to spread what became known as the new craft of ‘groundsmanship’. By 1900, all the major British cricket grounds had been relaid and levelled. The initial impetus for this, Sandiford argues (1994: 137), ‘was largely the offspring’ of the death of George Summers, a batter who was hit by a ball from a fast bowler at Lord’s in 1870.
However, there is evidence that the poor surface at Lord's had led Surrey and professional touring teams to refuse to play at Lord's from as early as 1859.

Not only were wickets relatively under-prepared in the late 18th and early 19th centuries but, similarly, the playing and spectating areas were not yet at a stage where either was clearly defined. As Dunning and Sheard note (1979: 33–4), one of the differences between folk games and modern sports is the move towards a clear distinction between playing and spectating roles. Central to this distinction is the introduction of a physical barrier — in cricket the boundary, in boxing the ring — which designates the spatial areas which are exclusive to participants. In early games, spectators watched from wherever they could. The problems associated with the informal nature of such an arrangement are highlighted in the first ever reference to cricket to appear in *The Times* newspaper. The report featured the forerunner of the MCC, The White Conduit Club:

> It is recommended to the Lordling Cricketters who amuse themselves in White Conduit Fields, to procure an Act of Parliament for inclosing their play ground, which will not only prevent their being incommoded, but protect themselves from a repetition of the severe rebuke which they justly merit, and received on Saturday evening from some spirited citizens whom they insulted and attempted *vi et armis* to drive from the foot path, pretending it was within their bounds. (22 June 1785)

*Vi et armis* is a legal term for trespass accompanied by force and violence — literally meaning by force and arms — and it seems likely that this sort of incident provided part of the motivation which led Thomas Lord, acting on the advice of the Earl of Winchilsea, to establish Lord's cricket ground in Dorset Fields, London, in 1787.

The first recorded use of boundaries was in 1731 and the first provision of a 'stand' for spectators was in 1772 (Brooke and Matthews, 1988: 128–9). Although the standardization of the separation of players and spectators took place in a slow and uneven manner, where relatively large numbers of spectators were attracted regularly to matches some sort of provision became (perhaps financially) necessary. On 22 June 1787 *The Times* reported on a match at The New Cricket Ground, London: 'Upwards of 2000 persons were within the ground, who conducted themselves with the utmost decorum; the utility of the batten fence was evident, as it kept out all improper spectators.' Similarly, in 1791 'divers standings were erected' to cater for some 10,000 spectators at the MCC against Nottingham match (*The Times*, 6 September 1791).

But where boundaries were informal or non-standardized, violence and disorder could (was perhaps more likely to) occur. The Eton–Harrow match became an annual fixture at Lord's in 1822 but boundaries were not introduced until 1864. Consequently, the early matches were felt to be 'very haphazard affairs... and a fieldsman pursuing a ball hit into a hostile patch of the crowd would have to play a frenzied game of hide-and-seek before recovering it' (*The Times* 12 July 1929). Similarly former England Captain and MCC President, Pelham Warner (1946: 54–5) recalled how he heard that at Lord's in 1866 a spectator fielded the ball and returned it to the wicket. The batter, presuming that a boundary would be signalled, stopped running and was run out by the fielding side. 'So great was the uproar and confusion' that play was abandoned for the day. Moreover, where
players and spectators were not clearly separated, spectators were liable to incur the same sort of injuries as participants, though often these were not viewed as particularly serious. When a ball hit a spectator in the eye, a writer in the *Hampshire Chronicle* (September 1786) recorded, 'but he was only a spectator and therefore [his absence] did not mar the sport' (cited in Ford, 1972: 130). The regularity of incidents related to the absence of boundaries can again be gauged from the aforementioned *Curiosities* which, in addition to player fatalities, lists the deaths of seven spectators, all but one of whom were hit by the ball (the other having been hit with a bat). As Sandiford contends, the introduction of boundaries was both 'in the interest of spectator safety . . . (and) the maximization of space' (1994: 135). It was not, however, until the publication of the 1884 code of rules that the first official mention of boundaries in the laws of the game appeared (Rait Kerr, 1950: 81).

*The Umpires*

As has already been shown with regard to the condition of the wicket, central to the early law codes of cricket was the standardization of dispute settlement by investing authority in a third party; namely, the umpires. In the 1755 laws, provision was made to allow an injured batter to retire and to resume his/her innings at a later time (a further indication that such injuries were relatively common), but not to be replaced or substituted. Presumably due to the suspicion that such a regulation would be flouted (and the implications this would have for bets placed on matches), an additional law decreed that the umpires were to be judges 'of all frivolous Delays; of all Hurt, whether real or pretended' (Rait Kerr, 1950: 97–8). Further to this, the 1727 Articles included provision for, and sanction against, the questioning of the umpires’ decisions: 'If any of the gamesters shall speak or give their opinion on any point of the game, they are to be turned out and voided in the Match; this not to extend to the Duke of Richmond and Mr Broderick' (cited in Harris, 1975: 39). It is interesting that, presumably on account of their social status, the Duke of Richmond and Mr Broderick stood outside the umpires' authority. This refusal to devolve *all* power to a third party illustrates the subtle and gradual way in which folk games, with their in-built and taken-for-granted inequalities, were formalized and developed into modern sports based, as they are, on principles of equality of opportunity. Furthermore, through their self-exemption, the Duke of Richmond and Mr Broderick failed to provide themselves with a method of dispute resolution other than by means of arguing in situ and, no doubt, this practice would have contributed to the prevalence of cricket-related duels briefly discussed above.

Given the relatively unruly character of cricket in its earliest stages and the imprecise authority of the umpires in this context, it is unlikely that, at this time, the people filling the role of arbiter had a particularly easy task. *Curiosities* cites the case, recorded in 1893, of an umpire being ducked in a pond by some disgruntled players, but it is clear that well before this time players were concerned to have an umpire who could effectively exercise authority. In 1818 a condition of playing the England vs Nottingham match was that both umpires be 'gentlemen', and Ford notes that it was not unusual for newspaper reports to note the
umpires’ good standing as credentials (1972: 105). Professional umpires were used in the 1830s and, perhaps somewhat belatedly, a law was introduced prohibiting umpires from gambling on matches in 1835.

Furthermore, it seems that in the early game it was customary for the umpires to carry a stick or bat. The 1727 Articles indicate that the stick was used for recording the number of ‘notches’ scored. As already noted, a common practice c.1700 was for a batter to complete his/her run by touching a stick held by the umpire (18th-century art work shows one of the umpires standing in a ‘position of imminent personal peril’ very close to the batter: Altham and Swanton, 1948: 29). Scott (1989: 147) cites the 1853 Lane vs Barnes case in which, following an argument over the batter’s dismissal, Barnes assaulted Lane with a bat taken from the umpire. Even as late as 1975, Harris (1975: 39) noted that, ‘A few years ago, a preparatory school headmaster stated in a letter to The Times that when his boys were called upon to umpire, they felt it necessary to carry a bat as a symbol of office’. It is unclear exactly how and why the practice of the umpire carrying a stick or bat developed but it may be either that the umpire’s stick was introduced to help with accurate scoring or — and this necessarily remains speculative — that the bat, given its etymological derivation from a weapon used in attack and defence, was used by umpires as a means of defence and to depict authority. From the documentary evidence currently available it is impossible to give primacy to either one of these explanations.

Other Customs

A final point worthy of note in this connection is that other cricketing practices and customs were reformed in line with the general process of reducing physical contact between players. For instance, one local variant of the rules specified that runs could not be scored if the ball became lodged in the batter’s clothing. However, if the ball had not yet touched the ground, fielders were entitled to try and catch the lodged ball and the batter was entitled to ‘fend them off’ with the bat to protect their innings (McLean, 1987, cited in Minto, 1994: 24). Nowadays an umpire would declare ‘dead ball’ and halt play if/when the ball became lodged in a batter’s clothing, thus reducing the potential for contact and injury. Similarly Brodribb records how, until 1848, it was customary for fielders to scramble to get the ball at the end of the game, perhaps to keep as a souvenir or perhaps because of the ball’s monetary value. Brodribb notes that the practice was abolished after an incident in a match between England and Kent in that year but does not give any details. However, it may have been similar to the incident which occurred 30 years later when George Pinder broke his collar bone during a scramble for the ball at the end of the 1878 Yorkshire vs Nottinghamshire match at Sheffield (Brodribb, 1953: 177).

Summary and Conclusion

In conclusion, we can see that early cricket was characterized by high levels of violence, physical contact and injury relative to today, even though nowadays the hard ball is delivered at speeds which would have been impossible during the era
of underarm bowling (pre-1835). Analysis of the early codification of cricket, moreover, illustrates that there were conscious and explicit attempts to reduce these kinds of incidents. The later introduction of protective clothing for players (pads and gloves protecting the legs and hands were introduced in the 1830s and 1840s: Sandiford, 1994: ch. 7) is a further illustration of this trend. Thus, rather than giving primacy, as Stokvis suggests, to researching the standardization and national diffusion of sport, it is more adequate to view these processes and the control of violence as highly interdependent. We can see, furthermore, that the previously described characteristics of the developmental processes of relatively violent sports such as football, rugby and boxing have parallels in, and similarities with, this non-contact sport (although it is important to note that, perhaps as a result of comparisons being made between the sports, violence and injury in cricket did not really attain issue status in the early development of the game).

It is perhaps difficult to assess the extent to which this case study is generalizable to other non-contact sports such as golf or tennis but it certainly seems reasonable to suppose that the playing of other non-contact sports in the 18th and 19th centuries would have been characterized by the same relatively violent tenor which characterized cricket and, indeed, English society more generally in those times. Whether or not rules developed or were introduced in these sports which served, or were intended to serve, to reduce violence and injury is, ultimately, a question which cannot be answered without detailed theory-guided empirical research. However, as this present case study shows, it may be problematic to assume a priori that the non-contact sports of today were similarly non-contact in the past. Indeed the reduction in physical contact generally between people in societies of Western Europe since the Middle Ages is something which is outlined in Elias's *The Civilizing Process* (2000; see e.g. the sections on attitudes towards natural functions and behaviour in the bedroom).

As Dunning and Mennell (1998) point out, the tendency to think in terms of simple unilinear trajectories regarding the observable decline of violence and injury has been a common mistake made by Elias's critics and it is important that this paper does not contribute to the same sort of misunderstandings. Dunning (1992: 271) in his counter-critique to Stokvis notes that a central tactic in cricket 'involves deliberately aiming the ball directly at the heads of opposing players, ostensibly in the hope of intimidating them and increasing the chances that they will play a false stroke'. Dunning correctly cites this form of bowling with regard to violence and injury in cricket but the timing of the introduction of this tactical innovation is problematic. There is no evidence that short-pitched fast bowling, where the bowler aims to bounce the ball high enough to strike the batter's head, appeared in the folk antecedents of cricket to which Stokvis refers. Prior to the 19th century, underarm bowling — first rolled along the ground to take advantage of the uneven pitch and latterly to enable the ball to deviate due to spin imparted on the ball — was the norm (Terry, 2000). Round arm and over arm bowling became legal in 1835 and 1864 respectively and their introduction was marked by some considerable debate; at this stage of cricket's development the control of violence *did* attain issue status within the game. This development, the Bodyline controversy of 1932–3,\(^4\) and the West Indian dominance of world cricket in the 1970s and 1980s largely based on a reliance on fast bowling
(Malcolm, 2001), pose rather different questions for figurational sociologists than are addressed in this article. These developments seem, once more, to point directly to a link between issues of violence and the international diffusion of cricket; again, counter to Stokvis, it would be difficult to explain one process without reference to the other. While the folk antecedents of cricket may have been relatively violent and while early law changes may have served the function of reducing the number of opportunities for physical contact, injuries and violence, subsequent developments in fast bowling have included tactical and law changes which may well have served to increase the potential injury and violence in the game. In Elias’s terms these developments appear to have been the product of a ‘de-civilizing process’. Recent work by Dunning and Mennell (1998) has illustrated that Elias’s theory of civilizing processes can also be a useful framework through which to analyse ‘de-civilizing’ trends. However, the complexities of such developments in cricket, and the changing balance in the game between them and ‘civilizing’ trends, have meant that such issues could not be examined here in the empirical detail needed. These processes will need to be examined in future as they seem highly relevant to Elias’s theory of civilizing processes and the development of sport generally in the 20th and 21st centuries.

Notes

1. See e.g. the work on globalization (e.g. Maguire, 1999), on drugs, health, pain and injury (Malcolm et al., 2001; Roderick, 1998; Roderick et al., 2000; Waddington, 1995, 2000) on race (Malcolm, 1997, 2001), commercialization (Malcolm, 2000; Malcolm et al., 2000) and gender (Colwell, 1999; Maguire and Mansfield, 1998; Smith, 2000). In his work on birdwatching, Sheard (1999) emphasizes the sport-like characteristics of certain forms of this relatively pacified activity, notably ‘twitching’, and discusses the way in which this activity might be seen in terms of a routinized and ‘civilized’ form of hunting.

2. Though, as one of the anonymous reviewers of this article pointed out, regulations were introduced into horse racing at an early stage to prevent crossing and jostling.

3. Stokvis’s mistake is, of course, very understandable as this is part of the image of the game which has been portrayed by the English and the ruling cricket/political groups in particular. It should, however, be noted that ‘manliness’ has also been seen as a very important characteristic advanced through the playing of cricket. See Williams (1999) and Malcolm (1999) for a discussion of cricket and Englishness.


5. Unless otherwise stated, newspaper reports from The Times are taken from Williams (1985).

6. According to Rice (1993), the author was Alfred Lawton Ford, compiler of the Index to Scores and Biographies, volumes 1 to 13.

7. 18th-century newspapers often referred to games involving gentlemen and/or aristocrats as ‘great’ or ‘grand’ matches.

8. The deaths of neither George Twigg nor Thomas Hatter are recorded in Curiosities, indicating that the source should not be viewed as comprehensive.

9. Cricket, like many sports first codified in England, has what came to be called ‘laws’ rather than rules. This is one of the facts which led Elias to draw connections between the processes of parliamentarianization and sportization noted above. The use of such a term is also indicative of the social significance and prestige that sport acquired in England even at that early stage.

10. It should be noted that the early laws of cricket often referred specifically to batsmen despite the apparent regular female participation in the sport. For reasons of accuracy such language will be repeated here although, whenever possible (i.e. when not citing from the laws) gender-neutral language will be employed.
11. ‘Charging down’ had also been included in the 1727 Articles of Agreement between the Duke of Richmond and Mr Broderick but it is interesting to note that Yates (1982: 7) claims that such a practice was common in the USA and the colonies until at least 1846.

12. Interestingly, Underdown (2000) makes a number of references to the accounts of the Hambledon Cricket Club which demonstrate that, throughout the 18th century, individuals were paid for tending their playing area at Broadhalfpenny Down.

13. By 1774 the laws no longer explicitly prohibited substitutes from entering the field of play and Rait Kerr argues that it is probable that they were allowed with the consent of the opposition's captain (1950: 70). In 1798, a further liberalizing of the laws relating to substitutes occurred but it remains the case today that substitutes may not bowl or bat, and it remains customary that the selected substitute does not play in a specialist fielding position such as wicketkeeper.

14. Bodyline was a tactical innovation most commonly associated with the England cricket captain, Douglas Jardine, and implemented primarily to curb the scoring of Australia's star batter, Don Bradman. The tactic involved the systematic use of short-pitched fast bowling designed to restrict scoring opportunities and intimidate the batter by making the ball rise sharply towards the batter's upper body and head.

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Cricket: Civilizing and Decivilizing Processes in the Imperial Game

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Cricket

Civilizing and de-civilizing processes in the imperial game

Dominic Malcolm

In Jamaica on 29 January 1998, an international (test) match between England and the West Indies was abandoned on account of the state of the wicket (playing surface). Although on Christmas Day 1997 a limited-overs match between India and Sri Lanka had been abandoned for similar reasons, such an incident is unique in over 120 years of test cricket. Specifically, it was the unevenness of the ball’s bounce off the wicket that was deemed to be hazardous to the players (slightly harder than a baseball, a cricket ball weighs between 155.9 and 163 grams and, at international level, is usually delivered at speeds of up to 90 miles per hour). In the 56 minutes of play prior to abandonment, England’s physiotherapist was called to the field to treat injured players on six separate occasions (equating to approximately once every 12 balls bowled). It was this that led the umpires, in consultation with the team captains and the match referee, to decide that the wicket was too dangerous to play on.

British tabloid newspapers used headlines such as ‘Son of a Pitch’ (The Sun, 30 January 1998) and ‘Killing Field’ (The Daily Mirror, 30 January 1998) to describe the events. Match referee, Barry Jarman, was ‘totally horrified’ and thought that ‘someone would have definitely been badly hurt if play had continued’. Umpire, Jack Bucknor, was ‘worried the batsman could be hit every ball’, and England physiotherapist Wayne Morton claimed, ‘It was like war out there’ (The Sun 30 January 1998). The Times editorial (30 January 1998) argued that, ‘Somebody could have been killed. Test cricket is not a game for fainthearts. But neither should it be turned into an intimidatory dice of death.’ Others, though fewer in number, argued that the game should have continued. Former England batsman Brian Close1 argued, ‘I should have imagined that in my day they would have gone on with it and made the best out of it’ (The Guardian, 31 January 1998). These events provided part of the stimulus for researching this chapter. Pace Close, how have violence and injury, and perceptions of what levels of violence and injury are deemed tolerable in cricket, changed over the years? More particularly, what light does evidence from the sport of cricket shed on Elias’s theory of civilizing processes and vice versa?

My previous work in this area has focused on spectator disorder in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century cricket (Malcolm 1999) and the relatively violent tenor of early (pre-1850s) cricket (Malcolm 2002). Through an examination of the
development of the game's structural features (laws, customs, physical environment), I have argued that processes relating to the standardization, codification and national diffusion of cricket, like comparable processes in relatively violent sports such as football, rugby and boxing, represent something of a civilizing spurt. Yet, with this developmental pattern established, one is left with something of a conundrum. As the Jamaican test illustrates, a central tactic in modern cricket 'involves deliberately aiming the ball directly at the heads of opposing players, ostensibly in the hope of intimidating them and increasing the chances that they will play a false stroke' (Dunning 1992: 271). Yet this tactic is a relatively recent innovation. Roundarm and overarm bowling (essential in order to make the ball rise to head height) only became legal in 1835 and 1864 respectively and their introduction was marked by some considerable debate. In addition to these developments, the 'Bodyline' controversy of 1932–3, and the West Indian dominance of world cricket in the 1970s and 1980s, largely based on a reliance on short-pitched fast bowling (Malcolm 2001), appear to be developments which, in Elias's terms, represent 'de-civilizing spurts'.

One way in which we can account for these apparently de-civilizing changes is in terms of a shift in the balance between affective and instrumental forms of violence. In 'Social Bonding and Violence in Sport', Dunning (1986) attempted to address the idea that modern sports are becoming increasingly violent and that, correlativelly, this represents a partial refutation of Elias's theory of civilizing processes. Dunning developed a typology of violence and demonstrated a historical shift in the balance between affective and instrumental forms of violence. In attempting to account for this pattern, Dunning argued that the external and internal pressures which contribute to civilizing processes have, in turn, increased people's propensity to use foresight, planning and rational strategies in everyday life. Hence, the 'dampening of Angriffslust' that has led to a reduction in 'affective' violence has been matched by changes to personality structures that have resulted in the development of an ability to use violence in a more rational or instrumental way. Modern sports therefore (and Dunning uses rugby, soccer and boxing as examples), may not be characterized by an increase in violence per se but, rather, by a relative increase in forms of violence that serve as a means for achieving certain goals, and a relative decrease in forms of violence based on high degrees of emotional spontaneity. If, in modern sports, 'the balance between rational and affective violence has changed in favour of the former' (Dunning 1986: 231) we can locate the cited cricketing developments in terms of this more general shift.

It is, however, important to avoid viewing the shifts in this balance as 'evolutionary' or 'unilinear'. Empirical evidence suggests that such trends have occurred in cricket, but this is not to say that we can dismiss potentially de-civilizing spurts as therefore unproblematic. A similar point is made by Dunning et al. (1992) who note that Elias sometimes wrote as though, once a monopoly over violence is established, violence becomes more or less eliminated from society at large, except during times of war or revolutionary upheaval. While such an approach is useful in some contexts, they suggest that when working on a smaller time-scale – as indeed most present-day figurational sociologists inevitably are – 'we must seek to
identify the sources and forms of continuing violence within societies which have a relatively stable and effective state monopoly of physical force' (Dunning et al. 1992: 10). To this end, they argue, first, that the manner in which the state monopoly over violence is used is a significant influence on the overall pattern of violence in a society; second, that certain sections of a society are more protected by this monopoly, while others are 'less subject to the sorts of civilizing constraints' (1992: 12) that most readily affect members of the higher classes; and third, they contend that:

while Elias is correct to emphasize the close interconnection between functional democratization – processes of equalization that result from equalizing shifts in the balance of power – and civilizing processes, it should also be noted that functional democratization, since it involves a change in established patterns of dominance and subordination between groups, may also lead to a heightening of tensions and to increasing violence. Thus functional democratization, as it relates, for example, to the relationships between classes, between men and women and between different racial or ethnic groups may actually be associated with increases in violence, at least in the short term.

This passage forms the basis of the theoretical framework employed and examined here. More specifically, while the notion of a shift in modern cricket from affective towards instrumental forms of violence has, I argue, some validity, the notion of functional democratization gives greater analytical purchase in terms of explaining some of the shorter term increases in violence evident in the game. Thus, though the game is markedly less violent than it tended to be two or three hundred years ago, short term de-civilizing spurts can be theorized as follows: the development of roundarm and overarm bowling developed in the context of professional–amateur, upper class–lower class relations; the bodyline controversy is most understandable in the context of the shifting international balance of power between Australia and England; and the West Indian dominance of world cricket in the 1970s and 1980s can most adequately be viewed in terms of the development of neo-colonial 'racial'/ethnic relations. It is to these developments, and the relationship between violence and functional democratization, which I now turn.

The development of overarm bowling

Elias and Dunning, in their analysis of the dynamics of sports groups, contend that the whole development of most sport-games...centred to a very large extent on the resolution of this problem: how was it possible to maintain within the set game-pattern a high level of group tension and the group dynamics resulting from it, while at the same time keeping recurrent physical injury to the players at the lowest possible level.

(1966: 395)
As the following account illustrates, with regard to cricket, this problem was most apparent in relation to attempts to ensure that the contest between batting and bowling remained relatively even.

Although the initial codification of cricket took place in the early to mid-eighteenth century, Sandiford (1994: 128) argues that the game cannot be said to have assumed its 'modern character' until 1864, the year in which overarm bowling was legitimized. In the early years of cricket the bowling of the ball along the ground in a fashion similar to modern bowls, was replaced by 'lob bowling'. The influential cricket historian, the Revd Pycroft, writing in 1851, recalled that under these relatively genteel conditions:

> the principle [sic] injuries sustained [by batters] are in the fingers ... The old players in the days of underhand bowling played without gloves; and Bennett assured me he had seen Tom Walker [see below - DM], before advancing civilisation made man tender, rub his bleeding fingers in the dust ... [Now, however], with a good pair of cricket gloves no man need think much about his fingers; albeit flesh will blacken, joints will grow too large for the accustomed ring, and finger nails will come off.

(cited in Rae 2001: 86)

During the nineteenth century, however, bowling was revolutionized. Largely resulting from the innovation of leading batsmen who ran towards the high tossed lob in order to hit the ball before it bounced (also termed 'giving her the rush' (Altham and Swanton 1948: 65)), batting grew to dominate bowling and games became increasingly protracted. Bowlers responded accordingly. Tom Walker, playing for the Hambledon club circa 1788, 'made an attempt to introduce the new “throwing” style' but was censored by senior members of the club (Altham and Swanton 1948: 65–6). But it was John Willes in particular who was in the vanguard of these developments. The former Surrey player, W.W. Read (1898: 86–7) cites a report of a match held on 20 July 1807 which appeared in the Morning Herald, in which it is claimed that, the 'straight-armed bowling, introduced by J. Willes Esq. was generally practised in the game'. But, as the Morning Herald continues:

> Mr Willes and his bowling were frequently barred in making a match and he played sometimes amid much uproar and confusion. Still he would persevere until 'the ring' closed in on the players, the stumps were pulled up and all came to a standstill.

(Pycroft cited in Birley 1999: 64)\(^4\)

The issue of Willes's bowling came to a head in 1822 when, opening the bowling for Kent against the Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC), Willes was no-balled,\(^5\) 'threw down the ball in disgust, jumped on his horse, and rode away out of Lord's and out of cricket history' (Altham and Swanton 1948: 66). Though admittedly speculative, Birley (1999: 64) claims that it was Lord Fredrick Beauclerk (perhaps the most influential aristocrat cricketer of his day and subsequently MCC president) who had persuaded the umpire to no-ball Willes.
The response to Willes's actions can only be understood within the broader structure of power relations in eighteenth-century cricket. The MCC made the laws (rules) and was largely content with the dominance of batting; their membership, consisting of predominantly upper-class amateur batsmen, stood to gain most from this trend. It was the professionals, often the employees of MCC members, who bowled and whose livelihoods depended on results. Thus, despite their relative lack of formal influence, professional bowlers had much to gain from pursuing new bowling techniques. They were, effectively, seeking to improve their market position in the face of harsher times (improved batting techniques, better prepared, more even, pitches). Two Sussex professionals, William Lillywhite and James Broadbridge, became the leading proponents of the new style: 'Where Willes could be dismissed as an eccentric amateur, here were two professionals clearly determined to take bowling on to a new level of proficiency' (Rae 2001: 100).

So successful was Lillywhite that he became known as the 'Non pareil' and Sussex became the leading side in the country. That various players deployed roundarm bowling, despite its formal illegality, demonstrates the relatively limited authority of the MCC at this time. Whilst defeated opponents objected to their methods, Lillywhite and Broadbridge had an influential ally in G.T. Knight, a leading MCC member who was himself a roundarm bowler. After trying, and failing, to invoke a change in the laws, Knight persuaded the MCC president, H. Kingscote, to sanction three 'experimental matches' between Sussex and All England in 1827. After Sussex won the first two, the nine All England professionals (indicating that this was no straight batsman–bowler, amateur–professional, class conflict) refused to play the final match, unless the Sussex bowlers 'abstain from throwing' (Altham and Swanton 1948: 67). The side was altered (the batting strengthened by the inclusion of two further amateurs), and with Knight's roundarm bowling particularly successful, the All England team secured victory in the final match.

The experimental matches provided no solution but Knight, through a series of letters to The Sporting Magazine in 1827–8, continued to set out the case for legitimating roundarm bowling. His argument was that the dominance of batting in the game was detrimental, that attempts to regulate roundarm bowling had continually failed because of the difficulties in defining what was, and what was not, a 'throw', and that other proposals to correct the imbalance between bat and ball (such as increasing the size of the wicket), would be retrograde steps. Furthermore, he claimed that this style of bowling was not at all new, that historical precedent existed (citing Tom Walker of Hambledon as one example) and, finally, that there was nothing to fear about the new style, because it 'makes it quite impossible to bowl fast and dangerously'. Mr Denison, replying for the MCC, stated that the change would lead to scientific play being replaced by chance hits, that the new style was throwing, 'pure and simple', and finally that 'It must lead to a dangerous pace, such as cannot be faced on hard grounds, save at the most imminent peril'. The MCC resisted this particular challenge and modified Law X to clarify the existing position (Rait Kerr 1950: 76). Yet, in the face of the rising power of professionals in the game (though this is not to say that either the professionals or the amateurs acted in
An Eliasian or Process Sociological Analysis of Cricket

unison), the law was altered in 1835, 'legitimizing any ball not thrown or jerked in
which the hand or arm did not go above the shoulder' (Birley 1999: 67).

A major unintended consequence of this law change, however, was that bowlers
were effectively granted further licence to innovate. William Lillywhite experi­
mented by raising his hand higher and higher and continued to dominate games
and inflict injuries but such was Lillywhite's reputation, and his economic power
as a cricketer spectators would pay to see, that few umpires were prepared to declare
his style illegal. As leading umpire William Caldecott noted, '[umpires] thought
that what Lillywhite did must be right . . . it was cruel to see how he would rattle
either the knuckles or the stumps' (Brookes 1978: 95). Not surprisingly, others
followed Lillywhite's lead.

During the 29-year period between the legalization of first roundarm and then
overarm bowling, the Laws of cricket were regularly altered in both overt and covert
attacks on new styles of bowling (see Rait Kerr 1950: 32). In 1845 Law X was
reformulated allowing umpires to call 'no ball' whenever the bowler came so close
to infringing that the umpire had doubts about the ball's legality. Penalties for no
balls and wides began to be accredited to the bowler and leg byes were introduced
in an attempt to curb bowlers' zeal.7 The LBW laws were revised so that, for the
batter to be out, the ball had to pitch in a straight line between the wickets
(restricting roundarm bowlers' chances of obtaining such a dismissal). Finally, in
a move which might be seen as an attempt to swing the balance back towards the
batter, attempts to improve the quality of the playing surface continued to be made
(Malcolm 2002: 49-51).

This period was also notable for the development of professional touring teams
such as William Clarke's All England XI. Matches were often one-sided affairs
and Clarke's two fast bowlers, George 'Tear 'em' Tarrant and John 'the Demon'
Jackson regularly intimidated the opposition. Tarrant's bouncers 'frighten[ed] timid
batsmen . . . causing them to change colour and funk at the next straight one',
while Jackson would bowl a 'deliberate head high full-toss' to batsmen who scored
runs off his bowling (cited in Rae 2001: 88—9). But as unequal as these contests may
have been, the issue of legitimate and illegitimate bowling did not resume centre
stage until August 1862 when Edgar Willsher opened the bowling for All England
against Surrey at the Oval. As Willsher, a professional with Kent, began his third
over, he was no-balled by the umpire. His following five balls were also no-balled
at which point he, and the eight other All England professionals, walked off the
pitch (the two amateurs remained). Play was abandoned for the day but, presumably
following overnight discussions, the game resumed the following morning, with the
'offending' umpire replaced.

This incident led to considerable debate in the press, an MCC vote to retain
the existing laws 12 months later, and finally the revision of the law in June 1864.
In the decisive meeting, R.A. Fitzgerald, Secretary of the MCC, opposed any rule
change because he considered that 'high bowling' had led to high scores and a
lowering of the general standard of bowling. Among those in favour of alteration
were the Hon. F.S. Ponsonby who argued that the existing law was not, and could
not be, enforced. Moreover, he noted that while some people were concerned that
a change in the law might lead to greater dangers to the batsmen, greater care of the pitches could reduce these problems (The Times, 11 June 1864). The amendment was passed 27 to 20, 'amid much cheering', though in Birley's view, 'the belated relaxation of Law X had changed nothing' (1999: 101).

These bowling innovations could, on the one hand, be interpreted as a shift in the balance between affective and instrumental violence of the type discussed earlier. The development of this style of bowling was characterized by relatively high degrees of forethought and planning. The social tensions in the game, heightened by the developing marketplace in which professionals took increasing control over employment opportunities, the increasing popularity of such matches and the growing significance of revenue derived from paying spectators, provided impetus to the search for new tactics and techniques. It is difficult, if not impossible, to assess the motives and emotions of participants in these developments but it does seem that these strategies were employed not necessarily to inflict injury or increase violent play, but in a goal-oriented (i.e. playing success) manner. Indeed, we must presume that the professionals had, as much as anyone, an (occupational/financial) interest in limiting the occurrence of injury; their protests during the 1827 experimental matches perhaps being an indication of this. That such innovations should have led to a style of play which, taken in isolation, was likely to increase the occurrence of injury, was largely an unintended outcome of the shifting balance of power between competing groups in the game. The rising influence of the professional class of players we might fruitfully term a process of functional democratization. Groups of varying power became more closely intertwined, more functionally interdependent, such that 'every action taken against an opponent also threatens the social existence of its perpetrator; it disturbs the whole mechanism of chains of actions of which each is a part' (Elias 2000: 318). In this context, Lillywhite and Broadbridge's interdependence with G.T. Knight is a telling example.

The international diffusion of cricket

As the nineteenth century drew to a close, the number of actors in what might be termed the 'cricket figuration' was to increase further with similar, equally wide-ranging, effects. Throughout the Victorian era, cricket had played a prominent role in English public schools with many arguing that the game inculcated notions of gentility and manliness. Logically extrapolating from this notion, educators and leading cricket administrators alike argued that cricket could be used to 'civilize' the people of the Empire and strengthen the bonds between the colonized and the 'Mother Country'.

Yet, as I have argued elsewhere (Malcolm 1997), cricket developed in radically different ways in the various territories of the Empire. Though the diffusion of cricket to the Indian sub-Continent, South Africa, New Zealand and elsewhere is significant in terms of the alliances and power balances which subsequently influenced debates, an exhaustive account of the diffusion of the game is not within the scope of this chapter and discussion will be limited to cricket in the Caribbean and Australia only. In the Caribbean, according to Yelvington (1990: 2), the
history of cricket is a tale of ‘the gradual supplanting of whites by blacks on the field and in society’. Initially, members of the military played between and among themselves. However, during the period of slavery, blacks had been encouraged to use what ‘leisure time’ they had ‘constructively’ and became slowly incorporated into the game. Whites in the Caribbean used cricket to demonstrate loyalty to the Crown, to show that the heat of the tropics had not led to a degeneration of English stock and (once slavery was abolished in 1838) to distance themselves from the ‘uncivilized’ indigenes (Malcolm 2001: 265). Yet, significantly, the white desire for success in inter-island and international competitions entailed a process of functional democratization through the increasing reliance of whites on black players (and black fast bowlers in particular).

In Australia, though Aborigines played an important part in cricket’s development, British immigrants held the most powerful positions in the game and established the first clubs (the Military Cricket Club and the Australian Cricket Club, both formed in 1826). Here, cricket symbolized the cultural unity of the so-called ‘Anglo-Saxon race’ within the Empire, and early Australian cricket was highly nostalgic with clubs adopting English names (e.g. the Mary-le-bone Club formed in Sydney in 1832) and grounds designed to replicate the English rural environment (Cashman 1998: 34). Inter-city rivalry contributed to the diffusion of cricket and the elite schools, run for the sons of the colonial gentry, aspired to develop boys’ manly virtues through the game. As in the Caribbean, playing cricket served to demonstrate loyalty to the Empire and the continued strength and vigour of white men in hot climates (see Bale 2002 for a broader discussion of the influence of notions of ‘environmental determinism’). Victories over England supported claims for (a degree of) equality in the two nations’ dealings more generally.

The global diffusion of cricket was an aspect of the lengthening chains of interdependency and the functional democratization of the Imperial cricket figuration. Though initially subservient, as will be demonstrated, groups in the colonies increasingly sought to challenge the right of the English to define the way in which the game is played. Moreover, this challenge had consequences for the relative levels, and types, of violence evident in the game.

**Bodyline**

Given the differing patterns of relations in the respective colonies, it is not surprising that Australian self-assertion should predate its Caribbean counterpart. It was during the winter of 1932-3 that fast bowling was again to become the dominant issue within cricket. By this time, cricket and cricketing issues were placed in the Imperial context, where “progress” was measured essentially by success in British terms against British standards maintained by British institutions’ (Stoddart 1979: 126). ‘Bodyline’ undoubtedly represented a further shift towards the instrumental use of violence in the game. However, a more detailed account of events demonstrates the contemporary tolerance towards/repugnance of physical injury and violence, and the importance of lengthening interdependency ties (in
the form of shifting class power balances and developing international/Imperial relations) for understanding such changes.

Australia's victory over England in 1930 was largely attributed to the batting of Donald Bradman. Presciently the Surrey captain, Percy Fender, wrote that 'something dictated by the result of reasoning' was needed to curb Bradman, 'something . . . along the lines of a theory' (cited in Rae 2001: 120). That theory was initially termed 'fast leg theory', though Australian journalists are thought to have invented the term 'bodyline' to economize on their cables to England (Stoddart 1979: 124). The main English protagonists were the captain Douglas Jardine, and his fast bowlers Voce, Bowes, Allen and, most importantly, Harold Larwood. That fast bowlers used short-pitched deliveries (bouncers) in order to disconcert the batsman was not a particularly new technique, for players from various countries had done this since overarm bowling became legitimate. Moreover, various individuals on the English county circuit had intermittently employed the kind of field settings characteristic of bodyline. Bodyline was different, however, in terms of the sustained nature of the attack through the persistent bowling of the ball at the batter's body or legs (or wide of the leg stump) thus restricting the batter's scoring opportunities, the regular deployment of five or more fielders on the leg side, the lack of compassion with which the tactic was used (e.g. persisting with bowling bouncers at batters who were visibly shaken having been hit) and, perhaps most importantly of all, because of the social context in which the matches took place.

Though the two nations were in the depths of an economic depression when the tour took place, the social significance of the games was such that record crowds were attracted. With England set to take a two to one lead in the best of five test match series, and with the Australian public becoming particularly enraged when wicketkeeper (i.e. not a specialist batter) Bertie Oldfield was hit by a Larwood bouncer, the Australian Board of Control sent a telegram to the MCC. Bodyline, they claimed, '[made] protection of the body by the batsman the main consideration. This is causing intensely bitter feeling between the players as well as injury. In our opinion it is unsportsmanlike' (reported in Wisden 1934: 328). The MCC defended their team but offered the Australians the option of cancelling the tour. Jardine insisted that the accusation 'unsportsmanlike' be retracted, which it was (reluctantly) on the first morning of the next match. England went on to win the series four games to one.

The planning that lay behind the development of bodyline is symptomatic of the high degree of forethought characteristic of sport in relatively civilized societies. That the English sought to use the neutral term 'fast leg theory' demonstrates an attempt to underplay violent and physically injurious aspects (similar, perhaps, to the desire to push acts of a repugnant nature 'behind the scenes' which Elias (2000) identified). Indeed, Larwood always claimed that his bowling did not cause injury and was, in fact, less dangerous than 'conventional' fast bowling (Rae 2001: 139). Counter to this, while the Australian media, through the adoption of the term 'bodyline', highlighted physical danger, the official response of the Australians took a somewhat different tack. In the Board of Control's telegram 'injury' was a secondary consideration to the 'intensely bitter feeling' between the players.
Underscored by the accusation that such tactics were unsporting rather than irresponsible, violent or dangerous (that is to say, such tactics made the ball difficult/impossible to score from), and by the highly vocal spectator response, the Australians 'challenged the imperial tradition that Britain set the standards for civilized behaviour' (Stoddart 1979: 126). The stances assumed by the respective parties illustrate a delicate balance of repugnance/tolerance towards violence at this time. Larwood and the MCC (see below) recognized that violence was a central issue, but the Australians, owing to their subservient status, were constrained from identifying the injuries sustained as their main objection, as this would have undermined the very notions of manliness which they sought to demonstrate through cricket participation. Their challenge to the dominant group's status took the form of questioning the 'right' of the English to define standards of behaviour; effectively a kind of surveillance and pressure from 'below'. Following a summer during which bodyline bowling was widely deployed in the English county game, and by the West Indian team touring England, Wisden's editor came to condemn bodyline as a 'noxious form of attack' (Wisden 1936: 339—40). Even Arthur Carr, Larwood and Voce's county captain who had helped pioneer 'fast leg theory', acknowledged that 'Somebody is going to get killed if this sort of bowling continues' (cited in Rae 2001: 140–1). Before the 1935 season began, the MCC finally clarified their condemnation of bodyline, declaring illegal 'persistent and systematic bowling of fast, short-pitched balls at the batsman standing clear of his wicket' and issued instructions to umpires on sanctioning offenders (Birley 1999: 251).

One of the key features of the figuration enabling this challenge to be made was the weakening of English dominance due to the prior playing success of the Australians and the functional democratization evident within English cricket. Douglas Jardine was 'an amateur who looked and played like a professional' (Stoddart 1979: 131). Although firmly rooted in the elite classes, and felt by many to be particularly aloof, Jardine assumed the behaviour and cultural mores of his social 'inferiors' in an attempt to realize his goal of defeating Australia. Tellingly, shortly after his appointment as England captain, Jardine met Larwood, Voce and Carr to plan their attack. As Birley claims, 'the version [of events] preferred by Australians, of innocent professionals manipulated by wicked amateurs, though understandable, can scarcely be entirely correct' (1999: 103). Neither would it be correct to view bodyline as the professional bowlers' challenge to the dominant cricket conventions as defined by the amateur-elite. Rather, the development of bodyline tactics demonstrates a commingling of class cultures characteristic of an equalizing of power chances within the English game, and the social significance that the test series was to acquire can only be understood in terms of the international functional democratization characteristic of early twentieth-century post-Imperial, Anglo-Australian, relations.

Beyond bodyline

Post bodyline, short-pitched fast bowling continued to be a prominent feature of the game though it remained a tactic largely used against specific, prolific-scoring
batsmen. During the 1951–2 test series against the West Indies, the Australians regularly deployed bouncers to undermine the batting of the '3 Ws' (Clyde Walcott, Everton Weekes and Frank Worrell) (Rae 2001: 151). Similarly, during the 1957–8 South African series against Australia, one 56-ball spell of bowling by Heine and Adcock of South Africa included a total of 53 bouncers (Williams 2001: 128). Criticisms were raised periodically; Rae (2001: 151) describes *Wisden* taking 'its traditional dim view' of events in 1951–2. In 1964, *Wisden's* editor talked of bouncers as 'one of the curses of modern cricket' (1964: 92) and two years later the editor reiterated his feelings, arguing that treating cricket like 'warfare' had led to various controversies, including 'the use of the bumper to frighten and threaten the batsman with bodily harm' (1966: 78–9). But prior to the mid-1970s, short-pitched fast bowling was rarely used against the weaker batters. There was commonly thought to be a 'fast bowlers union' — an informal, unspoken agreement that fast bowlers would not bowl bouncers at each other. The decline of this convention was widely (though not entirely accurately) perceived to have been propagated by the West Indian team.

A number of commentators have discussed the development of a neo-Imperial, black West Indian cricket style based on a mix of 'flamboyant', 'contemptuous' batting and 'attacking', 'violent', fast bowling (see Malcolm 2001 for a more detailed discussion). Despite the contravention of certain cricketing conventions which this style posed, for many years West Indian cricketers remained somewhat constrained to behave according to the dominant, English norms and to practise forms of self-policing. During the 1926 England tour to the West Indies, England bowled bouncers to the (white) West Indian captain, H.B.G. Austin. When the West Indies' Learie Constantine retaliated in kind and bowled bouncers at the England captain, the Hon. F.S.G. Calthorpe, he was implored by his colleagues to stop. James (1963: 111–12) recalls:

‘Stop it, Learie!’ we told him. He replied: ‘What’s wrong with you? It is cricket.’ I told him bluntly: ‘Do not bump the ball at that man. He is the MCC captain, captain of an English county and an English aristocrat. The bowling is obviously too fast for him, and if you hit him and knock him down there’ll be a hell of a row and we don’t want to see you in any mess. Stop it!’

Constantine also recalled the 1933 West Indian tour to England, during which he resented ‘the blindness of some of our critics who professed to see danger in those balls [bouncers] when we put them down and not when English players bowled them’ (cited in Marqusee 1998: 167). Twenty-five years later Ray Gilchrist was sent home from the tour of Pakistan and India for bowling that the West Indian cricket administrators deemed to be counter to the spirit of the game.

But despite this long history, events from the mid-1970s represent a dramatic escalation in the use of, and the controversy surrounding, short-pitched fast bowling. Although the West Indian team were to become ‘the most vilified and maligned [team] in sporting history’ (Williams 2001: 117) the origins of this phase in the game are more properly located in England’s tour to Australia and New
Zealand in 1974–5. The English players suffered at the hands of a new Australian pairing of fast bowlers, Dennis Lillee and Jeff Thomson:

Dennis Amiss and Bill Edrich had their hands broken; David Lloyd's box was, in his own words 'completely inverted'; Luckhurst, Fred Titmus and Derek Underwood all took crunching blows; and Thomson got a ball to cannon into the covers via Keith Fletcher's skull. Lillee bowled a beamer10 at Bob Willis, while the bumper he bowled at Geoff Arnold was described by Jim Laker as the most vicious ball he had ever seen. Willis, Underwood and Arnold were all established tail-enders.

(Rae 2001:158)11

Some (though not all) of these injuries occurred when batters faced short-pitched fast bowling. England also bowled short and fast and, like the Australians, targeted the weaker batsmen. When the team moved on to New Zealand, debutant and tail-end batsman Ewan Chatfield's life was only saved by the rapid use of mouth-to-mouth resuscitation and heart massage.

These matches clearly involved a high number of injuries, some of them particularly dramatic. However, they also represented something of a sea change in tactics and (again) a new context in which such actions took place. First, it became clear that weaker batsmen were no longer to be spared from having to deal with short-pitched fast bowling. Second, in contrast to the general air of disapproval that characterized previous episodes of on-field violence, crowds in Australia took an active role in encouraging their fast bowlers with chants such as 'Kill, kill, kill, kill'. Third, as Rae argues, fast bowlers clearly became 'less reticent about their aggressive agenda' (Rae 2001: 149). Lillee and Thomson were particularly outspoken. Shortly before the 1974–5 Australia vs. England series, Lillee wrote 'I bowl bouncers for one reason, and that is to hit the batsman and thus intimidate him . . . I want it to hurt so much that the batsman doesn’t want to face me anymore' (cited in Wilde 1994:36). Thomson, in a magazine interview stated: 'The sound of the ball hitting the batsman's skull is music to my ears' (cited in Rae 2001: 157).

England's matches in Australia and New Zealand inspired the editor of Wisden to address the issue of short-pitched fast bowling in four separate pieces in the Editor’s Notes section of the 1975 edition. A piece on the 'History of the Bouncer' was accompanied by 'Nauseating Remarks' which discussed the comments of Lillee and Thomson. Under 'Menace of Short Pitched Bouncers' the editor argued that 'Action should be taken before someone is seriously hurt'. Most alarmingly, in 'Bad Example to Juniors' the former chairman of the Cricket Society, Dr R.W. Cockshutt was cited as reporting that 'in one year [by implication, 1974] nine men had been killed in junior cricket' due to cricket balls hitting the skull (1975: 96–7).

But the use of short-pitched fast bowling continued and many (Swanton 1978; Wisden 1979: 80; Wilde 1994: 68–9) attributed this development to Australian media baron Kerry Packer. Packer, as a consequence of his failure to secure the rights
to televise Australian test cricket, recruited players for his own, rival, competition. Packer glamorized the confrontational and dangerous aspects of the game through aggressive marketing campaigns, leading at least one commentator to describe him as 'the Godfather of fast bowlers' (Wilde 1994: 68—9). Injuries occurred regularly. England's Dennis Amiss stated that 23 batsmen were hit on the head during Packer's first season (Wilde 1994: 69); Ray Robinson (1978: 29), writing in The Cricketer, counted a mere 16 during the Australian 1977—8 season as a whole. Yet it would be misleading to place Packer too centrally in these developments for not only did this type of bowling precede his involvement in cricket, but it was also subsequently to become inextricably bound to the West Indies cricket team and the assertion of a West Indian 'national' identity.

As Packer's influence over world cricket gradually waned, the West Indies refined short-pitched fast bowling into the 'most efficient form of attack yet devised' (Wilde 1994: 10). Both Wilde and Williams identify the West Indian desire to shed the image of 'happy go lucky' (Wilde 1994: 51), talented but 'less cautious and more flamboyant' cricketers (Williams 2001: 116) as a significant motivational force behind this development. A key turning point, however, was the West Indian defeat by India in Jamaica in 1976. Clive Lloyd declared the West Indian second innings, leaving India to score what at the time seemed an impossible 403 to win the game. But India achieved this score and calls for Lloyd's resignation soon followed. Determined to win the next game, Lloyd replaced a spin bowler with an additional fast bowler (making three in total). The trio repeatedly bowled bouncers, hitting the Indian batsmen several times. Indian captain Bishen Bedi declared their first innings closed with four batsmen still to come to the crease and had five players 'absent hurt' in the second innings, in what was 'the nearest anyone has come to surrendering a test match' (Wilde 1994: 55).

It thus appears that the shift towards the use of instrumental violence was closely connected to the desire for competitive success and the desire to shed the ('racial') stereotypical image of West Indians and their cricket. These twin goals, and the relative power balances required to enable such a challenge, can be more usefully understood, again, in the context of the lengthening and strengthening of interdependency ties entailing processes of functional democratization in the neo-colonial setting. The fast bowling of blacks has played a central role in the 'gradual supplanting' of whites in Caribbean cricket (Malcolm 2001: 264—71), and in the period of cricket history more dominated by fast bowling than any other, West Indian fast bowling was pre-eminent. From 1980 to 1994 the West Indies won an unprecedented 79 per cent of all tests which they played and won 16 out of 24 test series (Wilde 1994: 176). Furthermore, of the 88 batsmen who retired (or were absent) hurt due to injuries inflicted by fast bowlers in test matches between 1974 and 1994, 40 incurred their injuries while playing against the West Indies (data adapted from Wilde 1994: 212—14).

It is perhaps not surprising that these events generated considerable controversy within the game. However, the nomenclature of the debate is also revealing. 'Brutal', 'vicious', 'chilling', 'thuggery', 'vengeance' and commonly, 'violent', were terms that regularly appeared in the English mainstream and specialist cricket press.
The West Indian slip catchers became known as 'Death Row' and their bowlers acquired nicknames such as 'Whispering Death' (Michael Holding) or were referred to, for example, as 'a cold blooded assassin' (Malcolm Marshall) (cited in Williams 2001: 117). Wisden carried articles, pictures, or Editor's Notes commenting on short-pitched fast bowling in eight of the ten issues between 1975 and 1984 and thrice more in the next eight years. In 1979, for instance, the editor noted: 'In modern times, the act of deliberate intimidation to make the batsman fearful of getting some severe injury has become almost systematic with all countries, except India, exploiting this evil deed' (1979: 79–80). In 1984, the editor added 'the viciousness of much of today's fast bowling is changing the very nature of the game'. West Indian players objected to the implication that their success was 'based not on skill but on intimidation and brute force' (Holding and Cozier, cited in Williams 2001: 119) and, as the early excesses of 1976 were not subsequently repeated, we can only assume that elements of West Indian self-censorship continued. But the weight of opinion, led by English, Australian and Indian cricket officials, sought to curb the use of short-pitched fast bowling (and thus West Indian success) through rule changes and the deployment of new forms of protective equipment.

The bodyline controversy ushered in new laws to deal with bowling deemed to be intimidatory but, while umpires did occasionally issue warnings (e.g. against the West Indies in Jamaica and at Old Trafford in 1976), they were criticized for not exercising their powers effectively. In 1975 Wisden's editor recognized the 'heavy and onerous responsibility' resting with the umpire and suggested that Australian umpires' failure to implement the law effectively during the winter of 1974–5 may have been 'because the huge crowds urged Thomson and Lillee to maintain their assault and battery' (1975: 97). The following year Wisden's editor had come to believe that 'too much responsibility' was placed on the umpires and that 'responsibility surely lies with the captains' (1976: 63).

Support for the umpires eventually came in 1976 when the International Cricket Conference (ICC) condemned the intimidation of batsmen, urged umpires to enforce the law more rigorously, and insisted that test match sides should attempt to bowl a minimum of 17.5 six ball overs per hour (curbing a development concomitant with the dominance of fast bowling, which led to both an intentional – to reduce the batting team's rate of scoring – and unintentional – ironically fast bowlers take longer than slow bowlers to complete their overs – reduction in the number of overs bowled). The following year the ICC accepted a recommendation that countries could mutually agree to restrict the number of bouncers to two per over and not more than three in any two consecutive overs (Williams 2001: 124) but this, and a similar scheme introduced in 1979 (Wisden 1979: 80), faltered when players unilaterally abandoned their agreements during play. A 'bouncer immunity' scheme for non-specialist batsmen was tried but again faltered due to problems of defining which batsmen should, and which should not, be covered under the scheme and in defining how long the immunity lasted for tail-end batsmen who scored a significant number of runs (Wilde 1994: 78). All such regulations remained voluntary until 1991 when the ICC introduced a three-year experimental scheme that limited bowlers to one short-pitched delivery per over (defined as any ball
that would pass over the batsman's shoulder). In 1994 the law was revised to permit two bouncers per over, a regulation which still stands and runs in conjunction with the rulings on intimidatory bowling.

Concomitantly we see the development of more, and a wider range of, protective equipment for the batter. When England played against Australia in 1974–5, players rarely used chest guards, arm guards, inner thigh pads, or helmets. Colin Cowdrey, called up as a replacement for injured players, 'had the foresight' to have rubber sewn into his vest (Wilde 1994: 63). In 1976 Tony Greig was pictured with a motorcycle-style helmet and Wisden reported that Australian players, 'warning that somebody might get killed ... [are] pleading for the introduction of headguards' (1976: 62). The helmet eventually became 'regarded as acceptable' in test cricket after Rick McCosker's jaw was broken in 1977 (Robinson 1978: 29). Shortly after this incident, Greig's successor as England captain, Mike Brearley, experimented with a skull cap (Wilde 1994: 71) and the motorcycle-style crash helmet was piloted in 1978 in test cricket by Graeme Yallop, and in English county cricket by Dennis Amiss. Wisden's editor described the development as a 'sartorially and aesthetically ... objectionable trend ... Yet if their use saves cricketers from serious injury, they must be allowed.' Warning that helmets might lead to an increased use of bouncers, the editor concluded: 'The helmet, it seems, has come to stay – an unsightly adjunct to an increasingly dangerous game.'

Though it took a number of years, the rate of player injury did ultimately subside. The objections to bouncers, the concern over the injuries and the action taken are all indicative of a 'civilized concern' and a 'civilized intervention'. The players, for instance, did not want the scars, and so on, to prove that they were men (see Sheard, Chapter 2 in this book, for a discussion of similar processes in boxing). The West Indians objected to the new laws, perceived to have been imposed as a challenge to their cricketing style and success. West Indian cricket captain, Vivian Richards, speaking of racism and hypocrisy stated: 'I know damn well that there are people at the top of the cricketing establishment who feel that the West Indies have been doing too well for too long' (Wilde 1994: 195). In 1991 the Caribbean Times asked whether there had been 'a white supremacist plot to undermine the West Indies long-standing status as kings of cricket' (cited in Williams 2001: 125). Whether or not such allegations of conspiracy were true, the debate over short-pitched fast bowling during the 1970s and 1980s had a distinctively 'racial' dimension. West Indian cricket, and black West Indian cricketers, had grown in influence in the cricket world and their ascent was closely related to the neo-colonial assertion of a West Indian national identity. It simultaneously represented a challenge to the traditional balance of power. Thus, once again, we can see that an equalizing of power balances went hand in hand with a higher incidence of (predominantly instrumental) violence in the game.

Conclusion

This chapter has sought to address the apparent conundrum identified in my introductory remarks, namely how can we understand the development of
increasingly violent tactics in cricket? For while we might say that there has been an overall civilizing development in cricket in terms of a shift from affective to instrumental violence, and indeed if we look over a number of centuries, even in terms of the overall level of violence in the game, there have clearly been some very significant de-civilizing spurts during the last century and a half. My argument here has been that because functional democratization necessarily involves a change in the established pattern of dominance and subordination, heightened tensions and increasing violence may, and indeed in the instances outlined here did, occur. Consequently de-civilizing spurts within the game of cricket occurred due to the equalizing shifts in the balance of power, characteristic of the development of a more complex, global, social world.

Notes

1 Famously Brian Close played for England against the West Indies at Old Trafford in 1976. As discussed in the following text, this match is widely regarded as one of the modern era's most violent games. According to England bowler Bob Willis, Brian Close (with his batting partner John Edrich) received, 'the most sustained barrage of intimidation' he had ever seen (cited in Rae 2001: 162).

2 As discussed later, roundarm bowling involved permitting bowlers to raise their arms to shoulder height when delivering the ball to the batter. Overarm bowling essentially removed all restrictions on how high the arm could be raised when bowling.

3 Bodyline involved the persistent use of short pitched fast bowling at the body of the batter, and the positioning of a relatively large number of fielders on the 'leg' side.

4 The idea of making the 'ring' was taken from boxing where it was used as a means of separating contestants from spectators (see Malcolm 1999).

5 Balls that an umpire decides are unfair are called 'no-balls'.

6 This correspondence is reproduced by Denison in his *Sketches of the Players* (1845), which itself is reproduced in Arlott (1948).

7 A wide – defined as a ball which the batter does not have a fair chance of reaching – was punished by the award of one run to the batting team but was not initially included in the figures that recorded how many wickets, for how many runs, a bowler got. Leg byes are the runs made after the ball hits the batter's legs rather than his/her bat.

8 LBW or 'leg before wicket' laws enable a batter to be dismissed if it is their legs, rather than their bat, which stops the ball from breaking the wicket and thus a batter being bowled.

9 *Wisden Cricketers' Almanack*, first published by John Wisden in 1864 is often referred to as the Bible of cricket such is the reverence with which it is generally held.

10 A beamer is a ball that is bowled directly (i.e. does not bounce) at the batter's head.

11 'Tail-ender' refers to the final cricketers in a team's batting order and thus, normally the weakest.

12 The current laws of cricket allow for a captain to end his/her team's innings at any time; a tactic normally used to give a side sufficient time to bowl out the opposition.

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Wilson (various years).

Reading 5
Stacking in Cricket: A Figurational Sociological Re-appraisal of Centrality

in

Sociology of Sport Journal

1997, 14(3), 265-284
Stacking in Cricket: A Figurational Sociological Reappraisal of Centrality

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This paper examines the phenomenon of stacking in the sport of cricket. It is argued that cricket is a particularly revealing case study of "race" relations in Britain because of the diversity of "racial" groups that play it and the variety of national identities that are expressed through it. Data presented show that the two minority "racial" groups in British cricket are stacked in different positions; Asians as high-status batters, and Blacks as low-status bowlers (pitchers). The author uses the work of Norbert Elias to argue that stacking can best be explained, not in terms of positional centrality, but through a developmental analysis of cricket that focuses on historical class relations and Imperial relations in the Caribbean and Indian subcontinent.

The theoretical notion of stacking, introduced to sport sociologists a quarter of a century ago (Loy & McElvogue, 1970), continues to be the source of much debate and research (e.g., Johnson & Johnson, 1995; Lavoie & Leonard, 1994; Bivens & Leonard, 1994). Whereas the vast majority of this literature has been produced with reference to the United States, others have attempted to apply it to French Canadians in ice hockey (Lavoie, 1989), Australian Aborigines in rugby league (Hallinan, 1991), and Blacks in English soccer, rugby union, and rugby league (Maguire, 1988, 1991), and basketball (Chappell et al., 1996). In this paper it is my intention, first, to contribute further data on the participation of "racial" minorities in sport in general and in British sport in particular and, secondly, to challenge the adequacy of the concept of centrality through the application of figurational sociology and the work of Norbert Elias.
At this early stage, however, it is necessary to address some definitional issues, particularly the use of the concepts “race” and ethnicity. In this paper I shall use the terms “Black,” “White,” and “Asian” to describe the three “racial” groups studied. It should be noted that all the individuals involved in this research have equal, de jure, British status. The reason for the use of these “racial” categories is not that they are unproblematic, or even deemed particularly accurate. Indeed, “racial” categories are social constructs based on a biological fallacy. Rather, the use of “race,” as opposed to ethnicity is, in this instance, justified with an acknowledgment of the limitation of the methodology around which this paper is based. Ethnicity has a self-definitional component, and the author, at this preliminary stage, has had to impose the categories used here from outside. Whereas clearly more in-depth research of “racial” minorities’ participation in cricket would involve an analysis of players’ self-perceptions of ethnic identity, for reasons of time and space they cannot be investigated here. Discussion of ethnicity will be invoked only at a higher level of generality, that is to say, with reference to spectator groups and cricket cultures, whereas the analysis of players will be restricted to the “race” categories of Black, White, and Asian.

Reasons for Studying Cricket

The rationale for examining the role of Blacks in English soccer, rugby, and basketball is based on high rates of participation among this group. However it is possible to argue that cricket provides a more illuminating example than any other single sport through which to study “race” relations in Britain. As Eitzen notes, the social significance of the entry of Blacks into baseball was greater than that for other sports because of baseball’s status as America’s national game (Eitzen, 1989, p. 305). Whereas soccer is indeed the national game of England, cricket is quintessentially the “English” game. In Tom Brown’s Schooldays, it is described as “the birthright of British boys old and young, as habeas corpus and trial by jury are of British men” (cited in Birley, 1993, p. 329). Maguire, in his recent examination of English national identity, cites Prime Minister John Major’s view of Britain as “the country of long shadows on county (cricket) grounds, warm beer, invincible green suburbs, dog lovers, and pool fillers” (Maguire, 1994, p. 414). This, of course, involves imposing a classification of being English, especially southern English, on the Welsh and the Scots. In a later work, Maguire and Stead note:

Cricket is seen to represent what ‘England’ is and gives meaning to the identity of being ‘English.’ The sport fixes ‘England’ as a focus of identification in English emotions. Cricket reflects and reinforces the tendency in English culture and identity to hark back to past glories. The ‘golden age’ of cricket is at the high point of Empire. (Maguire & Stead, 1996, p. 17)

If we are to examine the participation of and discrimination against “racial” minorities in sport, then clearly national identities (Englishness, West Indianness, Indianness) as components of self-defined ethnicity must be seen as crucial. Furthermore, the existence of, and discourse surrounding, the Tebbit “cricket test” is a clear example of contested “racial” and national identities in English/British society manifesting themselves in the sporting arena. The “cricket test” refers to a speech made by a senior Conservative politician Norman Tebbit in which he argued that if a British immigrant, or one of his or her descendants, chose to support
India, Pakistan or the West Indies when one of the latter was playing against England, this could and should be used as a gauge of his or her level of assimilation into English society: the implication being that "incomplete" assimilation is a problem to be addressed by the individual. At an England-India game later that summer, a banner was seen that read "we failed Tebbit's cricket test and we're proud of it" (Maguire, 1993, pp. 298-299).

Perhaps the main reason for cricket being a central focus for contested "racial" and national identities is that, unlike the other British team sports previously studied (i.e., soccer, the two rugby codes, and basketball), cricket was widely adopted and is still extensively played in the countries from which British Black and Asian immigrants come. Whereas the majority of British international soccer and basketball contests are located in and played against European nations, and rugby contests are primarily against British ex-colonies in which Whites have been historically dominant (e.g., New Zealand, Australia, and South Africa), cricket is also played in British ex-colonies that are predominantly non-White. Currently there are nine nations that are granted "test-match," that is full international status: England, Australia, South Africa, West Indies, New Zealand, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and Zimbabwe. Cricket is firmly located within the old British empire, so much so that the international governing body of cricket, the International Cricket Council, only changed its name from the Imperial Cricket Council as recently as 1965. Additionally, 21 of its 26 current member states have belonged to the British Commonwealth at some time (Williams, 1989, p. 128). Thus, cricket provides a unique arena in which British immigrants and their descendants can observe their "home" nation competing against the imperial colonizer-cum-adopted home. As the issue of national identity has recently grown in prominence in the subdiscipline of the sociology of sport, it can only be beneficial if this discourse is cross-fertilized with the research into "race" relations and sport. I suggest that this interface of national identity and "racial" contestation makes cricket an excellent example through which to examine the sporting opportunities afforded to "racial" minorities in Britain.

A further advantage of the use of cricket as a test case of "race" relations in British sport is the multi-"racial" composition of its participants. Susan Birrell has rightly criticized the bipolar, that is to say Black-White "race" relations research, that has dominated this subject area (1989, p. 213). While a small number of physical educators have examined the participation of Asians in sport (e.g., Fleming, 1991; Carroll & Hollinshead, 1993), the work of British sport sociologists has focused entirely on the participation and motivations of Blacks. While it must be recognized that Blacks have a longer history and a higher profile in British sport, seldom is it acknowledged that Asians constitute a greater proportion of the British population. Cricket, with the possible exception of (field) hockey, is the only mainstream British sport in which immigrants from the Indian subcontinent have participated in significant numbers. Ellis Cashmore, in his influential book *Black Sportsmen* (1982), detailed the prevalence of Blacks in soccer, boxing, and athletics, and a recent estimate places the proportion of English professional soccer players who are Black at 20% (Guardian, 1994, August 17). In contrast, there is currently only one Asian professional soccer player in the English league (Chris Dolby of Bradford City F.C.), one Asian playing professional rugby league (Ikram Butt), and only a minor involvement of Asians in track and field athletics (Gowry Retchakan) and in boxing ("Prince" Naseem Hamed). Examining the involvement of Blacks in sport without reference to other similarly excluded "racial" groups is
necessarily misleading. Blacks negotiate their position and define their cultural status not only with Whites but also with Asians and members of other smaller "racial" or ethnic groups in Britain. Such a multipolar approach should be both welcomed and encouraged for its more "reality-congruent" or "object-adequate" premises (Elias, 1970, pp. 52-53).

Finally, as Birrell has noted, in the area of sport and "race," class is almost completely obscured through our practice of reading "race" as "race/class" and letting the analysis go at that. Thus we produce an image of "race" and sport as homogeneous and undifferentiated." (1989, p. 214). Such a one-dimensional view of stratification is clearly problematic and this study confronts this failing in two ways. First, attention to the specific intrasport class stratification of cricket, established in the 18th century and persisting—albeit in a weaker form—today, adds the additional perspective to the analysis of "racial" minorities' participation in sport that Birrell argues is a necessary ingredient for a more sophisticated critique. Secondly, through this tripolar (i.e., Black-White-Asian) examination, class differences (and the term class is used here in a noneconomic reductionist sense) between and among members of "racial" groups are highlighted. Whereas "racial" stratification can sometimes differ from other forms of stratification on two main points, notably the strength of beliefs about the genetic inheritance of "racial" characteristics and the durability of inequality due to the visibility of physical trait differences, it is important that axes of stratification are not studied in isolation. Ultimately, they involve investigation of the same phenomenon—power discrepancies between members of social groups—and the focus on one form of stratification to the exclusion of another will lead to a less adequate level of understanding. For this reason, Eric Dunning, in his analysis of the dynamics of "racial" stratification (Dunning, 1972), uses Elias' theory of "established-outsider" relations, a theory first used in a study of noneconomic, intraclass stratification (Elias & Scotson, 1965). Dunning uses a concept of power that sees it as polymorphous and figurationally generated in/by specific social interdependencies. Such a theoretical perspective will help us to understand "race" "as a culturally produced marker of a particular relationship of power" and thus to lead to a more adequate level of understanding (Birrell, 1989, p. 214).

"Racial" Stereotypes in British Sport

Before examining the data, it is necessary to say a few words about the "racial" stereotypes that have developed in relation to the two main minority groups in British sport. Whereas stereotypes are, at best, based on the "minority of the worst" (Elias & Scotson, 1965, p. 81) and as such are often factually incorrect, they are, by their very nature, seen by many people as accurate and informative. In this respect they are sociologically significant. The stereotypical view of Blacks in Britain is similar to that in America and has been well-documented. Blacks are perceived to be quick, instinctive, physically strong but lacking in intelligence and "bottle" (i.e., courage or moral strength). Asians, however, are caricatured as weak, both physically and mentally, and unable to participate in sport due to religious beliefs and practices. Such views were illustrated in a recent report on racism in English rugby league where the following quotes appear: "Asians can't wear turbans in the scrum!" "They appear to dislike the physical intensity of rugby league" and "I have heard it said that they do not take kindly to being covered in mud—I
understand it to be a religious thing” (Long et al., 1995, p. 27). This view was echoed by an unnamed official at West Ham United, a soccer club in London, who said, “You hear about Asians stopping practice to say prayers. They’re different to us, have a different culture.” (The Sunday Times, 1995, August 1). That it is often ignored that Asians in Britain may belong to a number of different religions (i.e., Hinduism, Islam, Sikhism, and Christianity), is indicative of the power of the established group to create and uphold stereotypes of outsiders. In cricket, these stereotypes manifest themselves as the “aggressive” West Indian fast bowler (pitcher), and the “wily” Indian spin bowler (cricket’s equivalent of a pitcher who puts “English” on the ball in baseball), and the “wristy” Indian or Pakistani batsman (using timing rather than strength to play the ball)³. Whereas these two stereotypes clearly have influence over the sports participation of the respective “racial” groups in Britain, it is important to recognize their processual, contested nature, and the particular relevance of sport as a site of contestation. In recent years, West Indian batsmen (e.g., Brian Lara & Viv Richards) and Pakistani fast bowlers (e.g., Wasim Akram & Waqar Younis) have become prominent enough to represent obvious challenges to these particular “racial” stereotypes. As we shall see, stereotypes cannot, on their own, explain the participation of members of “racial” minority groups in sport. They are as much a product as a determinant of sport participation, and they are subject to continual contestation, renegotiation, and shifts in the power balances both in sport and in society more generally.

**Methodology**

Research data were gathered from the 1990 and 1995 editions of The Cricketers Who’s Who, an annual publication featuring career statistics, personal data, opinions about the game and, perhaps most importantly, a photograph from which “race” could be categorized—however crudely—for almost all “first-class” county cricketers in Britain⁴. Whereas most players both bat and bowl (pitch), it was possible through analysis of career performances and the use of personal knowledge to categorize players as chiefly batsmen (batters), bowlers (pitchers), all-rounders (nonspecialists) or wicketkeepers (catchers). Fast, medium-fast, and medium-pace bowlers were categorized together on the grounds that they use ostensibly the same bowling (pitching) action and skills. Following the same criterion, the various types of slow and spin bowler were kept together. Fielding positions, because of their fluid nature, are not listed. However, more will be said about this later. At this point I would like to echo Maguire’s reservation that it is clearly inadequate to measure the complex social processes that are involved playing role and “race” in a game like cricket simply through quantitative data (Maguire, 1988, p. 260). Other, more qualitative, forms of analysis and research are required as well. The trends outlined by quantitative data should act as a starting point rather than a fait accompli and serve as a base from which further qualitative studies and discussion may be stimulated. Finally, it should be noted that, for the purposes of this research, “overseas players”—that is county or first-class players ineligible to play for England—were excluded from the analysis. Whereas the involvement of overseas players is clearly influential in terms of role-modeling and in countering/reinforcing, the “racial” stereotypes held by both the established White group and the outsider Black and Asian groups, of greater concern here is the playing positions of Blacks and Asians born, or brought up in, Britain.
Findings

According to the 1993 General Household Survey, 92% of the British population describe themselves as White, 3% as Indian, Pakistani, or Bangladeshi (categorized together here as Asian)\(^5\), and 1% as Black Caribbean (GHS, 1993). Thus, the data in Table 1 indicate that, in line with previously studied British sports, there is a clear overrepresentation of Blacks. However, unlike previous studies, in cricket there is a marginal overrepresentation of Asians compared to their proportion of the British population as a whole. What is more, for both “racial” groups, representation has marginally increased over the past 5 years. Such overrepresentation, however, needs to be seen within the context of the underrepresentation of members of “racial” minority groups in sports participation more generally. Research shows that, where the criterion used is participation once in the preceding four-week period, 65% of Whites compared with 59% of Afro-Caribbeans, 50% of Indians, and only 37% of Pakistanis regularly participate in some form of sporting activity (Sports Council, 1994).

More pertinent to this study, though, is the relationship between cricketing roles and “race.” The first thing that should be noted is that, due to their numerical dominance, the pattern of the playing roles of Whites very closely follows the pattern found in the sample as a whole (see Tables 2 and 3). Furthermore, because the overall participation of Blacks and Asians in cricket is relatively low, any conclusions must necessarily be tentative. However, from the data contained in Table 2, it can be seen that in 1990 more than two-thirds (69.6%) of first-class Black cricketers were fast/medium bowlers (compared to just 27.8% of first-class cricketers as a whole). Blacks were slightly overrepresented in the all-rounder role but substantially underrepresented in the roles of batsman, wicketkeeper, and slow/spin bowler. Of Asian first-class cricketers, 58.3% were batsmen and 33.3% were slow/spin bowlers. No Asians played as fast/medium bowlers or wicketkeepers.

The data from the 1995 Cricketers’ Who’s Who presented in Table 3 once again demonstrate the numerical dominance of White cricketers. However, significant changes have occurred during the 5-year intervening period. Whereas the

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1  Ethnicity of British Cricketers 1990 and 1995</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1990 No. (%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White 304 (88.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black 23 (06.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian 12 (03.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown 3 (00.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total 342 (100)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. The increase in the total number of cricketers from 1990 to 1995 is due to more comprehensive recording in the later edition rather than any structural changes to the game per se.
### Table 2  Proportion of Racial Group in Each Playing Role, 1990

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Batsman</th>
<th>Fast/Medium Bowler</th>
<th>Slow/Spin Bowler</th>
<th>All-Rounder</th>
<th>Wicketkeeper</th>
<th>Unknown</th>
<th>All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>121 (39.8)</td>
<td>78 (25.7)</td>
<td>33 (10.9)</td>
<td>39 (12.8)</td>
<td>31 (10.2)</td>
<td>2 (0.6)</td>
<td>304 (100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>3 (13.0)</td>
<td>16 (69.6)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3 (13.0)</td>
<td>1 (4.3)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>23 (100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>7 (58.3)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4 (33.3)</td>
<td>1 (8.3)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>12 (100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>1 (33.3)</td>
<td>1 (33.3)</td>
<td>1 (33.3)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3 (100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>132 (38.6)</td>
<td>95 (27.8)</td>
<td>38 (11.1)</td>
<td>43 (12.6)</td>
<td>32 (9.4)</td>
<td>2 (0.5)</td>
<td>342 (100)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 3  Proportion of Racial Group in Each Playing Role, 1995

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Batsman</th>
<th>Fast/Medium Bowler</th>
<th>Slow/Spin Bowler</th>
<th>All-Rounder</th>
<th>Wicketkeeper</th>
<th>Unknown</th>
<th>All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>138 (36.6)</td>
<td>83 (22)</td>
<td>46 (12.7)</td>
<td>48 (12.7)</td>
<td>32 (8.5)</td>
<td>30 (8)</td>
<td>377 (100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>6 (16.6)</td>
<td>20 (55.6)</td>
<td>1 (2.8)</td>
<td>7 (19.4)</td>
<td>2 (5.6)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>36 (100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>9 (50)</td>
<td>3 (16.7)</td>
<td>2 (11.1)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1 (5.6)</td>
<td>3 (16.7)</td>
<td>18 (100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1 (100)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1 (100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>153 (35.4)</td>
<td>106 (24.5)</td>
<td>49 (11.3)</td>
<td>56 (13)</td>
<td>35 (8.1)</td>
<td>33 (7.6)</td>
<td>432 (100)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Figures in brackets are percentages. Because of rounding, percentages may not add up to 100.
number of Blacks who were fast/medium bowlers actually rose from 16 in 1990 to 20 in 1995 and were still largely overrepresented in this playing role (55.6% of Blacks were fast/medium bowlers in 1995), the rise in the number of Blacks in other playing roles, especially batsmen (16.6%) and all-rounders (19.4%), had resulted in a large decrease in the proportion of Black first-class cricketers who are "stacked" in the role of fast/medium bowler (see Table 4). A similar "countertrend" was also evident in the playing roles of Asian cricketers. Whereas the proportion of Asian first-class cricketers who were batsmen decreased between 1990 and 1995 (from 58.3% to 50%), there was a numerical rise from seven to nine. Whereas there had been no Asian fast/medium bowlers or wicketkeepers in 1990, in 1995 there were three and one, respectively. The increase in the number of players whose role was unknown reflects the more comprehensive catalogue of players published in 1995. Moreover, the presence of a large number of Asians whose playing role was unknown is perhaps an indication of a trend toward the growing participation in cricket of members from this "racial" group.

Thus, we can conclude that "stacking" in cricket exists and that it is compatible with the stereotypical notions of "racial" attributes cited earlier. However, an important finding from the somewhat rudimentary time-series data presented above is that there has been an apparent breaking down of the pattern of "stacking" for both of the minority "racial" groups included in the study. Whereas still strongly overrepresented in their respective roles, there has been a decrease in both the proportion of Asian first-class cricketers who are batsmen and a decrease in the proportion of Black first-class cricketers who are fast/medium bowlers (see Table 4).

Whereas the data presented here replicate the findings of most other studies of team sports and show that the playing positions people occupy are heavily influenced by "racial" group membership (Lavoie, 1989; Maguire, 1988; Hallinan, 1988; Lapchick, 1989; Curtis & Loy, 1978), this multipolar examination reveals an unexpected finding. The two "outsider" "racial" groups are "stacked" into different playing positions, that is to say, Blacks as fast/medium bowlers and Asians as batsmen. In order to expand on the consequences of this finding, it will be necessary first to review whether the concept of centrality is applicable to cricket and, subsequently, to examine whether the pattern of "race" occupancy of playing roles suggested by the findings presented above would not be more adequately theorized with reference to the specific social interdependencies experienced by members of the respective "racial" groups and mediated by issues of class, empire, and national identity.

Table 4  Percentage Change in Racial Groups' Representation in Each Playing Role, 1990-1995

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Batsman</th>
<th>Fast/Medium Bowler</th>
<th>Slow/Spin Bowler</th>
<th>All-Rounder</th>
<th>Wicketkeeper</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>-3.2</td>
<td>+3.7</td>
<td>+1.8</td>
<td>-0.1</td>
<td>-1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>+3.6</td>
<td>-14.3</td>
<td>+2.8</td>
<td>+6.4</td>
<td>+1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>-8.3</td>
<td>+16.7</td>
<td>-22.2</td>
<td>-8.3</td>
<td>+5.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Centrality and Cricket

When Loy and McElvogue first introduced the concept of stacking, their hypothesis was that "racial segregation in professional team sports is positively related to centrality" (Loy & McElvogue, 1970, p. 7). Central positions were defined as those positions characterized by frequent and wide-ranging interaction with a high number of teammates and physical positioning on the field of play. As is now well-documented, central positions were found to be dominated by White players, whereas Blacks, Loy and McElvogue maintained, tended to be excluded from such positions by team managers who, in line with prevailing stereotypes, perceived them as lacking interaction and decision-making skills. Yet as Edwards first noted and Maguire subsequently argued, the clarity of the centrality/noncentrality axis differs between sports (Edwards, 1973; Maguire, 1988). The group dynamics of cricket make the classification of the centrality of team positions problematic in a number of ways. Whereas in many American team sports, decision-making is invested in a player because he or she occupies a particular playing position, in British team sports decision-making powers are invariably invested in a "captain" who may, theoretically, occupy any playing position. Of the 18 first-class county captains in 1995, 15 were batsmen, one a wicketkeeper, and two were all-rounders. All were White, yet statistically one would expect at least two non-White captains out of the 18. However, historically the assignment of the captaincy has been dictated by social class, of which more will be said later. At this juncture, all that needs to be noted is that centrality in cricket is not simply a product of the decision-making requirements of the particular playing position but is a rather more complex notion bounded by the class structure of the wider society both past and present.

Furthermore, it would be an inaccurate portrayal of the group dynamics of cricket, and therefore not heuristically beneficial, to define positions in accordance with their centrality/noncentrality. While a team is batting, (normally) only two players from that team are on the field of play at any one time. Interaction is limited to the duration of a player's innings (anything from a few minutes to more than a day) and dependent on the match situation (e.g., the need for quick runs or the need to use up the remaining playing time). During this part of the game, players categorized as batsmen are the most central. However, when a side is fielding, the captain, the bowlers, and the wicketkeeper have the most frequent and wide-ranging interaction with colleagues. Conventionally, fast bowlers are selected to do the majority of the work (and therefore interaction) at the beginning of innings, and slow/spin bowlers dominate the bowling later on. Moreover, the home team is able to influence the proportionate involvement of each type of bowler by having the wicket (playing surface) prepared to suit their strengths relative to what they perceive as those of their opponents. As a result, the classification of central positions is far from clear.

A further characteristic of the group dynamics of cricket that compounds the problem of categorizing centrality/noncentrality is the current division of the professional game into two different formats—"limited overs" or one-day cricket and the four/five-day game—each with an emphasis on different positional roles. It has been argued that batsmen are more influential in winning "limited overs" matches, a form of cricket that has risen in prominence, mainly for commercial reasons, since the establishment of the Gillette (now Nat West Bank) Cup in 1963,
the John Player (now Axa Equity and Law) Sunday League in 1969, and the Benson
and Hedges Cup in 1973. Conversely, bowlers are thought to be more influential
in the longer version of the game. Moreover, the format of County Championship
matches should not be seen as an historical constant. For instance, in 1990 the
format was changed from three- to four-day games on the rationale that, by struc­
turing the county game to make it more like the five-day international “test matches,”
the prospects of the national team would be enhanced and the development of
slow/spin bowling encouraged. Hence, centrality is not a single immutable quality
inherent in a playing position, but rather a relational concept influenced by long-
term processes such as commercialization, globalization, and spectacularization.

Centrality and Fielding Positions

Before moving on to an explanation of the relationship between “race” and
playing role, it is necessary to say something about the fielding positions in cricket.
Traditionally, the batsmen take up what might be considered the “central” fielding
positions—(i.e., closest to the bat and most likely to have catching chances)—
whereas the resting bowlers field in deep positions. In this respect, batsmen could
therefore be described as central. However, these fielding positions are fluid and
dependent on the game situation. The Oxford Companion to Sports and Games
(Ariott, 1976) lists 26 standard fielding positions for cricket, including bowler and
wicketkeeper. The remaining 24 positions (plus any others specially employed for
a particular batsman and/or tactic) are to be filled by nine fielders. Like the cap­
taincy, the social roots of the division of fielding roles have developed from the
peculiar class relations of 18th and 19th century England. That is to say, batsmen
were predominantly middle class amateurs and batsmen traditionally filled the
closest catching positions. Studies that claim to identify central roles are based on an
essentialist notion of sport. Rather, sports, their personnel, playing structure, and so­
cial organization are dynamic and characterized by ever-changing balances of power.

What the evidence presented above suggests is that it is inadequate to define
centrality in terms of positional function. Rather, one has to see it as a facet of
social relations, power, and interdependency. Far from being a clear concept, the
centrality of playing positions in regard to cricket is inadequate on two counts.
First, cricketing roles are too fluid to be used as a unit of analysis and, secondly,
playing positions in cricket cannot be understood in essentialist terms but have to
be seen as carrying social meaning resulting from both the intended and unin­
tended consequences of class relations dating back to the 18th century and as li­
able to change due to wider processes such as commercialization and the changing
power balances between Britain and the member countries of its former Empire.

A Figurational/Process Sociological Explanation

The findings presented here highlight the need for an analysis of the rela­
tionship between playing role and “race” which, rather than extrapolating from the
findings of a single social group, takes account of the social interdependencies
specific to each group involved and between them and other groups. The pattern
of the “race” occupancy of particular playing roles is an expression of power rela­
tions, and the relationships between Blacks, Asians, and Whites in Britain are heavily
influenced by interdependencies of class, empire, and national identity.
Perhaps one of the main reasons why cricket is the quintessentially "English" game is the specific class relations that characterized its codification and subsequent development. As Dunning and Sheard have noted, professional cricket "started when members of the aristocracy and gentry hired players, nominally as household servants or for work on their estates, but, in fact, principally on account of their cricketing skills" (1976, p. 57). Such was the status security of the landed classes of 18th century England that, in contrast to the later development of soccer and rugby, initially at least, professionalism in cricket was not viewed as either morally suspect or socially problematic. However, urbanization and industrialization in the 19th century gradually eroded the social dominance of the landed classes and, as they became increasingly insecure in their social status, so the issue of professionalism in cricket grew in prominence. "While in cricket these terms [amateur and professional] had originally only indicated whether a player accepted payment for his services, they soon came to denote . . . the whole gamut of social relationships on and off the field" (Brookes, 1978, p. 85). Until the distinction between amateurs and professionals was abolished in 1962, the social distance between the two groups was maintained by status-emphasizing practices. Examples of such "symbolic subordination" included the use of separate gates for entering and exiting the playing field, the listing on scorecards of the professional's initials after and the amateur's initials before the surname, and the use of separate, usually inferior, travel and changing facilities by the professionals. Professionals were expected to help with the preparation of the playing area and to bowl to the amateur batsman in the "nets" (practice pitches) in order to provide him or her with practice (Dunning & Sheard, 1976, pp. 58-59). Before World War II, professionals were usually expected to address an amateur as either "Mr." or "Sir."

Amateurs and Professionals: Class-Based Stacking in Cricket

More importantly for present purposes, the social distance between amateurs and professionals was maintained by a separation of playing roles, that is to say, a form of stacking. Professional players were subordinated to an amateur captain selected on the grounds of social status rather than, and often despite, playing and tactical ability. With one exception, all the captains of county sides until 1939 were amateurs. At the international level, Len Hutton, in 1952, became the first professional to captain England since the 1880s (Williams, 1989, p. 119). Furthermore, as Brookes notes, "by 1850 the pattern of amateur batsmen and professional bowlers was well-established" (1978, p. 92). The phrase "whistle down a mine shaft and up comes a fast bowler" is indicative, not only of these class relations, but of the power of the established to characterize bowling as a low-skilled, manual form of labor—a perception that persists today. Take the thoughts of a current South African (White) bowler, Brett Schultz, on his role, "I know bowlers aren't supposed to be clever but when you think someone out, that is the greatest" (Guardian, 1995, October 21, p. 21). Note the apologetic tone of his statement. Tactics, often the product of discussions between bowler and captain, are normally credited to the latter. The role of the bowler is often seen as merely placing the ball where the captain tells him or her. While all the players contained in this study are paid for playing, the legacy of the amateur/professional, gentleman/player relationship remains strong to this day.
The power of the established group to maintain their social position in cricket endured way beyond that of similar groups in other British team games such as soccer and rugby. As Dunning and Sheard have shown (1976, 1979), this is attributable to the specific class relations in the wider society at the times when the administrators of the respective sports were confronting such issues as professionalism and class relations. As the data presented here indicate, the traditionally lower status position of bowler has become the role in which Black, though not Asian, cricketers have come to be prevalent. Conversely, Asians are most numerous in the traditionally higher status position of batsman. Such a finding cannot be explained simply in terms of straightforward White discrimination against Blacks, nor solely in terms of economic stratification. One can only explain why Blacks are stacked in lower status positions and Asians in higher status positions by reference to the specific social interdependencies of each “racial” group, that is to say, to empire relations and the introduction of the first Black and Asian cricketers into Britain.

Cricket Cultures in the Caribbean and Indian Subcontinent

The cricket cultures, developed during periods of colonization, from which Blacks and Asians have come to Britain are very different. As Williams notes, “all sections of West Indian society played . . . whereas in India, leading players tended to be recruited from social elites” (1989, p. 130). Cricket was introduced into the Caribbean by imperial military officers and was later adopted by their slaves (perhaps as a way of satirizing the colonizers’ ways). As Yelvington notes, Blacks “performed restrictive roles. At first they were ‘allowed’ to prepare pitches and fields and a few were ‘allowed’ only to bowl and retrieve batted balls during practice sessions” (1990, p. 2). Stoddart notes how this relationship remained relatively static. In 1895, the six Barbadian (Bajan) clubs employed 14 (Black) ground staff who performed similar bowling and pitch preparation duties to their White professional counterparts in England (1988, p. 246). In Beyond a Boundary, C.L.R. James describes how cricket clubs in the Caribbean were stratified both according to color and to class (1963, especially chap. 4), and Stoddart notes that during the 1890s, there was rarely a Black or “colored” representative on the Barbados Cricket Committee. Such was the enduring nature of the power of the colonialists in the Caribbean that they remained in the ascendancy in important institutions, such as team selection boards, many years after political independence. It was not until the appointment of Frank Worrell in 1960, after 32 years of West Indian international “test-match” cricket, that the national side was led by a Black captain.

Whereas the West Indies Black-White “race” relations grew out of a postslavery “master-servant” relationship, British Imperial influence in India was characterized by a relatively more even power balance based on education and proselytism. In the Caribbean, Whites became the dominant landowning class, while in India there was less redistribution of property toward the Whites. The native princes, therefore, remained relatively empowered. Initially, cricket was played by British regiments but, as Mangan has shown (1978), English language colleges adopted the game, partly to express their “modernity” to their colonizers, and became influential in the development of cricket in the area. Although colleges in the Caribbean also adopted cricket and were influential in the game’s development, unlike India where the pupils were native Indians, the Caribbean establishments were dominated by Whites. The White “plantocracy” formed the
cricketing elite of the Caribbean, while in India, the Parsis, a group of wealthy entrepreneurs of Arab origin, were among the first to adopt the game, again seeing its value as a demonstration to the British of their suitability for collaboration. The Parsis even organized two cricket tours to England in the 1880s. But perhaps most importantly for the game's development, cricket "appealed to India's princes because it was an aristocratic game that upheld traditional notions of social hierarchy and patronage. Social rank was also reflected on the Indian cricket field, for the nobility were, with few exceptions, batsmen rather than bowlers" (Cashman, 1979, p. 197). Although there was great variety in the ways that cricket was adopted by princes in the various regions of India, many of the more anglophile princes and merchants saw cricket as a vehicle of assimilation into the elite classes of the "mother country." Such was the wealth and status of Indian princes that they were able, in the 1920s and 1930s, to model themselves after the British aristocracy and import prominent English professionals such as Larwood, Hirst, and Rhodes to act as coaches. Indicative of the more even power balance that existed in the Indian subcontinent, by comparison with the Caribbean, is that although India started playing international "test match" cricket four years later than the West Indies (or should that read were invited to play test cricket?), they have never been led by a White captain.

The Introduction of "Racial" Minorities Into British Cricket

It is therefore not by any means surprising that this difference in imperial "race" relations manifested itself in the introduction of Black and Asian cricketers to Britain. Hill (1995) shows how the first overseas players from the Caribbean came to Britain as professionals in the Lancashire League. Estimates of the number of spectators attending Lancashire League matches in the 1920s indicate that it was the economic equal of the more socially prestigious County Championship (Williams, 1989, p. 121). Hill notes that, due to the greater status exclusivity of county cricket in England in the 1920s, cricketers from the Caribbean found it easier to obtain contracts in the Lancashire League. The acceptance of professionalism was greater in the north than in the south of England and manifested itself in all three major team sports: soccer, rugby, and cricket. League cricket, because it enjoyed greater autonomy from cricket's ruling body (the Marylebone Cricket Club or MCC) than its county equivalent, was more open to overseas professionals; professionals who excelled with both bat and ball. Despite this, professionals in the Lancashire League, like their county cricket counterparts, were expected to perform coaching and ground preparation duties. Although the greater openness of the Lancashire League facilitated the participation of migrant professionals from the Caribbean, such players, while receiving considerable kudos and notoriety within the local community, were assimilated into British cricket in the traditional position of the subservient professional and as such had social roles that more closely resembled lower status bowlers than higher status batsmen.

Conversely, the emergence of Indian cricketers in Britain was dominated by individuals of high social status, many of whom attended public schools and the universities of Oxford and Cambridge. Players such as Ranjitsinhji (1900s), Duleepsinhji (1920s), and the Nawab of Pataudi Snr. (1930s) "regarded themselves as 'English cricketers'" (Cashman, 1979, p. 179) and were, unlike players from the Caribbean, assimilated into the established ruling classes of Britain. Despite
their “race,” their status was high and, in cricketing terms, it was readily accepted that such men would be batsmen. An example of Ranjitsinhji’s internalization of the norms of the established can be seen from the stance he took during the aforementioned renegotiation of the role of the professional cricketer in the late 19th century:

A professional in former times was entirely the servant of his club and in a servant’s position. In the exhibition elevens, he became a free member of a club with equal rights with other members, and also in a way a public character, supported by and responsible to the public. These two aspects of a professional’s position are worth remarking on with reference to this position for modern professionals playing for counties. A modern professional who represents his county is partly a servant of a club, partly a servant of the public, and partly a skilled labourer selling his skills in the best market. (Quoted in Brookes, 1978, p. 140)

That Ranjitsinhji should choose to make such a public stand is indicative of a parvenu trying to align himself with one social group, by distancing himself from another. His attempt, it appears, was relatively successful.

The involvement of migrant cricketers in the English game was met with a mixed response. Because of fears that the growing numbers of overseas professionals would harm the English game, a motion—eventually defeated—was proposed to the Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC) in 1906 that the residential qualification period be extended for migrant players. However, 15 years later, an influx of overseas amateurs was positively encouraged. As Maguire and Stead conclude, “restrictions on overseas players were as much to do with the vexed questions of professionalism as they were to do with protecting indigenous English players and the national team” (Maguire & Stead, 1996, p. 4). For present purposes, however, it is sufficient to note that there was differential treatment, on what appears to have been a class basis, of the migrants coming to England to play cricket.

These culturally specific power relations are, then, clearly influential in contributing to the pattern of “race” and playing role that is evident in contemporary British cricket. However, where cricket differs from, say, soccer or boxing, is in its importance as a site for the contestation of national identities. Whereas Black role models are perhaps more prominent in other sports, cricket, more than any other sport, facilitates the expression of nationalistic pride for their former homes/cultures among members of ex-Empire nations. That being so, it is perhaps not surprising that such people are interested in playing cricket, rather than sports such as rugby and soccer that have relatively less sociohistorical significance in the Caribbean and Indian subcontinent. Since 1950 when the West Indies first defeated England in England, the West Indies has been the preeminent side in world cricket, not losing a “test” series against England since 1969. The England team reached their nadir during the 5-0 defeat in England in 1980 (labeled a “Blackwash,” as opposed to a whitewash, in some sections of the British press), and the continual and relatively comprehensive victories of the West Indies over their former colonial “masters” is no doubt an important source of cultural pride for immigrants from the Caribbean and their descendants. Reflecting on West Indian batsman Brian Lara’s world record “test-match” score of 375 in Antigua in 1994, Chris Searle wrote, “(Lara) touched the collective brain and heart of a dispersed people and fueled their unity and hope” (1995, p. 32). Contextualizing Lara’s achievement in
the light of the role of Black players in the English side against which Lara was playing, Searle continues,

the Caribbean was unequivocally a part of English cricket, too. Like the English health and transport systems, it could not function effectively without the essential Caribbean contribution. Lara’s achievement had also been integrally linked to the diaspora: it was something much more than a routine meeting of two sporting nations; it transcended a historically charged confrontation between the ex-colonisers and the decolonized. Now the Caribbean was on both sides.” (1995, pp. 32-33)

Furthermore, West Indians have developed and negotiated a cricket style of their own based on what Burton (1991) terms “street culture.” In an analysis that appears to be based on highly stereotypical “racial” views, Burton has described this style as a mix of “flamboyant,” “contemptuous” batting and “attacking,” “violent” fast bowling. As St. Pierre notes, “Performance before an audience of West Indians equally emphatic about violent and aggressive cricket conspired to produce a change in this “beautiful, difficult English game’” (St. Pierre, 1973, p. 15). Yelvington, perhaps somewhat overzealously concludes that, “What is clear is that success in cricket combat versus the colonizer has fundamentally changed the nature of Afro-West Indian ethnic identity where a positive self-image emerges” (1990, p. 3). Indicative of the power resources still available to the established, traditionally Anglo-dominated cricket authorities is the ability to characterize such modes of playing the game, based on the actions of a minority, as “status violations” characteristic of whole groups. Although precedents for continual violent, short-pitched fast bowling include the famed MCC “bodyline” tour in 1932-33 and the Australian teams, including Jeff Thomson and Dennis Lillee of the early 1970s, the adoption and refinement of these methods by West Indian teams (e.g., by using a battery of four as opposed to two fast bowlers) has led to restrictive rule changes. This cricketing style and its relevance to national identity is a product of an adoption/contestation of cricket peculiar to sociohistorical processes in the Caribbean states. It is clear that the anglophiles who adopted cricket in the Indian subcontinent would not produce a challenge to the ethics and norms of the game such as that which has developed in the West Indies.

However, cricket in the Indian subcontinent is similarly influential on, and influenced by, national identity and intra-Empire relations. Cashman notes that the Parsis’ “achievements in cricket helped to set in motion the first stirrings of an Indian nationalism,” as early victories over the English challenged the colonial mythology of the inherent superiority of the White man (Cashman, 1979, p. 192). Subsequently, cricket has become the most popular game in India, and more popular in India than in any other country in the world. In recent years it has, with the help of television, dispersed both geographically, to the north and east of the country, and socially to the lower castes. International “test” matches in India, though relatively expensive to attend, draw more spectators than in any other country. Although success for Indian and Pakistani cricket teams has been limited, people whose ethnicity has a basis in these nations have, on occasion, used cricket as a forum to express national identity. In particular, I refer to the near riot and stabbing of a spectator that occurred at a match between England and Pakistan in Birmingham in 1987 (Parry & Parry, 1991), and the celebrations that accompanied the defeat of England by Pakistan in the 1992 Cricket World Cup. On this subject,
An Eliasian or Process Sociological Analysis of Cricket

Pnina Werbner has written: "While the English mourned their defeat, British Pakistanis all over the United Kingdom were celebrating their team's victory. When it comes to cricket, it seems blood is thicker than English rain" (1996, p. 104). Research into the pride generated by this victory would be a very fruitful line of inquiry, but impressionistic evidence of the numbers of Pakistan cricket shirts bought by Britishers of Pakistani descent after the 1992 World Cup victory would indicate this to have been a highly significant event in terms of the national identity formation/expression of British Pakistanis.

Conclusion and Suggestions for Further Research

In this paper I have attempted to look at the concept of stacking in cricket using "Eliasian" sociological theory. The result of this has been to produce an analysis of the relationship between "race" and playing role that is both historical and based on a conception of power. I have argued that playing roles in cricket cannot adequately be analyzed using a central/noncentral distinction. Playing roles in cricket are too dynamic for such an analysis and, moreover, their staffing has contained social meaning throughout the history of the game. I suggest that similar investigation of other British team sports, if not American team sports as well, would reveal further interesting comparisons.

Too often research has focused solely on "race" without reference to any other forms of stratification. I have looked at the class relations peculiar to English cricket, but a more comprehensive survey that analyzes the social backgrounds and cricketing experiences of British Blacks and Asians and focuses more extensively on the importance of class and geographical region for the highly differentiated communities, which have been somewhat "lumped" together here as from the Caribbean and Indian subcontinent, could only be beneficial. Furthermore, this paper highlights the need for research that centers on the Indian, Pakistani, and Bangladeshi communities in Britain and the significance of cricket (and other sports) within them, giving special attention to issues of identity formation and contestation.

The paradox inherent in much of the work in this research area is that discrimination is examined by looking at those members of "racial" minorities who do excel in sports, rather than those excluded from the elite levels of it. The Asian cricket leagues in Britain are a particularly interesting example of a minority group's organization of leisure time running counter to mainstream, that is, White sporting practices and institutions. A number of factors are surely relevant to their existence: the perceived discrimination against them within the White-dominated county cricket circuit; the status of cricket as a form of leisure deemed acceptable to members who hold religious and other forms of social power among British-Asians; the changing power balances between the different generations of migrants and their descendants; and an increasing desire of some to locate their identity closer to the mainstream of British White society while still emphasizing their separateness and Asian identity. There is much scope for research into both the emerging Asian participation in, and historical absence from, elite British sport. It is only through comparing and contrasting research into various other "racial" and/or ethnic groups, with the relatively well-developed literature pertaining to Black involvement in sport, that it will be possible to develop multipolar theories of "racial" minority participation in sport that have a higher degree of reality congruence.
to a greater range of sports and countries than the majority that have been produced so far.

References


Notes

1. The term “test match” was coined during England’s first tour to Australia in 1861-62. They were described as “tests” because the Australian sides invariably had more players than England’s eleven. The term is now used to describe full-length (five-day) international cricket matches between those countries granted “test match” status. The nations are listed here in the chronological order in which they were granted “test” status which is, in and of itself, revealing of imperial and postimperial relations.

2. Interestingly, Ikram Butt was adopted as a child by a White couple. A recent survey has suggested that this White influence was crucial in his participation in rugby league.

3. The author acknowledges that “batsman” is a gender-biased term but, because no appropriate gender-neutral term exists, it will be used throughout the paper. Such is the common acceptance of this term that England international women cricketers call themselves “batsmen.” This in itself raises interesting questions about the internalization of gender norms in English cricket that might be pursued elsewhere. My thanks to the Women’s Cricket Association in Birmingham, England for their help in this matter.

4. Elite or “first-class” cricket in Britain is played by 18 county sides and the national team. Of the county sides, 17 are in England and one, Glamorgan, in Wales. Thus, it is right to talk of British cricket. However, perhaps because Glamorgan obtained “first-class” status relatively late (1921), the national team is referred to by its traditional name, England. Scots also have played cricket for England, probably the most famous being Mike Denness who captained the side 19 times in the 1970s.

5. There are very significant differences between the groups that have been categorized together here, and this is certainly an area that requires further research. However, the prevailing White stereotype that applies to British-Asians does tend to treat these diverse people as homogeneous.

6. Maguire appears to make an error in his application of centrality to football. Defining centrality according to a FIFA manual and managerial perceptions, he concludes that Blacks are stacked in noncentral positions, (e.g., forwards and wingers). However, in terms of social profile, earnings, and tactical importance, these are clearly the central positions. Maguire also fails to acknowledge the dynamism of the importance of playing roles that are dependent not only on personnel and tactics but also on power relations and sociohistorical factors.

7. The exception to this occurs when a batsman sustains an injury during the game that disables him or her from running. In such an instance, that player can still bat but another player is allowed to run between the wickets (bases in baseball) for him or her.

8. A team may decide to play for a draw, in which case players will try not to get out rather than emphasize scoring runs. Alternatively, a team may try to win by scoring runs as quickly as possible in order to allow themselves enough time to bowl the opposition out.

9. The first English international sides, called All-England XIs, were touring sides in the mid-19th century made up of professionals and formed for commercial reasons. The first and most well-known of these was the “William Clarke XI” formed in 1846 (see Brookes, 1978, chap. 8).

10. Non-first-class cricket in England is organized at a number of different levels. The Lancashire League was, and still is, one of the premier local leagues in the country, and clubs in it still regularly employ high prestige overseas international players as professionals.

11. In contrast to baseball, in cricket the ball is usually “pitched,” that is, delivered to the batsman via the ground. The “shorter,” or nearer to the bowler that the ball is “pitched,” the higher the ball tends to be when it reaches the batsman.
Recently there have been allegations that Pakistani fast bowlers have illegally altered match balls and that, through the use of bribes, certain Pakistani international players have attempted to fix match results. Both of these cases, even if substantiated, are examples of covert practices and, as such, present a different sort of challenge to the norms of the game than that presented by West Indian fast bowlers.

Acknowledgment

I am very grateful to the anonymous reviewers whose comments and suggestions have helped me clarify some of the issues in my own mind and, hence, in the paper also. Additionally, I would like to thank my colleagues Eric Dunning, Ivan Waddington, Patrick Murphy, Ken Sheard, and Martin Roderick at the CRSS for their help in the writing of this paper.
Reading 6

"It’s not Cricket": Colonial Legacies and Contemporary Inequalities

in

Journal of Historical Sociology

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‘It’s not Cricket’: Colonial Legacies and Contemporary Inequalities

DOMINIC MALCOLM

Abstract Cricket has been historically significant in defining notions of English national identity and continues to feature in debates over the inclusion/exclusion of immigrants in British society. British-African-Caribbean players are well represented in the English game but participation appears mediated by ethnic group membership. This contemporary pattern can only be understood when contextualized within the historical development of cricket in the Caribbean and, in particular, the struggles between whites and blacks and between the white elites. Over-representation in certain cricketing roles has been an ever-present feature of this negotiation; contemporary inequality is, therefore, largely a consequence of the legacy of British Imperialism.

*****

Cricket, Englishness and Imperial Relations

While there are many British-African-Caribbean athletes in a wide range of sports (in particular soccer, athletics and basketball) cricket provides a more illuminating example of the inclusion and exclusion – the integration and separatism – of this minority ethnic group than perhaps any other single sport. As Etizen (1989: 305) notes, the social significance of the entry of blacks into baseball was greater than that for other sports because of baseball’s status as America’s national game. Whilst, currently, soccer might be said to be the national game of England, cricket is the game which, more than any other, is widely held to express English national identity. Consequently, it is cricket which has witnessed more regular and more frequent ‘racial’ controversy than any other sport in the United Kingdom (U.K.).

Cricket was first referred to as the ‘national game’ by Lord William Lennox in 1840 (Sandiford 1998: 22), but a more revealing account of the interdependence of cricket and national identity is provided by Thomas Hughes in his classic book, Tom Brown’s Schooldays (1857). Cricket ‘is more than a game. It’s an institution’ states Tom. ‘Yes’ his friend Arthur agrees, ‘the birthright of British boys old and young, as habeas corpus and trial by jury are of British men’ (cited in Brookes 1978: 86). Playing the game, it was widely believed, helped inculcate many of the qualities fundamental to Victorian gentility and manliness and the widespread acceptance of this ideology served to concretize the game’s cultural significance. As a measure of this ideological predominance, we can see that a variety of cricketing
phrases – such as ‘playing with a straight bat’ (meaning honest, upright and steadfast), and ‘it’s not cricket’ (unfair play or action) – became, and remain, part of the lingua franca.

Just as cricket was used to inculcate notions of gentility and manliness to boys in Victorian English public schools so, it was argued by educators and leading cricket administrators alike, could it be used to ‘civilize’ the people of the Empire and strengthen the bonds between the colonized and the ‘Mother Country’. Lord Harris, President of the MCC and a firm believer in the civilizing mission of the game, claimed that ‘cricket has done more to draw the Mother Country and the Colonies together than years of beneficial legislation could have done’ (cited in Holt 1990: 227). To know and understand cricket, though initially a signifier of Englishness, came to be a signifier of inclusion into the British Empire more widely. As Pelham Warner, a white Trinidadian who went on to captain the England cricket team and become Secretary of the MCC stated:

Cricket has become more than a game. It is an institution, a passion, one might say a religion. It has got into the blood of the nation, and wherever British men and women are gathered together there will the stumps be pitched. North, South, East and West, throughout the Empire, from Lord’s to Sydney, from Hong Kong to the Spanish Main, cricket flourishes (cited in Bradley 1990: 15).

Conversely, a failure to understand cricket led to exclusion and derision. The use of the terms ‘French Cut’ and ‘Chinese Cut’ to describe miss-hit shots served to reinforce the notion that only British people (in the widest Imperial sense) could play the game (Cashman 1998: 122). Similarly, ‘French Cricket’ is a term used to describe a simplified, less formal version of the game. At a time when many international sports governing bodies were being formed (the International Olympic Committee, 1894; the Fédération Internationale de Football Associations, 1904; the Fédération International de Natation Amateur (swimming), 1908; the International Amateur Athletic Federation, 1912) an international ruling body for cricket was established under the name the Imperial Cricket Conference (ICC) in 1909. The ‘Mother Country’s’ dominance of the world game was clear; the President and Secretary of the then British governing body of cricket, the Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC), were installed as ex-officio Chairman and ex-officio Secretary of the ICC respectively. Although in 1965 the ICC changed its name to the International Cricket Conference, it remains dominated by member states which have, at some time, belonged to the British Commonwealth or former British Empire. All the current nations with ‘test-match’, that is full international, status were formerly part of the Empire: England; Australia; South Africa; West Indies; New Zealand; India; Pakistan; Sri Lanka, Zimbabwe and Bangladesh.
Although the game has become far more 'global' during the 1990s, ex-Empire nations still account for 39 of the 74 current member states.4

The interdependency of English identity and the Imperial experience is appositely summarized by Maguire and Stead (1996: 17):

in the habitus of male upper class Englishness, cricket embodies the qualities of fair play, valour, graceful conduct on and off the pitch and steadfastness in the face of adversity. Cricket is seen to represent what 'England' is and gives meaning to the identity of being 'English'. The sport fixes 'England' as a focus of identification in English emotions. Cricket reflects and reinforces the tendency in English culture and identity to hark back to past glories. The 'golden age' of cricket is at the high point of Empire.

**Cricket and Contemporary 'Race' Relations**

So central is cricket to notions of British and, more particularly, English national identity that, in recent years, images of the game have often been cited during wider debates over national sovereignty and independence. Maguire has illustrated how cricket became a central reference point in debates about the U.K.'s changing relationships with Australia (Maguire 1993) and during debates over the country's place and role in the European Community (Maguire 1994). Marqusee (1998: 15) has argued that, 'For the English it is a point of pride that Americans cannot understand cricket . . . for the Americans, everything they took, until recently, to be "English" - tradition, politeness, deference, gentle obscurantism - seems to be epitomised in "cricket". Central to all these discussions is the question of what it means to be English, part of the British Empire, or an outsider to these groups.

As the vast majority of post-Second World War British immigrants have been drawn from the nations of the former Empire, cricket has come to be highly significant for many of the people who form the minority ethnic communities in the U.K. It was for this reason, no doubt, that Norman Tebbit, a senior Conservative politician, introduced his so-called 'cricket test' in 1990. Tebbit argued that if a British immigrant, or one of his/her descendants, chose to support a team such as India or the West Indies when that team was playing against England, this could, and indeed should, be used as a gauge of his/her level of assimilation into English society. Talking specifically about British Asians (though Tebbit viewed the 'test' as more generally applicable) Tebbit asked, 'which side do they cheer for ... were they still harking back to where they came from or where they were?' *(The Times, 21st April 1990, cited in Maguire 1993: 298).*
Similarly, the integration of British ethnic minority players into the game has been questioned. In a *Wisden Cricket Monthly* article entitled 'Is it in the Blood?', Robert Henderson argued that the poor record of the England cricket team was connected to the prevalence of players who had been born overseas and/or had spent much of their childhood living in other countries. Players who had undergone such socializing experiences, Henderson claimed, could never be truly English and thus would never possess the same level of commitment as a 'genuine' English player. Crucially in terms of race relations, however, Henderson concluded the article by making a connection between biology and culture. Whilst all players may well be trying at a conscious level, he argued, 'is that desire to succeed instinctive, a matter of biology? There lies the heart of the matter' (Henderson 1995: 10). The fallout in the wake of the article was considerable. Players threatened to sue Henderson for libel and the captain of the England cricket team, Michael Atherton, resigned from his position on the magazine's editorial board. Moreover the debate acted as the stimulus for the establishment of an anti-racist pressure group, 'Hit Racism for Six', which had the stated aim of 'opposing all forms of racism in cricket at all levels' (Hit Racism for Six 1996).

Henderson might be seen as a single voice standing on the periphery of the game were it not for a number of other incidents which illustrate how the role of African-Caribbeans in cricket is also questioned by some within the game. The career of Devon Malcolm is illuminating in this context. Malcolm was born in Jamaica, moved to England as a child and, in 1987, became qualified to play for the national cricket team. Malcolm's international career was characterized by displays of varying quality.\(^5\) There has been considerable debate over whether or not Malcolm should have played for England more often and some (e.g. Searle 1996) have argued that the player's non-selection shows elements of 'racial' bias. Furthermore, when Malcolm was publicly criticized by the England cricket team's bowling coach, Peter Lever – 'Malcolm has pace and fitness, but that is all. The rest of his game is a non-entity' – and by the team manager, Ray Illingworth – 'Malcolm has no cricketing brain' (cited in Searle 1996: 52)\(^6\) – newspaper columnists such as the *Daily Telegraph*'s Donald Trelford, highlighted what might be considered the 'colonial touch of the England management'. When Malcolm publicly questioned whether he might have been treated differently had he been white, the governing body threatened him with the charge of 'bringing the game into disrepute'. Moreover, no action was taken when another player in the England tour party, Dermot Reeve, alleged in his autobiography that he heard Illingworth refer to Malcolm as a 'Nig-nog' (see Marqusee 1998: 300–302).
Comments from leading players and administrators illustrate that stereotypical beliefs about biological differences have some significance within the game. In an article about British-African-Caribbean and British-Asian county cricket players which appeared in *The Sunday Times* (27/4/97), Illingworth stated: 'it is a fact that a lot of the West Indians, because of their looseness, can usually bowl quicker than white people'. Similarly, the British-Asian batsman (and now England cricket captain) Nasser Hussain stated, 'Black people are pretty loose they have loose limbs and can run up and bowl the ball at up to 100mph'.

The racial stereotyping and abuse of individuals, the questioning of the allegiance of spectators and the questioning of the 'commitment' of ethnic minority English players all illustrate the central role which cricket plays in debates about the integration and separatism of ethnic minority communities in Britain today. These debates have generally been triggered by whites but, through the continual and relatively comprehensive victories of the West Indies over their former colonial 'masters', it has become very clear that the game is a highly significant source of cultural pride for immigrants from the Caribbean and their descendants. Reflecting on West Indian batsman Brian Lara's world record 'test-match' score of 375 against an England side containing a number of black and Asian players, Chris Searle (1995: 32) wrote:

(Lara) touched the collective brain and heart of a dispersed people and fuelled their unity and hope . . . the Caribbean was unequivocally a part of English cricket too. Like the English health and transport systems, it could not function effectively without the essential Caribbean contribution. Lara's achievement had also been integrally linked to the diaspora: it was something much more than a routine meeting of two sporting nations; it transcended a historically-charged confrontation between the ex-colonizers and the decolonized. Now the Caribbean was on both sides (1995: 32–33).

**The Contemporary Pattern of African-Caribbean Cricketing Participation**

Having established both the historical and current significance of cricket to notions of English national identity, and the centrality of the game in discussions of inclusion/exclusion of immigrants in British society, we are now in a position to look more carefully at the contemporary experiences of African-Caribbean players in the elite level of the game. More particularly, how does membership of this minority ethnic group influence an individual's playing experiences?

The scale of African-Caribbean sports participation has led to the popular assumption that, as an area of social life, sport is relatively free from 'racial' discrimination. However, many sociologists have
questioned whether it is correct to equate this representation with an absence of discrimination. Initiated by Loy and Elvogue (1970), a series of studies has illustrated how, in a variety of team sports, there is a tendency for members of minority ethnic groups to experience 'stacking'; that is to say, sportspeople of African-Caribbean, Asian, Latin-American descent, etc., tend to be disproportionately over-represented in certain roles whilst remaining somewhat excluded from others. Further, the tendency is for sportspeople from minority ethnic groups to be 'stacked' into roles which can be classified as relatively peripheral and/or less significant to the outcome of the game whilst, concomitantly, being excluded from those positions which are deemed to be the most 'central' or tactically significant.

However, the structural and organizational characteristics of cricket mean that such theories cannot be easily and simply supplanted onto the game. Cricket is a bat and ball-based game (not unlike baseball) in which all players bat and roughly half the players bowl (pitch). However, it is common for players to be selected and therefore categorized in the following way: as batters, bowlers, all-rounders (non-specialists) or wicketkeepers (catchers). Although there is some overlap, bowlers can be further subdivided into those bowlers who, in order to defeat the batter, rely largely on pace (fast, fast-medium and medium paced bowlers) and those who rely largely on the ball spinning when it bounces (slow or spin bowlers). In contrast to baseball, fielding positions in cricket are relatively fluid in nature and, consequently, do not reflect specialist abilities. One player may occupy a number of fielding positions in a game and, as a result (although the role of wicket-keeper, which is a more-or-less permanent position, is an exception to this rule), fielding positions are not generally used to classify players. Moreover, cricket at the domestic and international level consists of two basic forms. First-class cricket is the traditional, and as the name would imply, higher status form of the game. First-class games, in which teams may bat for up to two innings each, normally take place over a period of three to five days. More recently, limited-overs cricket has developed as a shorter and commercially more profitable form of the game. In this latter form of the game each team bats for only one innings, to be completed within a set number of overs and, weather permitting, concluded within a single day. At the elite level in Britain, these two forms of the game are organized around competitions for 18 counties and series of matches in which national teams play each other. County playing staffs are predominantly made up of England-qualified players although, since the early twentieth century, regulations for the employment of 'overseas' (that is, non-England qualified) players have been in place. These restrictions have varied
An Eliasian or Process Sociological Analysis of Cricket

Table 1 British-African-Caribbean Involvement in County Cricket

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>African-Caribbean Players</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Batsman</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fast/Medium Bowler</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>69.6</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slow/Spin Bowler</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All-rounder</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wicket keeper</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>342</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

over time but currently counties are restricted to the registration of only one overseas player per season.

Within the different game forms, and the different levels of competition, African-Caribbean representation has been negotiated in various ways. In particular (see Table 1) this can be seen in terms of the positional representation of England-qualified (i.e. not overseas) African-Caribbeans in British county cricket.11 Firstly we might note that, in contrast to the make-up of the British population as a whole (of which only 1.6 percent describe themselves as Black Caribbean (CRE, 1999)), this ethnic group is considerably 'over-represented' amongst professional cricketers as a whole. Secondly we can see that of those British-African-Caribbeans who play cricket for county teams, a disproportionately high number (69.6, 55.6 and 50.0 percent in 1990, 1995 and 2000 respectively) play primarily as fast/fast medium paced bowlers. In contrast, around 25% of all players filled this position between 1990 and 2000. Concomitantly, relatively few blacks played primarily as batsmen in these years (13.0, 16.6 and 12.5 percent respectively). This, then, is a clear indication that in cricket, as in many other team sports, ethnic minority players are stacked in specific positions.12

As Table 2 shows, this pattern is even more pronounced at the highest level of the game. Since Roland Butcher became the first African-Caribbean cricketer to represent England in 1980/81 (atypically, Butcher was primarily a batsman) thirteen other African-Caribbean cricketers have followed in his footsteps. Significantly, between eight and ten of this total of fifteen (53.3
and 66.7 percent) have been selected primarily as fast/medium fast bowlers whilst only four (26.6 per cent) have been selected primarily as batters.\footnote{13}

Thirdly and finally, we can see that the participation of black cricketing migrants in the British county game follows a similar pattern, though perhaps one which is subject to greater and more rapid change (Table 3). The data in this regard are rather more complex than for England-qualified African-Caribbean players because there are a number of variables which need to be taken into consideration when analysing the findings. Firstly, every year a touring team from at least one of the test playing nations plays a series of matches in England which effectively excludes the top players from that country (usually a touring squad will consist of 16 players) from being available to play county cricket during that season. In 1990 England played against India and New Zealand, in 1993 against Australia, in 1995 against the West Indies, and in 1999 against New Zealand again.\footnote{14} Secondly, as already noted, restrictions regarding the number of overseas players who could be registered to play for a county team have changed. In particular this accounts for the reduction in the number of overseas players since 1990. Finally, the type of overseas players sought by counties partly reflects the relative strengths of international teams over the period as well as world wide tactical trends. More particularly, there has

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### Table 2 British-African-Caribbean involvement in the English National Cricket Team (Figures are correct up to September 30th 2000)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Playing Role</th>
<th>Limited-overs Debut</th>
<th>Appearances</th>
<th>Test Debut</th>
<th>Appearances</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Butcher, R.</td>
<td>Batter</td>
<td>1980/81</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1980/81</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cowans, N.G.</td>
<td>Fast-bowler</td>
<td>1982/83</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>1982/83</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slack, W.N.</td>
<td>Batter</td>
<td>1985/86</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1985/86</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small, G.C.</td>
<td>Fast-bowler</td>
<td>1986/87</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>1986</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>De Freitas, P.A.J.</td>
<td>Fast-bowler/All Rounder</td>
<td>1986/87</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>1986/87</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lawrence, D.V.</td>
<td>Fast-bowler</td>
<td>1991</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1988</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lynch, M.</td>
<td>Batter</td>
<td>1988</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1989</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lewis, C.C.</td>
<td>Fast-bowler/All-rounder</td>
<td>1989/90</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>1990</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Williams, N.F.</td>
<td>Fast-bowler</td>
<td>1990</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1994</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benjamin, J.E.</td>
<td>Fast-bowler</td>
<td>1994/95</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1994</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Butcher, M.</td>
<td>Batter</td>
<td>1997</td>
<td>27</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alleyne, M.</td>
<td>All-rounder</td>
<td>1998/99</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3 Overseas Players Employed by Counties for Selected Seasons, 1990–1999

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National Qualification</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Primary Playing Roles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1990</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Indies</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10 Fast-bowlers, 2 Batters, 1 All-rounders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2 Fast-Bowlers, 1 Batter, 1 All-rounder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1 Batter, 1 All-rounder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1 All-rounder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1 All-rounder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zimbabwe</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1 Batter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>22</td>
<td>12 Fast-Bowlers, 5 Batters, 5 All-rounders</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **1993**               |     |                       |
| West Indies            | 12  | 7 Fast-bowlers, 3 Batters, 2 All-rounders |
| Pakistan               | 4   | 2 Fast-bowlers, 1 Batter, 1 Spin bowler |
| New Zealand            | 1   | 1 Fast-bowler          |
| South Africa           | 1   | 1 Fast-bowler          |
| **Total**              | 18  | 11 Fast-bowlers, 4 Batters, 2 All-rounders, 1 Spin bowler |

| **1995**               |     |                       |
| Australia              | 3   | 3 Batters              |
| India                  | 3   | 1 Fast-bowler, 1 All-rounder, 1 Spin Bowler |
| Pakistan               | 3   | 1 Fast-bowler, 1 All-rounder, 1 Spin Bowler |
| South Africa           | 3   | 2 Batters, 1 Fast-Bowler |
| West Indies            | 2   | 1 Fast-Bowler, 1 All-rounder |
| New Zealand            | 2   | 1 Fast-Bowler, 1 All-rounder |
| Sri Lanka              | 1   | 1 Batter              |
| **Total**              | 17  | 6 Batters, 5 Fast-bowlers, 4 All-rounders, 2 Spin bowler |

| **1999**               |     |                       |
| Australia              | 12  | 10 Batters, 1 Fast-Bowler, 1 All-Rounder |
| South Africa           | 2   | 1 Fast-bowler, 1 All-Rounder |
| West Indies            | 2   | 2 Fast-bowlers         |
| Pakistan               | 1   | 1 Spin Bowler          |
| Sri Lanka              | 1   | 1 Spin Bowler          |
| **Total**              | 18  | 10 Batters, 4 Fast-bowlers, 2 All-rounders, 2 Spin bowler |

* Data from 1993 are adapted from Maguire and Stead (1996).

been a shift in recent years from a reliance on fast bowlers towards the increasing use of spin bowlers in test matches. Bearing these points in mind, we can see that whilst overseas players from the West Indies were particularly prevalent in the early 1990s, since then Australian cricket migrants have become ascendant. Moreover there has also been a significant shift away from counties acquiring fast/fast medium bowlers as migrant players and a move towards the employment of overseas batters.

More pertinent for our purposes here, however, it can be seen that during the 1990s, when West Indian players have been employed in county cricket, it has predominantly been the fast/fast medium
bowlers who have been recruited. That is to say, ten out of the thirteen West Indian players in county cricket in 1990, seven out of the twelve in 1993, one out of the two in 1995 (when the West Indies toured Britain) and both of the West Indians on county playing staffs in 1999, were fast/medium fast bowlers. In total, of the twenty-nine instances of a West Indian player being employed for a season by an English county, twenty (68.9 percent) were selected because of their abilities as fast/fast medium bowlers. The pattern has been far from unilinear. When greater numbers of overseas players were allowed in the English game, in effect almost all West Indian international players were employed in county cricket and hence the pattern was less pronounced. More recently, stricter regulations have applied. However, when this trend was at its zenith (circa 1990) 'journeymen' fast bowlers (e.g. George Ferris) were employed by counties whereas internationally renowned batsmen (e.g. Viv Richards, Richie Richardson) were not.

**Explaining the Pattern: the Development of Cricket in England**

Emerging from these data, therefore, is a distinct pattern of African-Caribbean representation in elite English cricket. Whether in terms of the England-qualified players who make up the bulk of county squads, the elite few who play for the national side, or the international 'stars' who are hand-picked from nations around the world, players of African-Caribbean descent have played primarily in the role of fast/fast medium bowler. Whilst an important finding from the somewhat rudimentary time-series data presented above is that there has been an apparent breaking down of the pattern of stacking, it remains the case that the occupation of playing positions is heavily influenced by 'racial' group membership. This is not to say, of course, that there has been a coordinated attempt on the part of school teachers, county cricket coaches or international selectors to construct this pattern of participation; rather, what we see is an unintended consequence of the combined actions of a range of disparate people.

As noted earlier, such a pattern exists in a range of team sports and is often explained with reference to the commonly held (yet apparently false) beliefs about the different physical and mental capabilities of supposedly separate biological 'races'. What is significant and distinct about 'stacking' in cricket, however, is that a historical precedent of 'stacking' exists, namely the distinction between players from upper and lower social classes; that is, between gentlemen amateurs and professional players. Moreover, it is only with reference to this historical development that contemporary 'racial' stacking in cricket can be explained.
As Dunning and Sheard have noted, professional cricket 'started when members of the aristocracy and gentry hired players, nominally as household servants or for work on their estates, but, in fact, principally on account of their cricketing skills' (1976: 57). Such was the status security of the landed classes of eighteenth century England that, in contrast to the later development of soccer and rugby, initially at least, professionalism in cricket was viewed as neither morally suspect nor socially problematic. However, urbanization and industrialization in the nineteenth century gradually eroded the social dominance of the landed classes and, as their social status became increasingly less secure, so the issue of professionalism in cricket grew in prominence. While in cricket these terms [amateur and professional] had originally only indicated whether a player accepted payment for his services, they soon came to denote ... the whole gamut of social relationships on and off the field' (Brookes 1978: 85). Until the distinction between amateurs and professionals was abolished in 1962, the social distance between the two groups was maintained by various status-emphasizing practices. Examples of such 'symbolic subordination' included the use of separate gates for entering and exiting the playing field, the listing on scorecards of the professional's initials after, and the amateur's initials before, the surname, and the use of separate, usually inferior, travel and changing facilities by the professionals. Professionals were expected to help with the preparation of the playing area and to bowl to the amateur batsman in the 'nets' (practice pitches) in order to provide him with practice (Dunning and Sheard 1976: 58–9). Before the Second World War professionals were usually expected to address an amateur as either 'Mr' or 'Sir'.

The social distance between amateurs and professionals was also maintained by a separation of playing roles. Professional players were subordinated to an amateur captain selected on the grounds of social status rather than, and often despite, playing and tactical ability. With one exception, all the captains of county sides until 1939 were amateurs. At the international level, Len Hutton, in 1952, became the first professional to captain England since the 1880s. Furthermore, as Brookes notes, 'by 1850 the pattern of amateur batsmen and professional bowlers was well established' (1978: 92). Whilst all current players are paid for playing, the legacy of the amateur/professional, gentleman/player relationship remains strong to this day. It remains the case that of the many people who have been knighted for their services to cricket, only two (Sir Alec Bedser and Sir Richard Hadlee) have primarily been bowlers.
Explaining the Pattern: the Development of Cricket in the Caribbean

The status differences attached to the respective playing roles, and the British-African-Caribbean stacking in lower status roles both have a strong historical precedent in Caribbean cricket. According to Yelvington (1990: 2), the history of cricket in the Caribbean is a tale of 'the gradual supplanting of whites by blacks on the field and in society'. However, as the following section will show, this was not a simple, linear process characterized solely by dominance and subordination. Rather, blacks negotiated their way and, at times, were also incorporated into the game by whites whilst the various groups of non-whites also sought to discriminate against each other. As Stoddart (1998: 81) notes, it is 'a complex mixture of accommodation and resistance ... (with) as many struggles over boundaries within and between the lower ranked social groupings as there were within the white elite'. Indeed, C.L.R. James's (1963) seminal book, Beyond a Boundary, is essentially an autobiographical discussion of the seeming contradiction between an appreciation, acceptance and love of cricket (and the values and behavioural mores associated with the game), and a lifetime of resistance against the subordination of non-whites under Imperial rule. The conflict between non-whites and between the different islands in the West Indies which served to constrain independence for the region, is a recurring theme. Significantly, however, the fast bowling of blacks features as a central aspect in this broader process of negotiation.

Beckles (1995a: 37) notes that the first references to cricket in the West Indian press appeared in the Barbados Mercury and Bridgetown Gazette in June 1806 and January 1807. The second of these two reports was an announcement of a dinner being held at the St. Ann's Garrison Cricket Club. Two years later, the Gazette publicized a 'grand cricket match' to be played between the Officers of the Royal West Indies Rangers and Officers of the Third West Indian Regiment for 55 guineas a side. These, and subsequent, press reports highlight the central role of the military in the organization of the early game in the region. The St. Ann's Garrison Cricket Club in particular was prominent in this development (indeed Beckles refers to it as a 'pioneering West Indian social institution' (1995a: 37)) although, as Stoddart (1998: 79) notes, it was common for cricket fields to form the central feature of garrisons throughout the Caribbean.

Initially members of the military played between and amongst themselves. However, during the period of slavery, blacks had been encouraged to use what 'leisure time' they had 'constructively'.

...
Pursuits perceived as a threat (and this can be taken to mean almost any activity which was unfamiliar to whites) were prohibited. Consequently, those activities which were familiar (like cricket) formed the few permissible pastimes available to slaves. This is not to say, of course, that the slaves were entirely compliant in this adoption; many (e.g. Yelvington 1990) have argued that there may have been elements within the play of blacks which effectively sought to satirize the colonizers' ways. Gradually, however, the slaves were 'incorporated' into the leisure pursuits of the military officers, albeit on a very limited basis. As Yelvington (1990: 2) notes, blacks 'performed restrictive roles. At first they were "allowed" to prepare pitches ... and a few were "allowed" only to bowl and retrieve batted balls during practice sessions'. Thus from this early stage, the cricketing experiences of blacks featured bowling as a central characteristic and, in this respect, they performed a similar role to that of the early professionals in English cricket.

As previously noted, people throughout the former British Empire adopted cricket as a signifier of inclusion. However, in the West Indies specifically, there were three central reasons for this. Firstly cricket allowed the white community to demonstrate their loyalty to the Crown. Secondly, performances on the field of play also served to prove that the heat of the tropics had not led to a degeneration of English stock (Stoddart 1995a: 15), and thirdly, once slavery was abolished (in 1838) cricket served to distance the elite from the "uncivilized" indigenes' (Beckles 1995a: 34). As Beckles (1995a: 36) puts it: 'In exactly the same way that whites defined a political system in which less than 10 per cent of the population was enfranchised as democratic, a place was found for blacks within the cricket culture that enhanced the divisions of labour insisted upon by the plantations.'

These factors contributed to cricket's dramatic spread in the Caribbean during the second half of the nineteenth century. The major centres of cricket - clubs and schools - were organized on the basis of social ranking with occupation, wealth and colour, rather than playing ability, the determinants of membership. In Barbados, for instance, the sons of the white elite (and a few blacks who received scholarships) went to Harrison College, the sons of the plantocracy went to Lodge and the sons of the emergent middle class coloureds joined white pupils at Combermere. Once they left school, each had their respective clubs to join; old boys from Harrison joined the Wanderers club if they were white or joined Spartan if they were black; Lodge old boys joined Pickwick, and black and white Combermere old boys joined Empire and Pickwick respectively (Stoddart 1995b: 71). Similar situations existed in Guyana, where the Georgetown Cricket Club was dominated by
the Portuguese elite, in Trinidad (James 1963), and in Jamaica where the highly prestigious Kingston Cricket Club had restrictive policies preserving the club as a bastion for whites (St. Pierre 1995: 109). However, cricket clubs run by, and for, non-whites operated similar exclusionary policies. In Jamaica the Melbourne club, dominated by the coloured professional classes, instituted a complex fee structure which effectively, if not officially, limited membership.

Such exclusionary practices were mirrored in the game's competitive structures. The Barbados Cricket Committee (BCC), established in the late 19th century, was made up almost entirely of whites. Stoddart (1995b: 67) describes the BCC as 'a self-appointed, self-constituted, self-selected and self-perpetuated group', whose role was to organize local competitions and host touring teams. Although the BCC was superseded by the Barbados Cricket Association in 1933, such was the continuing feeling of exclusion amongst lower and working class blacks that the Barbados Cricket League was established three years later to cater for the cricketing needs of this section of the population. Similarly, where the concentration of Chinese and Indian populations was large enough, they too established leagues of their own (Stoddart 1995c: 241).

After the incorporation of black slaves into military cricket practice and the post-slavery establishment of cricket clubs for blacks, the next significant dynamic in this process of 'gradual supplanting' was the institutionalization of inter-island competition. The first such match (between Demerera and Barbados) was staged in 1865 but by 1896 St. Kitts, Antigua, Trinidad, Jamaica, St. Vincent and St. Lucia had all joined the regional cricketing network (Beckles 1995c: 193–194). As with intra-island competitions these games were organized and played almost exclusively by whites. Significantly, however, inter-regional fixtures came to be seen as forums in which the elites could demonstrate their superiority over their counterparts in other territories. Initially, the major consequence of this for non-whites was that an increasing amount of integration between white and non-white players within the various colonies took place. Whilst remaining largely excluded from the formal structure of both intra- and inter-island competitions, 'friendly' games between black teams and the white elite were organized in an effort to sharpen the skills of the white representative players. Status-emphasizing practices, similar to those used in England, were employed during this early phase of integration; for instance a degree of distance was maintained by the exclusion of black players from clubhouse refreshment breaks during and after the game. More regularly, blacks began to be employed on an individual basis with the role of the professional in English cricket as the template for their employment. As St. Pierre (1995: 108) states, 'in Barbados . . . the
An Eliasian or Process Sociological Analysis of Cricket

caste-like stratification system, based on race/colour, allotted to black Barbadians – they were known as “professionals” – the role of bowlers and fetchers of balls delivered during practice sessions in which whites batted and blacks bowled. By 1895, Stoddart (1995a: 21) notes, the six Barbadian clubs employed fourteen (black) ground staff who performed similar bowling and pitch preparation duties to their white professional counterparts in England.

However, these regional matches plus, from 1895, the reciprocal tours to and from England, 'signaled the beginning of the non-racial democratizing process in selection policy' (Beckles 1995c: 197). The inclusion of black players enabled territories such as Trinidad to compete with the most powerful cricketing teams such as Barbados. Moreover, English administrators such as Pelham Warner noted that unless black players were selected for the West Indian team the region would remain far behind the 'Mother Country' in playing terms and when the West Indies side came to England they would risk having embarrassing defeats inflicted upon them by the English counties. Such comments had resonance for white West Indians because, as noted above, a major reason for playing cricket was to prove that the Caribbean climate had not resulted in the colonizers' physical decline (though clearly the notion of using black players to demonstrate that the whites had not physically declined is fraught with contradictions). However, as the white elite also sought, through cricket, to distance themselves socially from the non-white population, the entry of blacks into this previously all-white domain was highly contested. The Guyanese representative side remained dominated by the members of the Georgetown Cricket Club and was always captained by a white or Portuguese player from that club. During the 1890s, Barbados refused to play Trinidad in the Challenge Cup if their team included black players (Beckles 1995c: 197) and, although the skills of the Barbadian professional, William Shepherd, were particularly influential in gaining black representation against touring teams from 1902 onwards, calls for the inclusion of black professionals in the Barbados Cup competition were consistently rejected on social, rather than 'sporting' grounds.

The growing desire for playing success meant that Pelham Warner’s words were heeded when the 1900 West Indian tour party to England was selected; the party consisted of fifteen players, five of whom were black. This initial tour was granted only ‘second class’ status and most of the games were lost but, interestingly, of the five black players, three were bowlers and two were all-rounders. When the subsequent tour party to England was selected in 1906, the team consisted of seven black and seven white players. This time, the MCC decreed that all games would have 'first-class' status. Again, the
composition of the tour party provides evidence of positional segregation of black and white players. Four of the seven whites were picked primarily as batsmen whilst four of the seven blacks were picked primarily as bowlers.

Yet despite the growing number of blacks playing at all levels of West Indian cricket, selection committees, like that in Barbados, rarely included black or 'coloured' members. Moreover, as Stoddart (1998: 85) notes, there were fierce debates over the selection of regional sides until well into the 1920s. James (1963: 88–103) for instance, discusses the non-selection of the black Trinidadian Wilton St. Hill for the 1923 tour to England. Significantly St. Hill was primarily a batsman. The inclusion of black bowlers was less contentious although judgements about appropriate temperament meant that some bowlers fared better than others in this regard. As a result of the limited opportunities for non-white players in the Caribbean, talented black players began to look elsewhere for employment. Some played for teams in North America but most came to Britain. Due in part to the stricter residency regulations in county cricket, but also to the greater status exclusivity of county cricket in England in the 1920s, cricketers from the Caribbean found it easier to obtain contracts in the Lancashire League. Caribbean cricketing migrants excelled in a variety of roles – e.g. George Francis as a fast bowler, Learie Constantine as an all-rounder and George Headley as a batsman – but despite this they, like their professional counterparts in county cricket, were all expected to perform bowling, coaching and ground preparation duties. Although the greater openness of the Lancashire League facilitated the early participation of migrant professionals from the Caribbean such players, whilst receiving considerable kudos and notoriety within the local community, were assimilated into British cricket in the traditional position of the professional and as such had social roles which more closely resembled lower status bowlers than higher status batsmen.

Thus, black Caribbean cricketers began to represent their home territories, the region as a whole, and even towns in the North of England but certain cricketing roles remained more open to non-white participants than did others. Whilst the employment of blacks as groundsmen and bowlers became common, batting and the captaincy remained somewhat 'out of bounds'. The inclusion of black players, it seems, was crucial to improving West Indian playing standards and, consequently, full test status was granted in 1928. St Pierre (1995) has undertaken an interesting analysis of the relative performances of whites and non-whites in early test matches which illustrates how significant the performances of blacks continued to be to the overall playing success of the side. Between
1928 and 1960 the West Indies and England played each other in ten series of matches. During this time no white West Indian made a double or single century and only on twenty-five occasions did one make fifty runs in an innings. In contrast, non-white West Indians made seven double, twenty-nine single and fifty-six half centuries. Similarly white West Indians took four or more wickets in an innings only twice whereas non-white West Indians achieved this on forty-four occasions. St. Pierre (1995: 110) concludes that, 'since whites were not normally picked as bowlers and they did not perform as batsmen, then they must have been picked for some other reason'; that is to say, as administrators and as leaders.

Moreover, from 1928 to 1960, with one exception, every manager, captain and vice captain on tour to England was white. In 1947-48 there was much political manoeuvring in order to install the black batsman George Headley as captain of the Jamaican team to play England. The major 'breakthrough', though, came in 1960 when the black Barbadian, Frank Worrell was chosen to captain the West Indies side on a tour to Australia. Coming at a time when the case for a single, region-unifying, West Indian government was being made at its most vociferous (see James 1963: 217-243), Worrell's potential appointment assumed considerable social significance. By this time all the region's political leaders were black and exclusion from the cricket captaincy increasingly came to be seen as untenable. Pro-Worrell campaigners noted that he had regularly captained teams representing the Commonwealth and had enjoyed considerable success. As James (1963: 224) noted, 'in cricket these sentiments are at their most acute because everyone can see and judge'. It is, of course, interesting to note that Worrell was primarily a batter and, although he came from a relative humble background, he had acquired an English university degree and had become 'acceptable within establishment circles in the Caribbean' (Stoddart 1995c: 249).

The captaincy of the West Indian team by a black player, and consequently the removal of all white players from the side, signaled a new phase of selection policy guided more than ever by meritocratic principles. The side increasingly came to dominate world cricket culminating in a period from 1980 to 1994 when the West Indies won an unprecedented 79 percent of all tests played and won sixteen out of twenty-four test series, drawing seven others and losing only one (Wilde 1994: 176). More particularly the West Indies continually and comprehensively beat the England cricket team, winning all five tests in England in 1984, in the Caribbean in 1985/86 and four out of five tests in England in 1988. The West Indian team was now entirely composed of black players but, tellingly, the method by which the team dominated world cricket was through
their use of fast bowlers. There were, of course, some very talented West Indian batsmen at this time but, as Wilde's analysis of the period between 1974 and 1994 shows, the side's dominance was based on fast bowling. Of all the fast bowlers who achieved fifty test wickets (and therefore relative success at this level) over a third (nine out of twenty-six) were West Indian. Moreover, aggression, violence and injury (to the batter) are inextricably linked to fast bowling; Patterson (1995: 145) talks of 'the beautiful, sweet violence of the act' of fast bowling where, so often, 'it is “us” versus “them”'. "Us" constitutes the black masses. "Them" is everything else – the privileged, the oppressor, the alien, dominant culture'. In this the West Indies also dominated. In all test matches played throughout the world between 1974 and 1994, a total of 88 batsmen retired from their innings through injury (or sometimes simply because of intimidation). Of these almost half (40) retired whilst playing against the West Indies.

The reliance on fast bowling was not a specifically West Indian tactical innovation; precedents had been set by England in the infamous 'Bodyline' tour to Australia in 1932/33 whilst the modern era of fast bowling dominance is often attributed to Australia's deployment of Lillee and Thomson during England's tour in 1974/75. However, the West Indies had the personnel both to adopt and refine this method (for example, by using a battery of four as opposed to the usual two fast bowlers). Interestingly, West Indians had previously tried variants of this fast bowling tactic but had censored themselves due to actual or perceived criticisms of status violation. During the 1926 England tour to the West Indies, England bowled bouncers\(^{19}\) to the (white) West Indian captain, H.B.G. Austin. When the West Indies' Learie Constantine retaliated in kind and bowled bouncers at the England captain, the Hon. F.S.G. Calthorpe, he was implored by his colleagues to stop. James (1963: 111–112) recalls:

'\textit{Stop it, Learie!} we told him. He replied: 'What's wrong with you? It is cricket.' I told him bluntly: 'Do not bump the ball at that man. He is the MCC captain, captain of an English county and an English Aristocrat. The bowling is obviously too fast for him, and if you hit him and knock him down they'll be a hell of a row and we don't want to see you in any mess. Stop it!'

Constantine also recalled the 1933 tour to England during which he resented 'the blindness of some or our critics who professed to see danger in those balls (bouncers) when we put them down and not when English players bowled them' (cited in Marqusee 1998: 167). Twenty-five years later Ray Gilchrist was ostracized from the West Indian team and sent home from the tour of Pakistan and India for what was deemed, by West Indian cricket administrators, to be an inappropriate use of bouncers. These incidents illustrate that the
West Indian post-1974 dominance of world cricket, facilitated as it was through a reliance on fast bowling, signaled a final stage in the 'gradual supplanting of whites by blacks'. By 1991 the ICC had initiated rule changes which served to curb the dominance of fast bowling. However, rather than censoring themselves, the West Indian authorities actively and openly opposed the new rule changes. Clyde Walcott, President of the West Indian Cricket Board called it 'a fundamental and unnecessary change in the way the game is played'. The West Indian cricket captain, Vivian Richards, spoke of racism and hypocrisy: 'I know damn well that there are people at the top of the cricketing establishment who feel that the West Indies have been doing too well for too long' (Wilde 1994: 195).

Conclusion

This paper has outlined the central role which cricket plays in the generation of notions of English national identity and the influence this has had throughout the British Empire more widely. The game continues to feature in debates over the U.K.'s changing role within the world and in debates over the role of ethnic minorities within the U.K. However, evidence of the involvement of African-Caribbean cricketers in the English game illustrates that the process remains one of partially restricted access.

The current pattern of African-Caribbean cricketers, however, can only be understood when contextualized historically. The development of cricket in the West Indies is well-documented and illustrates a negotiated process of black 'liberation' from white 'rule'. Central to this process is a much underplayed and seldom recognized power resource, namely sporting ability. The cricketing ability of blacks was highly significant in that it allowed the subservient group to exploit divisions between the various groups who constituted the white elite. Had whites not been in competition with their counterparts on other islands, or had they not felt the need to prove themselves to the dominant groups back in the 'Mother Country', it is unlikely that blacks would have made the impact on cricket that they did. This impact, however, has always been subject to a degree of control by the white elite and the role and social status of black players exhibits many parallels to the class relations which, historically, have characterized the English game. These class relations are also well-documented but the significance of this analysis is that it serves to bring these two strands of literature together.

Furthermore, it is evident that the playing role of fast bowler is central to the development of African-Caribbean cricket. Through a monopolization of the role of fast bowler, blacks firstly acquired
An Eliasian or Process Sociological Analysis of Cricket

representation in the West Indian team, and latterly supremacy in the world game. Given the historical precedent, and given the success which African-Caribbeans have had in this, albeit somewhat limited, role it is highly understandable that the 'stacking' of British-African-Caribbeans in cricket has taken a similar form. Whilst it is perhaps not surprising that the English class system influenced the early development of cricket in the Caribbean, its continued role in structuring the careers of British-African-Caribbean cricketers reveals much about the continued prejudice and discrimination which such players face. It may well be that British-African-Caribbean youngsters see West Indian fast bowlers as suitable role models, but it would also appear to be the case that people within British cricket use this historical pattern as a basis for the ('racial') stereotyping of contemporary players. As noted in the introductory sections to this paper, cricket has been used as a vehicle to question the extent of the integration of British ethnic minorities into 'mainstream' society. The data discussed here illustrate the limited way in which that integration has been 'allowed', by people in the cricketing world, to take place.

Some (e.g. St. Pierre 1995; Stoddart 1998) have sought to explain the West Indian dominance of fast bowling, not in biological terms, but in terms of environmental influences. However, as can be seen above, a more adequate explanation is that this pattern is largely a consequence of the cultural legacy of Imperialism. Moreover social rather than environmental explanations can be seen to be rather more adequate if one also seeks to explain the British-African-Caribbean dominance of fast bowling in county cricket. That is to say, when environmental differences are neutralized, a similar pattern continues to exist. Cross-cultural evidence is also revealing. The first black players to play for the national sides of South Africa and Zimbabwe, Makhaya Ntini and Henry Olonga, are both fast bowlers as, indeed, was the first Samoan to play for the New Zealand national side, Murphy S'ua. A final anecdote in this regard relates to the British-African-Caribbean player, Dean Headley, who made his England cricket debut in 1996 (see Table 2). Dean Headley is the grandson of the aforementioned George Headley and the son of Ron Headley. George and Ron both played for the West Indies as batsmen; Dean, however, is a fast bowler.

Notes

1 The nation-state we refer to as the UK consists of four 'countries' – England, Scotland, Wales (which together constitute Great Britain) and Northern Ireland. Each has been held to have a more or less clearly distinguishable national identity yet Englishness, derived as it is from the
politically, economically and often sportingly dominant 'country', is often assumed (by the English in particular) to be synonymous with Britishness. Moreover, in the same way that British national identity is largely derived from the most powerful country within that group, so the identity of Englishness is largely derived from the most powerful group within that population, namely upper-middle class adult males.

2 This practice continued until 1989 when a decision was made that, in future, these positions would be subject to an election.

3 The term ‘test match’ was coined during England’s first tour to Australia in 1861–62 and is now used to describe full-length (five-day) international cricket matches between those countries whose players are deemed to have reached a sufficient standard of playing ability. The nations are listed here in the chronological order in which they were granted ‘test’ status which is, in itself, revealing of imperial and post-imperial relations.


5 Malcolm has played for England 40 times, taking 128 wickets at 37.09 runs apiece. This compares unfavourably with players such as Philip de Freitas (44-140-33.57), Dominic Cork (31-118-28.50), Andrew Caddick (37-140-27.34), Darren Gough (43-173-27.79) and Angus Fraser (46-177-27.32). No fast bowler who has played so many times for England in recent years has had such a poor wickets to runs average. However, Malcolm’s 9 wickets for 57 runs against South Africa in 1994 was, at the time, the fourth best bowling performance in the history of international test cricket.

6 Interestingly both of these criticisms implicitly touch upon the stereotypical characterization of blacks as physically adept but mentally lacking.

7 England did beat the West Indies, however, in the summer of 2000; their first series victory over the West Indies for 31 years.

8 For a comprehensive overview of studies of stacking in American sports, see Coakley (1998).

9 In contrast to baseball, a cricket ball is usually ‘pitched’, that is, delivered to the batsman via the ground.

10 An over consists of the bowling of six legal deliveries.

11 Data for English qualified players were gathered from the 1900, 1995 and 2000 editions of The Cricketers Who’s Who, an annual publication featuring career statistics, personal data, opinions about the game and, perhaps most importantly, a photograph from which ‘race’ could be categorized – however crudely – for ‘first-class’ county cricketers. For a fuller discussion of the methodology and findings, see Malcolm (1997).

12 One highly significant finding from this research, relates to the involvement of Asians in English cricket. Players from this ‘racial’ group are ‘stacked’ in the relatively high status position of batters. Malcolm (1997) argues that this pattern is related to different forms of colonization in the respective territories and, in particular, the enslavement which characterized the black Caribbean population compared to the property-owning Asian population of the sub-Continent.

13 These data highlight the problems in categorizing players according to playing role. All players bat, but how good a batter the bowler must be to be defined as an all-rounder is not clear. Moreover, players who might be defined as all-rounders at one level of the game, may not be at a higher level.

14 Cricket’s World Cup was held in England in 1999. As this involved all the top international cricket teams for a large part of the season many counties decided to select a player who did not play in the World Cup. The West Indies toured England in 2000 so data for this year have not been used.

15 Cricket in the West Indies, like most sports in most cultures, has been
dominated by males. The academic research in this area reflects this although, for a discussion of the role of females in West Indian cricket, see Beckles, 1995b.

16 Even as late as 1985 four of the thirteen executive officers on the BCA management committee were whites (Stoddart, 1995b: 67).

17 In 1923 Herman Griffiths was arguably the finest fast bowler in the Caribbean but H.B.G. Austin (the white captain) chose instead to travel to England with George Francis because he considered Francis more docile than Griffith.

18 The Lancashire League was, and still is, one of the premier non first-class cricket leagues in England and clubs in it continue to employ high prestige overseas international players as professionals.

19 A bouncer is literally a ball which bounces up from the pitch, towards the batter’s chest or head. It is also called a bumper or a ‘short-pitched’ ball.

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Reading 7

"Clean Bowled"? Cricket, Racism and Equal Opportunities

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‘Clean bowled?’ Cricket, racism and equal opportunities

Dominic Malcolm

Abstract This paper seeks to evaluate the ‘racial equality’ policy of the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB). A review of current research illustrates that much of the discrimination in the game is neither recognised nor addressed in this policy document. In light of the evidence presented, the paper concludes by arguing that to move closer towards equality of opportunity within cricket, not only must a range of current practices be reformed, but also the role of the ideological connections between Englishness, cricket and the ‘village green’ needs to be re-examined.

KEYWORDS: CRICKET; EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES; POLICY; MIGRANT WORKERS; RACISM

Introduction

English cricket underwent a major structural re-organisation in January 1997 when the Test and County Cricket Board (TCCB) and the National Cricket Association (NCA) were replaced by a single governing body, the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB). Designed to unify a previously disparate administration, the governing body’s first major policy document, Raising the Standard, stated that the ECB’s aim would be to create ‘a framework which allows every cricketer at every level – school children, club cricketers, County cricketers and Test players – to perform to their maximum potential’ (ECB 1997: 1). Yet, significantly, this document made no mention of British-black or British-Asian players, nor of the ethnicity-specific factors which can, and do, restrict the opportunities available to individuals who wish to take part in the game. This omission was particularly surprising given the relatively high profile ‘race’ issues have had in cricket in recent years – Norman Tebbit’s ‘cricket test’ and Robert Henderson’s ‘Is it in the blood?’ article being, perhaps, the two most notable instances.1 Partly by way of rectifying this omission, the ECB formed a multi-ethnic Racism Study Group (RSG) which, in November 1999, published Going Forward Together: A Report on Racial Equality in Cricket (ECB 1999). The report was based on a ‘broad consultative process’ and a questionnaire administered to 1,037 men and women from a range of age groups and ethnic backgrounds (though 70 per cent of the respondents were white). The RSG found that the majority believed that racism existed in English cricket (58 per cent of the whole sample, 71 per cent of non-white respondents), that 15 per cent had personally experienced racism in cricket and that 12 per cent felt that racism was ‘ingrained in cricket from the top-down’ (ECB 1999: 32).2 As the report was being compiled, the RSG launched an anti-racist poster campaign – ‘Racism Clean Bowled’ (later changed to ‘Clean Bowl Racism’) – to coincide with the 1999 Cricket World Cup; it also funded four inner-city/ethnic minority cricket development schemes and introduced equity training for ECB personnel and
sentatives of all County boards/clubs. Seventeen additional policy recommendations stemmed from the report which can be summarised into five broad categories:

- **Organisational** The ECB and affiliated clubs to have ‘open doors’ policies and codes of conduct for all related personnel including attempts to eliminate racist comment, action and/or the distribution of racist literature at, or near, cricket grounds. Policies to be supported by dedicated ‘senior’ staff and funding.

- **Educational** An expansion of the anti-racist poster campaign with distribution of literature to schools and clubs and at a range of international and domestic matches. Equity training for the ECB and county clubs and boards to be expanded.

- **Developmental (playing)** County boards to include ethnic minorities in their Development Plans ‘where those populations are significant in number’; to provide ethnic minority players and clubs with advice on funding to improve facilities and coaching programmes; to expand talent-spotting networks to embrace minority ethnic leagues and clubs; to seek action from local authorities with regard to improving access to facilities as well as their overall quality; and to actively encourage minority ethnic participation on county boards by ‘embracing and accepting diverse cultures’.

- **Developmental (spectating)** Attempts to be made to increase the number of minority ethnic spectators through the introduction of designated areas where musical instruments are allowed and the holding back of a percentage of tickets for test matches until, at most, one month before each match.

- **Monitoring** The ECB to commission evaluation and to establish national-/regional-/county-level fora to monitor anti-racist policies.

This policy shift brings cricket more into line with sports such as football and rugby league which have had relatively high profile anti-racist campaigns and policies for a number of years. Yet whilst the RSG considered that their consultative process had been ‘comprehensive and conclusive’ (ECB 1999: 5), the research reviewed here illustrates that various aspects of racial inequality in cricket are not addressed in the resultant policy document. Had the ECB drawn more comprehensively on published academic work in the area, a wider range of forms of racism would have been encompassed. The purpose of this paper, therefore, is to review aspects of racism in cricket – that is to say, the inclusion and exclusion which cricketing migrants and Britain’s minority ethnic groups face – at the various levels identified in *Raising the Standard*, and to evaluate the ECB’s racial equality policies in this light.

**Youth cricket**

Data relating to ethnic minorities in youth cricket are limited and derived from two studies in particular. Toms (1996) conducted research in a multi-ethnic, all male, inner London school and found that cricket, whether played in the playground, whilst representing the school or when playing for a club side out of school hours, was dominated by British South Asian children. In the six schools examined by MacDonald and Ugra (1998), limited evidence to support this ethnic participation bias was found (see below for a more detailed discussion). Moreover, in both surveys teachers showed a propensity to naturalise
this difference; one argued, 'cricket is very popular with Asian children and it is in their culture' (MacDonald and Ugra 1998: 50). The pupils in the respective surveys, however, differed markedly in their view of ethnic involvement in the game. Whilst MacDonald and Ugra found unanimous disagreement with this idea of an ethnic sporting divide, and some feeling that such a conception was itself racist (1998: 53), a number of boys to whom Toms spoke again naturalised cricket as the main participant sport of South Asians: 'Cricket's an Asian game, football's a white game and basketball's a black game. That's the way it is'; 'it's the culture isn't it' (Toms 1996: 106). Moreover, Toms also found evidence that racial stereotyping resulted in positional 'stacking'; that is, the dominance of particular positions (and a correlative absence from others) by players of specific ethnic/racial groups (the notion of stacking will be discussed in greater detail below). As one 16-year-old stated, 'the white boys are the batsmen and the "Takis" the bowlers' (Toms 1996: 107).

Whilst explicit mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion are not particularly pronounced in the cricketing context, the few studies available indicate that 'racial' inequality exists in schools and youth cricket. However, it is highly unlikely that the ECB's policy recommendations, aimed at condemning racist language and actions in schools cricket, will have much impact on this area. The belief, amongst both teachers and children, that different participation rates are a consequence of 'natural' or cultural difference will make them particularly resistant to change. Yet the policy proposal contains no explicit statement aimed at challenging the naturalisation of this form of inequality, or the appropriateness of certain ethnic groups dominating specific playing roles within cricket. Moreover, as I will presently demonstrate, similar patterns and attitudes are evident at all levels of the game, making a unified and comprehensive approach to tackling inequality imperative.

The grassroots of the game

More substantial research has been carried out into the adult 'grassroots' of the game. Two major studies have been published in recent years: Long et al.'s Crossing the Boundary (1997), which examined racism in local league cricket in Yorkshire, and MacDonald and Ugra's Anyone for Cricket? (1998), which investigated equal opportunities and cricket cultures in Essex and East London. The former report was based on a questionnaire mailed to 324 club secretaries in cricket leagues organised under the auspices of the Yorkshire Cricket Association (with a response rate of 36 per cent), 35 interviews with individual players (21 white, seven Asian, six African-Caribbean and one other) and two group interviews with umpires (11 white and one black). Anyone for Cricket was also based on a postal questionnaire, this time distributed via the Essex Cricket Association's routine mailing list, and consequently to both Association-affiliated and non-Association-affiliated clubs (which may have been partly responsible for the relatively poor response rate of 13 per cent). In addition to the research conducted in schools, MacDonald and Ugra used observation techniques and, as in the Yorkshire research, semi-structured interviews with players (18 white, 17 Asian, 10 black) and umpires (two white and two black).  

Both reports highlight considerable racial inequality and, more particularly, minority ethnic exclusion from the 'white' or 'English' cricketing world. MacDonald and Ugra argue that there are, in effect, two separate and distinct
An Eliasian or Process Sociological Analysis of Cricket

118

An Eliasian or Process Sociological Analysis of Cricket

cricket cultures in operation: a white, middle-aged, rural, county board-affiliated body of players and teams which play on good quality, privately rented cricket grounds in front of a handful of quiet and passive spectators; and a black and/or Asian cricket culture in which teams tend to be younger, urban, non-affiliated and play on poor quality pitches, hired from local authorities, with relatively large groups of vociferous spectators in attendance. The findings of the Yorkshire research only focused on affiliated players and teams yet this research also suggests that, even where a degree of integration has been achieved, significant levels of racial stereotyping and discrimination exist within the game.

According to MacDonald and Ugra (1998: 18), there were many white players who aspired to the ‘village green’ cricket stereotype, which they found ‘romantic’ and ‘quintessentially English’. For many, relaxation and the social side of the game, as opposed to winning, were major reasons for participating. White players described their approach to the game as ‘more cautious’ and more ‘thought-out’, and used terms such as ‘more flamboyant’, ‘aggressive’ and ‘more athletic’ to describe ‘black’ players (MacDonald and Ugra 1998: 18-19). Asian players were thought to be ‘wristy and stylish’ but played the type of ‘thought-out’ game played by whites. Similar perceptions existed in Yorkshire though there seemed to be something of an East-West split. White players from West Yorkshire argued, as some in the Essex survey did, that most of the differences were related to style, motivation and competitiveness (Long et al. 1997: 19-20).

A small number of white East Yorkshire respondents articulated beliefs about physical differences between ‘races’: ‘The West Indians are often fast bowlers and they seem to have tall builds, they appear quite elastic. They seem fitter and more powerful than tall English players. Mentally, English players handle pressure better but they are not so naturally talented’ (Long et al. 1997: 19).

Ethnically distinct playing characteristics were also described by black and Asian players but, crucially, using rather different terminology. Again, the majority rejected the idea of inherent physical differences between ‘races’, though notions of cultural difference were quite common amongst minority ethnic players in Essex and East London. ‘English’ cricket, for example, was described as ‘boring’, ‘slow’ and ‘soft’. White players were perceived to be ‘mechanical’ whereas black and Asian players described their own game as aggressively competitive with ‘natural ability’ more evident.

The predominance of notions of culturally based differences in playing style (and the relatively weak adherence to notions of biological difference), are illustrative of ‘new racism’ (Barker 1981) which, as Miles notes, ‘is seen largely, although not exclusively, to dispense with a notion of biological superiority/ inferiority, and to formulate a notion of the Other as being naturally different in cultural terms’ (1989: 64). The work of Long et al. and MacDonald and Ugra provides graphic and context-specific examples of the mobilisation of such a belief system. Whilst black and Asian cultural identities act as forms of resistance (that is to say, minority ethnic players tend to define their own cultural tradition – their perception of their own distinctive way of playing the game – as ‘superior’ to its ‘white’ or ‘English’ counterpart), many white cricketers, through an adherence to a stereotype of Englishness and village green cricket, appear to exhibit a further characteristic of ‘new racism’, namely, ‘the defence of the mythic “British/English way of life” in the face of attack from enemies outside and within’ (Solomos and Back 1996: 18).

This cultural separatism is concomitant with (perhaps even a bolstering
ideology of) an institutional separation in the form of ethnic-based clubs and leagues. MacDonald and Ugra (1998: 7) note that non-affiliated clubs in their survey had a significantly higher proportion of minority ethnic personnel (26 per cent) than did affiliated clubs (8 per cent) and go on to argue that their results show a link between the ethnic base of a club and its affiliation to the Essex Cricket Association. Whilst this was not an area probed in the Yorkshire research, the county has a well-publicised, and probably longer tradition of institutional cricket separatism than anywhere else in the UK. Named after the primary domestic competition in Pakistan, the Yorkshire Quaid-I-Azam League was founded in 1980 (Khan 1996: 13). An all-Asian league was established in Bradford in 1983 (Fleming 1991: 238). Yet it has only been more recently that the Inter-Island Amateur Cricket Cup, the Clive Lloyd Cup and the Sri Lankan League have been established in London (Marqusee 1998: 163-4). Given the evidence from other sports (in relation to football see e.g. Maguire 1988), it is not surprising that both studies found that minority ethnic managers and administrators were particularly under-represented in grassroots cricket (Long et al. 1997: 6; MacDonald and Ugra 1998: 11).

Moreover, both studies provided evidence of a process which 'naturalises social formations' – in this instance, cultural and institutional separation – 'in terms of a racial-cultural logic of belonging' (Solomos and Back 1996: 19). Most white respondents in Essex were unaware of the number of active black and Asian players in the region but, when researchers raised the subject, displayed a tendency to explain the separatism in terms of the individual choices made by black and Asian players. A system of 'voluntary apartheid' was perceived by white interviewees because, 'the social culture and environment after the (white) game was something they (black and Asian players) couldn't really join in'. The simplistic way in which 'the game' is self-evidently equated with 'the white/English game' is revealing of feelings of ownership and belonging. In contrast, black and Asian players described the separatism in terms of exclusion: 'What's the alternative? We can't get into white leagues' (MacDonald and Ugra 1998: 24). In contrast to notions of the voluntary nature of this apartheid, all bar two of the black and Asian Essex interviewees stated that they would like the opportunity to play in the 'English' leagues (MacDonald and Ugra 1998: 37).

MacDonald and Ugra highlight specific inter-personal and institutional racist practices which result in the exclusion of ethnic minorities from 'English' leagues. On an inter-personal level, it was felt that fixtures were refused by white club secretaries because of a perceived unwillingness of ethnic minority players to join the 'social side' of the 'English' game. One Asian respondent noted that he found it considerably easier to arrange fixtures with 'white' teams once he changed his side's name from Tunjabi XI to 'Striker's XI'. Another said, 'as soon as they know it's an Asian side [e.g. because of an accent or the request for vegetarian food] they will find an excuse' (MacDonald and Ugra 1998: 27). One (black) interviewee made a more explicit connection between cricketing cultures and exclusion; 'What can I say – is it bias? Maybe it's the way ... the spirit in which we approach our games' (1998: 31). On an institutional level, the criteria for league membership were also felt to have the consequence of excluding non-white teams. As noted above, sides with mainly black and Asian players tended to be more recently established, to lack resources and, consequently, to play on relatively poor, local-authority-owned, pitches. Some predominantly white teams, it was noted, 'refuse to play us because they say
pitches are not of a standard’ (MacDonald and Ugra 1998: 31). Other interviewees noted that, ‘When we first applied for the league they [the authorities] used to give us silly excuses; “You don’t have a sight screen”, “Oh, there isn’t a bar facility”, “Oh there isn’t any shower in the changing room” ... [they] make silly excuse, so they could stop you’ (MacDonald and Ugra 1998: 30). Others felt that the formal criteria were used to filter out certain types/groups of people; ‘what they look for is facilities; basically to keep out clubs they don’t want. It’s an old boy’s network’ (MacDonald and Ugra 1998: 31). The provision of alcohol was particularly problematic in arranging friendly fixtures. Bars were perceived (by white players) as an essential feature of the social side of the game (and for fund-raising), and fixtures were refused on the false assumption that all Asians abstained from drinking alcohol (MacDonald and Ugra 1998: 28-9).

Although the Yorkshire research sought only the views of ethnic minority players within County board-affiliated leagues, a similar perception of exclusion was evident. Yorkshire County Cricket Club (CCC) has, until recently, had a policy whereby only players born within the county were eligible for selection. Though many British-black and British-Asian cricketers would qualify under this birthplace regulation regardless, critics have long argued that the policy has been used as a way of excluding outsiders and, by implication, Yorkshire’s minority ethnic communities (Fleming 1991). Indeed, black and Asian youngsters in the Yorkshire research argued that Yorkshire CCC had not done enough to develop and encourage minority ethnic players (Long et al. 1997: 20–1). Some had personal experiences (‘I felt like a complete outsider ... and I hated it, I really hated it’), and others argued that practices were generally discriminatory: ‘The Asian or West Indian lad has to be twice as good as the English lad, but if he’s the same as an English lad the chances are that he’ll be left behind and the English lad will be given a chance’ (Long et al. 1997: 21). This perception was echoed in Essex, though more stress was placed upon exclusion from the scouting networks altogether, rather than discrimination within them; ‘you might be Brian Lara [but] no one is going to come down to watch, you know’ (MacDonald and Ugra 1998: 37).

In marked contrast to the experiences of racism discussed above, the prevalent view amongst respondents in both surveys, regardless of ethnicity, was that ‘the traditions of cricket seem to protect the game from the worst kinds of behaviour’ (Long et al. 1997: 18). Many argued that there was less racism in cricket than in most other sports, football in particular. This may be so, but within this broad agreement, noticeable differences were evident between the minority ethnic and the white respondents. Most white players accepted that racism in cricket was an issue, but felt that it was not a particularly serious problem. In both surveys, white respondents stressed that, as their club was open to all-comers, there were few problems of exclusion. Many white players and administrators forwarded the view that racism became an issue because of the presence of significant numbers of black and Asian players. Consequently it is the involvement of the ethnic minorities, as opposed to the attitudes of white players, which is problematised and becomes defined as a threat to the ‘smooth’ functioning of (the traditional power balance within) the game.

Whilst many of MacDonald and Ugra’s interviewees stated that they had never been racially abused in cricket, examples of racist language and racial abuse were included in both survey reports – ‘the guy turned around and said, “What kind of fucking Paki shot is that?” ’ (MacDonald and Ugra 1998: 33); ‘one...
player) came up to me during the innings and said “Get out you black bastard”’
(Long et al. 1997: 17–18). The authors of both reports comment that such
experiences were so regular, and so taken for granted, that respondents saw
them as inevitable and unremarkable (Long et al. 1997: 17; MacDonald and Ugra
1998: 32). Additionally, non-white players in both surveys, but more commonly
in the Essex research, felt that league officials favoured white players and teams.
A black Yorkshire respondent argued that most racism in cricket stemmed ‘from
the people in charge of the game, like the umpires. Constantly they make it plain
that ... they’re after you’ (Long et al. 1997: 18). Another man recalled a disci­
plinary meeting at which ‘the committee there were all English ... so whatever
their (a ‘white’) side said ... happened, they believed them. They didn’t believe
us.’ (MacDonald and Ugra 1998: 34). 

Thus, at the game’s ‘grassroots’, there are two distinct cricketing worlds,
divided at both cultural and institutional levels. There is, it seems, a general
assumption amongst white players – that is, the group which provides the
majority of personnel who administer official and affiliated cricket leagues – that
this ‘voluntary apartheid’ is largely a consequence of the choices made by
individuals and not of the practices, regulatory structures, or overt racism
of ‘white’ players and leagues. Furthermore, the ECB’s equal opportunities
policy appears to be largely based on an empathy with the perspective of the
‘white-established’, as opposed to the ‘minority ethnic-outsider’. The main
emphasis of the policy is directed at establishing ‘open door membership’
policies, of welcoming ‘ethnic minority clubs and leagues ... within their (official
leagues’) structures and environment’ (ECB 1999: 54). However, as noted above,
many white players believe that their clubs already meet with this recommenda­
tion. Although there are clearly identifiable practices which could be, and need
to be, addressed if the goal of a more integrated sport is to be met, there is no
explicitly stated requirement for clubs or leagues to review the potentially
discriminatory effects of current practices. Consequently, there is no overt
criticism of the most significant factors currently limiting minority ethnic partici­
pation in the game.

Until the consequences of such practices are highlighted it is unlikely that
effective change will occur. Minority ethnic groups express a belief that disad­
antage and exclusion are ingrained features of cricket, perceive racist incidents
as unremarkable, and demonstrate a lack of confidence in the authorities’
abilities or desire to redress this situation. In many respects these findings
parallel research carried out in the field of racially-motivated crimes and law
enforcement more broadly. Virdee argues that ‘low level’ racial harassment is
often perceived as unremarkable and therefore neither defined in such terms,
nor reported to the police by the victim (1997: 263); others have found that
sections of the minority ethnic population have little confidence in the ability of
the police to tackle problems of racist violence (Brown 1984). These perceptions
of public policing are mirrored in the officiating and regulation of the cricketing
world and, consequently, exclusion of ethnic minorities from the sport, and
specific parts of the sport, is likely to be equally resistant to change.

The semi-professional game
As we move towards the elite level of the game, we can see both similarities and
differences in the pattern of inequality. A further component of Long et al.’s
study was an examination of attitudes towards 'overseas' or migrant players in Yorkshire league cricket. They found that, whilst the vast majority of players interviewed felt that overseas players were beneficial to the game, antipathy was expressed by some administrators. The majority (52 per cent) disagreed with the statement that 'overseas players are having a negative impact on league cricket in Yorkshire', and although just 21 per cent supported this statement, far more (44 per cent) were of the opinion that professional players (a category into which, of course, a great many overseas players fall) should not be allowed (Long et al. 1997:11). The subtle and varied ways in which overseas players have been included in, and excluded from, cricket has a long history in the English game. Ever-present, however, have been concerns about social class. As Maguire and Stead note, 'restrictions on overseas players were as much to do with the vexed question of professionalism as they were to do with protecting indigenous English players' (1996: 4). Moreover, the status of overseas migrant players has recently risen in prominence in England as a whole, as the success of the England cricket team has waned. Meanwhile in Yorkshire, as noted above, the County's practice of only selecting Yorkshire-born players has increasingly come under attack.

Greenfield and Osborn's (1996) postal survey of secretaries of semi-professional cricket leagues produced very similar results to those of the Long et al. survey. Investigating the number of 'overseas' players and the variety of regulations regarding qualification rules, they argue that several distinct approaches to overseas players can be identified, 'ranging from the openly supportive ... to the downright hostile' (1996: 287). The exclusion of players, they note, tends to take place on the grounds of payment or nationality (often eligibility to play for England), but in the wording of league regulations money often overlaps with nationality and nationality overlaps with citizenship and/or residency.

Echoing the arguments already made about the discriminatory nature of some league membership criteria, Greenfield and Osborn argue that regulations restricting the participation of migrant players are used 'as a method of categorizing and operating exclusionary boundaries' (1996: 279). They continue: 'notions of mythical English village identity can then be raised to act as a vehicle of exclusion ... in short it becomes a pragmatic attempt to preserve the status quo' (Greenfield and Osborn 1996: 279). Yet this process of exclusion has wider ramifications for British-black and British-Asian players. Wider debates over (often stricter) immigration laws can heighten 'racial' tensions domestically. For instance Searle (1993: 53) has argued that popular press coverage of allegations of cheating levelled against the Pakistan cricket team in 1992 were linked to a heightening of racial tension and violence in society more generally.

Greenfield and Osborn (1996) argue that problems become most acute when the 'outsider' excels in the game and consequently 'he' is seen to upset 'our' game (drawing further parallels with the tendency in the grassroots game for racist abuse to occur when white players begin to lose). As noted above, it is the outsider, rather than the attitudes and actions of whites, who becomes problematised by the established group of (predominantly) white administrators. The same discontent would not be directed, Greenfield and Osborn claim, at either a low quality 'overseas' player, or a high quality England-qualified player. One consequence of regulations restricting the participation of migrant players is that
a strict line is being drawn between the native English player who does not require any ethnic definition and indeed is characterized as without ethnicity and other groups who do have ethnic origins ... three distinct groups are formed, the non-ethnic group, the acceptable ethnic group, and the overseas ethnic group (Greenfield and Osborn 1996: 285).

League regulations regarding overseas or migrant players are thus mechanisms which establish ethnic divisions between both 'home' and 'foreign' players, as well as reinforcing the divisions drawn between sections of the domestic population. In a recent example the Surrey Championship side, Spencer, were penalised for fielding an ineligible player (The Cricketer International, September 2000: 66). The club claimed that Maqsood Ahmed had told them that he had been resident in the UK for four years, but when his qualification was queried, the club could not substantiate this claim and lost contact with the player. Ahmed's eligibility remains unproven but, more pertinently, this example highlights the way in which such regulations provide an official or 'legitimate' avenue for the questioning of an individual's inclusion in English cricket. Such questions, no doubt, are asked of those players whose skin colour, accent, etc. do not conform to preconceived notions of characteristics appropriate to an Englishman or UK citizen. More specifically, eligibility criteria specify a group of people who do not 'belong' and closely identify a group of UK citizens who do (i.e. British-blacks and British-Asians) with that outsider group. Such regulations contribute to a process by which 'their' difference is used to enhance the sense of 'us' (Wallman 1979: 3), and provide an example of how, ' "Immigration" has become, par excellence, the name of race, a new name but one which is functionally equivalent to the old appellation' (Balibar and Wallerstein 1991: 222).

Yet the ECB's equal opportunities policies make no specific reference to the issues raised by Greenfield and Osborn and of league regulations regarding player qualification in particular. Cricket leagues are largely autonomous and free to make their own rules regarding affiliation and playing. But without greater centralised control, or at least the issuing of guidelines, the ECB cannot hope to tackle the forms of exclusion which result from this practice. Indeed the tacit acceptance of these regulations raises questions as to the exact nature of the 'open doors' policies which the ECB and affiliated clubs intend to implement. As Greenfield and Osborn conclude, 'we find at a local level attempts being made to preserve part of a fast disappearing rural idyll' (1996: 288). This indicates that MacDonald and Ugra's identification of a 'white' English cricket culture as underpinning a variety of exclusionary practices, is more widely in operation.

The professional game

Similar debates about the place and role of overseas players exist in professional, or county cricket and aspects of this will be discussed below. However, the majority of evidence of racism and exclusion at this level of the game has related to the behaviour of spectators. In addition to the controversy surrounding the Tebbit 'cricket test', violence occurred at the 1996 Headingley test (in Leeds) between England and Pakistan when ten arrests for public order offences were made and a further 180 spectators were ejected from the ground (Independent, 12 August 1996). Four years previously, a group of white spectators had thrown a mutilated pig's head into a group of Pakistan supporters (Marqusee 1998: 178). A number of black players have also been
subjected to racist abuse from spectators. In 1985 David 'Syd' Lawrence recalled how a group of Yorkshire supporters threw bananas at him and 'called me nigger, black bastard, sambo, monkey, gorilla', and in 1986 the West Indian captain, Viv Richards, was abused by a section of the crowd at Headingley whilst playing for Somerset (Marqusee 1998: 162). An incident at Southampton, where the Middlesex and England fast bowler Norman Cowans was subjected to chants of 'black bastard, black bastard' indicates, however, that such behaviour is not solely confined to Yorkshire supporters (Searle 1990: 33). In addition to this Searle (1996) has argued that changing regulations over noise levels and the use of musical instruments at international matches have had the effect of deterring British-based West Indian supporters from attending games.

This dimension of racism is well addressed in the ECB's policies with three of the 17 recommendations directly related to spectator behaviour. Furthermore, it was this aspect of the report, and the proposed introduction of designated areas in which musical instruments would be allowed, which attracted considerable media attention. There are, however, a number of incongruous features in this regard. Whilst not wishing to deny the seriousness of the incidents cited above, there is a potential danger that too much focus on this dimension of racism within cricket may detract from other serious concerns. To my knowledge, no reliable information regarding the ethnic composition of cricket crowds currently exists (and so evidence of exclusion can be impressionistic only). Moreover, the ECB report and the academic literature provide no indication that the 'sale or distribution of racist literature in or around ... ground(s) on match days' (ECB 1999: 52) is a particular problem. Whilst anti-racism in cricket is not influenced to the same extent by the 'racist-hooligan couplet' which dominates equivalent policies in football (Back et al. 1998), there is a tendency in Going Forward Together (ECB 1999) to conflate racism with rowdyism. There is, for instance, some ambiguity as to whether Recommendation 3ii condemns solely racist chanting and abuse, or whether the intention is to cover 'offensive behaviour' more generally. Moreover, by conflating the presence of black and Asian spectators with the provision of areas where musical instruments are permitted (i.e. more rowdy areas) there is a danger of promoting a form of the 'hooligan-racist couplet' in reverse. In the same way that not all football hooligans are racist, and not all racist football supporters are hooligans, so it would be mistaken to think that all black and Asian spectators are 'rowdy', or that all rowdy spectators are black or Asian.11 It is equally likely that these special areas will attract a similar kind of person to those previously responsible for the racist violence seen particularly at Headingley. Additionally, the retention of a proportion of tickets until at least a month prior to the staging of the match is not only highly patronising (are the policy makers suggesting that only white people have the forethought and financial means to buy tickets to matches?) but was shown to be misguided during the 1999 World Cup at which the prevalence of Indian and Pakistani supporters was a major feature. Like the football-related policies which pre-date Going Forward Together, the ECB's policy thrust can also be criticised for directing too much attention towards spectators and not enough at players and administrators at the elite end of the game.

Having said this, it is true to say that evidence of racism and exclusionary practices 'within' the game has been less forthcoming. Whilst this partly parallels the experience of football, one notable feature of cricket is that the game's elite performers are broadly representative of the ethnic composition of the
An Eliasian or Process Sociological Analysis of Cricket

country as a whole. The ECB's Racism Study Group states that minority ethnic players constitute 12 per cent, 6 per cent and 10 per cent of first-class, minor counties and county age-range squads respectively (ECB 1999: 25). Analysis of The Cricketers' Who's Who 2000 puts the current figure for ethnic minority representation in first-class cricket at 13.6 per cent (Marshall 2000). These figures compare favourably with the Commission for Racial Equality's (CRE) data on the ethnic composition of the population of Great Britain. They estimate that ethnic minorities constitute 5.5 per cent of the total British population and place 1.6 and 3.1 per cent of the population into a range of 'Black' and 'Asian' sub-categories respectively (CRE 1999). Unlike the situation in professional football, therefore, both black and Asian players are well represented in elite cricket.

Furthermore, the RSG noted that none of the county players to whom they spoke in their research cited experiences of racial prejudice or discrimination (though 82 per cent of non-white respondents 'believed' racism existed in the game). It may be that this is an accurate picture of county players' opinions more generally; these cricketers have, after all, been successful in realising their chosen career and are, perhaps, less likely to perceive the existence of such barriers. Moreover, as we saw in the grassroots of the game, it may be that racist incidents are so commonplace that many individuals simply do not define them in such terms. Yet it may also be the case that official action, like that taken against Devon Malcolm, has resulted in a marked reluctance amongst minority ethnic players to speak out against prejudice. When Malcolm publicly questioned whether his treatment at the hands of England's cricket manager Ray Illingworth would have been different had he (Malcolm) been white, the ECB threatened to punish Malcolm for 'bringing the game into disrepute'. No further action was taken when, subsequently, another England player, Dermot Reeve, revealed in his autobiography that he had heard Illingworth refer to Malcolm as a 'Nig-nog' whilst the team were practising in South Africa (see Marqusee 1998: 300–2 for a fuller discussion). The former professional footballer, Richie Moran, has spoken out against the racism he encountered as a player and has been highly critical of other black players and administrators who have, in his opinion, underplayed the extent of racism in the game (Moran 2000: 196). It may be the case that a similar 'conspiracy of silence' also exists in cricket.

There is, however, one index of discrimination and exclusion which is quite evident in the English professional game. For many years, American sociologists of sport have analysed the way in which black athletes in team sports are 'stacked' into certain positions and, correlatively, under-represented in others. Commonly, black players in America are most prevalent in the spatially peripheral positions which, normally, also involve players in the most limited amount and range of interaction (and thus the position is defined as having a relatively low importance). This pattern, it is widely argued, is based on stereotypical and racist ideas about the innate biological differences between blacks and whites; that is to say, the notion that blacks are physically superior (especially in terms of speed and strength) but mentally inferior in comparison to whites.

Whilst Malcolm (1997) has noted that there are problems in relating this methodology to cricket, a form of 'stacking' is evident in the English professional game. Table 1 indicates that over half of all British-black county cricketers are played primarily as fast bowlers (compared to 28.7 per cent of county cricketers as a whole) and that exactly half of British-Asian county cricketers are played...
An Eliasian or Process Sociological Analysis of Cricket

Table 1. British minority ethnic cricketers in the first-class county game (2000)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Playing position</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th></th>
<th>Asian</th>
<th></th>
<th>All Players</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Batsman</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>38.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fast/medium bowler</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>51.9</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>28.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slow/spin bowler</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>23.3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>10.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All-rounder</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>12.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wicketkeeper</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>10.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>58</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>472</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


primarily as batsmen (compared to 38.2 per cent of county cricketers as a whole). Moreover, as Table 2 illustrates, this trend is even more pronounced amongst players who have been selected to play for England. Since Roland Butcher became the first black-British cricketer to represent England in 1980 (atypically, Butcher was primarily a batsman), 13 other ‘black’ cricketers have followed in his footsteps. Significantly, between eight and ten of this total of 14 (57.1 and 71.4 per cent) have been selected primarily as fast or medium-fast bowlers whilst

Table 2. British minority ethnic cricketers who have played for England

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Playing role</th>
<th>One-day debut</th>
<th>Appearances</th>
<th>Test debut</th>
<th>Appearances</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Butcher, R.</td>
<td>Batsman</td>
<td>1980/81</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1980/81</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cowans, N.G.</td>
<td>Fast bowler</td>
<td>1982/83</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>1982/83</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small, G.C.</td>
<td>Fast bowler</td>
<td>1986/87</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>1986</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>De Freitas, P.A.J.</td>
<td>Fast bowler</td>
<td>1986/87</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>1986/87</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lawrence, D.V.</td>
<td>Fast bowler</td>
<td>1991</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1988</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lynch, M.</td>
<td>Batsman</td>
<td>1988</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lewis, C.C.</td>
<td>All-rounder</td>
<td>1989/90</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>1990</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Williams, N.F.</td>
<td>Fast bowler</td>
<td>1990</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benjamin, J.E.</td>
<td>Fast bowler</td>
<td>1994/95</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1994</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Butcher, M.</td>
<td>Batsman</td>
<td>1997</td>
<td>19</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alleyne, M.</td>
<td>All-rounder</td>
<td>1998/99</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D'Oliveira, B.L.</td>
<td>All-rounder</td>
<td>1970/71</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1966</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Asian

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Playing role</th>
<th>One-day debut</th>
<th>Appearances</th>
<th>Test debut</th>
<th>Appearances</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ranjitsinhji, K.S.</td>
<td>Batsman</td>
<td>1896</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duleepsinhji, K.S.</td>
<td>Batsman</td>
<td>1929</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nawab of Pataudi</td>
<td>Batsman</td>
<td>1932/33</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raman Subba Row</td>
<td>Batsman</td>
<td>1958</td>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hussain, N.</td>
<td>Batsman</td>
<td>1989/90</td>
<td>34</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ramprakash, M.</td>
<td>Batsman</td>
<td>1991</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1991</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patel, M.M.</td>
<td>Spin bowler</td>
<td>1996</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Habib, Aftab</td>
<td>Batsman</td>
<td>1999</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vikram Solanki</td>
<td>Batsman</td>
<td>1999/00</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Usman Azfaal</td>
<td>Batsman</td>
<td>2001</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Adapted from player databases on www-uk.cricket.org, accessed 17 July 2001.
Table 3. Trends in the employment of overseas players in English county cricket (1993–2001)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>International qualification</th>
<th>1993–96</th>
<th>1997–01</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Indies</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zimbabwe</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-totals</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>166</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Adapted from player databases on www-uk.cricket.org, accessed 17 July 2001.

only three (21.4 per cent) have been selected primarily as batters. Correlatively, of the ten Asian players who have been selected to play for England, nine have been batsmen and the other a spin bowler. Whilst the notion of centre-periphery positions is not particularly applicable to cricket, throughout the history of the game players of different social classes have been linked to specific playing roles. Players were divided into amateurs (upper class) and professionals (lower class) and, as Brookes notes, ‘by 1850 the pattern of amateur batsmen and professional bowlers was well-established’ (Brookes 1978: 92). We can see, therefore, that not only does a form of stacking exist within contemporary cricket, but that British-black players are ‘stacked’ into the playing position which has traditionally held low status.

To a degree, a similar pattern of stacking exists amongst cricketing migrants imported by the county teams in recent years. Whilst the number of overseas players in county cricket grew steadily after the Second World War, in 1967 a decision was made to allow each county to sign two ‘overseas’ players, with the residency qualification period being reduced from five to two years; a move which was later perceived by many to have ‘opened the floodgates’ (Wright 1993: 62). Attempts have since been made to tighten these regulations and, effectively, from 1991 counties have been limited to a quota of one overseas player each.

Since 1993, county cricket sides have employed overseas players on 166 occasions. Whilst the West Indies and Australia have provided the majority (64.5 per cent) of migrant players over the last nine seasons (see Table 3), in recent years there has been a distinct shift in preference away from the former towards the latter (West Indians constituted 46.1 per cent of migrant players between 1993 and 1996 and Australians constituted 55.5 per cent during 1997–2001). Concomitant with this development has been a movement away from the recruitment of fast bowler migrants, towards the employment of batters (see Table 4). In part, it might be argued, this shift has been a consequence in the global cricketing trend (augmented by rule changes) which has reduced the significance of certain types of player (e.g. fast bowlers) and increased the significance of others (e.g. spin bowlers, and in the English county game in particular, batters).

More pertinently for our purposes here, however, there is the distinct trend in
Table 4. Playing role of overseas players employed by English first-class counties (1993–2001)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>International qualification</th>
<th>Batter</th>
<th>All-rounder</th>
<th>Fast/medium-fast bowler</th>
<th>Spin/slow bowler</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Indies</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>26</td>
<td></td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zimbabwe</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1993-96 25 15 32 4 76
1997-01 48 12 17 13 90
Total 73 27 49 17 166

Source: Adapted from player databases on www-uk.cricket.org, accessed 17 July 2001.

terms of the recruitment of players performing particular roles. That is to say, a disproportionate number of players of certain nationalities have been employed to perform specific roles, indicating perhaps that particular stereotypes – be they national, ethnic or racially based – are informing decisions about recruitment. More specifically, we can see that Australian nationals have constituted 67.1 per cent of all migrant batters recruited in the last nine years, West Indians have constituted 53.1 per cent of all fast/fast-medium bowlers and the Indian subcontinent (represented by India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka) has provided 82.4 per cent of all spin bowlers. Thus it would appear that, whilst cricketing employment opportunities are open to a wide range of cricketing migrants, the roles available to players of certain nationalities are effectively limited. When county cricket administrators search for a specific type of player (e.g. spin bowlers), it seems they concentrate their search on particular nations and nationalities (i.e. the sub-continent).

Thus, both British minority ethnic players and ‘overseas’ migrants operate in an area of employment which appears strongly influenced by national, ethnic and even racial stereotyping. Whilst this pattern is not identical to romanticised notions of village green cricket and Englishness, it does have a similar consequence in moulding, and often restricting, the opportunities available to this group of employees. Consequently, whilst direct evidence of racism ‘within’ professional cricket is relatively rare, these figures indicate that ‘racial’ stereotyping and inequality are indeed prevalent at the highest levels of the game. The ECB make no reference to this form of inequality in their policy document.

Conclusion and evaluation

The policy proposals contained in Going Forward Together do address many of the problems of exclusion highlighted in this paper but, inevitably, to more adequately evaluate this policy document we will have to wait and see how well resourced the policies are and how effective are the monitoring processes. County boards should indeed ‘embrace and accept diverse cultures’, lobby local
authorities to improve the quality of municipal pitches and provide advice on funding for the improvement of facilities. Such measures should help to equalise the playing opportunities which different ethnic groups face. Policies to foster minority ethnic administrative representation are clearly essential although the added proviso, 'where those populations are significant in number', provides a loophole which may, consciously or not, be exploited. The goal of ensuring minority group representation is central to any equal opportunities policy and should not be contingent upon a rather inexact notion of that minority being of a particular size. Notwithstanding this criticism, the policies identified in Going Forward Together do represent a progressive move. However, as they currently stand, they will not be sufficient to bring about the level of change which the data reviewed here would indicate is necessary.

In future, the ECB should ensure that equal opportunities policies are pursued at all levels of the game in equal measure. Whilst the overall representation of minority ethnic players in the county game is encouraging, and means that cricket is arguably more representative of the ethnic make-up of the UK than any other professional team sport (male or female), the evidence presented here indicates that the role of British-Asian, British-black, and indeed migrant players within the game, needs to be addressed. The pattern of positional representation is a consequence of the stereotyping of members of minority ethnic groups - be it biologically- or culturally-based - and suggests the existence of inequitable practice. Moreover, these elite players provide the role models for young sporting participants. We see evidence of the normalisation and acceptance of these stereotypes at the grassroots level of the game (though, peculiarly, a slightly different form of stereotyping seems to be exhibited by school children) and the interdependency between the various levels of the game must be acknowledged and addressed in order to form an effective policy. Unless addressed, this positional bias will become (or remain) self-perpetuating.

More crucially, however, the ECB's policy is based on a theoretical misconception which must also be addressed if equality of opportunity is to be achieved. As Small has noted:

The problem with the focus on Black people alone is that it conceives the black population as the cause of racialised antagonism, rather than it being a consequence of white attitudes and actions ... But, in fact, the problem is not 'race' but 'racisms', not relations between 'races' but relations which have been 'racialised', not the physical attributes of Blacks or their personal inferiority, but the motivation of non-Blacks and the obstacles they impose (1994: 30).

To achieve equality of opportunity, the ECB must shift its focus from the minority who are not integrated, to the majority whose regulations and practices serve - sometimes unwittingly, sometimes not - to discriminate against particular groups. To this end, it is clear that certain supposedly neutral policies - for instance league membership being contingent upon the quality of a club’s facilities - actually have the consequence of excluding minority ethnic cricketers and teams. By insisting on this level of conformity, the (predominantly) white cricket establishment effectively restricts league membership, and therefore playing opportunities. The ECB needs to explicitly recognise that certain practices have the consequence of being exclusionary. Whilst these regulations do not discriminate against minority ethnic groups in a de jure sense, they are examples of de facto discrimination. Moreover, white players and administrators
must ask themselves why black and Asian cricketers feel 'uncomfortable' or 'excluded' from the 'white' game. More particularly, assumptions that this arrangement is voluntarily entered into must be challenged and the dominant groups need to examine what it is that they do which results in minority ethnic players feeling they cannot join in with their game. In terms of monitoring the effectiveness of the ECB's equal opportunities policies at this level, the extent and strength of perceptions of the ethnic separatism within the game should be one benchmark.

Embracing and accepting diverse cultures is, therefore, only one side of the equation. What is also required is a recognition that the current culture of the 'white' game must change. League entry requirements and regulations related to the status of 'overseas' players in league cricket have the effect of reinforcing notions of who is deemed to belong and, correlatively, who is not. Many cricket administrators already perceive their clubs to be open to all and, as a consequence, the recommendation of the ECB that all clubs should have 'open door' policies is likely to have little tangible effect. Many 'white' cricket players and administrators do not recognise that they, through their notions of how the game should be played and in what contexts, play an active part in the process of exclusion. Rather than simply being encouraged to be 'more open', the romanticised stereotype of English village cricket to which many adhere needs to be highlighted as part of the problem of closure. Equal opportunities will remain an unobtainable goal if the central tenet in the reproduction of Englishness is allowed to remain uncontested. For many, such a suggestion will be unsavoury for it is upon this ideal that much of the appeal and strength of the game is based. However we can see that, at various levels of the game, this notion serves as a form of cultural separation and, furthermore, underpins the institutional separation evident through ethnically divided leagues and clubs. The question is not simply how can minority ethnic groups be integrated, but how might the quintessential 'English' game also be changed to allow this integration to take place?

Notes

1 In 1990 Norman (now Lord) Tebbit argued that if a British immigrant, or one of his/her descendants, chose to support a team such as India or the West Indies when that team was playing against England, this could, and indeed should, be used as a gauge of his/her level of assimilation into English society (Maguire 1993; Marqusee 1998). Henderson (1995) argued that the poor record of the England cricket team was connected to the prevalence of players who had been born overseas and/or had spent much of their childhood living in other countries. Players who had undergone such socialising experiences, Henderson claimed, could never be truly English and thus would never possess the same level of commitment as a 'genuine' English player.

2 These figures are not broken down according to ethnicity in the report. It is likely, however, that non-white respondents were disproportionately represented within the group who had personally experienced racism. Thus, potentially, the figure of 15 per cent who had personally experienced racism might correspond to around half of all the black and Asian respondents in the sample.

3 'Let's Kick Racism out of Football' was launched by the Commission for Racial Equality and the Professional Footballers' Association in 1993 (CRE and PFA 1993). Subsequently the policy has been renamed 'Kick it' and has become independent of the CRE. For an evaluation of the variety of responses to racism in football see Garland and Rowe (1999). In 1996 Rugby League launched
An Eliasian or Process Sociological Analysis of Cricket 131

its own version, 'Let's Tackle Racism'. For a description see, for instance, Open Rugby, September 1996.

4 It should be noted that the methodology employed by MacDonald and Ugra makes their findings somewhat problematic. Interviews were held with white players from affiliated clubs, and non-white players from non-affiliated clubs. A more accurate picture might have been provided, for instance, by also interviewing a sample of the substantial number of white players from non-affiliated clubs. This would have served to 'test' the MacDonald and Ugra thesis. As the research stands, the methodology employed was highly likely to confirm the original thesis.

5 Like the majority of sports in the UK, cricket is dominated by men and, consequently, the research in the area reflects this gender balance. Moreover, the ECB's Raising the Standard makes scant mention of the women's game (simply that the Women's Cricket Association be integrated into the ECB structure) and inappropriately uses male nouns (such as batsman) to refer to players of both sexes. Going Forward Together makes no distinction between the men's and the women's game at all.

6 Given the sample size, the likely bias towards particular types of club, and the contentious/politically sensitive nature of the subject matter, conclusions in this respect should be tentative.

7 Yorkshire County Cricket Club's relationship with the county's minority ethnic communities continues to court controversy. Most recently the county opened a memorial gate at their Headingley ground in honour of former player Sir Leonard Hutton. In an attempt to celebrate the contemporary nature of cricket, as well as Hutton's career, artist Kate Maddison used one of the four friezes on the gates to depict Asian women wearing saris. A number of prominent ex-Yorkshire cricketers complained that such scenes had little relevance to Hutton's playing career. A debate then took place over whether or not these views had racist implications.

8 At the time of the research Brian Lara was the captain of the West Indies team and widely regarded as the best batsman in the world.

9 In a recent case in the Bradford League, the executive committee refused to investigate alleged racism because, despite complaints by one of the team captains, the umpires made no reference to the incident in their match report (The Cricketer International, September 2000: 66).

10 This incident occurred during the highly controversial Pakistan tour to England in 1992, in which there were allegations that the Pakistani players had cheated through 'ball tampering' (see Searle 1993; Marqusee 1998).

11 In the summer of 2001, following a series of incidents in England predominantly involving supporters of the Pakistan national side, there was widespread media and political debate about disorderly behaviour at cricket matches. Most notably, games were interrupted and abandoned due to pitch invasions, a Headingley steward was assaulted, and an Australian player sustained facial injuries when a beer can was thrown from the crowd. Such incidents at sports events often bring calls for draconian policing and swingeing punishments but, and in the absence of detailed comparative research this remains a necessarily speculative point, it appeared to be the case that the debate was particularly fuelled by (i) the fact that the majority of the supporters involved were Asian (rather than white), and (ii) that in a number of towns and cities in the north of England, serious disorder had occurred in areas with particularly high proportions of Asian inhabitants.

12 The Cricketers' Who's Who (Marshall 2000) is an annual publication which features statistics relating to players' careers. Ethnicity – or more accurately 'race' – is recorded using photographs and the author's personal knowledge of the game. There are, of course, inaccuracies inherent in this methodology and the findings are meant only as an indicator and not to be taken as a definitive statement. For a more detailed discussion of this methodology, and the problems involved, see Malcolm (1997).


15 These data highlight the problems in categorising players according to playing role. All players bat, but how good a batter a bowler must be to qualify as an all-rounder is somewhat subjective. Moreover, players who might be defined as all-rounders at one level of the game, may not be at a higher level. However, while the playing role of one or two may be debated, the pattern identified is so distinct as to be relatively unaffected.
The following data are derived from the CricInfo website (www-uk.cricket.org). Figures relate to the number of seasons of employment and not the number of individual players. For varying reasons, some players continue employment with a single county for a number of years, others are released and re-employed by other counties and others spend just one season in the English county game.

References


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Reading 8

England's Barmy Army: Commercialization, Masculinity and Nationalism (with M. Parry)

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ENGLAND'S BARMY ARMY
Commercialization, Masculinity and Nationalism

Matthew Parry and Dominic Malcolm
University of Leicester, UK

Abstract This article examines a group of English cricket supporters known as the Barmy Army which explicitly and self-consciously challenges the traditions of spectatorship in English cricket. Following a discussion of who the Barmy Army are and a description of the distinctive characteristics of the style of their support, we seek to examine the factors which have led to the group's development at this particular time and in this specific sporting context. The article argues that in order to understand why the Barmy Army arose and why it has had such a significant impact on the game we must consider: a) society-wide processes such as time-space compression and the development of 'New Laddism'; b) sports-wide processes such as changes in football and in football supporter cultures; and c) sport-specific processes such as cricket's economic development and the internationalization of the game. The article concludes by suggesting that the Barmy Army represent a qualitatively new form of English national identity, that its behavioural style involves a blurring of traditional class-based forms of spectatorship, and that the influence wielded by this small, deviant, group indicates the relatively limited nature of the cricketing establishment's power.

Key words • Barmy Army • cricket spectatorship • national identity

'England's Barmy Army' was the name bestowed on a vocal and boisterous group of England cricket supporters by the Sydney Morning Herald during the winter of 1994/5. The supporters were following the English side during their three-month 'Ashes series' against Australia. The quadrennial tour to Australia is the longest and, for English supporters, the most significant cricket competition. The extensive travel involved and the length of time over which both the individual matches and the series as a whole are played, require a particularly high financial, temporal and even emotional commitment from spectators. These features seem to have been the catalyst for the formation of this group, already bonded by common nationality, the camaraderie of a backpacking, hedonistic lifestyle and, not least, a love of cricket. Almost spontaneously it seemed, they formed themselves into a loosely organized but cohesive and clearly identifiable unit. Interest in the group, both from the Australian press and other English fans, snowballed. By the fourth Test match in Adelaide the Barmy Army trademark had been registered and T-shirts were being printed and sold. A mailing list had been established to promote future 'package' tours and fund-raising activities were being organized. The group were raised to the level of popular cult status and were, for example, given their own designated enclosures at grounds, one of
which was sponsored by Mitsubishi. They also organized parties, attended by England players, attracting further media interest. The Barmy Army have continued to be a feature of English cricket (both at home and abroad) and their presence and style of support has been, and remains, somewhat controversial.

As we argue in this article, the Barmy Army has ‘created’ a style of supportership, qualitatively different to that traditionally associated with English cricket. Working largely within a figurational sociological framework and drawing upon ethnographic data augmented by secondary sources, we seek to understand who the Barmy Army are, describe what it is that they do and examine why it should be that they developed at this particular time and in this specific sporting context; that is to say, what does the Barmy Army tell us about broader social processes effecting sports spectatorship, and the economic and political context of English cricket in particular?

This article has developed out of a masters dissertation and, as such, is the collaboration of student and supervisor. Following a number of years as cricket spectators, and some experience of attending matches with members of the Barmy Army, a more systematic approach to data gathering was employed during the home series against Australia in summer 2001. At the outset, the first named author interviewed two people who, in 1994/5, had been part of the initial Barmy Army group. The ‘administrator’ of the Barmy Army website, Paul Burnham, was also contacted and has been interviewed in person and, on a number of subsequent occasions, by telephone. In addition to this, the first named author acted as a participant observer during five days of cricket at four Test match venues during the summer of 2001, sitting with Barmy Army members and conducting interviews at the grounds, in adjacent pubs and so on.

**Cricket Spectatorship in Historical Context**

We cannot understand the social significance of the Barmy Army and their activities without first outlining the historical development of cricket spectatorship, for it is in direct opposition to the traditions of the game that the Barmy Army locate their actions, and therefore seek to define themselves. Early, that is 18th-century, matches attracted large crowds (upwards of 10,000), which were rough, volatile and disorderly. Interference with play was commonplace, and riots not infrequent (Birley, 1979: 50; Malcolm, 1999, 2002a; Underdown, 2000: 83–5). However, historians largely agree (Vamplew, 1980; Guttmann, 1986: 79; Sandiford, 1994: 123) that, by the mid- to late-19th century, crowds had become far more orderly and ‘civilized’. More pertinently though, during the 19th century the way cricket came to be constructed and represented within elite and popular discourse changed. Three generalized elements of this discourse — what we have termed here, *fundamentals* — may be delineated. Although they should not be seen as mutually exclusive, they are distinguished here for heuristic reasons.

The *rural idyll* fundamental centres upon an idealized, socially harmonious scene in which a village green cricket match takes place within a picturesque and tranquil English country setting. Stemming from the upheavals of industrialization and urbanization, this ideology was a nostalgic and romantic celebration of
an imagined lost past, a ‘sentimental ruralism’ as Marqusee describes it (1998: 55).

The second fundamental, is the notion that cricket represents a distinctively English expression of moral worth (see Williams, 1998, 1999, 2001). This fundamental is captured in the phrases ‘it’s not cricket’, ‘playing with a straight bat’, etc., which are widely used to sanction perceived substandard behaviour. Cricket came to be regarded not just as a game but, rather, a venerated symbol of the code of ethics of the English gentleman (see Malcolm, 1999 for a discussion of the sociogenesis of this ideology). This code, closely related to cricket-specific notions of amateurism, played down competitiveness and partisanship, and emphasized fair play, sportsmanship, graceful play, etc. (Holt, 1996). These values were the antithesis of the professionalism, gambling, gamesmanship and violence characteristic of 18th-century cricket. Commercialization, it was widely assumed, would undermine the ethics of sportsmanship and fair play, and thus cricket’s moral worth (Williams, 1998: 108). Indeed, spectatorship was also sometimes regarded as potentially morally debilitating and implicit and explicit codes of conduct for spectators, analogous to the behaviour of middle class concert or theatre audiences, called for restrained approval, reserve and the curbing of displays of emotion from spectators. Not only was it considered unsportsmanlike to cheer the mistakes of opponents and against the ‘spirit of the game’ to shout or abuse players and other fans, but a failure to acknowledge fully the achievements of one’s opponents would undermine the moral worth to be derived from cricket.

The rural idyll and moral worth fundamentals converge to form the third fundamental, the representation of cricket as the quintessential English game; that is to say, as the game which best defined and encapsulated English national character and morality, and formed the basis by which elites imagined themselves and their position in the domestic and international order (Williams, 1998: 101). A failure to understand cricket reinforced boundaries of inclusion and exclusion. The use of the terms ‘French Cut’ to describe a miss-hit shot, ‘Chinaman’ to describe an unusual type of bowling delivery and ‘French Cricket’ to describe a simplified, less formal version of the game served to reinforce the notion of who belonged and the behaviour expected from them (Malcolm, 2001). Thus, during the 19th century, cricket was ‘reinvented’ as a timeless pastoral activity, as a forum for displays of moral worth and as a symbolic totem of Englishness. English cricket spectators were juxtaposed with their more vociferous counterparts in the colonies, most notably Australia.

Our description of these three fundamentals is not meant to portray an essentialist view of cricket. In reality many spectators did not conform to these codes of behaviour (Birley, 1999: 183; Vamplew, 1980: 15). But these idealized views of cricket, and cricket spectatorship, remain closely guarded by many in the game. They are seen as the basis for contemporary cricket’s marked contrast to other (‘lesser’) sports and, for instance, used as justification for certain regulations which have the effect of discriminating against minority ethnic groups (Carrington and McDonald, 2001; Malcolm, 2002b). More particularly for present purposes, these idealized views have been mobilized in arguments favouring the suppression of the Barmy Army:
An Eliasian or Process Sociological Analysis of Cricket

138

Does any true lover of the game want to see cricket follow the path of soccer? . . . I believe cricket to be one of the few civilizing influences left in Britain today . . . Cricket is possibly the one major game in which how it is played is more important than winning. Fielders of one side are still seen applauding a century scored by a member of the opposition — even in a (international) Test match. These are symptoms of a code of behaviour fundamental to the game. It is what sets it apart and what will, I trust, protect cricket from the antagonism and aggression, among players and spectators, which have ravaged football. More important preserve (sic) one strand in British life to the maintenance of civilized society and in individual behaviour. (Letter published in The Cricketer, August 1995)

Who? A Tentative Demography of the Barmy Army

. . . anybody can join the Barmy Army on tour, there isn’t a membership scheme and anybody who wants to support England, sing some songs, party hard and enjoy themselves is welcome to join in . . . so whether you’re 18 or 80, male or female — get involved. Every tour introduces new characters . . . so the group is constantly evolving with only the name staying the same. Watching England abroad is no longer the preserve of the rich and famous, it can be done easily and cheaply on a tight budget and most importantly it will be a great crack watching England lose, draw and occasionally win. (Dave Peacock, Barmy Army website, 11 December 2000)

In some ways, the Barmy Army, because of its fluid, nebulous form, defies conventional sports spectator research strategies (see e.g. Waddington et al., 1996). Indeed, our initial intention to survey the membership via the Barmy Army website was thwarted by the knowledge that a recent marketing survey had produced just 30 responses from an estimated 6000 affiliated website members (Paul Burnham, personal communication).

Despite this lack of data, Barmy Army leaders lay claim to being ‘representative of the full social spectrum’ (Guardian, 7 February 1998) — ‘18–80, male or female’ — and openly espouse an anti-racist and anti-sexist agenda (for instance, staging a fund-raising match for the development of township cricket in South Africa in 1996 (MacQuillan, 1996: 45)). They take some pride in the claim that the Barmy Army have created a novel and, in their eyes, all-inclusive ‘broad church’ form of association which cuts across the traditional divides of class, ‘race’, age, gender and regional loyalty (Paul Burnham, personal communication).

Yet, and while the reliability of ethnographic data in this respect is likely to be poor, through a combination of participant observation, the anecdotal evidence of Barmy Army members, overheard conversations and the examination of crowd photographs, we would argue that perhaps 80 percent of Barmy Army members are male, white, and between the ages of 20 and 40. During the research there was some evidence of the incorporation of a broader range of individuals. At Trent Bridge, for instance, we witnessed a black youth wearing a Barmy Army polo shirt, who appeared to be well known among other members. There were also several younger females and some older people (approximately 60 years of age) who clearly saw themselves as associated with the group. Yet, while the Barmy Army formally opens up its membership to all-comers, it is our impression that more often than not groups resemble a boy’s-own drinking club, a male preserve and a sphere for the public expression of somewhat traditional forms of masculinity (Dunning, 1999: 236).
In terms of social class, again evidence is sparse. The journalist Vic Marks has argued that most of the 'recruits' work in 'solicitors' or accountants' offices' (Observer, 24 Jan. 1999: 15). Conversely, B.C. Pires, argued that the Barmy Army members he met in the West Indies 'appeared to be predominantly working-class lads' (Guardian, 7 Feb. 1998: 10). We do know, however, that the Barmy Army's 'leadership' is largely drawn from relatively socially privileged strata. The three co-founders/ 'party co-ordinators' (a term which signifies the underlying anarchic/democratic ethos of the Barmy Army) are Dave Peacock, Paul Burnham and Gareth Evans. Dave Peacock, aged 36, is an ex-public schoolboy from Bedford, a former manager with the power supply company National Power, and currently a recruitment consultant. Paul Burnham, aged 34, is also an ex-public schoolboy with a degree in sports science. Previously an 'executive' with British Airways, Burnham is now self-employed. Perhaps the most entrepreneurial of the three, it was Burnham who patented the words 'England's Barmy Army' as a registered trademark and who established the now lucrative leisurewear business (personal communication). He currently also holds 'directorships' in other companies. Peacock's and Burnham's public school backgrounds indicate that their parents were also probably middle class. The third co-founder is Gareth Evans, a chartered surveyor with the supermarket chain, Sainsbury's. Of others questioned in the research, several were self-employed (two builders and a satellite-dish installer). Another had his own printing business, while other members included a bank clerk, an accountant, a local government worker, a teacher, and a husband and wife who were Metropolitan Police officers. Numerous students and several people who described themselves as 'writers' were also known to be Barmy Army regulars.

While seemingly male, young and predominantly middle class, the Barmy Army membership is fluid and finds its fullest expression abroad when members are together for sustained periods of time and where their 'otherness', or outsider status, is thrown into sharpest relief. The next section of this article describes the 'distinctive' supporter style of the Banny Army for, though the personnel may be fluid, the supportership style remains relatively constant.

What: Barmy Army Style and Motivations

The groups that you see on television evolve spontaneously because what we are is a style of support and the group will be made up of whoever wants to join in with the fun on the day. (Dave Peacock, Barmy Army website, 9 May 2001)

The controversial nature and the sociological significance of the Barmy Army rest upon the contrast between the supportership style and motivations of its members and that embodied in the three fundamentals of English cricket identified above. Compared to the tradition of restrained approval and curbed emotion, the Barmy Army is vocal, self-conscious, partisan and carnivalesque. The Barmy Army motto is 'To love England, to love cricket, to love the players'. As one follower emotionally explained:

... them over there (gesturing to the members' section)² they haven't got a clue; all they give is
this (imitates polite quiet handclapping). What it’s all about is getting behind your team the way football fans do week in week out; it’s all about lifting, raising the players by showing you care and they (gesturing to the England players in the field) respond for you and love it too. (Fieldnotes, 2 Aug. 2001)

As the motto and this quote indicate, there seem to be three concurrent motivational and self-justifying preoccupations predominant among members of the Barmy Army — fun, influence and nationalism — as well as one unintended and (internally) relatively contentious preoccupation, commercialism. The first of these, having fun, is evident in the colourful, carnivalesque atmosphere generated by supporters who, among other things, wear fancy dress costumes, paint their faces and carry inflatable figures. In part, Barmy Army members consider that their supportership style can be infectious and thus hope to convert/recruit other spectators at, and to, the game. They themselves perceive that the Barmy Army have, at least partly, been responsible for the galvanization of English Test crowds since 1994.

The second preoccupation is to utilize this style of support to have an influence on the event/match itself. The Barmy Army fan is not only characterized by high emotional involvement, but by a commitment to aid the team by actively influencing play. Various strategies are employed in this regard, from slogans and choruses directed at individual players or the England team collectively, to and in even greater contrast to the traditions and norms of cricket spectatorship, irreverent, insulting and even crudely abusive chants and songs directed at opposition fans and players. During the research some coarse verbal abuse of Australian players was noted, including homophobic accusations about players’ sexualities, paedophile activities and reference to Australia’s history as a penal colony. In an ironic inversion of the long-standing tradition of applauding a successful bowler as he walks back to his fielding position (usually near the boundary) at the end of his over, the Barmy Army vociferously applaud opposing bowlers only if they have bowled badly. Elements of masochistic and ironic self-depreciation, commonly known to football fans as ‘gallows humour’, were also noted, and seemed to comprise a collective management strategy for coping with the strains and frustrations brought on by the team’s regular defeats in recent years. The familiar terrace chant of ‘Only sing when you’re winning’ for instance was modified and adapted to become ‘We only lose when we’re playing’ following defeat by New Zealand in 1999.

The Barmy Army further flout the norms of English cricket spectatorship through their assertion that proactive, partisan support contributes to the team’s performances. Paul Burnham, for instance, argues that at the Melbourne Test in December 1998, the Barmy Army support was central in encouraging the team to a narrow, and somewhat unlikely, victory over Australia (personal communication). Implicit in this assertion is the notion that the establishment of cricket, as represented by traditional supporters, are responsible for England’s relative lack of success in international cricket in recent years. The public endorsement of, and praise for, the Barmy Army from some of the England players serves as a particular point of pride, especially given the hostility and derision encountered from sections of the media. Bale argues that crowd ‘interference’ reveals the spatial boundaries of sport as limen, that is the particular threshold of conscious-
ness where the stimulus of the crowd begins to produce sensation in the players. Crowd involvement in cricket can sometimes cross the boundary and become liminal space; that is, inhabit a world between playing and spectating (Bale, 1998: 272). This, it seems, is what the Barmy Army are constantly seeking to do; to cross the threshold to achieve greater levels of liminality than previously existed, a threshold looked upon as sacred by more traditional cricket watchers.

The third major preoccupation of the Barmy Army is the nationalistic nature of members' support. On the one hand this is relatively self-evident in that their raison d'être is to follow and support the England cricket team. The nationalism of the Barmy Army is, however, characterized by the common conflation of English and British national identities seen among, for example English football fans. What is termed the England cricket team formally represents the English and Welsh Cricket Board (ECB), though players from Scotland and Northern Ireland are not excluded from playing under its aegis. It is more properly a cricket team representing the UK, but this conflation of national categories is a consequence of historically specific power balances which have resulted in England, the politically, economically and often sportingly dominant 'country' within the union, being assumed (by the English in particular) to be synonymous with Britishness. As noted above, 'to love England' is part of the Barmy Army motto, yet the Union Jack (rather than the flag of St George) constitutes the major graphic image of their logo.

Yet the 'Englishness' espoused by the Barmy Army also has some distinctive features. As much of the data noted thus far illustrates, Barmy Army members present themselves in direct opposition to the ideological traditions of English cricket. Press criticism, regarding the infringement of these traditions is likely to have amplified anti-establishment behaviour. Many commentators have drawn parallels between the behaviour of the Barmy Army and the kind of Englishness which is closely associated with football supporters in general, and football hooligans who follow the national team more specifically. Ian Woolridge, for instance, writing in the Daily Mail in December 1994 spoke of,

... the extreme embarrassment of some 30 or 40 English hooligans... the detritus of the English national social security system... those morons seek confrontation with any Australians that will take them on... this small banal bunch of louts... (Cited Barmy Army website, 9 May 2001)

Yet members of the Barmy Army would (quite rightly) explicitly reject such a characterization. Barmy Army support is patriotic and chauvinistic, but it is perhaps more accurate to draw parallels between themselves and the 'Tartan Army' and 'Roligans' who follow the Scottish and Danish national football teams respectively. In their activities overseas all three groups have utilized a stereotypical racist, bigoted, parochial and confrontational English football supporter as a 'hooligan referent', primarily in dialectical self-definition as a means of asserting a culturally distinctive national identity, and as a Goffmanesque impression management strategy to 'win over' their hosts by actively cultivating a gregarious, fun-loving and friendly persona (Giulianotti, 1994: 17). Domestic divisions (if and when they exist) tend to be subjugated to the collective identity which emphasizes that being a fan abroad involves a responsibility to actively and posi-
tively experience foreign cultures, and to socialize with opposing fans. Members of all three groups also tend to drink heavily, practise self-policing mechanisms and engage in spontaneous revelry and carnivalesque-type behaviour. While songs and chants may include aggressive, coded and racialized verbal abuse (for example, during 2001 the Barmy Army could be seen and heard singing one particular song, dancing in a conga-style line, dragging an imaginary ball and chain in a mock reconstruction of early transported Australian colonists), it should be noted that instances of disorder at cricket matches more commonly perceived to have been ‘racially’ motivated (e.g. disorder at the England–Pakistan Test match at Headingley in 1996) have not been thought to have involved the Barmy Army (Malcolm, 2002b).

In light of the Barmy Army’s explicit rejection of the existing and contrasting forms of English identity, we could conceivably speculate that the Barmy Army represents a new variant of English national identity. The Barmy Army have utilized cricket as a subcultural space within which identities can be expressed in (relatively) uninhibited forms. Despite retaining a disposition to defend and protect aspects of their own indigenous cultural forms, members simultaneously and aggressively forge a new and distinctive cultural identity which jettisons many other aspects of Englishness.

While having fun, attempting to influence proceedings and displaying nationalism might be described as the ‘intended’ or initially explicit motivations which bonded members of the Barmy Army, commercial activities quickly became a prominent and controversial feature of the movement. Since 1995 the Barmy Army has acted as an unofficial supporters club, representing the interests of a ‘new wave’ of England cricket supporters. The group maintain a sophisticated website (launched in 1999), which serves as a sort of cricket fan’s travel guide or *Lonely Planet*, advertising membership, offering information on matches and ticket availability and coordinating the movements of its members for matches at home and abroad. It also acts as a campaign publicizer and as a global discussion forum for cricket fans. Overseas the Barmy Army becomes a surrogate community, the symbol and focus for the ad hoc association of cricket followers.

These growing organizational functions have led to a marked commercialization of the initial anarchic (perhaps democratic), backpacker ethos. Although the original business was disbanded in 1995 it was soon re-established and became a formally registered limited company, with its own patented logo. An extensive range of cricketing merchandise has been marketed including polo shirts, baseball caps and sunglasses. From 2001 products were on offer through official outlets at cricket grounds (rather than simply being hawked around cricket grounds or sold through the website) and advertised in leading cricket magazines. The leisurewear features the Barmy Army’s stylized Union Jack logo. Barmy Army shirt sales reached 4000 in the first six months of 2001, representing a not insubstantial turnover for this one range of product of £80,000–100,000 (Fieldnotes, 2 Aug. 2001). In 2001 the Barmy Army published the words of its most regularly sung songs in *Songs of Praise 2001*. These ‘entrepreneurs’ have packaged and commodified the identity which they helped to create; in Marqusee’s terms they have become custodians of a national ‘brand’ (2000: 24) and TV guest appearances on,
for example, the popular BBC1 comedy sports quiz *They Think It's All Over*, have helped to consolidate the group/brand recognition and subsequent commercial gains.

But the rapid commercialization and commodification of the Barmy Army name has caused some conflict within the group. One member, for instance, talked of a 'sell-out', a 'perversion of a great idea'; another argued that the group had lost its original anarchic charm and accused those who run the business of no longer being interested in supporting England (underlining the importance of nationalism to group members). Another described commercialism as 'ridiculous' and a 'complete paradox'.4 Such views have good grounding. In contrast to these commercial developments, Barmy Army members demonstrate considerable hostility towards the occupiers of corporate hospitality boxes. However, it does seem that these entrepreneurial initiatives have helped in many ways to unite the group and enable them to grow in influence and significance. Stylized merchandise not only serves as a good source of publicity for the group (which itself may feed into increased recruitment and thus prominence), but the profits also seem to have enabled the group to maintain continuity by part financing their non-commercial activities (e.g. providing travel information, acting as information disseminators and organizing campaigns).5 Furthermore it seems undeniable that the cultural capital the Barmy Army has been able to mobilize by running a reasonably 'successful' business has made this group attractive to others in the 'cricket figuration'6 who are equally, if not more, commercially minded.

**Why? The Interdependencies and Social Processes in the Barmy Army Figuration**

In the final section of this article we look at the interdependencies and broader social processes which have converged at this specific time and space to create the phenomenon that we see today; that is to say, we seek to answer why the Barmy Army arose and has had such a significant impact on the game. In brief we might categorize relevant factors in terms of society-wide processes (time–space compression, the development of 'new laddism') sports-wide processes (changes in football and in football supporter cultures) and sport-specific processes (cricket's economic development and the internationalization of the game).

On a society-wide scale we can see that, most simply, the Barmy Army's existence has been facilitated by the time–space compression characteristic of ongoing globalization processes. It may seem obvious, but it is nonetheless crucial, to note that in many ways the Barmy Army represent a new phase in global (or at least international) sports spectatorship and tourism. In the context of UK sport at least, large-scale international travel to sports events has, until recently, been confined to association football matches, mainly in Europe. More recently and in conjunction with, or perhaps because of, developments in cricket, international rugby union fixtures and tours by the British Lions in particular have been characterized by similar forms of sports tourism. This growth in global sports tourism may well be linked to a growth in, or perhaps a redefinition of, patriotism and nationalism.
The sports-wide processes which have influenced the development of the Barmy Army derive in large part from football culture, and from ‘working class’ football culture in particular. The trend for fans to travel away to support their team, and to make themselves highly visible in the process, has been a characteristic of English football since the 1960s. The institutionalization of this practice came to provide opportunities for ‘invasion’ in ‘quests for pleasurable excitement and ego-enhancing prestige’ (Dunning, 1999: 174). This, in part, has led many football supporter groups to define themselves in terms of being an Army (e.g. the ‘Tartan Army’; see also Brimson, 2000). Persisting with this military theme, two of the Barmy Army founder members are nicknamed the ‘General’ and the ‘Lieutenant’ and others like to define themselves variously (and humorously) as foot soldiers, Barmy infantryman and novices. Like traditional English working class football support, the Barmy Army tends to congregate in the cheapest areas (like football ‘ends’), which members attempt to make ‘their own’. The group unity, facilitated by this spatial concentration, forms the basis of attempts to influence the outcome of the match as well as more irreverent exhibitionist displays. Such parallels are not accidental. One Barmy Army member recalled counting over 60 different replica football club shirts being worn by England fans who ‘joined’ the Barmy Army at the Adelaide Test match in Australia in 1995. The wearing of replica football kits may, indeed, have been highly significant in the initial identification and congregation of fellow England fans before the Barmy Army began to manufacture their own distinctive merchandise. Moreover, it appears that a shared interest in football may have been crucial to the subsequent group-formation and shared-identity consciousness.

Yet the Barmy Army do not just exhibit similarities with traditional working class football support, they also share many of the characteristics of a wider football culture which developed in England during the 1990s. Partly in the wake of the Heysel Stadium disaster and the ongoing problems of hooliganism and disorder, but more directly as a consequence of the Hillsborough tragedy and the subsequent Taylor Report, English football underwent a well-documented economic transformation based on the principles of the free-market economy (see e.g. Conn, 1997; King, 1998). The perceived need to improve facilities in general and aspects of safety in particular led, most notably, to the introduction of all-seater stadiums in the top two English divisions. Encouraged by these trends, a ‘new business class’ increasingly took control of football and attempted to take the game ‘up-market’. However, in the eyes of many, this modernization of facilities and remarketing of the game necessitated not only a change in the relationship between fans and the clubs which they supported, but also a change in the fan base of football itself: ‘Fans were to become customers . . . [and] the notion of the customer, who paid more for a better service, implied a shift of football support towards more affluent sections of society’ (King, 1997: 232). Football attendances have indeed risen, though survey data indicate that no marked change in supporter demographics has taken place (Malcolm et al., 2000). Panopticon surveillance and increasing legal intrusion have severely curtailed football fan autonomy, and placed constraints on fans’ traditional participatory self-expression both within and outside stadiums (see e.g. Brick, 2000).
Many consider that this has tended to sanitize and anaesthetize the experience of being a football fan (Lee, 1998: 48).

In response to these developments new manifestations of spectatorship have emerged; a process Brown refers to as a ‘fundamental regeneration of football fandom’ (1998: 65). Football fans who see themselves as ‘traditional’ or ‘long-standing’ supporters, increasingly define themselves in contradistinction to the so-called ‘cardboard cut-out’ spectators (those supporters perceived as newcomers and largely middle class) whose relatively pacified support has led to accusations of them not ‘getting behind’ the team. Barmy Army members also define themselves in opposition to the more reserved spectators, though in this context it is they (the Barmy Army) who are the newcomers, and the ‘traditional’ supporters who characteristically exhibit lower levels of emotional display. There also appears to have been an increase in the carnivalesque elements of football supporterhip in England (arguably appropriated from the styles of Dutch and Danish fans), exemplified by the wearing of fancy dress and the use of face paints and inflatables (again, paralleled in the behaviour of the Barmy Army described above).

An equally significant development in 1990s football has been the growth of organized supporters clubs and associations. The national Football Supporters’ Association (FSA), founded in the wake of Heysel, led to the development of many club-based independent supporters’ associations (ISAs). These groups were initially concerned to expose aspects of football supporterhip which had been (falsely) stereotyped by images of hooliganism, though latterly supporter group action has sought to challenge the commercial development of the game, and to become active in the promotion of ‘liberal’ agendas such as anti-racism. Again, many parallels can be seen between these developments and the functions performed by the Barmy Army. ISAs also promote themselves as representative of a broad social spectrum, but, like the Barmy Army, have been dominated by white, middle class, males (Nash, 2001). The FSA, moreover, establishes ‘supporter embassies’ during international football tournaments in which the England team plays, thus performing a similar, though more formal, function to that of the Barmy Army during overseas cricket tours.

Finally, in conjunction with these trends, an unprecedented range of football literature — fanzines, magazines, factual and fictional books — has developed. While some (e.g. Brown, 1998: 52) have argued that the growth in football writing, as part of this cultural shift in football, has resulted from the development of a ‘culture of dissent’, King forcibly argues that, on the contrary, fanzines should not be seen as stemming from a dialectically generated process of resistance; rather they may more accurately be conceptualized as classical post-Fordist products, as entrepreneurial enterprises which have cornered niche markets (cited in Dunning, 1999: 125–6). In sum, these developments have led to football culture becoming increasingly pervasive in British and English society in recent years. Much of this has (like the Barmy Army) been middle class led (which has probably contributed to the fallacious view that the demographics of football support have changed markedly). Thus although the rise to prominence of the middle class fan in football might be conceived as an attempt to recapture and relocate their own culture within ‘popularism’ (by using, for instance, working
class fans as a cultural reference group) their rationale may also be analogous to, and a peripheral part of, wider commercialization processes.

Not unconnected with changes in English football culture, the behaviour of the Barmy Army also appears to be closely related to the broader phenomenon of ‘New Laddism’. Commentators (Carrington, 1998; Edwards, 1997; Whelehan, 2000) largely agree that the ‘New Lad’ phenomenon was/is a reaction to the 1980s ‘New Man’ (as identified by Rutherford, 1988). ‘New lad’, according to Whelehan (2000: 58) is ‘almost always white; part soccer thug, part lager lout, part arrant sexist’ and through this emphasis on sport, alcohol and sexual division, has been seen as a partial reversion to ‘traditional’ masculine, largely working class (Edwards, 1997: 81), values. New Laddism is based on an awareness of feminist discourse, claiming ‘political correctness’ through being ostensibly non-racist and respectful of femininities and feminism, but the heavy use of irony provides a certain linguistic and ideological ambiguity (Whelehan, 2000: 67). Consequently, Whelehan argues, New Laddism ‘could only have emerged in an atmospheres hostile to feminism’ (2000: 15); an attempt, Carrington argues, to redefine the boundaries of white English masculinity (1998: 106).

Connections between New Laddism and the Barmy Army have been made by other commentators. In the book Nothing Sacred (McLellan, 1996), a group of writers claimed to have identified, and proclaimed themselves part of, a distinct and developing ‘New Cricket Culture’. Evident in the growth of ephemeral fanzines like Sticky Wicket and Johnny Miller 96 Not Out, magazines Third Man and Inside Edge, the writings of Marqusee and the activities of the Hit Racism for Six campaign (note the parallels here with developments in football), MacQuillin argues that the New Cricket Culture is partly a ‘by-product of the sociological New Lad phenomenon’ (1996: 39). The Barmy Army, according to MacQuillin, is the most visible example of ‘cricketing Laddism’ and guest appearances made by members of the Barmy Army on They Think It’s All Over (which takes its name from the television commentary to England’s 1966 World Cup Final victory and which has been cited as a prominent manifestation of New Lad culture (Whelehan, 2000: 64)), provided a very clear indication of, and further cemented, the connection between ‘New Laddism’, football, and the Barmy Army.

But a comparison of the ideologies underlying ‘New Laddism’ and the Barmy Army shows just how closely these two phenomena are bound. During the mid-1990s, ‘New Lads’ were targeted, and the phenomenon promoted, by magazines such as Loaded and FHM. Edwards, in his analysis of these new, so-called, men’s magazines cites five central characteristics of these publications: (1) they are aimed at a middle class readership; (2) they are assertively heterosexual; (3) they represent an overt legitimation of consumption; (4) they promote an aspirational lifestyle; and (5) they ‘implicitly depend upon a city as opposed to a rural . . . milieu’ (1997: 75–6). Parallels clearly exist between these features and the Barmy Army’s predominantly middle class membership, the homophobia exhibited in their songs and the aspirational and overt consumption involved in foreign travel. Finally, and by no means least, a further parallel is evident in the Barmy Army’s opposition to the role of the rural idyll fundamental in cricket which we highlighted earlier.
Moreover, as Carrington notes, part of the 'New Laddism' phenomenon is an emphasis on cheeky, irreverent, humour, in which sexist and coded-racist remarks are rationalized as 'excusable' (Carrington, 1998: 106 and 120). For Whelehan (2000: 5), 'fundamentally sexist comments can be made under the shield of irony'. This, perhaps, explains why Barmy Army members question the opposition players' sexualities, highlight Australia's penal colony history and yet continue to espouse an ethos of social inclusion and, for instance, raise money to support the development of cricket in South African townships. The 'New Lad' ideology goes part way, we would suggest, towards explaining why, more often than not, the Barmy Army resembles a boy's-own drinking club, exhibiting somewhat traditional forms of masculinity. Finally, Whelehan notes that for some television celebrities — e.g. presenters, actors, sportsmen — 'laddism seems to be a means for holding on to their “working class” credentials' (2000: 74). It may well be that a similar kind of image-management works for the Barmy Army's middle class 'leadership'.

But these more general social and 'sporting' processes cannot entirely explain the rise and the subsequent impact of the Barmy Army, for their presence has been amplified, even cultivated, by various groups and individuals with widely differing agendas. A major consequence of these newly forged interdependencies has been to facilitate the expansion and longevity of the group. We can conceptualize these developments in terms of a dynamic functional interdependence; that is to say, the conflict and cooperation and the asymmetrical power balances between different groups (both within the English and world cricket figurations, and in wider society) have had a marked influence on the post-1995 development of the Barmy Army.

As a consequence of county cricket's post-1945 decline in popularity, attempts have continually been made to repopularize the game and increase revenue. As the traditions of English cricket would indicate, established groups have been resistant to such changes. Gradually, however, through the removal of the distinction between professionals and amateurs and the introduction of sponsored one day cricket (The Gillette Cup) in 1963, the expansion of one day competitions (The John Player League followed in 1969 and the Benson and Hedges trophy in 1972), the sponsorship of Test match cricket from 1977, and the Marylebone Cricket Club's (MCC) accession of power to the Test and County Cricket Board (TCCB) in 1982, lobbyists for commercial developments have largely overcome resistance (Sandiford, 1985). Recent moves to produce more commercially popular forms of cricket have seen 'revolutionary' developments such as the wearing of coloured clothing, the use of musical accompaniment and day–night floodlit games. Most recently (2003) the ECB launched Twenty20 cricket, a form of the game which builds on these trends but, significantly, involves matches reduced to 20 overs per side, or approximately three hours in length.

Cricketing authorities have also attempted to maximize income from broadcasting rights. Most notable in this respect has been the involvement of satellite broadcaster, BSkyB. In 1990 the financially ailing Sky TV (latterly BSkyB) purchased the broadcasting rights to England's winter tour to the West Indies. England unexpectedly won the first Test which helped to stimulate demand for
satellite dishes and subscriptions. It subsequently became clear to both television companies and the ECB’s predecessor, the TCCB, that coverage of the England team, especially playing in picturesque sun-filled locations, was a marketable commodity. English cricket, for the first time, became part of a commercialized TV package. The subsequent success of BSkyB’s coverage of the 1992 Cricket World Cup proved that the game was now a principal ‘dish driver’ and was influential in precipitating Sky to move to acquire football broadcasting rights (Cornwall, 1996: 63). In 1994 the TCCB concluded what was at the time a remarkable £58 million four-year deal with BSkyB and the BBC for the rights to televise matches. According to Cohen (1996: 138), out of the TCCB’s total income of £30 million in 1995, £12 million came from TV revenue, £9 million from commercial sponsorship and perimeter advertising, and only £6 million from the net surplus of staging international and one-day domestic competitions. In 1998 the TCCB’s successor, the ECB, put home Test match cricket coverage out for competitive tender and the traditional broadcaster of cricket, the BBC, lost out as the ECB, Channel 4 and BSkyB concluded a television deal worth over £100 million.

Of course media companies themselves attempt to maximize income from the purchase of broadcasting rights and the relatively large proportion of the game’s total income which they supply enables them to exert an influence within the game. BSkyB immediately sought to market the game to appeal to a new audience — to a larger ‘football-type’ audience and the ‘New Lad’ culture more generally — and, consequently, moulded their cricket coverage such that it subverted the way cricket had traditionally been mediated (that is to say, in contrast to the three fundamentals outlined). The total effect is to have radically altered the nature of cricket coverage. Where cricket coverage used to be characterized by a relaxed, understated style which led many to elevate writers and broadcasters such as Neville Cardus and John Arlott to the status normally reserved for classical literature or poetry, cricket is now spectacularized and promoted as a gladiatorial contest. In the past, the media have largely concurred with (and thus amplified) the reserve and restrained approval characteristic of the traditions of cricket spectatorship; the relative importance traditionally attached to ‘winning’ was (and still is) almost caricatured on BBC radio’s Test Match Special by Henry Blofeld’s reputation for extensively commenting on, for example, the flight of pigeons and the movement of local buses, rather than on events in the game itself. With the advent of BSkyB, Channel 4 and Talksport (a radio franchise who have recently broadcast overseas matches), emotional significance became more centrally emphasized. State-of-the-art technology is utilized to create a viewer-friendly, dynamic package (e.g. on-screen scores and statistics, slow-motion replays and special effects enabling the viewer to judge the accuracy of umpiring decisions). The viewer experiences a constant and varied stream of images designed to engage the attention of the non-traditional cricket watcher. Moreover, an attempt is made to transpose the atmosphere in the stadium to the television viewer.

For these reasons crowds at matches have assumed an increasing significance to broadcasters who have realized that the fans in the ground form an integral part of their mediated coverage. The Barmy Army provides ready-made, and easily
An Eliasian or Process Sociological Analysis of Cricket

identifiable scenery for broadcasters, and has proved the prime target of television cameras seeking animated sections of the crowd. The Barmy Army feeds on this attention; it contributes to their fun, encourages their exhibitionist preoccupations and bolsters their notion that they can exert an influence on playing events. In an ironic inversion of Foucault’s (1979) assertion that in modern societies all facets of social life have become increasingly subject to panopticon-like surveillance which have hence enhanced disciplinary control through self-regulated docility, contemporary cricket broadcasts feature pervasive camera gazes and microphone feeds which, far from facilitating conformity, actively seek out, encourage and generate the boisterous and eccentric, the publicity-hungry and exhibitionist, the subversive and the bizarre. Where Kerry Packer previously used ‘fake’ crowd noises in his media presentation of cricket, broadcasters such as BSkyB and Talksport, utilize Barmy Army chanting and visual displays. There is some evidence too that one reason for incorporating so many ‘crowd shots’, is the ‘unintended’ inclusion of perimeter advertising and thus the greater exposure for sponsors. An advertiser in Sydney allegedly paid members of the Barmy Army to move to a position in front of his advertising hoarding throughout a day’s play (The Cricketer, Feb. 1999: 8). Thus, driven by the desire for increased income, English cricket authorities, media groups and advertisers have utilized the presence of the Barmy Army. This, in turn, has justified the group’s continued presence, partly legitimized their actions, and further increased their profile and significance. In return for revenue, the English cricket authorities have been obliged to embrace an audience, generated by commercial television, many of whom are young, follow football and have few or no pretensions to the rural idyll, moral worth or the quintessential Englishness of cricket. The Barmy Army is not only one element of this new constituency being courted, but also an active force in this marketing development.

Cricket administrators subsequently came to realize how the Barmy Army could be of direct benefit to them and formulated a strategy of co-option and incorporation. First the ECB recognized that the Barmy Army name and image represented an appealing commodity which could help to increase revenue through sales of their own merchandise. In 1999 the ECB’s spokesman, Andrew Walpole, was quoted as saying: ‘We welcome the tremendous support the Barmy Army has given in Australia and we’d be prepared to listen to any commercial proposals they might put forward’ (Observer, 24 Jan. 1999: 15). The ECB now sanctions the sale of Barmy Army leisurewear alongside official England products within Test match grounds. Second the ECB saw that the Barmy Army could help to popularize cricket and broaden its appeal. The rise in attendance at international matches in the 1990s may suggest that affiliation with the Barmy Army will produce economic benefits. As Dave Peacock notes: ‘we are beginning to build some bridges with the ECB, who at long last are seeing the Barmy Army as an opportunity, and not a threat, to the image of English cricket’ (Barmy Army website, 9 May 2001). Third, administrators became convinced that the vociferous support could play some role in helping to secure victories. ECB chairman, Lord MacClaurin, in an interview published on the Barmy Army website (8 June 2001), stated that:
We would support anybody who supports English cricket. I've seen the Barmy Army all over the world... and they've been very enthusiastic. I was in Australia and Sri Lanka when the England players made a point of going over to the supporters and thanking them, so I'm very pro the Barmy Army. These people that are spending their money to go and watch the England side — the boys like it — and it's good for English cricket. We are very fortunate to have such a big following.

In sum we can see that these developments represent a complex and dynamic power relationship. While Cornwall, for instance, argues that the introduction of coloured strips, and the marketing of replica shirts is evidence that, through the ECB's harnessing of their merchandising potential, the Barmy Army have become 'a creation of the marketing of the game' (1996: 68), he significantly underplays the degree of influence which the Barmy Army exerts. The recent incorporation of the Barmy Army — after many years of exclusion and rebuttal — is part of the ECB’s policy of harnessing the commercial opportunities offered by the group and illustrates how rapidly the contingencies of a commercial operation can change the nature of the interdependencies between groups. Yet the disparate interests which revolve around English international cricket present the ECB with a delicate balancing act. Financially, the ECB would not wish to risk alienating any of the various patrons of cricket and hence attempts to steer a careful course between the demands of the competing groups and thus between licensed tolerance and strict social control. While the ECB needs the particular market segment offered by the Barmy Army, they are equally dependent on commercial sponsors, as well as the more traditional fans who often buy more expensive tickets. Clearly some companies 'buy into' cricket to enhance their image through association with the three *fundamentals* but younger English fans, and the Barmy Army in particular, have been seen as 'alien' and a threat to traditional English cricket culture.

Thus we can see that the financial imperatives to maximize receipts from big international games, and to attract television revenue, have in one sense empowered this group of cricket fans because the financial solvency of the game depends on their presence, both in terms of gate revenue and providing the atmospheric backdrop attractive to television producers/audiences. However commercial pressures have also led to the prioritization of profitable corporate hospitality which arguably tends to work in a countervailing direction. Interestingly Marqusee argues that the insignificance of gate money has stripped spectators of any power they once had (1998: 141), but the evidence presented here would indicate that such a judgement is flawed. Test match revenue remains significant in and of itself, but equally crucial is the status of Test match cricket as an appealing and atmospheric place to be, and to be seen. From this, all else flows: gate money, broadcasting rights, sponsorship. Consequently, the Barmy Army has been accommodated as prime atmosphere-generators, a very valuable asset to television stations, and thus (initially) indirectly to the ECB. Because they seem to have been instrumental in raising the profile of cricket, in making cricket appeal to a mass and especially a younger audience, and are perceived to have inspired the team to some unexpected victories, England players themselves have come to see the Barmy Army in a positive light and added their support. The rapid commercialization of cricket, and the complexity of the processes this
encompasses, has resulted in the partial accommodation of the Barmy Army into the mainstream cricket establishment, not least because the values of elements of both the ECB and the Barmy Army have ultimately converged. It is not surprising, therefore, that (as discussed earlier) certain tensions over the commercialization of the Barmy Army’s activities have arisen.

Conclusion

This article has provided an initial analysis of the demographics of Barmy Army members, a description of their particular style of supportership and an assessment of what makes this group distinctive socially and therefore interesting sociologically. Moreover, by identifying the broad range of interdependencies in which the Barmy Army and its actions are enmeshed, and by delineating the convergence of a range of social processes in which the emergence and growth of the Barmy Army must be contextualized, we have attempted to provide the basis of an explanation for the development of this largely unexamined sporting phenomenon.

Research in this area is at an emergent stage, data are sparse, and it has been necessary in this context to provide a relatively wide-ranging discussion. Consequently, many avenues for future research emerge. Most notably it would be interesting to explore more fully what appears to be a qualitatively new form of English national identity and to probe, more deeply, Barmy Army members’ seemingly explicit rejection of both ‘traditional’ forms of Englishness characterized and encapsulated in cricket, and the more overtly aggressive and partisan forms of national identity stereotypically associated with football supporters. How explicitly and/or how successfully are attempts made to balance feelings of pride related to who ‘we’ are and where ‘we’ come from, with a recognition of the rights of others and respect for cultural difference? What sense of ‘alienation’, displacement, or even empowerment underpins these social movements? What are the different manifestations of this nationalism at home and abroad?

Not unconnected to this are the implications of this study for the role of class analyses more generally. We have, in this article, rather juxtaposed middle and working class cultures and styles of supportership yet, if anything, the example of the Barmy Army illustrates the diminishing utility of such categories (or at least the problems associated with their use in a static sense). We have highlighted the ways in which the predominantly middle class founders of the Barmy Army borrowed ‘working class’ football culture and combined this with entrepreneurial opportunism. King’s work on the transformation of football in the 1990s illustrates similar developments. These examples illustrate the blurring of class distinctions. Commentators often point towards a gentrification of football in England but perhaps a rather more subtle analysis, based on a commingling of class cultures, may provide a more object-adequate explanation.

Finally, what does our analysis tell us about balances of power within sports more generally? On the face of it the Barmy Army, a small, deviant, group with relatively limited power resources, has been able to wield considerable influence over English cricket as a whole, and on the actions of the administrators of the
game in particular. This indicates that seemingly powerful groups which, for instance, have been able to dominate the game (and thus a significant national institution) for many years, may themselves occupy a precarious position, liable to change as a consequence of new interdependencies (for example, with media companies) and unanticipated contingencies (for example, the decline in the England cricket team’s playing success). There are parallels between this and English football where media companies have also become increasingly involved in the structure of the game. The research discussed here indicates that neither broadcasters nor administrators nor fans wield sufficient power to exercise a high degree of control over cricket and that relatively even power balances may stem from the complex networks of interdependency which characterize sport in the 21st century.

Notes

1. The Barmy Army website can be found at http://englandcricketfans.rivals.net/

2. Most leading cricket clubs in England are private members’ clubs with the best, and separate, seating areas reserved for members. Stereotypically, members are the most traditional followers of cricket and represent the establishment.

3. This following report, for example, followed a Test match against Australia in 1997 at Birmingham:

The Edgbaston public’s support was crucial in energising England’s bowling performance . . . Atherton praised the atmosphere as the best he had experienced . . . Nasser Hussain, his vice-captain, called the Edgbaston crowd ‘phenomenal . . . they made a great noise’ . . . England’s victory took place before one of the most colourful and supportive Test crowds of all time. (Guardian, 18 June 1997)

4. Marqusee argues that since its inception the Barmy Army have split into ‘official’ and ‘unofficial’ wings, each critical of each other’s actions (1998: 32). While this issue didn’t arise during the fieldwork, at one match attended there was a distinct separation between what might be termed the Barmy Army ‘hardcore’ and a second group. The two acted similarly, sang similar songs, but this was interspersed with mutual insults and gestures.

5. Through their website the Barmy Army also sell tickets for Test matches (both home and away). Though this is done ‘unofficially’, they often buy block bookings at discount prices and then sell the tickets on with a relatively small mark up. During the fieldwork it transpired that in Sri Lanka during the winter of 2001, they had block booked a number of tickets to pass on to the members only to find that it was cheaper to pay at the gate on the day. Consequently a significant amount of money was lost.

6. Elias described a figuration as ‘a structure of mutually oriented and dependent people’ (2000: 482). He developed the concept as a means of trying to overcome some of the difficulties associated with more conventional sociological terms and theories, particularly unhelpful dualisms and dichotomies such as that between the individual and society and the tendency towards process reduction, in which everything that is experienced and observed as dynamic and interdependent is represented in static, isolated categories. Elias explicitly conceptualized figurations as historically produced and reproduced networks of interdependence (Murphy et al., 2000: 92).

7. Newcomers, that is, in the sense that their style of support is relatively new. It may well be, however, that members of the Barmy Army have been attending cricket matches for a number of years.
References


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Appendix 1
The Changing Structure and Culture of English Rugby Union Football

DOMINIC MALCOLM, KEN SHEARD
and ANDY WHITE

In 1995, the International Rugby Football Board (IRB) declared rugby union an 'open' sport and thus formally legitimized professionalism in what had previously been a 'shamateur' game. Whilst others have examined what this has meant in individual clubs,1 our aim here is to attempt a broad examination of the ways in which the game has since changed in response to full professionalism. Our analysis of this modern period is partly an extension of work conducted in the 1970s which dealt with earlier crisis periods in the game.2 It draws, too, upon work presently being conducted into the socio-historical development of Gloucester RFC, and also upon the results of a survey carried out by the authors during the summer of 1997. This survey, which was initiated after the first season of 'open' rugby, was based on a postal questionnaire (with a response rate of 41%) sent to the head coaches/directors of rugby of the 68 clubs who had formed the 1st, 2nd and 3rd National Divisions and the 4th North and South Divisions of the English Courage League in the 1996/7 season. The purpose of this questionnaire was to ascertain how the game of rugby had changed at the top levels during the preceding 12 months and, more specifically, to examine those changes which had been introduced concomitantly with the advent of 'open' rugby.

Contemporary developments, however, form part of a long-term professionalization process going back at least 120 years. For most of its history the Rugby Football Union (RFU)3 was a staunch, if not fanatical, defender of the principle of amateurism, and this legacy had an effect upon how it responded to open professionalism and helps explain its less than enthusiastic – if not muddled – response to the opportunities offered, and threats posed by, professional sport. In 1895, the primarily middle class administrators of the RFU had constrained a significant number of clubs in the North of England to withdraw from membership of the RFU, nominally because some Northern clubs had started to pay their working class players small amounts of money to compensate them for the time they missed from work on Saturdays while playing rugby; these were the so-called 'broken
time’ payments. The ability of these Northern clubs to fund such payments was partly due to the commercial success of cup competitions, particularly the Yorkshire Challenge Cup introduced in 1876, which provided the economic foundation for the transformation of many clubs into ‘gate-taking’ clubs. The cup competitions also provided a focus for the local town and village rivalries which were so much a part of the Northern English experience, but which many ex-public school men saw as threatening the friendly rivalry and amateur conceptions of fair play and decent standards of behaviour to which they claimed to adhere. Formal competitions such as cups and leagues, and the professionalism which it was believed such competitions fostered, ran the risk of transforming sport from play into work and hence of destroying its ‘essence’. They led, critics claimed, to an over-emphasis on victory, to over-seriousness and an increase in violent and dangerous play. Professionalism, it was suspected, would also lead players to be more concerned with display for spectators than with play for their own enjoyment.

The anti-professionalism regulations introduced by the RFU in 1893 and 1895 to combat these threats led to 22 Northern clubs withdrawing from the RFU and forming a separate Northern Rugby Football Union, to be followed in the next season by a further 37. The strength of rugby union football generally, and of England international sides in particular, was affected for many years by this development, and the bitterness and antagonism between many supporters of rugby union and those of what became rugby league remains strong to this day.

However, despite this bitter history, the game of rugby union continued to ‘professionalize’ and to change in ways which down-played the original emphasis placed by administrators and players upon the interests of the players, and moved towards an increasing recognition of the interests of spectators. The pressure upon the RFU’s administrators to initiate changes in this direction probably stemmed from three developments occurring in the 1960s and 1970s. First, there was the perceived need to respond to the competitive tensions generated by the international diffusion of rugby and the desire to improve national playing standards, particularly as competition with teams from Southern Hemisphere countries became more intense. Second, there was the desire of members of some domestic ‘gate-taking’ clubs to introduce – or reintroduce – more formalized league and cup competitions, not only as a means of raising standards, but to further their commercial interests in increasingly inflationary times. Third, there was the growing dependence of the RFU itself, and the major clubs, on gate money, revenues from increasing media coverage, advertising revenue and commercial sponsorship. This change in the balance, between the felt need to attract spectators and the traditional emphasis upon player satisfaction,
led to changes being made in the laws of the game in order to make it more ‘spectacular’.

The growing competitiveness which led to, and which was encouraged by, the instituting of a National Knock-Out Cup in 1971, and the introduction of national leagues in 1976, was reflected in the greater ‘seriousness’ of involvement of rugby union players and club officials in their sport. This process found expression in the increased emphasis being placed on training, squad preparation and coaching and eroded still further the stress that carriers of the traditional amateur ethos had placed on the game as a primarily ‘recreational’ pursuit. This development towards increasing seriousness, and greater attitudinal professionalism, was more or less accepted by both players and administrators in the major clubs as being necessary to a modern sport. However, it was not just a question of changing attitudes and values for, especially in the 1980s and early 1990s, one also got the gradual establishment and increasing acceptance of a developing professional structure on a worldwide scale, the effects of which were to be felt in English rugby union. There were at least six strands in this process.

First, there was the gradual institutionalization of direct, if disguised, payments to players. These took the form of payments in cash for playing and training at all levels, including ‘colts’ and women’s rugby union, and as inducements to move clubs. These payments were, of course, illegal under the then existing regulations of the IRB. Second, indirect payments to players grew in extent and importance. These consisted of ‘no cost to play’ benefits at one end of the spectrum (that is, expenses associated with medical treatment, insurance, kit, travelling expenses and accommodation), through to the provision of employment, housing and cars, at the other. Top international players were also increasingly becoming involved in trust funds, product endorsement and promotional activities. These payments and activities were also supposed to be constrained by IRB regulations, but the regulations tended to be interpreted and applied either more liberally or more punitively by different national unions with particularly pronounced differences between Northern and Southern Hemisphere nations. Third, there was the development of an informal transfer ‘market’. This often consisted of little more than informal approaches by players or club officials to members of other teams, but could involve much more formal arrangements involving the establishment of official or semi-official ‘recruitment officer’ structures and functions. A variety of ‘inducements’ was offered to players to move clubs or even countries, ranging from cash, clothing, jobs (some sinecures, some merely a front to support rugby playing), through to mortgage support and match appearance money. A sophisticated informal transfer market started to develop at élite club level,
with international player migration becoming increasingly common. New Zealand players, for example, were to be found in club sides throughout the world; many Australians spent the ‘close season’ in Italy; British players were similarly scattered around France. Fourth, the lengthening and broadening of interdependency chains generated, to a large extent, by the commercialization of rugby union, led to a significant expansion of managerial and administrative functions and the professionalization of bureaucratic structures, first at governing body level and then increasingly at the level of the club. Coaching and team management also started to become professionalized with large salaries becoming common at élite club level. Ian McGeechan, for example, the ex-Scotland and British Lions coach, joined the English club, Northampton, for a reputed £40,000 p.a. Similarly, in 1995 the Welsh club Cardiff advertised for an ‘administrator’ at a salary of £50,000. Fifth, there was an increasing formalization of player/club, player/governing body, club/governing body, relationships. This involved such developments as the emergence of player representative groups (both formal and informal), the creation of bodies such as the English Senior Clubs Association to represent the interests of the élite clubs in negotiations with the RFU, and the formalizing of both the financial and representative roles of such bodies. Sixth, at both local and national levels, team sponsorship deals and marketing arrangements grew increasingly significant.10

It is clear then, that by the start of the 1990s, rugby union players at the top British clubs, although not necessarily professional in terms of the regulations of the RFU and IRB, were professional in any sociological meaningful sense of that term. They were certainly not amateur; indeed, in his nine-point typology, E. Dunning cites rugby union prior to 1995 as on the cusp of covert non-legitimate, and overt legitimate forms of sports professionalism.11 Whilst not formally paid for playing, players normally received some kind of remuneration financed out of money paid by spectators, advertisers and sponsors to clubs, or indirectly by employers who excused their absences from work when fulfilling rugby commitments. In this sense they were professionals. Increasingly, too, they were ‘time professionals’ in that rugby was, or was becoming, a major life interest for them, pushing other interests such as marriage, the family, education and occupation into the background.12 The events of 1995 not only formalized this situation but initiated a period of rapid change as rugby union became bound up in a series of processes characteristic of openly professional sport and it is to these that we shall shortly turn our attention.

Before attempting to analyse the most significant processes accompanying the professionalization of rugby union in England, however, we should note that one of the more immediate and dramatic effects of open
professionalism was the rapid and, given the history, very surprising thawing in relations with the 'old enemy': rugby league. This was epitomized in the so-called 'Clash of the Codes' contests which took place in May 1996. The league champions of the respective codes, Wigan (rugby league) and Bath (rugby union) competed against each other in two matches, one under league rules at Maine Road, Manchester – home of Manchester City (association) Football Club – and the other under union laws at Twickenham – the headquarters of the union game in England. It came as little surprise, at least to members of the rugby fraternity, that both Wigan and Bath convincingly won the matches in their respective codes. Much more significant than the results, however, was the fact that the games had occurred at all.13

A further feature of this thawing of relations was an end to the practice of prohibiting rugby league players – whether current or past – from playing rugby union. The move to summer rugby league which accompanied the introduction of 'Super League'14 meant that the opportunity now existed for players of both codes to move freely between the two games and take part in year-round rugby. Although, initially, a number of 'league players' took advantage of this opportunity (most notably, Jason Robinson and Henry Paul at Bath, Gary Connolly at Harlequins) such practices have become less common. This is partly due to the rather limited success of 'league players' in union (interestingly, since 1996 no professional 'union player' has moved in the opposite direction), but also to the concern expressed by administrators of both codes at the inevitable heavy physical demands on players which this would entail. More commonly, a number of 'union players' who had previously chosen to become rugby league professionals (Jonathon Davies, Scott Quinnell, Alan Tait, John Bentley, to name but a few) reverted to their former code. Indeed such was the initial momentum of this process that our 1997 questionnaire revealed that, although senior rugby union clubs looked primarily towards other English rugby union clubs for new recruits (92.6 per cent), the rugby league clubs were also regarded as a major source of players, with 44 per cent of our sample indicating that such players were being sought.

It is against this backdrop that our analysis of the rapid, post-1995 spurt of professionalization takes place. Many clubs, in order to cope with the new demands of professional rugby, altered their ownership structure and organization. The new owners and administrators in rugby union found it increasingly necessary to consider financial, rather than simply playing, goals. The particular physical requirements of rugby union meant that the players, the major assets of the newly revised clubs had, as far as possible, to be protected from injury. It is to an examination of these issues to which we now turn.
Club Structure

The top rugby union clubs were, in part, enabled by the decision that the game would go open (in that they no longer needed to hide their 'shamateur' activities), but also partly constrained in that they very quickly needed to generate increased income and, thus, become more business-like in their administrative structures. A process became evident whereby rugby clubs increasingly moved from being 'members clubs', towards professionally staffed, commercially orientated, corporate structures. This not only involved changes in organizational structure and forms, but also the professionalizing of the functions previously carried out by amateur, volunteer committee members. What we cannot examine here is the emergence of similar patterns of development at the level of the RFU but it is clear that the continuing professionalization of administrative functions at the national level encouraged and exacerbated conflict between professional administrators and the amateur member-elected committees, which had previously helped govern the game at national level. This conflict – and this structure which many consider to be inappropriate for a professional sport – continues to inhibit the professionalization of the game.

In response to our questionnaire, 67.9 per cent noted that their club had changed its constitutional structure during the first season of open rugby. A similar number (71.4 per cent) noted that the number of administrative workers at the club had also increased. Table 1, however, contains more specific details of perhaps the two most significant developments accompanying open professionalization: incorporation as a limited company and the growing prominence of a major benefactor or owner in the economic affairs of key clubs.

A similar pattern of incorporation and investment is evident amongst clubs which were in the Allied Dunbar Premiership (ADP) League Two in 1997/98. Bedford, London Scottish, Nottingham, Wakefield, Orrell, Coventry, Blackheath and Moseley have all become limited companies and, with varying degrees of success, have attracted outside investment. Worcester RFC, with the financial assistance of millionaire Cecil Duckworth, were promoted from the old Courage League Four North at the end of the 1996/97 season and were reported to be supported to the tune of £2 million as they competed in the newly-founded Jewson National League One in the 1997/98 season. There is, therefore, strong evidence to suggest that these increasingly evident features of the top clubs' development are rapidly percolating into the lower leagues.

From the currently available data, there appears to be a high degree of structural homogeneity between the elite clubs as they respond to the contingencies of a professional game by transforming themselves into
An Eliasian or Process Sociological Analysis of Cricket

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<th>Ltd Co.</th>
<th>Major investor (business interests)</th>
<th>Investment</th>
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<td>Bath</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Andrew Brownsword (Greetings Card business)</td>
<td>£2.5m</td>
<td>Changed name from Bath Football Club to Bath Rugby plc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bristol</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Arthur Holmes. Shares held by membership</td>
<td>Approx. £1m loan</td>
<td>Linked to merger with Cardiff RFC whose major investor is Peter Thomas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gloucester</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Tom Walkinshaw. 25% Shares held by membership, 73% by Walkinshaw</td>
<td>£2.5m</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEC Harlequins</td>
<td>Trust</td>
<td>Peter and John Beckwith (Riverside Leisure plc)</td>
<td>£3m</td>
<td>Changed name to NEC Harlequins after sponsorship by NEC, a trans-national Japanese electronics co.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leicester</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Planned share issue to membership</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London Irish</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Remains ‘membership club’</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newcastle Falcons</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Sir John Hall (Entrepreneur/Property Developer)</td>
<td>£5m</td>
<td>Part of local Sporting Club group owned by Hall, including Newcastle United FC, ice-hockey and basketball. The rugby club changed its name from Newcastle Gosforth to Newcastle Falcons after Hall’s investment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richmond (Promoted from League 2)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Ashley Levett (Metals trader)</td>
<td>£2.5m</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sale</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Shares owned by membership</td>
<td></td>
<td>Now located at Watford Town FC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saracens</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Nigel Wray (Executive Chairman of Burford Holdings- property company; also financial interest in Nottingham Forest FC)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wasps</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Chris Wright (Chrysalis Records/Trocadero plc)</td>
<td>£3m</td>
<td>Wright also has a financial interest in Queens Park Rangers FC on whose ground Wasps now play their home games. The two clubs are now part of the Loftus Road Group (plc) quoted on the Alternative Investment Market.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TABLE 1**

**THE OWNERSHIP STRUCTURE OF ELITE PROFESSIONAL RUGBY UNION CLUBS (1997)**
limited companies. There were sound commercial reasons that reinforced this pattern. First, limited company status either by guarantee or by shares, indemnifies the membership and managing committee from claims against them should the club make a loss. Second, the search for outside investors is facilitated by the expedient of having a limited company backed by assets against which investment can be made. Third, the existence of share capital facilitates the transfer of ownership to a greater degree than in a membership club where the role of the investor is confined to one of benefactor rather than owner. Fourth, it is to be noted that the majority of the investors have derived their wealth from the ownership of family or personally created business organizations. They are therefore predominantly entrepreneurial and thus should be comfortable in the area of new and emerging business ventures, albeit with a preference for limited liability structures to reduce risk. Finally, the success of clubs in ADP League One, such as Wasps, Bath and Harlequins, and of promoted clubs Richmond and Newcastle, with the trinity of structural attributes—limited liability, major investor and major sponsor—enabled the acquisition and retention of better players and reinforced the logic of this approach. In contrast, the fate of relegated clubs, West Hartlepool—which remained a members’ club—and Orrell—who could not attract major investment or sponsorship despite limited liability status—provided salutary lessons of the possible consequences of a failure to adjust.

There is, nevertheless, some diversity. As Table 1 indicates, a number of clubs—among them Gloucester, NEC Harlequins, Newcastle, Saracens and Wasps—appear to be additions to the portfolios of sports and/or leisure groups. A similar pattern is evident in League Two where boxing promoter Frank Warren’s ‘Sports Network Group’ took a 50 per cent share ownership in Bedford, and at Moseley, where 80 per cent of the shares were owned by an eight-man consortium including the Chairman of Aston Villa Football Club, Doug Ellis. This would appear to indicate that rugby union football at the élite level was, at this time, perceived to be a viable business opportunity and was becoming more deeply integrated into the sports industry/entertainment network. Richmond’s then owner, Ashley Levett, commented on the attraction of such a move by pointing out that: ‘The initial entry price into rugby is very small compared with other sports’. In a second group of clubs, limited liability and share issues were also the preferred option but the ownership of shares, and hence the ownership of the club, was retained by the members. For example, Bristol’s approximately two thousand members were each given 400 £1 ‘Founder Shares’. Leicester also introduced a similar share ownership scheme for their 10,000 members and at (Manchester) Sale, shares are owned by the membership. Whilst London Irish managed to survive as a membership club
for three years of ‘open’ rugby, various financial difficulties led, in June 1999, to a three-way merger between themselves, Richmond and London Scottish. Prior to this (in November, 1997) a ‘cross-code’ merger between Leeds Rugby Union Club (the product of an earlier merger between Headingly and Roundhay) and Leeds Rugby League Club was agreed after the former club accepted a take-over bid from Paul Caddick, a businessman with a controlling interest in the rugby league club. Of potentially greater interest, however, was the proposal by New Zealand provincial club, Auckland, to invest £500,000 in League Two club Blackheath in return for a 25 per cent stake in the club. Although this scheme was to founder, the fact that Auckland planned to use this link with Blackheath as a ‘nursery’ for the development of some of their younger players stresses still further the globalizing processes affecting the sport.

There are two general points to be made with regard to these developments. First, there is the emergence of clubs becoming tradeable entities, with either partial or total ownership being achieved through the transference of shares. Some clubs have recognized the possibility of loss of control over the organization and have retained a ‘golden share’ to allow some degree of veto over the use of the club by investors. Second, there is additional evidence that English rugby union in its commercial development is increasingly being penetrated by trans-national ownership, sponsorship, television, financial and marketing interests. Of particular importance in this expanding ‘financescape’, one element in the globalization of sports, is the potential for trans-national commercial organizations to add English rugby union clubs to their corporate portfolios through the simple expedient of the acquisition of shares. The transition to limited company status by the majority of English clubs, as one aspect of a continuing commercialization process, facilitates this development.

Players as Assets

The grounds, buildings and shares of rugby union clubs are obvious representations of its assets which are vulnerable to take-over bids. However, the players themselves, without whom the clubs would cease to function, also assume greater importance as assets with professionalization. Rugby football is a physical contact game which places great demands upon players’ bodies; indeed, according to Sports Council data, rugby has a higher rate of participant injury than any other British sport. With professionalization, as players become ‘commodities’ and part of the human ‘capital’ of commercially organized clubs, the possibly conflicting requirements of fully utilizing that capital, while also protecting a valuable asset, means that the demands upon players have to be carefully managed.
There are several ways that clubs seek both to protect their assets and/or to lessen their reliance upon a few skilled personnel. First, to minimize the risk of injury, they can limit the number of matches in which players are required to take part. Second, they can carry large squads of players of similar ability so that adequate replacements are always available. These, of course, are a 'cost' and have to be paid for. Third, the clubs can take steps to improve and/or protect the physical condition of players so as to lessen, so far as possible, the risk of injury including, for instance, the use of protective padding and muscle/ligament support not only for games but also for training and practice sessions. Fourth, they can seek to improve refereeing standards and to encourage the introduction of more 'protective' refereeing.

Let us now examine how far such policies have been pursued.

**Limits on the Number of Matches Played**

Players in any professional sport, but especially a hard physical contact sport such as rugby union, are subject to a variety of often contradictory constraints and pressures. Some of these pressures are self-imposed (e.g. the desire to play, even when injured, because players' identities are so closely bound to their sporting performance) but many stem from their employer's desires to make money or to return a profit. In contrast to soccer where the clubs are the primary generators of income, in rugby union the income generated from ticket sales and the sale of television rights for international games is highly significant. Moreover, most of the home unions are carrying huge loans for new stadium construction. Consequently, there is pressure to increase the number of international matches and thus the demands on players. Here the national governing bodies potentially come into conflict with the new 'owners' of the major clubs. There is an understandable reluctance on the part of the clubs to release expensive 'assets' if not for home international matches, then for training sessions and overseas tours, or games against touring teams. Not only do they lose the services of international players, but such players run an added risk of injury. The economic future of the clubs depends on winning promotion to higher leagues, maintaining league position, and/or winning prestigious league championships and cups. A feedback loop is evident whereby playing success further enables a club to recruit and retain key personnel which makes further playing success more likely. Although a major source of revenue for elite clubs (one 1st division club estimated that RFU contributions accounted for as much as 90 per cent of their income; another that it accounted for only 35 per cent) their support for the national side may be tempered by such 'parochial' considerations.

These tensions were revealed in our survey after the 1996/97 season. Compared with the season prior to rugby union becoming an 'open' sport,
1996/97 saw most 1st teams (53.5 per cent) in the top four divisions playing an increased number of matches; only two respondents indicated that their club had played fewer games. No coaches believed that their players played too few matches – although it is possible that club owners and directors might not have shared this view – while 60.7 per cent of them felt that their players took part in too many matches. This figure rose to 100 per cent of the respondents from 1st Division clubs, those likely to provide the bulk of international players and to be involved in the fiercest and most sustained competition.

However, this argument did not seem to be applied to all types of competition. Many of the season’s traditional fixtures were no longer seen as important. Most of our respondents noted that they would like to see fewer County Championship Games (65.7%), fewer ‘friendly matches’ (53.3%), and fewer divisional matches (52%). Conversely, there was a certain level of satisfaction about the newer forms of competition with 66.6 and 55.5 per cent of our respondents not wishing to see any change in the number of League matches or European Cup games, respectively. Moreover, sizeable minorities (22.2% and 40.7%, respectively) expressed a desire to see such games expanded. The call for a greater number of League games came solely, and unsurprisingly given the huge outlay on player contracts at this level, from clubs in the top two divisions. The call for more European rugby, whilst supported by all 1st Division respondents, was also supported by a significant proportion of 3rd and 4th division clubs (40% and 33.3%, respectively).

The current disputes over the creation of an Anglo-Welsh, and/or a European league, also found expression in our data. Fifty-one per cent of our respondents were opposed to their club playing more matches against Welsh opposition and slightly more, 60 per cent, were against their club playing more Scottish or Irish opposition. Conversely, 69.2 per cent were in favour of playing more Continental opposition and 68 per cent in favour of playing more teams from the Southern Hemisphere. Those respondents most in favour of more Southern Hemisphere and Continental matches came mainly from the top two divisions, whilst no respondents representing 1st division teams were in favour of playing more Scottish or Irish clubs, and only one was in favour of playing more Welsh clubs. This probably had a great deal to do with perceptions of the quality of rugby played in the respective countries (perceptions which were borne out in recent European Cup games). Perhaps unsurprisingly, given the already congested nature of the club fixture list and the ‘artificial’ nature of such games (and despite the success of the cross-code Bath–Wigan clashes of 1995), only one respondent was in favour of playing more games against rugby league opposition.
The increasing globalization of competition, coupled with the growing recognition of the potential clash of interests between club and international rugby and the escalating demands upon top players, was reflected in respondents' views on how the international rugby union programme should develop. A total of 87.5 per cent wanted to see more international games played against Southern Hemisphere nations (who, traditionally, have had the strongest teams); 64.3 per cent wanted to see the Five Nations Championship expanded. Some 74.1 per cent wished to see the Five Nations re-scheduled to be played later in the year – after the club programme had finished and when there would be less chance of clubs losing their best players, thereby compromising league or cup success.

Given space to air their views on the subject of the international rugby programme, our respondents were fairly consistent in their support for the interests of the national side: 'The needs of the national side must be pre-eminent' (2nd division coach); 'England needs more internationals against better nations if it is to win the World Cup' (4th division); 'Our national side needs to play against top sides, even at the expense of our clubs, if they are to be successful' (2nd division). It is perhaps significant that such rationalizations came from outside the 1st division. The reasons for promoting more and different international fixtures included the oft-quoted belief, which underpinned the call for cup and league competitions in the 1970s, that: 'The higher the competition the greater the likelihood that playing and training standards will improve' (3rd division). The call for more games against Southern Hemisphere sides was justified as an 'attempt to bridge the quality gap' but included the proviso that games 'should be selective and serve a purpose, that is internationals should not be devalued' (4th division).

The stated justifications for moving the Five Nations championship to later in the year stemmed from two compatible lines of argument: the need to meet the requirements of the clubs, and the need to meet those of the national side. Some coaches argued that the international programme should not be allowed to clash with the League because of the 'danger of turning the public off with too much rugby' (2nd division). Others suggested that moving the Five Nations to the summer would both improve playing standards – 'Internationally you would see better quality rugby at the end of the season' (1st division) – and that, "We need to progress to a situation whereby the international squad is together for long periods" (2nd division).

Similarly, those coaches who advocated expanding the Five Nations programme fell into two distinct camps: those concerned with the global development of the sport and those concerned with enhancing England's position within that global structure. One respondent, typical of those who wished to see the wider diffusion of the game, commented: 'The Five
Nations has stagnated over the past three years or so and needs a lift. Rugby is a world game and should not be restricted' (4th division). Another (2nd division) respondent argued that other European sides should be included in the 'Five' nations or international championship 'on merit'. Italy was the nation most often cited as worthy of inclusion, but other countries – Romania and Spain for example – were also mentioned (Italy, however, was subsequently included in the new ‘Six’ nations championship which started in February 2000).

Hence the advent of ‘open’ rugby has brought about contradictory pressures and desires. Most clubs have seen an increase in the number of games played and there is a widespread feeling among coaches that players are playing too much rugby. Whilst many would like to see a reduction in the more traditional forms of fixture (County Championship, Divisional and ‘friendly’ games), there is also a substantial body of opinion that would like to see club sides and the national side developing playing links with Continental and Southern Hemisphere opposition. The main argument in support of such a move, that these sides are assumed to be superior in terms of skills and fitness and that playing them would consequently raise the standard of English play, is augmented by a desire to diffuse the game globally and also, no doubt, to increase much-needed income.

These are the views of coaches and Directors of Rugby and do not necessarily accord with those of club owners. Coaches are much more likely to experience at first hand the damage done to players by over-playing. Whether they are listened to will depend upon the power relations at particular clubs. Similarly, the players are subject to a range of constraints, some self-imposed, some imposed by others. However, Lawrence Dallaglio, the England back-row forward, has expressed these tensions very clearly. In December, 1996, he was reported to have described as ‘madness’ the fact that he had played ninety-one matches in a season, and expressed his intention to reduce this to thirty-five.

**Squad Sizes**

Given the demands imposed upon players in the ‘open’ professional game, it would appear to be in the interests of both clubs and players for large squads of near equal ability to be established. In the pre-open days, some clubs were so successful in attracting players, with the best players tending to concentrate at clubs like Leicester and Harlequins, that the RFU was constrained to contemplate placing limits on the number of players who could be registered with any club. In the first year of open professionalism, it became clear that the richest clubs were again entering the market to strengthen their squads and to deny their rivals the services of top players. This was not a linear process, however, as competition, rising costs and
projected profitability constrained clubs to reassess their priorities and to re-examine the number of players they could afford to place under contract.

In our 1997 survey, it was found that size of squad and the number of players on contracts varied, not surprisingly, according to division. Yet, regardless of division, most clubs had increased their playing staff, with 80 per cent of 1st division, 75 per cent of 2nd division, 60 per cent of 3rd division and, perhaps more surprisingly, 70 per cent of 4th division clubs having increased the size of their 1st XV squads during the preceding 12 months. The number of sides which the clubs fielded remained relatively stable, with only 14.3 per cent having reduced, and 3.6 per cent having increased the number of teams during the corresponding period. It would appear though, that at this early stage in the open period, clubs were aware of the need to carry large squads and reserve strength in order to protect their physical assets and to remain competitive in a changing market.

### Table 2

**The Employment of Rugby Playing Staff in the ‘Open’ Period**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Division</th>
<th>1996/97</th>
<th>1997/98</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Full-time</td>
<td>Part-time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Range</td>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Division 1</td>
<td>5-20</td>
<td>12.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Division 2</td>
<td>0-20</td>
<td>6.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Division 3</td>
<td>0-4</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Division 4</td>
<td>0-5</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 contains data relating to the range and mean number of full- and part-time players employed by the clubs who responded to our survey. Information was provided for both the first (1996/97) and second (1997/98) seasons of ‘open’ rugby. Whilst all 1st division sides had some players on full-time contracts during 1996/97, very few clubs in the lower divisions (22.7%) did so. The number of part-time contracted staff, however, varied more widely within divisions than between them. The 1st division sides had a minimum of 10 and a maximum of 40 on such contracts, with clubs in the lower leagues displaying a similar pattern. There was, though, a clear difference in the mean number of part-time players employed by clubs in the four divisions; from 25.6 in Division 1 to 6.9 in Division 4. Moreover, most respondents indicated that their clubs would be increasing the number of contracted (both full- and part-time) players for the 1997/98 season. Only 46.5 per cent (down from 64.3%) and 18.5 per cent (down from 25%) of clubs did not expect to have any full-time or part-time contracted players,
respectively, during the second professional season. The mean number of full-time players for clubs in the first two divisions doubled in the second season of professionalism and more than doubled in the divisions below them.

It soon became clear, however, that some clubs had over-stretched themselves in this regard. The first signs came from Wales, but it was not long before English clubs also felt the pinch. In January 1997, it was reported that first Llanelli, and latterly Swansea (both large and relatively successful Welsh clubs), were no longer able to meet their wages bills. Swansea gave eight first team players the option of tearing up their contracts or leaving the club; the club Secretary, referring to the ‘greed’ of players, and to the fact that the Welsh had to compete for signings with English clubs as exacerbating the problem. Opinion in Wales seemed to indicate that only four fully professional sides could be supported and that the other clubs should resign themselves to semi-professional status. Gareth Davies, chief executive at Cardiff RFC, one of the more secure Welsh clubs, reported that ‘We will make a loss this year from a position last year when we made £350,000’.

A year later, English clubs showed similar symptoms. In February, 1998, the Premiership Two club, Moseley, went into administration, laying off a dozen players as their debts passed the £1 million mark. In March 1999, Richmond called in the administrator when Ashley Levett made the decision to cut personal losses approaching £8 million and announced 34 redundancies. As noted earlier, Richmond went on to merge with London Scottish and London Irish. In our survey, whilst 37 per cent of respondents stated that their clubs had made a profit in the season prior to professionalism, only 25.9 per cent had recorded a similar financial return in 1996/97 and, more pertinently, a mere 15 per cent thought that their club would make a profit in the second season of the new era. Moreover, the numbers making, or expecting to make, a financial loss rose from 33.3 per cent in the season before professionalism to 50 per cent in the second season.

**Physical Conditioning**

Part of the reason for assembling such large squads is that élite rugby clubs – or perhaps more accurately the coaches of élite rugby clubs – are increasingly aware of the physical demands placed upon players and that the effects of these demands need to be minimized if players are to continue to function at an acceptable level. Most top clubs have taken some steps to help ensure that players are in good physical shape to resist the rigours of the sport. These steps have included the ‘scientization’ of training and fitness conditioning; the development of more adequate medical monitoring
and control; the provision of more professionally trained and readily available physiotherapy support and the implementation of better dietary and nutritional advice. However the effectiveness and general availability of such provision has not yet been adequately assessed and, if the example of Association Football is anything to go by, the quality of such provision, and its role in the protection of players, cannot be taken for granted.33

One obvious way in which players can safeguard their health is through the introduction of protective equipment. Rugby union players, administrators and spectators – and to a lesser extent those in rugby league – have traditionally resisted the introduction into their game of American-football-style body armour, taking pride in what they perceived to be the more ‘masculine’ nature of their chosen sport. Indeed, until relatively recently, much of this body protection was illegal. Protecting the head by the use of scrum caps, and the teeth and jaw by gum-shields, has long been accepted (although most players preferred to protect their ears by the judicious use of adhesive tape and scrum-caps were seldom seen), but shoulder padding and the use of upper body ‘harnesses’ were not only illegal but regarded by many in the game as effeminate. A small amount of padding was officially permitted, mainly to protect an injury, but before 1996 this protection was limited to light padding which had to be sewn into the lining of a shirt. In 1997, the laws were altered to say that protection could be taped to the body, but the use of shoulder pads was explicitly banned. However, it was becoming apparent that shoulder pads had become commonplace abroad and at the end of the Scotland v. Australia match in 1997, a correspondent to the magazine *Rugby World* pointed out that an Australian player ‘in full view of millions of television viewers ... (took) off his jersey displaying full upper-body armour’.34

The general confusion about the amount of protection which was, or which ought to be, allowed was reflected in our survey. It was recognized by 64.3 per cent of coaches that the wearing of ‘illegal’ items of body protection had increased in the preceding 12 months. Not surprisingly, perhaps, this admission was more typical of coaches in the top two divisions than those in the 3rd and 4th divisions, where the pressures on players are, presumably, a little less intense. Many respondents called for the legalization of shoulder pads and other forms of upper body protection, with only two insisting that this growing practice should be outlawed. Others called for a clarification from the RFU and IRB on what should be allowed and, in particular, for standardization of the practices permitted in the Northern and Southern Hemispheres in this respect. The arguments in favour of wearing padding, when expressed, were primarily based on a recognition of the need to protect players from injury, with respondents suggesting that ‘sensible soft padding should be worn at all levels. It
saves/prevents injury' and 'protective padding is necessary and inevitable – the hits are bigger and more frequent. Players will be finished before they are 30 and need protection'. However, this acceptance was tempered with the qualification that the 'move to American-football-style “armour” should be resisted.

In 1996, the RFU sanctioned the use of approved head protection and, in 1998, the use of upper body protective equipment. Since then more and more players, at all levels of the game, have taken advantage of the new regulations in an attempt to protect their bodies from the rigours of the game. It should not go unremarked, however, that the use of such protection is offensive as much as defensive. Players wearing body ‘armour’ are not only protected from the ‘hits’ of others – the increasing use of this term in preference to the more traditional ‘tackle’ is itself revealing – but are able to ‘hit’ their opponents harder with less risk of damaging their own bodies in the process. This development is reflected in some of the names given by manufacturers to their products, with one firm calling their upper body protector the ‘Terminator’. It remains to be seen just how far this process will escalate.

Officiating and Refereeing of Matches

The administrators of the game have, over the last few years – but especially with open professionalism – been constrained to alter the laws of the game to create a more free-flowing, spectacular ‘product’ and one which is safer for players under professional conditions. Touch-judges, it was pointed out in 1997, ‘have long been empowered to draw the attention of the referee to dangerous play. In future, their power will probably increase. Referees, too, will be expected to be more punitive’. To this end, the sin bin was introduced for the 1997/98 season and referees now have recourse to this as an alternative to the more severe punishment of sending off a player. But, in addition to implementing these rules changes, match officials have been charged with dealing with their potential contradictions. They have to protect players, the spirit of the game, apply the laws consistently, recognize the interest of spectators and clubs and help produce a ‘spectacle’, while bearing in mind their own career interests.

In our survey we attempted to probe reaction to law changes which had coincided with rugby union becoming open and discovered that they had, in the main, been well received by coaches/directors of rugby. Respondents felt that the game had been improved by changes to the line-out laws (96.3%), by the introduction of tactical substitutions (88.9%), by changes to the tackling laws (66.7%), by changes to the rucking laws (66.7%) and by changes to the rules relating to the offending team retreating for penalties (51.9%). In general, there was cross-divisional agreement on the desirability
and effectiveness of these law changes, although for two such changes – to the rucking and tackling laws – support was far less strong in Division 4. For these latter two changes less than half of the 4th division clubs felt that the game had subsequently improved, and this may indicate that different levels of playing ability and, more significantly for present purposes, refereeing ability, make different laws more or less workable in different contexts. Indeed, most respondents when asked what further changes they would like to see introduced to improve the game in the professional era, suggested that sufficient changes had already been introduced and that what was needed was a period of consolidation and more consistent application of existing rules by referees.

There was, however, a general perception that refereeing standards had not improved in line with changes in playing techniques, speed and fitness levels of players and the general entertainment value of the game. A total of 22.2 per cent thought that refereeing standards had improved in the preceding 12 months, 22.2 per cent thought that they had worsened. The remaining 55.6 per cent felt that they had stayed the same. Of those who felt that standards had declined, five out of the six were coaches from the 4th division which would appear to be consistent with the notion that referees at the lower levels of the game were experiencing difficulty in keeping pace with the speed and complexity of the modern game.

However, even at the highest levels of the game, referees encounter difficulty in balancing the demands upon them to maintain law observance, protect players and contribute to the entertainment of audiences. It has long been recognized that a complex game like rugby union can easily be spoiled as a spectacle by the actions of the referee. The club representatives and coaches in our survey were keen to stress just how important it was that referees fully understood not only their own role in encouraging a flowing game, but also what the clubs and players were attempting to achieve. As one coach of a 2nd division club put it: ‘Until our referees come to terms with the need for them to help in the production of a game we will continue to retard the development of our club rugby, particularly below Division 1’. Another recognized the complexity of the referee’s role and suggested that: ‘The game has become too fast for one man to referee ... Other options should be explored’. The coach of a 3rd Division club offered the opinion that there may be a need for a quarterly meeting of coaches and referees to monitor standards and to keep up with contemporary developments.

The necessity of improving channels of communication between referees and the top clubs found expression in the conference held in 1998 between the referees and the Allied Dunbar Premiership clubs. Nick Bunting, the RFU’s National Referee Development Officer and chair of the
conference, was adamant that both parties shared the same vision of how the game should be played. Bunting was quoted as saying that ‘At the beginning of the conference we recognised the need to entertain the TV companies and the paying public. That is why we, as referees, have adopted a participative approach with the senior clubs. We understand the framework they’re aiming for and, as a consequence, we now share the same view as to the style of play they aspire to.’ It is noticeable that nowadays referees at all levels of the game – touch-judges too – talk constantly to players, issuing instructions designed to obtain quick release of the ball, prevent infringements before they occur and discouraging players from incurring penalties. Bunting, moreover, recognized that referees had to be ‘enablers’ within ‘the expectations of the laws of the game’ and pointed out that they would not hesitate to penalize sides who deliberately tried to slow the game.

Professionalization and Spectacularization

Academic commentators on sport, from Marxists to figurationalists, have examined the contention that the professionalization, commercialization and commodification processes in sport can lead to its spectacularization and, in the case of Marxist approaches, the potential destruction of its ‘essence’. Although figurational sociologists have eschewed the idea that sport has an ‘essence’ and reject the value-judgement this implies, they have recognized that the administrators of professional sports are increasingly constrained to take the interests of spectators (relative to players) into account and that this could have implications for the way in which a sport develops. The interests of spectators, the pressure to make sports more ‘entertaining’, and the ‘need’ to expand the audience for sports becomes more of an issue, and more constraining, when mass-media involvement in sport – particularly the involvement of television – assumes the importance that it has in contemporary society. The developments we have outlined above – changing club structures and competition formats, increased squad sizes, growing concern over players’ health and the changing role of match officials – are best understood in this context.

The RFU began to become more financially dependent upon the mass media, and in part a non-rugby playing audience, with the advent of broadcast and televised rugby in 1927 and 1937 respectively. Such a process, however, became particularly marked during the 1970s as TV audiences grew and income from advertizers and commercial sponsors rose. With the advent of professionalism in rugby union, a deal was signed by the RFU with BSkyB in 1996 in which the English RFU were to be paid £87.5 million for the exclusive rights to internationals, including Five (later
Six Nations matches played at Twickenham. Moreover, BSkyB also obtained the rights to show selected games from the Allied Dunbar Premiership, attracting a total of 5.5 million viewers in the 1997/98 season. BSkyB, it would appear, saw rugby union as a sport which would help attract new customers to satellite channels, not only selling dishes but also advertising. Consequently, it has been prepared to invest large sums of money for the right to cover matches.

Indeed, it was the prospect of widespread television coverage that attracted many new sponsors to the game and, in part, contributed to the change in club structures. The electronics giant, NEC, became one of the first multi-nationals to inject money into the professional era, when it agreed a three-year contract with Harlequins at the start of the 1996 season (see Table 1). However, these sponsors did not necessarily get the anticipated return on their investment. The audiences which BSkyB attracted were viewed by many as disappointing. Coverage of club rugby on Saturdays could be counted in six figures, while Channel 5's highlights programme struggled to get the two million that sometimes tuned in to BBC2's 'Rugby Special'. As one newspaper pointed out: 'Sponsors, like clubs, made many early assumptions about the new era. As the enthusiasm dries up, firms could look to other sports for shirt sponsorship."

The significance for present purposes of this media involvement is the effects it was thought it would have upon the structure and ethos of the game. For this reason, we included questions on the impact of television in our 1997 survey. Several effects of media involvement on professional sport have been anticipated by academic and non-academic commentators, effects which are assumed to follow from the desire and need to woo spectators. These might be usefully divided into effects on the structure of the game itself, on the scheduling of games, on the ethos of the game and on its spectator base.

It is often difficult to separate out changes to a game which are designed to maintain an enjoyable tension balance between defence and attack, and those which are primarily designed to appeal to spectators. Claims that legislators have been making the game 'too fast' have been heard since at least 1893, but many of the most recent law changes have undoubtedly had this effect. Whether players object to such changes, or have their enjoyment lessened is a moot point, but it is undeniable that many changes have been introduced into the game since open professionalism which have increased its speed, kept the ball in play for longer and with fewer stoppages, and which have increased the appeal and entertainment value of the game to many 'live' and television spectators. Such structural changes have been quickly accepted by players and have not involved the 'drastic' changes - such as the abolition of the line-out or the reduction of the numbers on both
sides – which many commentators have claimed would be required by the professional game and which would bring it even closer to the previously existing professional sport of rugby league.

Changes have been introduced to what might be loosely described as the scheduling of the game, and these might be put down to the influence and requirements of ‘the media’. The kick-off times have been altered to fit in with television schedules but this has not had the radical consequences, and thus not received the weight of criticism, it has had for other sports. When the FA Carling Premier League agreed to the televising of matches on BSkyB, the deal involved the rescheduling of games to Sundays and Mondays. In a more severe example, Barry McGuigan blamed the loss of his World Featherweight title to his being forced to box in the heat of the Las Vegas sun in order to meet the requirements of American television. In rugby union, international matches have been played end-to-end so that, for example, on the week-end of 6 March 1999, the France v. Wales game (k.o. 14:00h) and Ireland v. England (k.o. 16:00h) could both be viewed by television audiences. English club games have kicked off slightly earlier or later to accommodate television schedules while some clubs have opted to play on Sundays. This latter change has not been imposed by television companies, but is usually the pragmatic decision of the clubs themselves – or sometimes imposed by their ground-sharing arrangements with soccer clubs – to maximize attendances.

The professional clubs were, however, quick to recognize that their interdependence with television companies and advertisers meant that, not only did they have to retain their existing levels of support but that, in competition with the attractions of other sources of entertainment, they had to adapt to what some perceived to be a consumer demand for a ‘total entertainment package’. Despite the Mintel Crowd survey of 1989 appearing to indicate that the introduction of American-style razzmatazz was not a major factor in attracting crowds to sporting events, several rugby clubs experimented with a variety of spectator ‘attractions’ including cheerleaders, fireworks, pre-match and half-time entertainments, remote-control kicking-tee deliverers, and musical accompaniment to successful goal-kicks and/or tries. The intention behind these changes in the marketing of rugby union is, of course, to attract new spectators. There has been some success in this regard with 1997/98 Premiership One attendances rising by 22.4 per cent on the previous season’s figures. Similar increases in attendances at association football in recent years have been evident, although whether or not this has led to a change in the demographics of the sport’s spectator base has recently been questioned. However, letters to Rugby World and Rugby News magazines in 1998 voiced complaints about the behaviour of Saracen’s new group of spectators, the ‘Fez Boys’. The
condemnation of these fans – or more particularly their new style of supportership – focused on their drunkenness, foul language and threatening behaviour. Such letters provide an indication that the spectator base of the sport is both changing and increasingly contested, particularly where clubs have moved to new locations to attract spectators, perhaps not well acquainted with the ‘traditional’ ways of supporting.

Given these changes, it is significant that in our survey, although 50 percent of coaches agreed with the sentiment that ‘television companies have too much influence over the running of the game’, 28 percent disagreed with this statement. It is also significant that most of those who objected to the influence of television companies – 13 of the 14 objectors – came from divisions three and four. Representative comments of such objectors included the expressed fear that, ‘We are becoming servants of the TV which in the long term will change the game dramatically (e.g. American Football)’ and the belief that ‘If TV commits vast financial support then they have a right to influence the running of the game’. However, it was primarily (four out of five) 1st Division clubs – that is the clubs likely to have had the most contact with the television companies – who disagreed that the TV companies had too much influence over the game. As we have indicated, the prevalent view in the sociology of sport is that television companies are becoming increasingly more powerful relative to governing bodies and sports organizations themselves. Often this assumed change in the power balance between television company and sports organization is portrayed – primarily by Marxist scholars – as a negative development and as threatening to the ‘essential’ character of sport. Our findings would appear to cast doubt on this notion as those who are most involved with media companies – the 1st Division clubs – and therefore those who might be assumed to have lost the most power, and to have been most affected by such things as schedule changes, are also those who display the least antagonism to those changes.

Conclusion

The historical and class specificities of rugby have always meant that its study provides a unique perspective on the development of sport more generally. Although, as noted earlier, rugby’s professionalization can be traced back well over a hundred years, in the last five years of the twentieth century, the game’s players, administrators and spectators have been faced with some of the most dramatic changes to occur in the history of any sport. Much popular and press disapproval has been expressed at the way in which administrators at the national and club level have addressed these new issues without, perhaps, an appropriate appreciation of the complexity of the financial, organizational, behavioural and emotional upheaval which
these groups of people have undergone. It is all too easy for critics to point up the defunct nature and the contemporary irrelevance of notions of amateurism and to argue for the unbridled embrace of professionalism ‘for the good of the game’. The truth is that the changing network of relationships which ‘open’ rugby has entailed and the deep-seated, and widely differing, beliefs about what, specifically, constitutes ‘the good of the game’, has meant that brokering agreements has been extremely difficult.

We hope that here, we have shed light on some of the outcomes of this brokering process. Changes to the structure of club ownership, club finance, and human (i.e. player) resource management have certainly been marked. Rugby union’s rules, the scheduling of its matches, its spectator base and the requirements placed on match officials are being transformed. It would not be inaccurate to say, therefore, that for many the ethos of the game has changed significantly. Yet the developments outlined in this paper represent only one side of the picture. How have the players reacted to the increased time and emotional commitment inherent in the shift to becoming full-time players? What do new and old spectators think of the ‘spectacle’ which they are now offered? What are the consequences of this sea-change for those who have traditionally fostered the grassroots of the game in the schools, in the non-élite clubs and amongst rugby’s development officers? These are the sorts of questions which could not be addressed here but should be central to future research.

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NOTES

3. *The Rugby Football Union, like its association counterpart The Football Association, is the name used by the English national administrative body.*
7. For example, the banning of direct kicks to touch outside of the 22 metre line and the alteration to the knock-on laws.
9. For players up to the age of 16, rugby sides teams are organized into yearly age groups. After this, and to bridge the gap between junior and adult rugby, players from 16 to 18 years of age
play together in a ‘Colts’ side.


13. Wigan also took part in, and won, rugby union’s annual Middlesex 7-a-side competition, also held at Twickenham.

14. Following similar negotiations in Australia, Rupert Murdoch’s News International media group (which includes BSkyB) offered to inject £77 million (later raised to £87 million) into a restructured rugby league programme in Europe. Super League, as it was to be called would involve a team from Paris and from London and – although it was vehemently denied that News International had insisted on these – the enforced merger of a number of clubs and a change to playing in the summer from 1996 onwards. Whilst the mergers were initially rejected, some moves towards this end have since taken place with Sheffield and Hull proposing to merge in 1999.

15. In the summer of 1997 the top two divisions of the national league were reconstituted as the Allied Dunbar Premiership Leagues One and Two. The Jewson National League One is the new name for the old Courage League Division Three, and the Jewson National League Two (North and South) is the equivalent of the old Division Four (North and South).

16. In March 1999, ‘a disillusioned and embittered’ Sir John Hall relinquished his 76 per cent controlling interest in the Newcastle club. His total losses were thought to be in the region of £9 million. See Smith, ‘An Oval Ball and a Broken City’, 150.

17. Warren’s financial difficulties, stemming from his dispute with boxing promoter Don King, meant that he had to withdraw support from Bedford in 1999, causing many of the club’s better players to leave in the close season.


19. Bristol, too, was to experience difficulties. Relegated to the 2nd Division at the end of the 1997/98 season, in July 1998 they called in the official receiver. By 15 August, however, they had a new owner, Malcolm Pearce, and declared themselves solvent again. In an effort to secure 1st Division status for the 1999/2000 season, Bristol initiated a failed buyout attempt of London Scottish.


22. According to *Injuries in Sport and Exercise* (London: Sports Council, 1991) there are 59.3 injuries per 100 participants per four weeks in rugby. Next in the list is soccer with 39.3 injuries, followed by martial arts (36.3), hockey (24.8) and cricket (20.2).


26. The England tour to Australia in the summer of 1998 was a particularly clear example of this. With so many players withdrawing from the tour England were forced to field what many considered to be almost a second team. Consequently they suffered their biggest ever defeat, losing to the Australians, 76–0 (*Electronic Telegraph*, 7 June, 1998).

27. To give some idea of the actual figures involved here the three year sponsorship of rugby union’s top two leagues, Premierships One and Two cost Allied Dunbar £7.5 million. This meant that, from this pot of money, Premiership One clubs received £500,000 in 1997/98.

28. The more players play the more money they earn but the greater is the risk of injury or
An Eliasian or Process Sociological Analysis of Cricket

... decline in performance due to staleness. Their position in the figuration of power relations is dependent on a range of factors – their ability, their age, the demand for their services – and will obviously influence the control they have over the decisions they take.

33. A recent survey of doctors and physiotherapists at professional football clubs has indicated that qualification standards and appointment procedures for medical personnel are relatively poor. See I. Waddington et al., Managing Injuries in Professional Football.
34. Rugby World (February 1997), 121.
35. The Rhino or Gilbert ‘Neoprene’ headgear was approved by the RFU for the 1996/97 season and shoulder pads, made of soft and thin material, were allowed to be incorporated in an undergarment provided that it is no thicker than 1 centimetre when uncompressed [Law 4, 1998]. Information provided by Rex King via the RFU website, http://www.rfu.com/
37. Sin Bins are currently only used in Allied Dunbar Premiership Divisions One and Two.
41. Dunning, Sport Matters; Dunning and Sheard, Barbarians.
42. Dunning and Sheard, Barbarians, pp.248–68.
43. Ibid., p.252.
44. Ibid., p.253.
47. Dunning and Sheard, Barbarians, p.249.
48. Ibid., p.217.
50. Smith, ‘An Oval Ball and a Broken City’, 150.
"Pain in the Assets": The Effects of Commercialization and Professionalization on the Management of Injury in English Rugby Union

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This paper examines the management of injuries in men's elite rugby union in England and, in particular, how this has altered as a consequence of the (formal) professionalization of the game in 1995. Data are drawn from 42 in-depth, semistructured interviews, conducted with seven coaches/directors of rugby, nine rugby club doctors, ten physiotherapists, and sixteen players. Partly as a consequence of examining pain and injury developmentally, our findings contrast with much of the existing sociological research in the area. The professionalization of rugby union, we argue, has not led to a greater acceptance of pain and injury in the sport or to a higher level of pressure upon, or "coercion" of, players to play under such conditions. Rather professional players receive markedly better medical backup and seem increasingly disposed to utilizing it.

Risk, Pain and Injury in Sport

The 1990s was marked by the movement of sociologists into the field of sports injury and pain, previously the province of exercise physiologists, biomechanists and sports psychologists. This body of work has shown that participation in high-level sport almost universally involves the acceptance of a relatively high level of risk of injury, the degree of which is seldom evident in 'other' occupational spheres (Hawkins and Fuller, 1999; Young, 1993). Sociologists of sport have sought to examine the role of socialization in this process (e.g., Curry, 1993; Messner, 1992). Injuries become "normalized" and from an early age athletes experience a "process of defining even serious injuries in sport as routine and
uneventful" (Curry and Strauss, 1994, p. 195). Some have sought to explain the normalization of pain and injury largely in terms of a particularly strong adherence to a specific set of subcultural norms, be it ‘positive deviance’ in relation to the ‘sports ethic’ (Coakley and Hughes, 1991), a close identification with the dominant notions of masculinity which are closely bound to, and generated in, sport (Messner, 1992; Young et al., 1994) or to notions of “habitus” (Howe, 2001). Others, most notably Nixon (1992, 1993, 1994), Walk (1997), Roderick (1998), and Roderick et al. (2000), have placed rather greater emphasis on how the network of relationships more specifically related to sports generates pressures on athletes to continue competing despite being injured and/or in pain. It is this latter body of work in particular which has influenced the design of the research reported here.

It is noticeable that North Americans have led this sociological trend and among them Nixon has been a leading figure. Nixon sought to explain what he calls a “risk-pain-injury paradox” evident in high level sport, defined as “athletes’ continued efforts to gain success while injured or in pain, a situation in which their chances to perform well and achieve success would appear to be reduced” (Roderick, 1998, p. 65). Nixon argues that, in part, this paradox can be explained by the existence of a “culture of risk” in high level sport where “beliefs about structural constraints, structural inducements, and processes of institutional rationalization and socialization” lead athletes to accept pain and injury as “part of the game” and the only choice they can make if they want to continue to be involved at this level of sport (Nixon, 1992, p. 128).

Nixon wedds this focus on subcultures with a social network analysis and proposes the concept of “sportsnets” to help us understand the “institutional rationalization” or legitimation of risk taking and playing hurt” (1998, p. 81). The “webs of interaction” (Nixon, 1992, p. 128), which constitute a sportsnet, may include coaches, managers, medical staff, and other athletes, as well as spectators, administrators, and investors in sports clubs. Because the sportsnet is mainly oriented toward producing winning teams (in the short term), the quality of medical care, it is argued, is necessarily compromised. Those in relatively powerful positions in the sportsnet (administrators, coaches) because they want to maximize the probability of success, “transfer” their risk of failure by encouraging and cajoling athletes to play through pain and injury. The sportsnet not only reinforces the athletes’ propensity to endure pain and injury, but high level network members may, intentionally or not, “disregard or exploit athletes in pursuit of their own self interest” (Nixon, 1992, p. 133). Athletes are most likely to be entrapped in a culture of risk, where sportsnets are:

(a) larger (and athletes are more easily replaced); (b) denser (network members have more contacts with each other than with people outside the sportsnet); (c) more centralized in their control over the flow of information and resources; (d) higher in the reachability of athletes to coaches and other authorities; (e) more closed for athletes (or more restricted in permissible contacts with people outside the sportsnet); (f) more homogeneous in the transactional content of member relations; (g) more stable in their social relational patterns. (Nixon, 1992, pp. 131-132)

Roderick was the first British sociologist to address these issues and, working within the figuralional perspective advocated by Norbert Elias, he proposed a number of ways in which Nixon’s work might be developed. Elias described a
figuration as "a structure of mutually oriented and dependent people" (2000, p. 482). He developed the concept as a means of trying to overcome some of the difficulties associated with more conventional sociological terms and theories, particularly unhelpful dualisms and dichotomies such as that between the individual and society and the tendency toward process reduction, in which everything that is experienced and observed as dynamic and interdependent is represented in static, isolated categories. Elias explicitly conceptualized figurations as historically produced and reproduced networks of interdependence (Murphy et al., 2000, p. 92). Elias encouraged sociologists to "think processually" by always studying social relations as emerging and contingent processes. To him it was axiomatic that figurations should be studied as interdependent relations which are continually in flux and that shifts and transformations in patterns of social bonding can be identified in all patterns of development. Moreover, a central dimension of figurations or dynamic interdependency ties is power, conceptualized not as a substance or property possessed by particular individuals and groups but as a characteristic of all human relationships (Elias, 1978, p. 74). Power is always a question of relative balances, never of absolute possession or absolute deprivation, for no one is ever absolutely powerful or absolutely powerless. Neither is the balance of power between groups in a society permanent, for power balances are dynamic and continuously in flux (Murphy et al., 2000, p. 93).

Roderick argues that, in order to highlight the characteristics distinctive to modern sportsnets, such a developmental approach is necessary. Such a focus, Roderick states (1998, p. 72), might highlight the influence that, say, the erosion of amateur values in sport and the correlative rise of "seriousness" and professionalism in modern sport has had on the "risk-pain-injury paradox." Moreover, following Elias's own attempt to overcome the (false) dichotomy drawn between micro- and macro-sociological approaches, Roderick proposes that future research should attempt to understand how broader structural changes in sport (such as commercialization) are related to changes in individual personality structure and patterns of human behaviour (e.g. pain-induced but socially-structured emotional display). Finally, Roderick notes that Nixon has a tendency to portray relationships as unidirectional (Nixon [1992, p. 130], argues that athletes in sportsnets are "receivers rather than sources of these messages"), and urges that future research should be based on a more adequate conceptualization of relational bonds as highly interdependent.

Roderick, Naik, Parker, and Waddington (Roderick et al., 2000; Waddington et al., 2000) augmented these theoretical comments with empirical data from interviews with doctors, physiotherapists, and players in English professional football (soccer). They found that a central aspect of the culture of professional football was the willingness to play with pain or when injured. Doing this demonstrated "a good attitude" (Roderick et al., 2000, p. 169) to managers and coaches and, conversely, not playing whilst in pain or with an injury led to a questioning of commitment, masculinity and commonly to stigmatization. Injured players were often ignored by managers and/or inconvenienced by physiotherapists. These practices were based on a desire to have players resume training and hence play as soon as possible. On the whole, players saw these practices as normal. Older players recognized that the speed with which they returned to play often led to a recurrence of injury or longer-term damage but largely continued to put themselves at risk. The extent of player commitment to this culture of risk, and the consequences
of these managerial practices, meant that players who were unable to play spoke of feelings of self-blame, guilt, depression, uncertainty about their future careers and their ability to recover their position in the team, and of strained relationships with partners and families. In sum, their identities were so closely bound to their role as a football player that a prolonged absence from playing led to them experiencing a loss of self-esteem and lower self-confidence.

**Rugby Union: Professionalization and Commercialization**

Our research was designed to build on this body of literature. We aimed to investigate the management of injuries in men's elite rugby union in England (defined as those teams playing in the Zurich Premiership, National First Division and National Leagues Two and Three [North and South Divisions]). Between September 2000 and October 2001, 42 in-depth, semi-structured interviews were conducted. Our aim was to achieve as random a sample as possible although, inevitably when researching into elite sport, convenience and snowball methods were often the main basis of selection. However, we attempted to draw interviewees from across the leagues, speaking to seven coaches/directors of rugby (three Premiership, two First Division, one Third Division coach and the coach of a Premiership club's age-group side), nine doctors (five with Premiership clubs, two with First Division, one with a Third Division side and one who works occasionally for a Premiership club but mainly for a regional representative side), ten physiotherapists (three with Premiership, three with First Division, two with Second Division and two with Third Division clubs) and sixteen players (six with Premiership, four with First Division, four with Second Division and two with Third Division sides). In total, representatives from 15 of the 68 clubs in these divisions were interviewed (though, of course, many interviewees had previously been connected with other clubs). For reasons of time and cost, clubs within the English Midlands were particularly well represented although interviewees were also drawn from clubs in the South West, the North West, Yorkshire and London. All the coaches/directors of rugby were former players and their experiences as players were integrated with our other findings. Current players ranged from age 19, up to one player coach who was 41 at the time of interview. Interviews ranged from 30 to 80 minutes in length and took place in various locations ranging from our offices to rugby clubhouses, interviewees workplaces and homes and even (in one instance) at pitchside. Interview schedules covering key areas were drawn up for each category of interviewee but interviewees were given considerable scope to lead the discussion. Consequently, the interview schedule developed as the research progressed, and not all interviewees addressed all areas covered in our initial schedule. Interviews were recorded and transcribed in full.

Previous research in the UK (Sports Council, 1991, p. 33) and New Zealand (Hume and Marshall, 1994) had demonstrated that rugby entails a particularly high risk of injury. Moreover, elite rugby union has undergone a particularly rapid phase of professionalization and commercialization in recent years and initial epidemiological research indicates that this has led to a higher incidence of player injury (Garraway et al., 2000). In Nixon's terms, it is evident that the sportsnet in English rugby union has become denser and more centralized under professionalization as well as larger, in the sense that clubs now employ greater numbers of administrative and commercial staff. Players have become “higher in
reachability" and a more precious resource for coaches, and at Premiership and leading First Division clubs, where the majority of players are full time, more homogeneous. There is no evidence to suggest, however, that rugby sportsnets have become more closed during this period of considerable change and we would expect that they have become less stable. The context of these broader changes needs some explanation.

For most of its history the national governing body for rugby union in England, the Rugby Football Union (RFU) has been a staunch, if not fanatical, defender of the principle of amateurism and powerful sections of this body continue to lobby against commercial changes. However gradual processes of professionalization have occurred as the original emphasis placed by administrators and players upon the interests of the players have been "played down," and the interests of spectators have been increasingly recognized. The pressure upon RFU administrators to initiate changes in this direction probably stemmed from three developments occurring in the 1960s and 1970s. Firstly, there was the perceived need to respond to the competitive tensions generated by the international diffusion of rugby and the desire to improve national playing standards, particularly in relation to Southern Hemisphere countries. Secondly, there was the desire of members of some domestic "gate-taking" clubs to introduce—or reintroduce—more formalized league and cup competitions, as a means of raising standards and furthering commercial interests. Thirdly, there was the growing dependence of the RFU itself, and the major clubs, on gate money, revenues from increasing media coverage, advertising revenue and commercial sponsorship (Dunning and Sheard, 1979, pp. 232-268). Such was the role of commercialism in English rugby union from the 1960s that this phase of the game's development is normally described as "shamateur."

The watershed moment in this process occurred in 1995 when the International Rugby Football Board (IRB) declared rugby union "open," and thus formally legitimated professionalism. Malcolm et al. (2000) have discussed some of the main structural and cultural changes to the English game which followed this announcement. Most notably players now receive overt and direct (as opposed to covert and indirect) payment for playing and most top players have relinquished other careers to become "full time" sportsmen. Organizationally, clubs were restructured (re-named, legally re-constituted, merged, re-located, etc.) in order to generate the increased income needed to fund this change. There was recognition, too, that players were now the clubs' major assets and that "the particular physical requirements of rugby union meant that the players . . . had, as far as possible, to be protected from injury" (Malcolm et al., 2000, p. 67). To this end, clubs increased squad sizes to provide cover for key players and restructured their fixtures in order to limit the number of matches players played (whilst trying to maximize revenue from the remaining matches). In addition to this, a range of rule changes were implemented, aimed at creating a more free-flowing, spectacular "product" and, by broadening the range of permissible protective clothing, a safer playing environment (Malcolm et al., 2000, p. 79). Large amounts of commercial money came into the game and kick-off times and match-days were re-scheduled partly in line with media demands. American-style practices such as the use of mascots and cheerleaders also became more prevalent. 37 of the 42 people interviewed in the research had been associated with the sport since its pre-"open" days. Changes over this six-year period were a central consideration in the design of the research.
The data, therefore, were distinctly developmental in character and a central point which we wish to highlight here is the close connection between these broader "structural" changes in the sport—in Nixon's terms, changes to the sportsnet—and the development of different modes of behaviour, especially in relation to attitudes towards pain and injury.

On the basis of Nixon's work, research into English professional football, and the commercialization and globalization of rugby union, we initially hypothesized that, under professionalization, players would be more willing to play through pain and with injury, that coaches would put more pressure on players to play in such circumstances and that medical staff would also experience increased pressure from coaches and hence, that medical practice would be poorer. At the same time, however, we were influenced by Elias's general theoretical work and by his discussion of civilizing processes in particular (see, e.g., Murphy et al., 2000, for a discussion of Elias's and other figurational sociologists' work in the sociology of sport). In light of the general trend identified in this literature one would expect, with the increasing complexity of a figuration and the broadening and lengthening of chains of interdependence (as represented, for example, by the globalization and commercialization of rugby union), together with "functional democratization" (the gradual historical tendency towards more equal—though not wholly equal—power balances between different groups and sub-groups in society), that a concurrent and parallel development would be a greater emphasis on forethought and long-term planning and an associated greater sensitivity towards pain and injury. Elias did not regard civilizing processes as unilinear and some figurational sociologists have attempted to explain a variety of apparently 'de-civilizing' trends (Dunning, 1986; Dunning and Mennell, 2000; Sheard, 1998). The range of our time series data is insufficient to allow discussion of long-term changes in personality structure which should properly constitute discussion of civilizing processes (see, however, Dunning and Sheard, 1979), but, what evidence we do have indicates a complex variety of developments in relation to pain and injury. Briefly stated, the professionalization of rugby seems to have entailed an increasing acceptance of playing with pain, but a decreasing tolerance towards playing with injury with its associated risk of longer term physical damage.

The remaining sections of this paper will examine three particular types of change in rugby union as a consequence of professionalization within the game, namely: changes in medical provision; changes to players' desire to play through pain and/or with injuries; and changes to the pressure applied on players within the sportsnet, and by coaches in particular. We argue that medical provision has improved markedly under professionalization and that whilst players' decisions are now influenced by financial considerations, such considerations are (a) relatively slight (in comparison to other motivations, e.g., comradeship, belonging, identity) and (b) counterbalanced by a recognition that playing with injury might have consequences for their longer term career prospects. Consequently, players largely seem disposed to playing with pain though not necessarily through injury. Finally, we argue that, whilst it is clear that coaches have considerable desire and motivation to play players as much as they can (to utilize their resources to the maximum), the power balance within this rugby figuration—that is the coaches' closeness to the players, and the players' relatively high degree of power—means that professional rugby union players experience a very different form of persuasion and coercion to their football counterparts. In this respect, as Walk (1997) and
Roderick (1998) have done, we too dispute Nixon's (1992) notions of "biased social support" or "conspiratorial networks." Moreover we would argue that in the context of English professional rugby union, the responsibility for playing hurt lies more with the players than it does with the sports authorities.

Changes to Medical Provision in Rugby Union

The implication of Nixon's analysis is, as Walk (1997) notes, "that medicine is practiced differently, more competently, and/or more ethically in nonsports contexts" (p. 24). Our research partly supports this assertion but also indicates that, if we look developmentally, we can see that medical care in English rugby union has markedly improved under professionalism; that is to say, as Howe (2001) argues, professionalization has made "accessibility to treatment of paramount importance" (p. 298).

In rugby union, as in English professional football (Roderick et al., 2000), physiotherapists are the players' primary source of injury management but at most clubs surveyed physiotherapists' regular attendance at both matches and training is a recent development. Previously, it was largely the responsibility of individuals to arrange (and pay for) treatment. As a player who retired in 1993 recalled: "I sort of had to have treatment away from the club to try and make sure I was fit to play, but . . . that was always sourced by yourself, not by the club." A retired international player highlighted the potential problems with such an informal arrangement. Whilst playing in the 1980s he used a physiotherapist whom he knew also treated other local rugby players. At the start of one match an opponent revealed that he was aware of the treatment our interviewee had been receiving and so would be targeting his tackles in order to exacerbate the injury.

Professionalism was identified as the main factor behind recent improvements in rugby club medical care. One Second Division player thought that, "at the professional side of things, the clubs are taking a lot more care of the players. Medical staff; there seems to be more around and around more often." Another player noted how improved physiotherapy was a direct result of the appointment of a new, and full time, director of rugby in the first year of the professional era:

We previously never really had physios at training, or occasionally we did and (the new director of rugby) insisted that at any training there was a physio, not just within the vicinity, but actually at the training session so that if someone did get injured they were there immediately or within 100yds of the pitch . . . that's been excellent. (First Division player)

At Premiership level, all the clubs on which we have information employed at least one full time physiotherapist and, unlike their football counterparts (Waddington et al., 2000) they were all chartered and so qualified to practice in the British National Health Service. Consequently, full time players were able to receive treatment on a daily basis. In lower leagues, however, physiotherapists noted with concern that players did not receive treatment as quickly as, ideally, they should. Clubs exercised relatively little control over players and proper rehabilitation could not be enforced. A physiotherapist who had worked at clubs in various leagues noted that at the lower level, she could only advise on rehabilitation whilst fully professional players had clauses in their contracts that obliged players to undergo treatment.
Professionalization has also led to an improved quality of medical care provided by club doctors. We found that, traditionally, medically qualified club members or supporters have either been co-opted or have volunteered to provide medical cover. However, many of these volunteers weren’t prepared to allow this honorary role to infringe too significantly on their enjoyment of the game. In keeping with the centrality of alcohol in rugby club culture more generally, (Donnelly and Young, 1988; Sheard and Dunning, 1973), a First Division physiotherapist recalled his experiences of the amateur game:

The club doctor was a social member who would turn up and frequent the bar. He would be available for stitching on a Saturday; they’d use a room out the back of the stand, complete with a bottle of scotch and an optic for members of the crowd to go down and get a quick shot during the game.

Remnants of this “amateur,” volunteer-based system continue. One club we examined, for instance, had two doctors, a longstanding volunteer GP and another—a sports medicine specialist—who had been appointed when the first team squad became full time. The newcomer expressed some surprise:

I did find it difficult to believe that this guy was the doctor for seven years... he’s never gone to any sports medicine training... all he cares about is rugby... and having that kudos of being the doctor and standing on the side watching the game.

At other clubs we found doctors who performed multiple roles (e.g., as committee members). One Second Division physiotherapist explained that the club’s doctor was also the club’s official photographer and that this led to some conflict of roles: “It doesn’t help when he’s on the touchline and you want someone stitched and he’s more interested in taking photographs of the game.”

This volunteer-based system of medical cover meant that appointments tended not to be advertised, candidates were not interviewed and, consequently, doctors’ qualifications to do the job were not scrutinized. Moreover, the sidelining of someone who, in the past, has voluntarily given a great deal of time and expertise for relatively little can be a difficult process. One sports medicine specialist revealed how he got involved with a team:

Doctor: I was the doctor and the physio... they couldn’t afford to have the expenses, minimum expenses anyway, so I did both roles... They had a doctor who was the father of one of their players who’s a GP... who was, not to put too fine a point on it, useless. So rather than get a physio so they would then have a physio, maybe a good physio but still not a very good doctor... they got me in as the physio. So for the first two seasons I was the physio... which is a crazy situation and eventually they agreed with me and got rid of the doctor and I became the doctor and then found an excellent physio.

Interviewer: Presumably they were reluctant to push the existing doctor aside because of some sort of obligation to him?

Doctor: Because he drank with the hierarchy, but he rarely turned up and was not qualified to do anything when he was there.
In contrast to professional football (Roderick et al., 2000) we found that it was quite common for rugby union players to seek treatment outside the "sportsnet." It was not unusual for players to receive treatment from physiotherapists either recommended by medical staff at the rugby club, or located by the player himself. Clubs regularly met the costs of this treatment. Medical staff at top clubs often had extensive networks of specialists to whom they referred players. A former Premiership player, now playing in the Second Division, recalled how he had contacted the medical staff at his previous club when he feared a spinal injury would end his career: "It's not so much (that) the physios (are better at the top level of the game) but more their sort of relationships with the consultancies is closer and therefore you can get it (treatment) quicker."

Although there was a general feeling that medical provision in rugby union was improving, those with sports medicine qualifications expressed despair that whilst clubs were paying out large amounts of money to, in particular, star players from overseas, they were reluctant to spend more money on players' health care. Howe's (2001) research indicated that "minor injuries ... turned into more serious ones because the medical staff were treating the wrong ailment" (p. 297) and our interviewees complained that, even at big clubs "the decisions as to whether people play are often made by either the GP who does not have sports knowledge or an orthopaedic surgeon who really knows how to operate but doesn't know about the rehab and things like that" (Premiership and representative doctor). The existence of a large number of club members who volunteered their medical "expertise" acted as a disincentive for clubs to seek appropriately qualified, or appropriately committed, personnel and this enabled the prevailing situation to persist. That there are now sports medicine specialists practising in rugby union is an indication of an overall improvement under professionalism, but some remained sceptical about the general quality of medical care at top clubs, and clubs' misplaced priorities in this respect:

I think the clubs have a responsibility ... to actually fork out some money, not only to compensate people for their time but also to train them up to a level where they can give appropriate care. If somebody breaks their neck on the rugby pitch, very often it is the ambulance people who are in charge, because nobody is actually qualified to deal with a severe neck injury.... The chances of making an injury worse, let alone killing someone, are actually significant. (Premiership and representative doctor)

None of the doctors to whom we spoke were employed by their clubs on a full-time basis; some did run clinics for players during the week, others attended perhaps one of the training sessions but, most commonly, doctors would simply "fast-track" players into their NHS schedules as a favor to the club. Even now relatively few doctors receive payment for their services. One Premiership doctor recalled asking for payment when the club started to pay its players. A First Division doctor had been paid until the club's financial backer withdrew. The following season he and other doctors had practiced at the club for no charge "as a gesture of good will" but became increasingly disillusioned: "I found the open-ended commitment they required, for no money, to be too much." Other doctors actually subsidized their club in the form of providing medical equipment, bandaging, etc. One Premiership doctor noted that "because the club doesn't pay its bills on time,
they've been blacklisted so I bear the cost (strapping, etc.) on my credit card.” Most doctors, if not happy, tolerate this situation, continuing to provide a service primarily because of a deep emotional commitment to the club.

Despite the level of remuneration remaining, at best, low, medical cover has become more comprehensive and procedures more professional in recent years. All the Premiership and Division One clubs covered in the research had a doctor present for home games, but further down the leagues, on the fringe of the amateur-professional divide, this is not always the case. A director of rugby with a Third Division side stated: “There are doctors who are members of the club but they’re not on duty on matchday.” This lack of medical provision has significant consequences for both the team—players requiring stitching must travel to the nearest hospital and so miss the rest of the game—and the players. An age-group coach recalled:

We had one lad who had his hand stood on and he had to go . . . to the (hospital) for 2 hours for treatment and, in contrast to that, we played a rugby club 3 or 4 weeks ago and there was a doctor there. A lad very badly damaged his ribs, was in a lot of pain. The guy was able to give him some injections and tablets and treat him straight away which obviously doesn’t make him feel any better because he’s got a long term injury, but at that time it (helped).

Not only do all Premiership sides have their own doctor at home games, but as one doctor with a Premiership side noted: “All the teams now that we’re professional bring a doctor with them. . . . It used to be the case that they didn’t—5 years ago—and it’s all changed.” A Premiership director of rugby explained that they had introduced this following “examples in the past of a doctor (doing what) we would regard as sub-standard stitching, and infecting.” A physiotherapist with a Second Division side noted that, as they didn’t take their doctor to away matches, the diagnosis of concussion (something which he felt he wasn’t particularly qualified to make) was generally left to him, because it was felt that the ramifications of a positive diagnosis (there is a recommended minimum of three weeks absence from the game), meant that the “home doctor” could not be trusted to diagnose reliably. Yet, even at Premiership clubs, as noted above, doctors are not, as a rule, present at training sessions. One graphic example of the problems associated with this shortfall in provision was provided by a First Division player who was a full time professional at the time of the incident: “I had 8 stitches in my head and I had to drive myself down (to hospital), they sort of looked at it and said, ‘Oh you’d better get that seen to.’ There’s no doctor there, it’s a training session, so I drove myself.”

Thus our research found that while medical cover for players is both quantitatively and qualitatively limited, the treatment of players’ injuries has dramatically improved as a result of the professionalization of the game. Of equal interest, however, was the way players themselves have responded to professionalization. It is these issues to which we now turn.

**Players’ Desire to Play**

As noted above, drawing on the work of Nixon, we might expect that players, whose livelihoods now depend on their performance on the pitch, or those
who at least have some financial incentive to play, would increasingly find the “culture of risk,” contextually rational. Howe’s ethnographic study suggests that such a culture exists in rugby union. However, on the basis of our research, we suggest that his claim that the increasing “risk of acquiring pain and injury . . . is the legacy of professionalism in elite rugby in Pontypridd” (2001, p. 300), is perhaps not generalizable. More particularly, whilst we discovered a considerable disposition amongst rugby players to play through pain and to rationalize injury as “part of the game,” we also found that players were acutely aware that playing with injuries could affect their longer-term health (players defined “longer-term” largely in terms of their playing careers) and a considerable reluctance to play with injuries which entailed a risk of further, or compounded, damage. In sum, whilst we found considerable evidence of a culture of risk, there was relatively little to support the existence of a “risk-pain-injury-paradox.”

A strong adherence to a “culture of risk” currently exists at all levels of the elite game. However, our research indicates that this culture pre-dates professionalization. As a 31-year-old First Division player who had spent one year as a full time professional noted, even as an amateur, “whenever you get injuries in rugby, whether it’s stitches or something like that, you tend to train and play anyway.” One interviewee, who retired before the game became professional, expressed the desire to play that he had experienced: “You see things going on, obviously if things are going well you want to be involved, but at the same time you can see that if someone else gets an opportunity, that means that you’ve got to come back and either start in the second team or work your way back up.” Another retired player recalled how, when injured his club signed a new player. Feelings of exclusion and isolation—“I felt everyone was talking about him when they should have been talking about me”—led him to return to playing as soon as he could, paying scant attention to medical advice. Howe (2001, p. 297) provides a similar example of a player, prior to professionalization, continuing to play despite injury.

Current players spoke of feelings of guilt and depression at enforced layoffs, problems in domestic relations caused by injury (“She [my wife] just shook her head, she said, ‘I don’t know how you do it’” [First Division player]), and the inability of “non-rugby” people to understand players’ acceptance and normalization of injury. A current player in the Third Division described how he enjoyed the prestige and status that could be derived from playing: “Everybody wants to play . . . when you get to a rugby club the first team is the rugby club, everything revolves around the first team.” Consequently, it was difficult to distinguish between the level of immersion into the club culture, that professional, semi-professional and amateur players felt. One player, who played top level club rugby in the late 1980s, recalled, “the whole of your life is all about the rugby club.”

Players define their identities largely in relation to their role as athletes (see Adler and Adler, 1985), and this appears to be irrespective of professionalization. Athletes immerse themselves in a culture of risk, which can translate into a high propensity to play with pain and injury. A Premiership director of rugby neatly summarized the commonly held spectrum of acceptable and unacceptable attitudes to injury. He identified four types of player:

The first one is the guy who gets injured and doesn’t tell you anything about it, just wants to play on and on until eventually it becomes a chronic problem. . . . There’s the guys who have a slight injury and because they’re such,
so much of an athlete, they find it very difficult to play through it. They can’t play unless they’re 100%. Then you’ve got the guys who will dog it out but are quite sensible about it . . . and there’s a 4th one. There’s the guys who aren’t injured but who have other interests, such as playing for . . . their country, and who don’t play on a supposed injury.

Thus, deviancy is defined in terms of taking too many risks, of being too sensitive to injury, or as having an ulterior (that is non-club) agenda. The director of rugby implicitly outlines what he sees as the ideal attitude for his players; that is to say, prepared to play with pain (“dog it out”). This is rationalized and normalized by the use of the term “sensible” but, and this is highlighted by the contrast with the first type of player (who self-inflicts chronic injury), the “ideal” players do not play if that involves putting themselves at risk of exacerbating an injury. Players should, therefore, be indifferent to pain but intolerant of injury. Players who exhibited “extreme” levels of tolerance were characterized as deviant: “He’s a Cumbrian (extreme north of England),” noted one 1st Division physiotherapist, “where players like playing until they can’t play anymore. We had to carry him off the field.”

To gauge the regularity of injury, we asked a number of players how often they considered themselves “fully fit.” One Premiership player estimated that, in his league, “most of the people playing . . . have a bang, or a legacy of an earlier injury that’s playing up here or there or something like that. 90% probably of rugby players are taped up somewhere on the body.” Others questioned the meaning of such a term: “Fully fit? Well it depends what you mean. I mean things like with rugby you get finger injuries and you can’t grip and that doesn’t really affect the way you play, it just hurts” (Second Division player). This quote was symptomatic of the way players more generally categorized their injuries. On the whole, only those physical conditions that caused a player to miss matches or training were defined as “proper” injuries. For players with other occupations, the impact of injuries on their “day job” was rarely considered particularly important. “Minor” injuries were commonplace and resulting pain was viewed as unproblematic. Oral painkilling and anti-inflammatory drugs were taken on a regular basis to manage the pain, though the administering of these drugs by injection seemed relatively rare. But players, we found, were reluctant to put themselves at risk of further injury: “I don’t think anyone would play where they would cause themselves more injury” (Premiership player).

An adjunct to the propensity to play with injury is the occurrence of re-injury through returning to play prior to being fully recovered. Many players talked about this: “Last year, when we were struggling, I dislocated a shoulder and I came back too early and did the same thing in that game and was out again” (Second Division club captain). A Second Division player-coach told how he had re-injured a hamstring because he had returned to playing quicker than advised: “The physio just said: ‘Well I told you it was six weeks.’” Medical staff revealed much the same: “I said he (a player coach) wouldn’t be on the pitch in the first place if it was up to me and he came off after quarter of an hour . . . he missed 4 weeks rugby after that” (Third Division physiotherapist). Indeed, in contrast to the work of Nixon, it seems that rather than the rugby sportsnet being “conspiratorial,” players themselves are often culpable. As one Premiership physiotherapist put it, “The single biggest pressure I have at this club is almost certainly coming from players rather
An Eliasian or Process Sociological Analysis of Cricket

than coaches or managers to provide get-quick-fit fixes." The strength of desire to play, and the acceptance that some degree of pain and injury is almost an ever-present, leads many players to risk the recurrence of injury and return to play sooner than is medically advised. Yet in terms of pressure and player exploitation, it is telling that club captains and player-coaches, who are in relatively powerful positions within the sport is net, often featured in these types of incident.

Some players reflected on the greater risk-taking when younger ("When I was coming up through the ranks at [Premiership club]... I was so desperate to play that I'd play on anything") while others demonstrated a continuance of this culture as they approached retirement. While age/career stage played a significant part in players' decisions to play with injuries and/or pain, for all players, whether amateurs playing prior to 1995, semi-professional or professional, identities were so closely bound to the rugby subculture, that playing through pain was a central feature of their self-image.

This is not to say, of course, that professionalization and money have not impacted upon players' attitudes. As one Premiership physiotherapist noted, "The pressures on everyone to succeed and perform are now, I would have thought, greater than they were... players are more difficult from the medical viewpoint to handle." Some linked this specifically to money:

I would say, in fact I know, if you're playing for a club that's got a big win bonus or a big match fee, people are mad keen to play, because if you don't play for a month, that's wiped out a whacking great bit of their salary. So yeah, there are going to be more people playing with injury, I think. In fact there is. I know there is. (Second Division player)

But many also played down the significance of money. One Premiership player, who stated that his club paid particularly large win bonuses said, "I don't want to lose my place, so that motivates me more than money does, but money I would say does motivate players." Others were more dismissive, describing win bonuses, "like a little perk... there's no real incentive, there's no pressure to play through injury because you're going to get your money anyway" (First Division player).

Moreover, being paid to play rugby, and thus having sport as a potential career, may have led to players being more cautious about playing with injury. A Premiership club doctor argued that due to the money now in the game, players have become more sensible, more aware of their bodies and pay more attention to health issues (see also Howe, 2001, p. 300). Consequently, "they don't play when injured so much these days. The win bonus is fairly small in significance" (Premiership doctor). Howe's experience was that players "would often seek medical treatment before an injury became serious." A Premiership director of rugby portrayed a similar picture: "I think that players now are more conscious... take [21-year-old international player], he must be looking at a dozen years here (thinking), 'it really is worth my while to look after my body.'" Similarly a Second Division player noted:

They all tend to take it more seriously now, it's more important to them, this is what pays the wages so, if they're injured they will take it, they will do the stuff that they're told to do. But when I started, the physio would tell you "get ice on it" and be careful to ice it 3 times a day, and keep your foot rested
up all day and that sort of thing and I was going to work and I'd never do
that. I mean the first thing that you'd do when you got off the pitch, as soon
as you got the painkillers down you, then drink 20 pints . . . I found that
players are probably playing when they are injured, less. People are saying,
"Right, I'm injured, I'm unfit for Saturday."5

These attitudes were not confined just to the playing elite. A physiotherapist
with a First Division club described modern rugby players as “more sensible.”
Playing with injuries, and the culture of heavy drinking, “doesn't happen any-
more, potentially the lads can make their living out of playing the game and they
look after themselves more.” Such changes are increasingly being felt in the lower leagues. Conversely it was “the older type player . . . who are set in their ways and
all you can do is give them your advice and at the end of the day, if they want to
play they will play” (First Division physiotherapist). Professional players, there­
fore, have better medical back-up available to them and are increasingly disposed
to utilizing it.

**Structural Pressures to Play**

While professionalization may have increasingly led players to question play­
ing with injuries, Nixon’s work in particular suggests that there will have been an
increase in the pressure exerted on players to actually do so. As for players,
professionalization has meant that more administrators, coaches and directors of rugby have become full-time employees of rugby clubs. Many have subsequently
relinquished other sources of income and, consequently, “high level network mem­
bers” have come, themselves, to have increasing stakes in the playing success or
failure of their clubs.

Once again we found a number of similarities with the existing research in
this area, but we also found some notable differences. As in other elite sports,
pressure on athletes to play with injuries was, at times, considerable. A Premierships
and representative doctor noted that “there are some (coaches) who clearly think
that an injury is just whingeing,” and one First Division coach illustrated this atti­
dude by saying, “you know straight away if a guy comes to you with an excuse like
a twinge, then you know, straight away, there’s something (mentally) wrong.”

However, it would be mistaken to think that such pressures were a particu­
larly new feature of the game and we found little evidence to support Howe's
(2001) claim that “No longer is the health and well-being of players considered, by
management, above the desire to win games” (p. 300). One retired player recalled
badly injuring his hand in the 1980s having just made his international debut. With
his hand in plaster, his club selected him for an important fixture. The burden of
responsibility therefore fell upon him. Withdrawing from the game within hours
of the kick off, the crowd booed the announcement of the team. Sitting with other
injured teammates, he watched his side lose. He recalled, ‘The captain turned to
me and said, ‘you know who they’ll (the supporters) blame for this, don’t you?’”

Players described a range of experiences where coaches had exerted pres­
sure upon them to play:

You go to the physio and the physio says you are 3 weeks (from being fit to
play), and you may think, no I’m only 2 weeks away and then you go and see
the manager or the manager calls you in and [says], “I’ve just seen the physio
and he talks a load of shit and you’ll be ready in a week won’t you, won’t you?” (First Division player)

The most extreme case of pressure from a Premiership coach came following a head injury:

Player: I wasn’t out cold but I couldn’t remember anything that happened, I lost about 2 hours memory. After the game (the coach) wouldn’t let me see a doctor.

Interviewer: Wouldn’t let you? You asked?

Player: He sort of like talked to the doctor . . . and sort of said, “He’s alright isn’t he, he wasn’t concussed.” They said that I wasn’t concussed and I played on the Saturday . . . when really I should have had 3 weeks off.

Medical staff also spoke of pressure from coaches. A First Division physiotherapist described what he called “treatment shopping” in one instance where the coaching and club management were not prepared to accept his, and the doctor’s, advice about the player. Physiotherapists outlined attempts at persuasion and gentle cajoling—“Oh it’s a really big game,’ you know, ‘Just a half,’ ‘Could he be on the bench?’” (Third Division physiotherapist)—while for others, conflict became more difficult to resolve. Another Third Division physiotherapist we interviewed noted that she had left her previous club partly because of a disagreement with a coach about a player’s fitness to play. A Premiership doctor recalled a similar case:

(The coach) wasn’t saying I want the player back by so and so, he just played them . . . He did play players when they weren’t really fit and he did, once, specifically against my advice. He was far worse when he moved on to other clubs. It got to the stage where medics were putting their advice in writing to cover themselves.

Players also recognized the pressure sometimes exerted on medical staff: “The director of rugby here, or perhaps everywhere, they try to impose themselves on the physio” (First Division player); “(The coach) ran the show and if he wanted a player to be fit the physio was under no illusion” (Second Division player).

Yet tales of this sort of pressure were relatively rare and largely confined to players’ and medical staffs’ experiences under Southern Hemisphere coaches. Medical staff interviewed recognized that pressure from coaches could be exerted but the majority talked of this on a theoretical level only. A Premiership doctor described his head coach as “a very certain character” who “knows what he wants” but nevertheless explained that, “He appreciates that with injuries, time is the big healer and you cannot rush things. Although he wants them out there—he can be quite assertive when he needs to be—I don’t think he is unreasonable about it.” Others felt empowered to resist: “Oh yes, there’s pressure on but I suppose that having played the game I have a different outlook on it . . . the coaches do respect that” (First Division Physiotherapist). As a gauge of the relatively weak form of pressure which coaches exerted in rugby union, no player, doctor, or physiotherapist recalled a coach pressurizing a player, or even merely suggesting, that a player have a painkilling injection. This finding contrasted sharply with the findings of Roderick et al. (2000), and a number of interviewees made similar cross sport comparisons which emphasized the relatively low levels of pressure exerted on elite rugby players.
While all players spoke of some degree of pressure to play when injured, this pressure was generally felt to be indirect and/or relatively gentle. One former Premiership player, now playing in the Second Division described the pressures as follows:

not really a direct pressure ... the biggest time that I felt under pressure was last season ... when I was really needed and it was a combination because he [the coach] knew that I was needed, and I knew that I was needed so you know, but there's no sort of "right you must play" type of thing, he just kept asking me, "when are you fit, when are you fit?" ... but never has any coach said, "you've got to play, you've got to be fit by the next game."

Yet, as the player later revealed, even the application of indirect pressure tended to provide the coach with what he wanted: "At our place, the physio, to a certain extent, will leave the decision up to the player and if the coach is saying, 'Will you be alright this week?' and you really want to play, you force yourself to play and it's not always the best thing."

While the application of this sort of pressure to play seems to be commonplace in elite sports, in contrast to the research into English professional football we found very little evidence of the stigmatization or inconveniencing of injured players. Injured players remained fully integrated within squads and some senior players became part of the coaching set-up during long-term absences through injury. Injured players attended training as usual and received treatment whilst the others trained. Interviewees noted that "joking" was commonplace in the rugby club environment but few perceived this as a strategy employed to exert undue pressure on players. One age-group coach stated that he used humour to "cajole" his players, but argued that, "Often people feel that if you're out and you've lost the opportunity to play, you're obviously going to be pissed off, so there's no need to have salt rubbed in the wounds." Similarly a Second Division player noted, "There's a lot of piss taking, but it's all good humoured and people know how to take it." There were, however, two exceptions to this: one from the pre-professional era—a player spoke of his club's policy in the 1980s of "cripple training" for injured players which was generally recognized as more demanding than "normal" training—and a current Third Division coach who noted that injured first team players trained with an age-group side, a practice he saw as providing an incentive for them to declare themselves fit. Thus, we discovered that there were varying degrees of pressure exerted on players and medical staff, but, overall, it seemed that this pressure was relatively slight compared to similar studies in professional sport, and professional football in particular. Moreover, interviewees were divided over whether professionalism had resulted in these pressures being increased. One Second Division player argued that in "a full time professional environment, you're being paid so you do get your arm twisted a bit." Similarly a First Division physiotherapist stated that his club had signed a particularly high profile player who was carrying an injury but that, against medical advice, the club arranged televised fitness tests and issued press statements that the player would be playing on a particular date, "to get the crowds in." However, the weight of opinion contradicted this. One Second Division player argued that the greater resources of fully professional clubs led to less pressure on players: "There's a bigger squad so they don't pressure you to get fit. They might do to some of the bigger players but at the end of the day there's no
point pushing people back too early 'cos they'll just injure themselves." A Premiership player stated that, "unless it's perhaps a big cup game or a big game where they really want you to play, they say 'look, play this week then take a week off, two weeks off.' I think that is more commonplace nowadays rather than just keep playing and playing until your body's physically ruined." A Premiership doctor noted that the increased speed and physical demands of the elite professional game were so severe that risks could not be taken: "We don't send people out with injuries because they'll get found out." As Howe (2001) notes, “value ... has been added to the bodies of rugby players since the advent of professionalism” (p. 299) and coaches and medical staff seem to both recognize, and act upon, this.

Indeed, there was a significant body of interviewees who argued that pressurizing players to play whilst injured was a characteristic of the old, pre-professional, school of rugby. A First Division coach argued that the pressures which he could bring to bear on his players had reduced with professionalism: “Instead of like the old way, like a coach (would) have 50 players, and you must do what the coach says. You jump over the wall. You’d have injections. The coach was like the king.” A physiotherapist at a Third Division club explained the changes resulting from the introduction of new coaches who had played international rugby: “Some (coaches) are into physio and some are more old-fashioned. I mean the higher level that they've played the better they are to work with.”

In support of this viewpoint, a number of interviewees noted that the “intensity” of training sessions had been reduced since the earliest days of professionalism. A First Division player recalled the training he experienced during the first year of professionalism: “Basically all you (did was) just smashing into each other and rolling in the mud ... it’s not surprising people got injured.” Coaches have become increasingly aware that they have a part to play in protecting their players from injury. Indeed this player described this form of training as “definitely ... old school coaching.”

Compared to their football counterparts (Roderick et al., 2000, pp. 172-175) professional rugby players felt relatively unpressured by coaches and consequently displayed a relatively high degree of autonomy over fitness decisions. A Premiership director of rugby stated that, “I very much rely on the commonsense of the players and I rely on the players actually being quite realistic about their fitness levels.” One of the physiotherapists at the club confirmed that this attitude was reflected in the coach’s policies—“We have no pressure from the management or the coaches at this club to do anything to anybody”—and a physiotherapist at a First Division club indicated that such an approach was not uncommon: “What I find is that it's not the coaches in fact that you seem to have a problem with, it's sometimes the players.” Players too spoke about the autonomy they had in decisions over playing (“definitely, you just do [ignore doctors]. I mean people ignore doctors all the time, whether they're playing rugby or not. I tend to ignore physios less than doctors,” Second Division player) and all the players we spoke to stated that they felt that medical staff worked as much in their interests, if not more, than in the club’s. In a finding again quite different to the research into English professional football, others spoke of their own ability to resist coaches’ pressure to play. When asked if, when injured one time, he encountered any sort of pressure or persuasion to play, a First Division player replied, “No 'cos I told them straight and he knows the way I am, he knows that if I was fit I'd play and he trusts my judgement and we get on well.”
Remarkably few players to whom we spoke stated that they had ever withheld information from club medical staff. This level of openness was less commonly described by medical staff but the majority concurred with the view that, as one Second Division physiotherapist put it, “there is generally more honesty in rugby than there is in football,” both in terms of players telling the medical staff what is wrong with them and in terms of players suspected of feigning injury.

**Conclusion**

In contrast to the existing sociological research into pain and injury, the findings reviewed here indicate that the professionalization of rugby union has not, in any simple sense, led to a greater acceptance of pain and injury in the sport, or to a higher level of pressure upon, or “coercion” of, players to play under such conditions. We would recognize that, whilst on the one hand contextual specifics partly account for these findings, our developmental approach, allied to our focus on interdependency within the sportsnet and an underlying acceptance of the validity of Elias’s theory of civilizing processes, has contoured the nature of our analysis. Consequently, we would argue, it seems important to draw a conceptual distinction between pain and injury and attitudes towards, and acceptance of each. Players can be in pain, yet continue to play with little or no risk of (further) injury. This, almost universally, they are prepared to do. Players, however, regardless of the level of pain (which can, of course be masked), may be injured, and at risk of exacerbating that injury by playing. There is a marked reluctance amongst players to risk playing under such circumstances, and an understanding, sympathy and support for such caution amongst coaches, directors of rugby, doctors and physiotherapists. That is to say, despite the widespread use of painkilling and anti-inflammatory drugs, rugby players acknowledge that they will regularly experience pain and, at all levels, they accept this as an inevitable part of playing a physical contact sport like rugby. However, all those within the professional rugby “sportsnet” show a distinct “non-acceptance” of the longer-term dangers of injury characteristic of the “risk-pain-injury-paradox.”

On the one hand, it might be argued that rugby union remains if not amateur, then “amateurish.” There is certainly a degree of “trust” in rugby union which is characteristic of an amateur-type assumption that players are, to some extent, taking part for the intrinsic enjoyment of participating as opposed to the extrinsic rewards on offer (i.e., money). This was demonstrated by the almost naïve practice of rarely subjecting players to fitness tests prior to their signing for a club. Indeed, one First Division player explained that although he had been injured for six months, a Third Division club offered him a contract (£500 per month for 10 months) simply because he told them that he thought he would be fit for the start of the next season. When he wasn’t, rather than stay at the club injured, he voluntarily withdrew from the contract, “promising” not to play for anyone else.

Linked to this amateurism is the rather unusual kind of power relations within the rugby club context. Player-coach relationships in rugby are characterized by a “closeness” or a relatively even power balance compared to other sports. Howe’s (2001) research substantiates this view: “The habitus at the club allows for open communication between the sports medicine team and the players” (p. 297). This situation may rest on a number of things. One consequence of the long history of amateurism in rugby is that structured coaching is, itself, a relatively new
development and consequently, many of the top coaches in the professional era are player-coaches or recently retired players. As one Premiership physiotherapist explained:

It certainly would be true to say [that] . . . someone like [names 3 coaches], they are far more aware of the pressures and the requirements and attitudes, and so they are certainly far more sympathetic, and they are the ones who are reluctant to play the players with injuries. Someone like [previous, older head coach] who has not played for a long, long time, would probably be a bit more willing to play someone coming back from an injury or carrying an injury.

Whilst this is undoubtedly significant, and may well reduce in the future as the coaching career structure develops, the existing career structure for players also contributes to this relatively even power balance. Firstly most players are trained for an alternative occupation. Secondly, many players have good educational qualifications, leading to often well-paid and high social status occupations. Thirdly, players tend to be contracted to a rugby club at a relatively mature age (typically around the age of 20). One Second Division player, whilst feeling that this situation might change under professionalism argued: “I didn’t go to a public school but it’s a public school sport, plus university, but the people who join football clubs, they’re just 16 aren’t they, that’s the reason (for the difference).” Moreover, current coaches express similarly ‘middle class’ attitudes of valuing deferred gratification:

I’m a bit old school-ish, and I don’t know if you class this as old school, but I actually believe that the guys have a life to live afterwards and I don’t want them hobbling round, when they’re playing soccer in the garden with their kids, and if you’re talking about an extra week or two weeks recovery time, then so be it, you have to accept that. (Premiership director of rugby)

Despite these context-specific factors, the findings reported here and the related processes of increased medical provision, increasing player awareness of health issues and the long term consequences of injury, and a growing reluctance amongst others to pressurize players to put themselves at risk, are all entirely consistent with the general developmental trajectory identified by Elias (2000). Moreover, we would argue that the findings presented here contrast sharply with much of the existing literature in this area, firstly, because we have attempted to examine changes over time and, secondly, because we have attempted to analyse changes in player/coach/medical staff relations and behaviour in the context of broader social processes in the sport.

References


**Notes**

1 Generally speaking, clubs in the Premiership and the top of the Division 1 will have full time coaching and playing staffs. Below this clubs may have one or two full time players (often player coaches or employed by the club as youth development officers).

2 There are problems relating to the standardization of recording of player injuries. As we outline below, the more comprehensive nature of medical care in professional rugby makes increases in the recorded rate of injury almost inevitable.

3 Despite such efforts to restructure fixtures, overall the number of matches played by professional rugby players has increased in recent years. This has been the subject of considerable debate in recent years although in 2001 the RFU and the Premiership clubs came to an agreement to limit the number of games played per season by a small number of elite players.

4 Likewise, Howe (2001) notes that with the advent of professionalization, Pontypridd RFC acquired the services of a “professional physiotherapist” (p. 299).

5 Howe provides a similar example. An international player revealed to him, “If I feel any pain I go to them (physiotherapists) right away. . . . I have missed several opportunities to play for Wales in the past because I was concealing an injury so I don’t want to miss my next crack” (2001, p. 298).

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In Britain, it is a widely held and longstanding belief that rugby is a relatively dangerous sport. The most comprehensive UK survey examining sports injuries found that for every 100 rugby participants (both union and league), 59.3 experienced an injury every four playing weeks (compared to 39.3 participants in soccer, 36.3 in martial arts, 24.8 in hockey and 20.2 in cricket). Hume and Marshall have reported similar injury rates from New Zealand, and further cite research in which rugby's contribution to total sport-related hospital admissions has been estimated to be between 49 per cent and 58 per cent.

It is not surprising, therefore, that the use of protective equipment has become more popular amongst rugby players as they try to minimize injuries. Developments in rugby league, American football, and even cricket have had an influence but, within the world of rugby union, developments in the use of protective equipment have been mostly driven by players in the Southern Hemisphere. Garraway et al. note that the use of protective equipment in training was first reported in the New Zealand Rugby Injury and Performance Project in 1994. Traditionally, however, rugby union players, administrators and spectators – and to a lesser extent those in rugby league – have resisted the introduction into their game of American-football-style body armour, taking pride in what they perceive to be the more 'masculine' nature of their chosen sport. Indeed, until relatively recently, much of this body protection was illegal. Protecting the head by the use of scrum caps, and the teeth and jaw by gum-shields has long been accepted (although most players preferred to protect their ears by the judicious use of adhesive tape, scrum-caps were seldom seen and even now, gum shields, are not used universally), but shoulder padding and the use of upper body 'harnesses' were not only illegal but regarded by many in the game as effeminate. Some padding was officially permitted, mainly to protect an existing injury, but before 1996 this protection was limited to light padding which had to be sewn into the
lining of a shirt. In 1997 the laws were altered to allow protection that was taped to the body, though the use of shoulder pads was still explicitly banned. However, observers noted that such equipment had become common-place in the Southern Hemisphere; for instance, a correspondent to the magazine *Rugby World* pointed out that at the end of the Scotland v Australia match in 1997, an Australian player 'in full view of millions of television viewers ... (took) off his jersey displaying full upper-body armour'. In 1996 the Rugby Football Union (RFU) sanctioned the use of approved head protection (either the Rhino, or Gilbert 'Neoprene') and in 1998 upper body protective equipment (shoulder pads, made of soft and thin material) was allowed to be incorporated in an undergarment provided that it was no thicker than 10mm when uncompressed (Law 4, 1998). Currently headgear is restricted to a thickness of '10mm, foam density to 45 kg/m3, and headform acceleration in a drop test from 0.3m to 200-550g'. Given this developmental pattern, it was not surprising that there was a period of confusion where many players and coaches were unclear about what protective equipment was, and was not, allowed. Even in the higher English divisions, for instance, where its use was more widespread, research revealed calls for the standardization of the practices concerning the use of protective equipment in the Northern and Southern Hemispheres. What arguments there were in favour of wearing padding, were primarily based on a recognition of the need to protect players from injury with sensible levels of protection, tempered with a resistance to moving to American-football-style armour.

Usage of all forms of protective equipment has increased dramatically since their legalization. The proliferation of adverts for various forms of protective equipment (which now includes mouth guards, padded head gear, pads fitted to shoulders, the chest and thighs, clothing with padding sewn into the lining, support sleeves, shin guards, ankle braces, and so on) appearing in *Rugby World* magazine is one indication of the growing use of this equipment in the game. Pre-1996 the average number of adverts per issue never rose above two. In 1997 the average had risen to 4.4 adverts per issue and this figure rose again to 12.9 in 1998, 14.4 in 1999 and 32 adverts per issue in 2000. In their study Finch et al. found that 64.3 per cent of their 15-year-old Australian schoolboy control group wore headgear. Indeed, Petterson has noted that some Canadian schools have made head gear compulsory, as indeed is its use throughout Japanese rugby.

Quite understandably, the sports medicine community has turned its attention to a variety of related issues in the field. Work has focussed on the epidemiology of rugby injuries, on identifying key risk factors, the long term effects of injury, the effectiveness of protective headgear and,
most recently, players' perceptions of the effectiveness of headgear. However, the seminal paper in this area is Garraway et al.'s 'Impact of Professionalism on Injuries in Rugby Union' published in the *British Journal of Sports Medicine* in 2000. This article was reported widely in the sporting press at the time of publication, and continued to interest the media, even being featured 18 months later when BBC Television relaunched its rugby 'magazine' programme, *Rugby Special*.

The aims of this study are twofold. Firstly, given the status of Garraway et al.'s work it is, perhaps, appropriate to consider their research in some detail and, in particular, to ask whether the authors were entitled to draw the conclusions they did. It is our contention that whilst some criticism of the research has been voiced in the sports medicine community, Garraway et al.'s thesis remains not only pre-eminent, but also problematic. This is of particular concern because the authors recommended that the International Rugby Board (IRB) place a moratorium on the use of protective equipment pending further research, and unless such a moratorium was well founded players might be put at an unnecessarily high risk of injury. Secondly, through our critique of Garraway et al.'s work, it is possible to provide a more rounded, more reality-congruent explanation for the increase in injury rates in rugby union. The study concludes with some reflections on why and how Garraway et al.'s work has become so influential and the role of social scientists in addressing the potential problems that stem from these social processes.


The two surveys on which Garraway et al. based their report used similar size populations of players from rugby clubs in the Scottish Borders. The first survey was conducted in 1993–94 when, in their words, 'rugby union was an entirely amateur sport' and was repeated four years later, after the IRB's 1995 landmark declaration which essentially removed all existing regulations regarding the payment of players. In their second survey, Garraway et al. separated out a group of 30 players who were then formally professional and contrasted their injury rates with 773 players who were formally amateurs. The same definitions of injury, the same outcome criteria and the same method of calculating playing hours were used in order to compare the results of the two surveys. Garraway et al. found that despite an average reduction in the number of hours of competitive rugby played, the proportion of players who acquired injuries almost doubled over the period from 27 per cent to 47 per cent. They found that many injuries in competitive play occur in one of the more...
violent episodes of the game, namely the tackle, and those playing in back row positions – where a high tackle rate is demanded – are more at risk than others. They also make much of their finding that amongst the newly professional players the injury rates were even higher when compared to the amateurs, with one injury to a professional player for every 59 minutes of competitive rugby. They conclude that the ‘penalties for accepting the financial and other rewards accompanying professionalism in rugby union appear to include a major increase in player morbidity’ (emphasis added).20 Perhaps the most contentious aspect of the Garraway et al. report, however, was the conclusion that, despite law changes and despite the increased emphasis in the game on speed and strength, ‘the factor that is most likely to have contributed to the increased burden of injuries in competitive play and requires the most urgent attention is the almost universal adoption of protective equipment in rugby union between 1993–94 and 1997–98’ (emphasis added).21 They do not, however, present any empirical data on the use, or non-use, of protective clothing.

One of the first issues that requires consideration in relation to Garraway et al.’s work is their use of the term ‘professionalism’. It is nowhere defined, but it seems to be used in at least two senses and the discussion oscillates between the two. At some points it is clear that the distinction is a straightforward one between whether or not a player is directly paid for playing rugby; that is to say, professionalism is used to refer to players’ formal monetary contractual arrangements. It is on this formal basis that the small number of professionals in the 1997–98 survey is distinguished from the remaining amateurs. However, a second meaning of professionalism is implicit in the discussion. Whereas, in the first of the above quotations, it is implied that it is the act of accepting the ‘financial and other rewards’ – that is, monetary professionalism – which may put a player at greater risk, these financial rewards are also said to accompany professionalism. In other words, professionalism and monetary and other financial rewards are seen as potentially separable. This allows a second wider meaning to be given to the term professionalism, a meaning that appears to refer to broader changes in the way the game is played; what we might term attitudinal or normative professionalism. These changes would include a greater emphasis on speed, strength and stamina, the utilization of a more extensive range of permissible protective clothing and the expansion of the playing season such that, for some players, the end of season break may amount to just a couple of weeks. We would agree that this broader use of the term ‘professionalism’ is more adequate and enjoys wider currency. However, the problem with Garraway et al.’s discussion is that they clearly imply that the increase in attitudinal and normative professionalism, and
changes in the way the game is played, is a direct consequence of the
player's acceptance of, and access to, financial rewards. In short, the
implication is that the change in some players' formal contractual
arrangements has had far reaching effects on the way the sport is
organized and games are played.

In reality, Garraway et al. are talking of two interlinked processes,
although they treat one (monetary professionalism) as if it were an
isolatable event (more of this later). Firstly, when they deal with changes
in the way the game is played, they are talking of a rationalization process,
familiar to social scientists interested in sport through, for instance, Allen
Guttmann's classic *From Ritual to Record.* Whether it be the
development of more effective fitness, training and dietary regimes,
resulting in faster, stronger players or improvements in equipment such as
the development of a javelin that flies further than others, such a process
has a long history and does not commence when money formally changes
hands. One of the functions of the rules of modern sport is the control of
this long-term process through the setting of limits on the range of
permissible practices and the application of technological developments.
For example, the application of medical and pharmacological
developments such as the injection of particular drugs or the use of
practices such as 'blood doping' is controlled, motor racing formulae
state what must, can and cannot be done to a vehicle to make it faster or
more stable, and in the past particular types of javelin design have been
prohibited to enable competitions to continue to take place inside existing
athletics stadia. Whilst such processes have been intimately connected
with commercial developments in sport, it would be misleading to claim
that technological and rationalization developments derived solely from
the commercialization and monetization of sport.

Secondly, when Garraway et al. talk of professionalism in its strictly
monetary sense, they seem to regard rugby union as being an 'entirely
amateur game' in 1993–94 and only becoming 'professional' post-1995.
Of course, in a formal sense they are correct – monetary and financial
rewards were only legitimised in 1995 – but that sense is probably the
least important here. For decades of 'shamateurism' many elite rugby
union players have been professional in any sociologically meaningful
sense of that term; at least they were not amateur. They did not have to pay
out of their own pockets in order to play rugby. Their rugby was financed
out of money paid by spectators, advertisers and sponsors to their clubs or
by employers who used them for public relations purposes or subsidized
their time off work to play rugby. They were also time professionals in
that they devoted an increasing number of hours to the pursuit of rugby
football. Rugby was a major life interest, which pushed other interests
such as marriage, family, education and occupation into the background. They were professional, too, in their preparation and attention to fitness and diet. Their payment, in cash or in kind, was well advanced, although this was 'closet professionalism' and was more advanced in some countries than others.\(^{24}\) In many ways the declaration by the IRB in 1995 merely legitimized an already existent situation and while Scottish rugby may not have been in the vanguard in terms of elite players' 'rewards', Garraway \textit{et al.}'s view of a clear-cut, 'before and after' situation simply fails to reflect the reality. Rugby union has long been a source of material, as well as honorific, reward for elite players and it is difficult to see why a technical formalization of these financial arrangements should have the far-reaching effects on the way the game is played, hypothesized by Garraway \textit{et al.}

Reliance on the formal distinction between professional and amateur has other implications for the ability to draw conclusions from Garraway \textit{et al.}'s data. The professionals from the Scottish border clubs in 1997–98 included 'all 30 adult players who played professionally for the Scottish Rugby Union or Border Reivers District'. In other words, the entire sample of new, formal professionals played representative rugby at district or international level. Scotland is probably one of those countries where the difference in standard between club and international rugby is particularly pronounced (compared, for example, to England or France) and the notion that those who play rugby at these higher levels are more at risk of injury is hardly novel.\(^{25}\) Indeed, previous evidence in both the sports medicine literature\(^{26}\) and from the sociological work in this area,\(^{27}\) clearly indicates that taking part in sport at an elite level is potentially injurious to a player's health. Thus making a comparison between formal professionals and amateurs on this basis is not comparing like with like. It may well be that it is not 'accepting the financial and other rewards accompanying professionalism' that carries the penalty of 'a major increase in player morbidity', but playing rugby at district and/or international levels.

More importantly perhaps, a similar, small group of elite players (although formally amateur) would, of course, have existed amongst the 803 players surveyed in 1993–94. Had those who played regularly at district and/or international level been abstracted from the population of players and their injury rates compared with those who did not play at such a high level, then a similar difference may (indeed, would probably) have been found. At this point in Garraway \textit{et al.}'s argument, reliance on the formal, strictly financial distinction between amateurs and professionals masks this possibility and means that this elite group remained buried in the larger population in the 1993–94 survey. Had their
other, implicit understanding of ‘professionalism’ (referring to differences in the way the game is played) been employed at this point, differences between club and district/international rugby may have been recognized as important in 1993–94.

The failure to use this wider conception of professionalism may also account for the difference Garraway et al. found in the length of time injuries prevented players from training/playing. In the 1993–94 survey the median (upper and lower quartile) time away from the game for players was 23 days. In the later, 1997–98 survey, the median time for formal professionals was 17 days and for the amateurs it was almost identical to the 1993–94 median. This is exactly what one would expect if there were a group of around 30 elite players buried in a population of over 800 in 1993–94. In short, Garraway et al.’s definition of ‘professionalism’ as ‘monetary professionalism’ at this point, has led them to abstract the group of players with the highest injury rates in the follow up survey, having initially disregarded the group entirely. Consequently, this ‘evidence’ is used to bolster their argument that financial changes and the consequent broader cultural changes in the game have resulted in higher injury rates. Whilst more reliable comparative data could have been sought, Garraway et al.’s simplistic understanding of amateurism and professionalism led them to a methodology that ultimately determined the findings. In fact, it seems highly likely that it is not formally professional players who have the highest injury rates, but those who play at district/international level, whether formally amateur or professional.

Problems also arise through Garraway et al.’s examination of only those injuries acquired in competitive play. The title, ‘Impact of Professionalism on Injuries in Rugby Union’, would suggest that injuries sustained in training, since this is now also more ‘professional’ (in both senses), and for full-time players more regular and demanding, would have been included. There are obvious difficulties involved in distinguishing between the ‘knocks’ acquired in training that develop into injuries in a competitive game and those that originate in the matches themselves. But leaving that aside, our own research in England indicates that in the period after the formal professionalization of rugby, some training sessions were arranged as full games, which even occasionally ended in brawls. This practice gradually disappeared as it became clear that the injury consequences of this kind of training weakened the team. Garraway et al. themselves speculate that some early season recurrent injuries may result from over-training, but it is not clear whether these injuries have been included in the data presented. The authors further acknowledge the significance of recurring injuries but take little account
of changes in the ways such injuries are managed in the professional club setting (a point which we have argued elsewhere). The more comprehensive healthcare available to rugby players in elite, professional clubs will partly account for the shorter times professionals are away from the game due to injury; both because treatment can be given more intensively, but also because injuries are assessed more quickly, perhaps before a minor injury develops into something more chronic and therefore more likely to recur. Moreover, because the presence of properly qualified medical personnel has varied over time, and continues to vary across the different playing levels of the game, the definition of what does and does not constitute an ‘injury’, and thus what a player is or is not ‘capable’ of playing with, is variable. Formal professionalism not only facilitates the payment of players, but obliges players to expose themselves to greater levels of medical surveillance and to pay more heed to the more informed opinions available.

The general finding that in the intervening years between the two surveys there seems to have been a general increase in the number of injuries that rugby players acquire in competitive play (leaving aside the flawed argument that money payments are ultimately responsible for this) might seem unremarkable, given the widely held (though not necessarily accurate) perception that sports in general are becoming increasingly violent. What is remarkable, however, is the conclusion that the most likely factor contributing to this rise is the ‘almost universal’ adoption of protective equipment. It is remarkable for two reasons. Firstly, there are no data presented on the use of protective equipment; it is simply asserted that its use has become ‘almost universal’ over a period of three years. This, we would suggest, is a considerable exaggeration, especially as the second survey was conducted at a time when specific items of protective equipment were only just becoming legal. Given this absence of data, Garraway et al. therefore cannot, and have not, examined whether those wearing protective equipment have higher injury rates, or whether injuries are more frequently inflicted by players who wear such equipment.

Secondly, there are problems with the way in which potentially contrary evidence is dismissed. It is acknowledged that protective equipment has long been in use in (professional) rugby league, but that sport’s apparently lower injury rate is put down to a ‘higher proportion of low momentum head on tackles’ taking place in rugby league, (again with no evidence cited) and the high speed tackle coming from behind the tackled player being potentially especially injurious. For those who watch both codes, it may seem that the second scenario occurs as often in league as it does in rugby union. In any event, these ad hoc dismissals undermine the central thesis. If these explanations are correct, then
An Eliasian or Process Sociological Analysis of Cricket

additional injuries in rugby union are not attributable to the wearing of protective equipment, but to differences in the way the two games are played.

Indeed, not only does evidence from rugby league seem to refute two of the main strands of Garraway et al.'s thesis — that a) formal professionalism and b) protective equipment lead to a greater incidence of injury — but rugby league may be a far more reliable indicator of longer-term injury trends than an individual survey, involving just thirty full-time players, undertaken during the second year of formally professional rugby union. Both professionalism and protective equipment have a far longer history in rugby league, and thus that game is undergoing a far less rapid programme of changes than is currently being experienced in rugby union. A longer terms perspective, therefore, is provided by Wilson who has suggested that there was no noticeable rise in rugby league career-ending injuries during the 1990s. This view was endorsed by former Professional Players Association Chairman Abi Ekoku, who is quoted as saying: 'If you look at the number of players who have been forced to retire since Super League began in 1996, there are very few.' Not only are players bigger and stronger (in Super League) but, he argues, 'those players are also better prepared to withstand the rigours'. Professionalization leads to increased training and fitness concerns and this appears to lead to a more standardized shape and size of rugby player. As former England rugby league coach John Kear has argued: 'Full-time professionalism decreases the risk of serious injury, with the proviso that it's like against like.' This contrary evidence takes on considerable significance in light of the methodological weaknesses of Garraway et al.'s approach that we have identified. Garraway et al. do not tell us whether the, albeit lower, injury rates in rugby league are also increasing, but if that is the case then the adoption of protective equipment could not be implicated, and the finger of suspicion for rising trends in both codes would point to changes in tactical emphasis and the 'bigger, stronger, faster' type of explanation. In summary, Garraway et al. present research that seems to indicate that general injury rates in rugby union are rising. The conclusions they draw are that formal, monetary professionalization is at the root of this trend and, in particular, implicate the associated 'universal' use of protective equipment. However, their research design does not entitle them to draw the first of these conclusions and on the second they present no data. It is though, on this basis that they make policy recommendations.

If Garraway et al.'s thesis regarding protective equipment is not based directly on their own data, it would seem to be based largely upon 'risk-compensation' theory. This well-established body of research and literature
suggests that one of the consequences of the adoption of 'safety enhancing' equipment (for example, helmets for cyclists, protective eyewear for squash players) is that wearers become more confident, take more risks and this results in a greater number of accidents. However, Elias’s work on technization, by invoking a longer-term view, is useful in refining this theory. Elias, using data related to the incidence of road traffic accidents in different countries across the globe, argued that new forms of technization and civilization should be seen as concomitant processes. More particularly, Elias argues that, ‘there is a great learning process connected with the newly-reached stage in the technization of road vehicles’ as individuals come to terms with the new regulations demanded of them from the state (for example, The English Highway Law of 1835) and come to develop ‘a specific form of self-regulation’. A de-civilizing spurt often occurs at a newly-reached stage of technization (for instance, the introduction of cars to a society commonly led to relatively high rates of death and injury), but Elias shows us that such spurts may be relatively short lived as, ‘standard rules ... become habit, second nature’. That is to say, whilst Elias’s work is compatible with risk-compensation theory (agreeing that new technology in the form of safety-enhancing features can lead to more accidents), Elias demonstrates that a longer term process of learning to live with such new technology may well lead to an overall decrease in accidents and injuries. How long this learning process takes is likely to be empirically variable and context specific but, we would argue, professional rugby is one environment in which such de-civilizing spurts are likely to be quite brief. Occupational experience will lead players to believe that protective equipment provides minimal benefits. Finch et al. found that players who had a recent history of head/neck injury were much less likely to say that they felt safer wearing headgear than players with no recent history of those injuries (36.0 per cent compared to 62.7 per cent). If experience (and due to the nature of rugby, this necessarily entails experience of injury) leads players to think that such equipment is of limited use, it seems logical to suggest that those who experience the highest injury rates would most quickly and firmly form that view. As previous epidemiological work has shown, those who experience the highest injury rates are those athletes competing at the highest level of their sport, and in contemporary British rugby union this now means full-time professional players.

Conclusion

Preferable to Garraway et al.'s analysis which pinpoints two particular changes in the game – payment and protective equipment – would be an explanation of this trend in injury rates that examines changes in the game
more broadly. It is quite clear that rugby union in recent years has become a faster game, played by bigger and stronger athletes who train for longer, and train harder. Moreover, rules have been altered to reduce the proportion of relatively static formations (for example, the scrum, lineout, ruck and maul) and create a more free-flowing game, which necessarily entails higher impact more often. In addition to this, the introduction of tactical substitutes has meant that it is now common for fresher, replacement players to be introduced late in the game. These so called ‘impact players’ are selected for their ability to ‘break’ the tackles of their relatively more tired opponents (players who may, therefore, be especially susceptible to injury). Changes to the medical provision provided at rugby union clubs will inevitably alter the ways in which injuries are defined and absences from playing managed.

Remarkably, in light of the flaws discussed above, letters published in the *British Journal of Sports Medicine* largely applauded Garraway et al.’s ‘meticulous investigation’ which, it was held, ‘set standards in defining injury definition and data gathering’ (although the latter author also stressed the need to examine a broader range of professionalization effects). A more critical note was, however, struck by Quarrie and Chalmers who questioned whether the researchers (Garraway et al.) had investigated the survey participants’ use of protective equipment and if so, their beliefs on its efficacy. Quarrie and Chalmers were also concerned that recommendations had been made in the absence of supporting evidence and that such recommendations mean ‘attention is diverted from other explanations’. But in many ways, as we hope to have demonstrated, such criticisms highlight just a small proportion of the problems contained in Garraway et al.’s work.

But if the Garraway et al. thesis is so patently flawed, why has it come to be so prominent and to be held in such high regard? We suggest that four factors are particularly important in this context. Firstly, the medical profession has, over the years, been highly successful in monopolizing routes of entry and knowledge. Consequently, medical ‘facts’ are treated with a kind of respect that, at times, they may not deserve. Indeed, given the authority with which they are held, it seems particularly important that such findings are subject to the levels of scrutiny common in other disciplines. Secondly, it should be noted that the media also have a vested interest in promoting this story for the notion that injury rates are increasing under professionalism is clearly more ‘newsworthy’ than a story essentially based on the notion that ‘things are getting better’. Thirdly, the thesis was likely to be well received by ‘rugby traditionalists’ who a) are dissatisfied at the onset; and the pace, with which elite rugby clubs have embraced professionalism; b) dislike rule changes which have
been introduced largely with a view to broadening interest in the sport among a wider, ‘non-rugby’ audience; c) particularly dislike the ‘Americanization’ of the game typified by the increased use of shoulder padding and head guards reminiscent of American football; and d) see the combination of these changes as de-masculinizing the game of rugby as a whole. Fourthly and finally, the Garraway et al. thesis was also likely to have been well received by the (relatively weak) players’ union which has, for a number of years campaigned to reduce the number of games which its most high-profile members play. The combination of these pressures helps to explain how a problematic and methodologically flawed piece of research should come to be so influential.

In the absence of any other checks and balances, we suggest, it is the task of social scientists with a professional interest in sport, to exert their critical weight and attempt to ‘de-bunk’ such myths. We hope, in some small measure, to have achieved this. However, we can certainly concur with Garraway et al.’s final ‘take home message’ – that the area requires further investigation.

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NOTES

9. Ibid., 78–9.


21. Ibid., 351.


26. Ibid.


29. Ibid.


33. Ibid.

34. Ibid.

35. C. Finch, ‘Teenagers’s Attitudes Towards Bicycle Helmets Three Years after the


37. Ibid., p.218.

38. Finch et al., ‘What do under-15-year-old Schoolboy Rugby Union Players think about Protective Headgear?’


Appendix 2
Liberation Cricket is a formidably comprehensive guide to West Indian cricket culture - probably the definitive collection of writings in the subject area. The central theme of this body of work is an examination of the ways in which cricket has served as a site of cultural contestation in the West Indies. Whilst there are a number of new papers in the book, the editors primarily draw on previously published material, but for those of us who have had to try to get hold of such diverse publications as *Jamaica Journal* and *Arena Review* in our search of the literature, this book represents a very welcome addition. However, as with any such collection of literature, there are problems. The division of the book into five themes is necessary, but many of the articles contained were written for a different format and the logic of their ordering is far from clear. There are no introductions or summaries to guide the reader and this would have been helpful in a book which, as a result, is best dipped in and out of, as opposed to being read sequentially.

Because so many authors have been drawn together in this book, it would be unfair to highlight any one or two chapters for closer examination. What I will do here, however, is to examine Brian Stoddart's claim in the book's concluding chapter, that 'Caribbean cricket has produced the single best set of intellectual literature about any sport anywhere in the World' (p.393). What are the strengths and weaknesses of this body of literature as a whole and to what extent does Stoddart's claim hold true?

One of the major strengths of West Indian cricket writing is its sheer quantity. If one were to imagine an English version of *Liberation Cricket* something barely half the size would be produced. Furthermore, the historical-sociological synthesis is to be welcomed by all who stress the significance of studying social processes. Certainly, it could be argued that West Indian cricket literature is better than any other cricket literature (with Stoddart's work in particular standing out as informative and insightful), but is it really more impressive than, say, the literature on British football which, whilst dominated by spectator disorder research, has more recently embraced such subjects as commercialization, race, ethnicity and nationalism, the role and effect of the media, discussions of gender, and so on?

Whilst reading *Liberation Cricket* one is left with the impression that the examination of the Caribbean game is not as 'vibrant' as one might have hoped from such a large literature. Depressingly, and in sharp contrast to British football hooliganism or sport and gender relations work, there is almost no critical assessment of competing explanations. This, in large part, stems from the theoretical conformity of the authors. Whilst not all the work in the book is based on a Marxist perspective, those which are not (chapters by Manning, Burton and Yelvington in particular) draw on the work of Marxists without really subjecting such analyses to systematic critical examination.

Furthermore, some troublesome conceptual issues (some typically Marxist and some not so typically Marxist) run throughout the literature. Sport and society are often dichotomized, with cricket treated as a 'reflection' which merely 'mirrors' social structure. There is little challenge to the view that cricket serves particular functions such as a 'cleansing function' for frustrated emotions, a safety valve for the release of tension, and consequently a 'cathartic' function for society. Others speak of the 'essence', 'internal logic' or 'spirit' of cricket; notions which are always difficult to sustain but in a book tracing how the game has been adapted and creolized by the West...
Indian people, stand out as particularly anomalous. These concepts are not evident in all the book’s chapters but they are recurring themes which, due to the general theoretical consensus of the authors, go unchallenged. Stoddart’s claim that Caribbean cricket has produced the single best set of sports literature is, therefore, hard to sustain. The area lacks a critical edge which would be required for a more penetrating analysis. Finally, within the literature on Caribbean cricket there is a lack of diversity and a certain insularity. Whilst not denying the importance of Worrell’s ascendency to the captaincy of the West Indies, nor wishing to pass over the significance of instances of crowd trouble, these topics are revisited a number of times without making any broader contribution to the area. The authors deal with the specifics without drawing on the theoretically more sophisticated literature on sports disorder. Clearly, a cross-cultural, cross-sport comparison would be fruitful. In terms of the lack of diversity, as Stoddart notes in the concluding chapter, the omission of a comprehensive and critical body of gender-based work is an omission. But beyond this, there are other opportunities to expand into new research areas. There is strikingly little on the effects of the media and commercial organizations on the way cricket is organized and played in the Caribbean. Relatively little light is shed on the globalization of cricket; the effects of player migration, competition with other sports forms (e.g. baseball) in the Caribbean, or the changing role of the West Indies in the international politics of the game. Moreover, though perhaps this moves slightly beyond the ambit of Liberation Cricket, there is little attempt at a comparison with cricket in the other colonies of the former British Empire.

Liberation Cricket provides a comprehensive and very welcome guide to the literature on the sport in the Caribbean. The great debt which is owed to C.L.R. James is apparent throughout the book, but, at the risk of further hackneying already overused phrases, it is surely time to move ‘beyond a boundary’; after all, ‘what do they know of cricket who only West Indian cricket know’?

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Appendix 3
Jack Williams Cricket and Race

In this, his latest work, one of the UK's leading sports historians, Jack Williams, turns his attention to an exploration of racism in English cricket. Organised chronologically, individual chapters cover pre-war and inter-war racism, the D'Oliveira affair of 1968, the subsequent 'rebel tours' to South Africa, reactions to the West Indian dominance of world cricket (depicted by many as overly reliant on 'violent' fast bowling), English-Pakistani tensions which peaked with allegations that the Pakistani cricket team were cheating during the 1992 'ball-tampering' tour, and racism in contemporary recreational cricket. The book is meticulously researched and has a strong, yet balanced narrative. Williams' work in general, it seems to me, is driven more by a desire to uncover empirical detail than justify theoretical positions and this book is no exception. The chapters on pre-1945 racism in English cricket, and the international outrages which surrounded the West Indian and Pakistani teams from the mid-70s onwards, are ground-breaking and add much that any scholar of sport, and cricket in particular, will value.

Williams argues that 'a study of cricket and racism can add a valuable dimension to understanding the social and cultural context surrounding racial assumptions in England'. I wholly support this view for, as Williams forcibly argues, not only is sport an area of social life which is entered into with a relatively high degree of voluntarism, but both sport and racism focus attention on the body and, therefore, upon that which is supposedly 'innate' or biologically determined. Moreover, though football might be the most popular sport in the UK (and indeed the world), cricket is a game (i) which is regularly portrayed as an embodiment of Englishness, (ii) in which, more than any other UK sport, participants relatively accurately represent the ethnic make-up of Britain and (iii) which provides a unique arena in which immigrants to Britain can observe their 'home' nation competing against the imperial coloniser-cum-adopted home. This alone commends a book such as this to be read beyond the relatively narrow confines of sports enthusiasts and sports historians and sociologists.

Whilst breaking a great deal of new ground there are some gaps in Williams' coverage which, if filled, would have contributed to a more complete volume. Nothing is said, for instance, about racism in cricket from the end of the Second World War up until the controversies over South African apartheid in the late 1960s. There is, indeed, little discussion of racism within the English County game since 1945. Most importantly, in my view, rather more needed to be said about the nature of relations in the different areas which fell under Imperial rule, and their subsequent impact. To be fair, Williams does locate the significance of cricket in race and ethnicity discourses to the game's place and role within the British Empire, and to notions that through cricket a peculiarly English sense of moral worth is expressed. In the eyes of the proselytisers, this enabled the colonised to become 'civilised'. But a more thorough investigation would have been illuminating. For, as I understand it, the historically specific Imperial relations in different territories - the slavery system of the Caribbean compared to the exist-
ence of a property-owning indigenous elite on the Indian subcontinent - have had a considerable influence on cricketing race relations in the twentieth century. A fuller appreciation of this is surely essential if we are to understand why it was, for instance, that Ranjitsinhji played for England and captained his county team, the MCC and even the 'Gentlemen' (in their annual fixture against the 'Players', i.e. against the lower-status professionals), whilst Learie Constantine played as a professional in the (lower-status) Lancashire League. Moreover, this pattern of early Imperial relations also partly explains the generation of 'racial' stereotypes, as expressed in biological assumptions about West Indians' 'natural' ability to bowl faster than any other 'racial' group, and possibly also beliefs about the corruption in Pakistani cricket and cheating amongst its players.

As a testament to the thought-provoking nature of the text and the non-judgmental style of Williams's writing, I found myself thinking hard as I read the conclusion to the book. Sub-titled 'Grounds for Optimism', Williams argues that there are reasons to suggest that racism in cricket is 'weaker than ever before'. The England and Wales Cricket Board has, for instance, recently published its first policy proposals promoting equality of opportunity in the sport. But this developmental study also starkly demonstrates the divergent forms of discrimination as well as the enduring nature of racism in the sport. Writ large in this text are the 'sophisticated' ways in which people adapt, alter, or modify racist views so that, despite its higher public profile and despite official attempts to tackle what is only recently deemed to be a 'problem', race and ethnicity remain highly significant constructs in sport in general, and cricket specifically, in the twenty-first century. Hopefully this text will encourage a greater cross-over of 'sport' and 'mainstream' race and ethnicity literature than is currently occurring.

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Appendix 4
Conclusion

Figurational sociology and the development of modern sport

Eric Dunning, Dominic Malcolm and Ivan Waddington

Our central objective in this Conclusion is to identify some of the key underlying themes in this collection of essays and to indicate how these themes are central to the concerns of figurational or process-sociologists.

Perhaps the first point that merits comment is the title of the book itself. In one key respect, the contents differ from what one might normally expect in a book entitled Sport Histories. In this regard it is significant that, although the chapters focus on the historical development of particular sports, none of the authors would regard themselves as historians in terms of their disciplinary allegiance. Rather, all the authors would describe themselves as sociologists or, to be more precise, as figurational or process-sociologists.

That figurational sociologists should have produced a collection of essays of this kind is not surprising, because what some writers have called historical sociology (Abrams 1982) has always been central to the Eliasian approach. As we pointed out in the Introduction to this volume, Elias wrote extensively on the relationship between sociology and history, and the study of long-term processes of development — by 'long-term' Elias meant processes over at least three generations — was central to his work. This is most clearly evident in Elias's magnum opus, The Civilizing Process, which van Krieken (2001: 353) has described as an 'analysis of the historical development of emotions and psychological life ... in relation to the connections ... with larger scale processes such as state formation, urbanisation and economic development'. It is clear from the chapters here that a concern with long-term processes remains central to many sociologists of sport who have been influenced by Elias.

It would, of course, be wrong to suggest that figurational or process-sociology is unique in this respect, for interest in long-term processes was central to the work of many of the classical 'founding fathers' of sociology. It is also the case that many scholars today who work within this classical tradition have continued to make the analysis of long-term processes a central aspect of their work. This is perhaps most clearly the case in relation to Marxist scholars, many of whom have made important contributions in this regard. In this context one might mention the work of Marxist historians such as Christopher Hill (1968, 1969), E.P. Thompson (1968) and Eric Hobsbawm (1969) who have made path-breaking contributions to the understanding of English history.
There is also a significant group of Marxist and neo-Marxist scholars working within the sociology of sport though, perhaps surprisingly, their contributions to the understanding of the long-term development of sport have been considerably more limited than have the Marxist and neo-Marxist contributions to the understanding of many other areas of social life. Among the most prominent early statements of a Marxist approach to the sociology of sport were the works of Bero Rigauer (1969, 1981) and Jean-Marie Brohm (1978). These early theoretical statements have been widely criticized, not only by non-Marxists but also by modern neo-Marxist writers. The charge of economic determinism stands at the forefront in this regard. As the hegemony theorist John Hargreaves has put it, such authors have produced ‘an account of sports in which they are seen as ineluctably functioning to reproduce the types of labour power required by capital, and to indoctrinate the masses with the dominant ideology of capitalist society’ (Hargreaves 1986: 3). While it is true that works such as those of Brohm and Rigauer do indeed contain relatively unsophisticated elements of economic determinism, it is also the case that they tell us almost nothing about the development of modern sport forms through time, for both works are written at a very high level of generality, with little systematic empirical reference to the development (or indeed to the current organization) of sport in modern societies.

If these more traditional forms of Marxism are now widely regarded as inadequate, what do modern forms of neo-Marxism, in particular that based on the hegemony theory of Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci (1971), have to tell us about the development of modern sport? An examination of the work of two leading hegemony theorists, John Hargreaves in the UK and Richard Gruneau in North America, will prove instructive in this regard.

In his *Sport, Power and Culture*, John Hargreaves (1986) sets out the guiding principles of hegemony theory. He notes that a focus on power is a central aspect of hegemony theory and that power is relational. He writes:

> When we use the term power, we are referring not to an entity, the mere possession of which enables an individual or collective agent to dominate another, but to a relationship between agents, the outcome of which is determined by agents' access to relevant resources and their use of appropriate strategies in specific conditions of struggle with other agents. Power is thus conceived here as not the exclusive possession of a single agent (the capitalist class, the political elite, men etc.); nor is it situated in, or generated at, any single location or level of the social formation (the economy, patriarchy, or whatever).

(Hargreaves 1986: 3)

Hargreaves goes on to say that power ‘is inherent in the structure of social relations’ and that power relations ‘are rarely total in scope, or totally one way in their effects’ (Hargreaves 1986: 4–5). He later elaborates on the characteristics of power relations:
Power relations take different forms: the compliance of subordinate groups may be obtained through the use of physical violence, or in the knowledge that [physical violence] is likely to be used against them; or by other types of coercion, such as economic sanctions or the threat of these; through the assertion of authority, or the prestige enjoyed by agents; and through agents' persuasive powers; or through some combination of all these means. Power may be exercised with or without the resistance of power subjects, and with or without their knowledge. Also, it can be exercised effectively simply by an agent deciding to withhold action rather than by taking positive measures to coerce, demand or persuade others.

(Hargreaves 1986: 5)

Few process-sociologists would find much with which to disagree in this approach to power. Indeed, much of what Hargreaves says echoes Elias's own writings on power. In this regard, we might note Elias's comment that power 'is not an amulet possessed by one person and not by another; it is a structural characteristic of human relationships – of all human relationships' (Elias 1978a: 74). We might also note his insistence on the polymorphous nature of sources of power and his concept of unequal and unstable power balances or power ratios. He also insisted that, however unequal a relationship may be, no party to a relationship is ever completely powerless, with such marginal exceptions as an unloved newborn baby, perhaps particularly in a society in which infanticide is practised. It is necessary, however, to add that, notwithstanding Hargreaves's explicit recognition in the foregoing quotation of the several different forms and sources of power, there remains a suspicion, as Dunning has noted elsewhere, that hegemony theorists nevertheless retain a residual attachment to a form of economic determinism (Dunning 1999: 112–14). Although Hargreaves and other hegemony theorists would certainly deny it, this attachment nevertheless breaks through occasionally in their work. For example, in describing the development of the rules of sporting contests as one possible source of the relative autonomy of sport, Hargreaves notes that:

The rules which structure sporting contests ... unlike those that structure competition and conflict in the real world, deliberately set out to equalise conditions of participation, that is, they are intended to be neutral, so that no one party to the contest has an advantage over the other(s).

(Hargreaves 1986: 11; emphasis added)

The implication that the rules of sporting contests are not part of the 'real world' – the 'real world' presumably consisting of the worlds of employment, economic competition and political conflict – involves a strange contrast that is reminiscent of Marx's famous distinction between base and superstructure. The relations of production, for Marx, constituted the economic structure of society, what Marx called 'the real foundation' on which rises a legal and ideological superstructure. Hargreaves's reference to the rules of sport as not being part of the 'real world' seems to be an echo of Marx's economic determinism. That is, Hargreaves appears...
to consign the rules of sport to superstructural status, seeing them as mere epiphenomena which have to be distinguished from 'the real foundation' of modern capitalist societies in which people compete within the marketplace, not on equal terms, as in the 'unreal' world of sport, but on terms that are often very unequal. By contrast, as the chapters in this volume by the Benns (Chapter 11), Curry and Dunning (Chapter 3), Malcolm (Chapter 5) and Sheard (Chapter 2) amply demonstrate, an understanding of the development of the rules of sporting contests is central to an adequate understanding of the development of modern sport. Sport is not, that is to say, a 'realm of freedom' made illusory, as hegemony theorists claim, by capitalism but a complex and increasingly important part of modern social life. Its rules are crucial to its structure and dynamics.

But let us leave aside these questions of whether or not hegemony theorists have effectively managed to move away, as they claim to have done, from the economic determinism characteristic of older forms of Marxism. Our primary question here relates not to such issues but, rather, to the question of the degree to which hegemony theorists have made a significant contribution to our understanding of the development of sport in the same way that other Marxist writers, in other sub-disciplines, have made a significant contribution to our understanding of other aspects of British or North American social development. What then, for Hargreaves, are the key questions to be addressed in relation to the development of sport?

It is here, perhaps, that both the advantages and the disadvantages of the Marxist legacy on which hegemony theorists draw are most apparent. Hargreaves is quite explicit about the central objectives of his analysis of modern sport: 'Our central thesis is that sport was significantly implicated in the process whereby the growing economic and political power of the bourgeoisie in nineteenth-century Britain was eventually transformed into that class's hegemony in the later part of the century' (Hargreaves 1986: 6–7). This central theme is reiterated elsewhere:

When considering subordinate groups' involvement in sports, one of our major themes would be the ways in which they manage to evade and subvert controls, the respects in which the sport-power relation enables them to resist pressure from dominant groups and to make tangible gains for themselves, as well as the ways in which it reproduces their subordination.

We will be making this point with particular reference to the question of how class relations enter the picture, in order to assess the role of sport as a factor in the composition and recomposition of class relations in Britain.

(Hargreaves 1986: 6)

On the very first pages of his book, Hargreaves makes it crystal clear that the concern of hegemony theorists is focused almost exclusively on questions concerning the dynamics of class relations:

We are, therefore, not so much concerned with giving a comprehensive account of sport as such, nor with analysing all respects in which sports are
related to other aspects of society, but with understanding the way in which sports as cultural formations may, in certain respects, be connected to the power apparatus. We do not, indeed we cannot, attempt to match the technical expertise of the variety of sports specialists, or the enthusiast’s knowledge of the rule and law of sports. Nor is it necessary to do so for our purposes. We wish to probe issues concerned with the way power is structured that lie at the intersection of political theory and the sociology of culture. In particular, we are concerned with the relation between sports and working-class culture, and the extent to which sport has played a role in accommodating the British working class to the social order.

(Hargreaves 1986: 1–2)

Again we find here a failure to understand that a concern with the ‘rule and law of sports’ is not simply a matter for the sports enthusiast but that it is also central to understanding the development of modern sports. More generally, however, one finds in the work of Hargreaves an almost exclusive focus on the dynamics of class relationships, which is replicated in the work of other leading hegemony theorists. For example in Class, Sports, and Social Development, Richard Gruneau (1983) emphasizes that his analysis ‘is not meant to be a detailed social history of Canadian sport’ (italics in original) but that it focuses on two issues: ‘the “problematic” of the institutional structuring of games and sports in Canada’ and ‘the ways in which the enabling and constraining features of sport at different stages in its development have been connected to class relations and the various processes governing their reproduction and transformation’ (Gruneau 1983: 92). He goes on to argue that

two factors are essential to an understanding of the basic character of Canada as a social formation: (1) the role of social class as a key factor in conflicts over various resources in Canadian society; and (2) the idea that class structures and patterns of social development are greatly influenced by the relations of domination and dependency that occurred between a metropole (or center) and a hinterland (or periphery).

(Gruneau 1983: 93–4)

Of course few scholars — and certainly not process-sociologists — would deny that class-based and other forms of domination are important for an understanding both of social life in general and of the development of sport in particular. As we noted previously, the concept of unstable power balances or power ratios is a central concept within process-sociology and there are many similarities between Elias’s concept of power and the concept of power used by hegemony theorists. However, and notwithstanding the genuine contribution that hegemony theorists have made to the understanding of modern sports — Dunning has described Gruneau’s book as making a ‘major contribution both to the sociology of sport and to Marxist sociology’ — it is our view that their almost exclusive focus on the dynamics of class relationships nevertheless places major restrictions on their ability
adequately to understand the development of modern sport. For example, as White (Chapter 4) and Dunning and Curry (Chapter 3) make clear in this volume, and as Dunning and Sheard (1979) have also made clear elsewhere, it is impossible to understand the development of two major world sports – association football (soccer) and rugby – without a detailed analysis of relationships within and between the English public schools in the second half of the eighteenth century and the first half of the nineteenth. Of course, it is true that the changing situation of the English public schools during that period cannot be understood in isolation from a number of broader social processes (one of which involved changing patterns of class relations) associated with the development of Britain as an urban-industrial nation-state. Dunning and Curry, and earlier Dunning and Sheard, appropriately locate their analyses of changes in the public schools within this broader pattern of overall social development. However, it is important to emphasize that the primary focus of their analysis is not simply on changes in the class structure per se – though they recognize that these form an essential context for understanding developments within the public schools – but on the changing patterns of relationships within schools between boys and boys, and boys and masters, and between schools in terms of the dynamics of status competition that formed a vital part of the public schools generally conceived as a social field. It is not, we think, overstating our case to suggest that a recognition of the importance of understanding the changing relationships within and between the public schools and their significance for the development of modern sport is not something to which a hegemony theory approach would be likely to direct the researcher. In the cases of soccer and rugby, however, it is impossible to develop an adequate analysis of the early development of these sports without such a focus.

The limits of a hegemony theory approach are also highlighted by other chapters in this volume. For example, Ken Sheard’s analysis of the relationship between violence, violence control and civilizing processes in relation to the development of boxing (Chapter 2) again illustrates the importance of moving beyond the dynamics of class relations. Of course, as Elias recognized and as other process-sociologists have recognized as well (Dunning et al. 1988) civilizing processes are themselves interrelated with a number of other social processes one of which – but only one of which – concerns the development of class relations. Nevertheless it is clear that the relationship between civilizing processes, violence and the control of violence within sport cannot be understood simply in terms of the dynamics of class relations; indeed, an exclusive focus on class relations would generate an understanding of violence and violence control within sport which would be, at best, inadequate. Put more simply, it is difficult to see how the use of hegemony theory would lead researchers to address the kind of processes that are central to Sheard’s chapter and, indeed, to other chapters in this volume – most notably those of Kiku (Chapter 10), Malcolm (Chapter 5), Smith (Chapter 9) and White (Chapter 4) – in which the analysis of civilizing processes is a central concern.

The same could be said about a number of other chapters here. For example, Chapter 11 by Tansin and Barry Benn focuses on technical developments in the apparatus used in women’s gymnastics and the way in which these developments –
originally designed largely as a response to concerns about the safety of gymnasts - facilitated the development of more exciting and spectacular, but also more dangerous, routines on the part of gymnasts. Of course it is clear that the development of technologies in sport is related to the commercial interests of companies that manufacture and promote sports technologies - and we are happy to acknowledge that neo-Marxist writers have made important contributions to our understanding of commercialization processes in sport (Beamish 1982; Sewart 1987). However, it is equally clear that one cannot understand all the unintended consequences of the introduction of new technologies into women's gymnastics if one concentrates simply on the links between technology and commerce.

The almost exclusive focus of hegemony theorists on the dynamics of class relations is, in our view, similarly limiting when one is seeking to understand the international development of modern sport. It is telling that both Kiku (Chapter 10) and Bloyce (Chapter 6) focus not just on the changing balances of class power within, respectively, Japan and the United States, but also on changing international balances of power. An explanation of the sportization of baseball which ignored the broader context of Anglo-American relations would, clearly, be a very partial explanation. Similarly, one cannot adequately explain the development of baseball in Japan without reference to America's twentieth-century status as a world power and Japanese perceptions of modernity, inferiority and superiority. In addition to this, Malcolm's work (Chapter 5) highlights how, while a focus on English class relations may be relatively adequate in explaining sporting developments in mid-nineteenth century England, as the twentieth century progressed, the networks of interdependency - the figurations involved - expanded to such an extent that the explanatory potential of a narrow natio-centric frame of reference became increasingly limited.

There is one further respect in which a contrast can be drawn between the contributions of process-sociologists and Marxists/hegemony theorists to the understanding of the development of modern sport. The contributions of process-sociologists in this field are numerous and well known. These include the early work of Dunning (1961) and the more recent work of Curry (2001, 2002, 2003) on the development of football; the work of Dunning and Sheard (1979) and, more recently, the work of White (2000) and Sheard (1997a) on rugby; the work of Brookes (1974, 1978) and more recently of Malcolm (2002) on cricket; and the work of Sheard on boxing (1992, 1997b) and, most recently, on the sportization of birdwatching (1999). In addition, the chapters contained in the present volume extend figurational analysis to a number of other sports: tennis, baseball, motor racing, gymnastics, clay pigeon shooting and Japanese martial arts, a striking testimony to the continuing interest of process-sociologists in long-term social processes. To what extent could it be said that Marxist/hegemony theorists have made similar contributions to our understanding of the long-term development of sport?

As we noted previously, the early traditional Marxist statements in the sociology of sport by Rigauer (1969, 1981) and Brohm (1978), and to these we might add Bourdieu (1978), were not only written at a high level of generality but they also
focused on developing a theoretical statement about the nature of sport in contemporary societies. Put more briefly, and notwithstanding their Marxist character, they lacked a properly developmental or historical perspective. Some leading hegemony theorists, however, do claim to offer a developmental perspective on modern sport. Prominent among them are the two authors whose work we have discussed, namely John Hargeaves and Richard Gruneau. However, the work of both authors is seriously flawed in this respect.

Hargreaves's book is subtitled 'A social and historical analysis of popular sports in Britain'. However, it involves little in the way of what would be regarded as traditional historical scholarship and is based almost exclusively on secondary sources. In this respect, it does not reflect the kind of detailed historical work that characterizes the work of the process-sociologists cited earlier. Many years ago, C. Wright Mills (1959: 160) pointed out in his discussion of the relationship between sociology and history that historical study not only 'encourages a widening of one's view to embrace epochal pivotal events in the development of social structures' but that it also invites what he called 'grubbing for detail'; one finds little evidence of such 'grubbing for detail' in Hargreaves's book. Other hegemony theorists have been prepared openly to acknowledge their unwillingness, or their inability, to dirty their hands with historical research. For example Ian Taylor's first paper on football hooliganism (1971), which drew on a very speculative history both of football clubs and football hooliganism, was honestly and accurately subtitled 'a speculative sociology of football hooliganism'. Much the same could be said of the work of John Clarke on football hooliganism (1978). The work of Taylor and Clarke is not only speculative – in the sense of not being firmly grounded empirically – but, as Dunning et al. (1998) suggested, it also reflects a romanticized view of the past, particularly of the past of the working class. Moreover, despite – or perhaps because of – the brief nod they offer in the direction of the history of the game, the explanations Taylor and Clarke offered were, in effect, present-centred forms of explanation (Dunning et al. 1988: 30). In these respects, they stand in marked contrast with the detailed and original historical research on football hooliganism carried out by what has become known as the 'Leicester School' (Dunning et al. 1988; Murphy et al. 1991).

As is the case with process-sociology, the intellectual origins of hegemony theory lie in a perspective which emphasized, perhaps above all else, the importance of understanding long-term processes of development. The absence of systematic, detailed, empirically grounded analysis of long-term processes of the development of sport within the work of hegemony theorists is accordingly particularly disappointing.

This is especially so given Gruneau's emphasis on the continuing need to address the problems that were central to the work of early classical sociologists. Gruneau identified in this connection the central concern of the classical authors as revolving around 'a deep concern about concrete historical paths of social development' and he was critical of American functionalists, and in particular of Talcott Parsons, for his 'devaluation of the focus on historical process and development' (Gruneau 1983: 6). Gruneau argued that the popularity of functionalism,
particularly in the United States, led to a withdrawal from what he called ‘a “classical” style of inquiry’ and he went on to argue, correctly in our view, for the need ‘to situate the study of sport in the mainstream of the sociological enterprise and to formulate new research initiatives based on a sensitivity to the best features of sociology’s classical tradition’ (Gruneau 1983: 2–3). However, if one examines the work of hegemony theorists closely and searches for detailed historical analysis of the development of either particular sports or sport in general, then one looks in vain. In effect, and notwithstanding Gruneau’s comments, it would seem that the hegemony theorists of sport have themselves eschewed the study of one of the basic problems in the work of classical scholars; namely, this concern with long-term processes. In this regard, the work of most hegemony theorists on sport has—despite the occasional nod in the direction of speculative history—been characterized by what Elias (1987a) called a ‘retreat into the present’.

In the light of the preceding arguments, we think it is fair to suggest that, while figurational or process-sociologists may not be uniquely concerned with long-term processes, it is the case that, more than any other identifiable theoretical framework within the sociology of sport, figurational sociology has facilitated a more consistent and thoroughgoing developmental approach. In this respect, Sport Histories may be regarded as distinctively figurational. But what else, in addition to their consistently developmental approach, marks out the chapters in this book as distinctively figurational?

We have already referred to the fact that, in Chapter 11, Tansin and Barry Benn argue that an unintended consequence of technical developments in the apparatus used in women’s gymnastics—developments designed largely as a response to concerns about the safety of gymnasts—was to facilitate the development of new gymnastic routines which were actually more dangerous. The identification of such unintended consequences in the development of modern sports is a recurring theme in this book. For example, Sheard (Chapter 2) argues that specific changes in the rules of boxing, supposedly designed to reduce participants’ injuries, have had the unintended consequence of increasing the likelihood of boxers suffering brain damage. Twitchen (Chapter 8) argues that, paradoxically and in a quite unintended way, British hostility towards motor racing played a crucial part in saving the sport from extinction in its early years after the ‘calamitous loss of life’ in the 1903 Paris–Madrid race, while White (Chapter 4) argues that the growing inability of the Rugby Football Union to preserve the traditional amateur form of the game as it had developed in England was an unintended consequence of the internationalization of rugby union. It is important to emphasize that, for Elias and the writers included here, these unintentional consequences are not merely accidents, the product of humans who, with hindsight, might have done things differently. Rather, the identification of such unintended consequences is a logical outcome of Elias’s conceptualization of social processes. In order to explain this point more fully, it will be helpful if we briefly revisit some key aspects of Elias’s approach.

As we have argued elsewhere (Murphy et al. 2000), Elias’s concept of ‘figuration’ is designed as a way of helping to move towards a resolution of the age-old problem within sociology that has variously been described as the relationship between the
individual and society, free will and determinism, personality and social structure or, in its currently popular formulation, the agency/structure debate. In this regard, Elias's approach recognizes that human action is, to a greater or lesser degree, consciously directed towards achieving certain goals and that all human action necessarily involves both cognition and emotion. In this sense his concept takes fully into account the fact that humans are thinking and feeling animals, and that, especially in modern, highly individualized societies, we each have our own more or less highly individualized patterns of intentions, preferences and desires. At the same time, however, Elias also emphasized that the outcomes of complex social processes cannot be explained simply in terms of the intentions of individuals. Indeed, it is important to recognize that the normal result of complex social processes involving the interweaving of the more-or-less goal-directed actions of large numbers of people includes outcomes that no one has designed and no one has chosen. The study of the complex interweaving of planned and unplanned social processes was central to Elias's approach.

It might be objected that Elias's concept of what he called 'blind' or 'unplanned social processes' (Elias 1987b: 99) involves nothing more than what has long been recognized by social scientists under other names. It is true that the idea of the unintended or unanticipated consequences of social action has a long history and that it may be found in the work of some classical sociologists and philosophers, while in economics it may be found — though in a specific and very limited way — in Adam Smith's concept of the 'guiding hand' and in the work of more modern free market advocates such as Hayek (1945). 1 Within sociology, the idea of unanticipated consequences is probably most closely associated with the work of Robert Merton (1936, 1949). However, as Mennell (1989) has pointed out, there are some important differences between the concept of unanticipated consequences as developed by Merton, and Elias's concept of blind social processes. Mennell points out that Merton focuses, in particular, on what may be regarded as an oddity of social life, namely the 'self-fulfilling' prophecy, with passing mention of the converse 'self-contradicting' prophecy. Such situations may have a certain fascination but they are, suggests Mennell, fundamentally a trivial diversion because they are simply an unusual and rather special case of something that is not only much more common, but also of considerably greater theoretical significance. Mennell (1989: 258) expresses what he sees as the major difference between Merton and Elias thus:

Much more clearly than Merton, Norbert Elias recognizes that people's knowledge of the figurations in which they are caught up is virtually always imperfect, incomplete and inaccurate. The strategies of action which they base on this inadequate knowledge therefore more often than not have consequences which they do not foresee. So unanticipated consequences are not a curious footnote to sociology but nearly universal in social life. For Merton, the self-fulfilling prophecy is like a boomerang: the consequences of men's [sic] actions rebound upon their initiators. For Elias, the analogy is much less exotic and much more commonplace: like the effect of a stone dropped
into a pool, the consequences of people's actions ripple outwards through society until they are lost from sight. Their effects are felt, not at random but according to the structure of the figuration in which they are enmeshed, by people who may well be quite unknown to each other and unaware of their mutual interdependence.

There is another, and perhaps more fundamental, difference between Elias's work and that of Merton. Whereas Merton's discussion of unintended consequences was largely individualistic, Elias's focus was on pluralities of people, for Elias was concerned not with single acts but with aggregates of intentional acts. The largely individualistic character of Merton's position was explicitly recognized by Merton himself in his early classic article which, he acknowledged, dealt mainly 'with isolated purposive acts rather than with their integration into a coherent system of action' (1936: 895). Although Merton's later (1949) discussion is perhaps less individualistic, it remains the case that Elias's approach focuses more systematically, not on isolated individual acts, but on the complex interweaving of the actions of many people, not all of whom will even be known to each other. The essays in this volume provide a number of examples of such processes specifically in relation to sport.

As we noted earlier, the question of 'blind social processes' or unintended consequences is closely related to another key issue in sociological theory, namely the question of what is usually called the relationship between the individual and society, or agency and structure. In a society such as ours, which is characterized by a relatively high level of individualism, there is often a tendency to think about social processes in individualistic terms; that is, to account for social processes in terms of one or two individuals whose actions are held to have been decisive for subsequent developments. Not surprisingly, such 'explanations' – we use the inverted commas deliberately, for such 'explanations' really explain very little if, indeed, they explain anything at all – are by no means uncommon in historical writing about the development of sport; the most famous example, at least in Britain, is probably that relating to William Webb Ellis who, it is often held, 'invented' the modern sport of rugby with a single deviant act, namely disregarding the rules of the game and picking up and running with the ball (Macrory 1991).

Such 'explanations' are based on what Elias called a *Homo clausus* model of human beings; that is, the view of individuals as self-contained and separate from other people. The concept of figurations was developed to convey the idea that sociology is concerned not with *Homo clausus*, but with *Homines aperti*, with people open to others and bonded together in dynamic constellations. As Elias put it:

The image of man [sic] as a 'closed personality' is . . . replaced by the image of man as an 'open personality' who possesses a greater or lesser degree of relative (but never absolute and total) autonomy *vis-à-vis* other people and who is, in fact, fundamentally oriented toward and dependent on other people throughout his life. The network of interdependencies among human beings is what binds them together. Such interdependencies are the nexus of . . . the
figuration, a structure of mutually oriented and dependent people. Since people are more or less dependent on each other first by nature and then through social learning, through education, socialization, and socially generated reciprocal needs, they exist, one might venture to say, only as pluralities, only in figurations.

(Elias 1978b: 261)

Given this approach, it is hardly surprising that figurational sociologists have little sympathy with the individualistic, Homo clausus explanations — also called 'great man' theories — which are sometimes offered for the development of modern sports. For figurational sociologists, the development of any modern sport is, as the chapters in this volume demonstrate, a social process, and a process of some complexity which cannot be meaningfully reduced to the actions of a single individual. In this context, it might be noted that it was, of course, Dunning and Sheard (1979) who were the first to 'de-bunk' the Webb Ellis myth. Comparable to the Webb Ellis myth is the claim that baseball was 'invented' by a single individual, Abner Doubleday. As Bloyce notes in Chapter 6, on the development of baseball, a number of historians have pointed out that this 'explanation' is nothing more than an individualistic 'origin myth' and Bloyce himself seeks to explain the sport's development in terms of the broader context of nationalism, commercialism and changing interdependency ties.

It is important to emphasize that Elias did not argue that social processes can be understood without reference to the actions of concrete human individuals. Indeed, he acknowledged the role — albeit a limited role — that individual people sometimes play in processes of development. Thus he argued that, while the belief 'in the unlimited power of individual people over the course of history is wishful thinking', it is similarly unrealistic to believe 'that all people are of equal importance for the course of history' (Elias 1991: 54). Elias's position is perhaps best exemplified here in Chapter 2 by Ken Sheard, who effectively questions the centrality of the role that historians have often attributed to a single individual, James Figg, in the development of boxing. While recognizing Figg's particular talents as a tutor, publicist and entrepreneur, Sheard emphasizes the importance of the network of relationships in which Figg was involved — and most notably his relationships with significant and powerful people. He also locates the early development of boxing within the context of broader processes such as commercialization.

We should perhaps make one final point about the role of individuals within the development of particular sports. At first glance, it might seem that Chapter 11 by Tansin and Barry Benn does precisely what we have argued a good process-sociological analysis should not do; that is, to focus on the role of one individual, in this case the Soviet gymnast, Olga Korbut. However, a closer examination will show that the focus of the Benns' chapter is not actually on Olga Korbut — for example we are told very little about the famous gymnast herself in their chapter — but on what they call the 'Olga Korbut phenomenon'. In other words, the focus is not on a single gymnast but, rather, on the way in which the gymnastic routines she performed and played a part in developing — almost certainly under the very
strict control of her Soviet coaches – came, as a result of media exposure, to symbolize a new approach to the sport. In this regard, the biography of Olga Korbut is very different from a sociology of the 'Olga Korbut phenomenon'. Indeed, given the very tight control that the Soviets exercised over their international athletes, it would be very ironic if Olga Korbut were to become the focus of a 'great woman' theory of gymnastics, with all that such theories imply about levels of socially produced individualism!

Finally, and perhaps unsurprisingly, one further theme emerging from this collection is the relationship between civilizing processes and the development of sport. It is perhaps worth noting in this connection that Stokvis (1992) has criticized figurational sociologists for, as he sees it, viewing modern sport as representative of a 'specific stage in the process of civilization'. He argues that this approach 'is too limited' and that it 'leads sociological research on sports too often to matters of violence and its control' to the neglect of other aspects of the development of sport such as the formal organization and standardization of sport, its diffusion in national societies and throughout the world and professionalization and commercialization (1992: 121). This debate has already been taken forward and it is not our intention to provide a detailed discussion of the responses of Dunning (1992), Murphy et al. (2000) and Malcolm (2002) here. However, it is perhaps worth noting that, within the collection of essays presented here there seem to be four broad types of approach, characterized by a different emphasis on the explanatory role of civilizing processes. Chapters 3, 9 and 10, by Dunning and Curry, Smith, and Kiku, respectively, make explicit links between the development of the sports that are the focus of their own work and the compatibility of this evidence with broader theories of civilizing processes. Others, for example Bloyce (Chapter 6) and Cooper (Chapter 7), by contrast, make little or no mention of civilizing processes in their work. A third group, more particularly Tansin and Barry Benn (Chapter 11) and Alex Twitchen (Chapter 8), address sports in which the control of direct interpersonal or face-to-face violence has not been central, but which have developed with significant reference to issues of safety and the generation of pleasurable forms of excitement. Finally, Chapters 5, 2 and 4 by Malcolm, Sheard and White respectively, focus on the co-existence of civilizing and de-civilizing processes, demonstrating how these often occur concurrently, perhaps affecting different groups in contrasting ways.

This diversity may initially surprise those with a prior knowledge of the sociology of sport for, as Stokvis's (1992) critique suggests, there is a widely held perception that figurational sociologists of sport are preoccupied with issues of violence and its control. Despite an increase in the number and range of figurationally informed, non-violence-orientated studies, in recent years, it remains the case that a substantial proportion of the work produced by figurational sociologists of sport has focused on sports in which forms of controlled violence are socially tolerated and/or which attract violence-prone spectators. That is because, along with material production, violence and violence-control figure centrally among what one might call the 'deep structures' involved in the sociogenesis and psychogenesis of 'civilizing processes' in Elias's non-evaluative, technical usage of that concept
An Eliasian or Process Sociological Analysis of Cricket

(Elias and Dunning 1986; Dunning 1999; Elias 2000). Further to this, the significance of sport in modern societies is partly connected with a "quest for excitement"; the 'controlled decontrolling of emotional controls' which players and spectators can experience (Elias and Dunning 1986; Dunning 1999). These, of course, are partly connected with violence-control but they also form pre-conditions for the monetarization, commercialization, professionalization and global spread of sports, all of them issues which, pace Stokvis and others, have been treated by figurational sociologists of sport since the beginning (Elias 1971).

Notes

1 Free market economists argue that the most rational form of economic organization is that which comes about as the unintended outcome of the actions of large numbers of people pursuing their own individual interests. We have no space to develop a detailed critique of this position here, but we would note that, if this were the case, planning would be very simple and unproblematic and would have extremely predictable outcomes, for we would simply have to decentralize all economic decision making down to the individual level and await the inevitably successful outcome. Those in government must wish that economic planning were indeed so easy!

2 See, for example, the work on globalization (e.g. Maguire 1994), on drugs, health, pain and injury (Waddington 1995, 2000; Roderick 1998; Roderick et al. 2000; Malcolm et al. 2001) on race (Malcolm 1997, 2001), commercialization (Malcolm 2000; Malcolm et al. 2000) and gender (Maguire and Mansfield 1998; Colwell 1999; Smith 2000). Pace Stokvis, it is also the case that Dunning and Sheard's Barbarians, Gentlemen and Players (1979) was centrally concerned with commercialization and professionalization and not just with violence and violence control.

References

An Eliasian or Process Sociological Analysis of Cricket


An Eliasian or Process Sociological Analysis of Cricket


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Appendix 5
Female Incursion into Cricket’s ‘Male Preserve’: Cricket, Gender and Elias’s Theory of Established-Outsider Relations (Paper presented at the 25th meeting of the North American Society for the Sociology of Sport, Montreal, Quebec, Canada October 29- November 1 2003)

Dominic Malcolm and Philippa Cook

Whilst this isn’t the time or place to recount these debates, I think figurational sociologists have now accepted that, to a large degree, their work has neglected the sporting experiences of females. For instance, Murphy et al.’s (2000) review of figurational sociological contributions to the study of sport contains just four references to work on female (or females in) sport, and 28 references to pieces focused largely upon male sporting experiences.

In a small, and modest way, this paper seeks to address this imbalance through an examination of the experiences of the elite female cricketers who are attempting to negotiate access into this ‘male preserve’ (Sheard and Dunning, 1973). It was borne out my co-authors’ Masters dissertation which I supervised and which, I hope, she will develop into a PhD at Brunel. The dissertation was based on 8 semi-structured interviews with top class female cricketers which were conducted during the women’s county championship in Cambridge (UK) in July 2002.1 Our central aim in this research was to use Elias’s theory of established-outsider relations to explore the connections between changing power relations, respect for others and self-respect.

Figurational Sociological Approaches to Gender Relations

Some contextualising statements on theory. Whilst figurational sociology may be ‘externally’ perceived as a relatively homogeneous and unified theoretical approach, there are elements of ‘internal’ debate. Dunning, for instance, highlights four ‘core figurational assumptions’ with regard to gender and gender relations. These are that:

a) gender relations are ‘fundamentally affected by the character and overall structure of the society in which they are lived’;

b) the necessity of biological reproduction makes males and females ‘radically interdependent’;

c) the interdependence of males and females is best conceptualized as involving a balance of power which is fundamentally dynamic and relational; and

d) at the heart of the interdependence of males and females is a shifting balance of power related not only to economic, political and ideological battles, but also to males’ and females’ ‘relative capacities to use violence and bestow sexual favours on each other or withhold them’ (1999: 226-27).

But Sharon Colwell (1999), in her work of feminist and figurational approaches to Physical Education, for instance, is critical of both Dunning’s ‘male bias’ (1999: 232), and the role of values in Maguire and Mansfield’s ‘feminist-figurational’ approach used in ‘No-body’s Perfect’ (1999: 234-35). Neither Colwell nor Maguire and Mansfield give the degree of emphasis to the role of violence in
gender relations that, for instance, Dunning does. This is not the place to discuss the relative merits of these works, but it is important, we think, to highlight the different approaches of researchers working under the umbrella of figurational sociology.

Indeed, the theory of established outsider relations is only fleetingly used by Dunning in his analysis of gender relations, not mentioned by Colwell, and used in what we might call an ‘adapted’ way by Maguire and Mansfield. The theory of established-outsider relations first appeared in outline form in Elias’s *The Civilising Process* (1939, 2000) but is most clearly expressed in Elias’s joint work with John Scotson, *The Established and the Outsiders* (1965, 1994). Although the theory of civilising processes has rather overshadowed the theory of established-outsider relations, one is essentially an extension of the other; that is to say, both are centrally concerned with connections between ‘changing power ratios between groups … (and) the social habitus of group members’ (Mennell 1992: 116).

Elias and Scotson’s study focused on a suburb of Leicester (England), which consisted of three clearly distinguishable neighbourhoods. Zone 1 was relatively affluent, predominantly middle class, and commonly regarded as the ‘best’ residential area. The largely working class communities of Zones 2 and 3 were very similar in terms of income, occupational structure and social class but, crucially, the inhabitants of these two communities viewed themselves as being very different from each other. More particularly, those in Zone 2 (the ‘village’) perceived themselves to be superior to those in Zone 3 (the ‘estate’). ‘Villagers’ described estate residents as rough, unclean, promiscuous and unable to control their children. Though only true of a small minority of families on the estate, those in Zone 3 largely accepted this characterisation of themselves as a group. Elias and Scotson explained this perceptual difference partly in terms of the length of residency (hence the terms ‘established’ and ‘outsiders’) but more particularly in terms of how differences in group cohesion and patterns of interdependency ties had developed over time. Thus, Elias and Scotson reflected (1965: 7),

... the image which the ‘established’, which powerful ruling sections of a society have of themselves and communicate to others tends to be modelled on the ‘minority of the best’; it inclines towards idealisation. The image of ‘outsiders’, of groups who have in relation to the ‘established’ sections relatively little power tends to be modelled on the ‘minority of the worst’; it inclines towards denigration.

Consequently, though inhabitants of zones 2&3 were very similar on any conventionally ‘objective’ measure of social stratification, their personalities were markedly different. A collective, largely positive, ‘we-image’ was incorporated into the self-image of ‘villagers’ and a collective, largely negative, ‘we-image’ was internalised by those living on the estate. Elias and Scotson used the twin terms ‘group charisma’ and ‘group disgrace’ to describe these self-images.

Van Stolk and Wouters’ (1987) have used established outsider relations to study gender relations and essentially, our work is an attempt to develop Elias and Scotson’s, and Van Stolk and Wouters’ work, and hopefully to demonstrate that
figurational sociology has more to offer the analysis of gender and sport than has hitherto been demonstrated.

The Structural Characteristics of Cricket
At the outset it's important to note that we don't use these terms in an essentialist, or historically static sense – that we recognise the social (re)production of sport – but the specific way in which the game is organised in contemporary Britain makes it very revealing as a sport through which, and in which, to study gender relations.

Firstly, in terms of violence. Dunning, in his 4 core assumptions, alerts us to the role of violence in the contouring of gender relations and to the general trend of reducing tolerance towards the use of violence in social life. Yet violence, if Elias and Dunning are right, is central to the popularity and social significance of sport in contemporary societies; sport as a 'quest for excitement' (Elias and Dunning, 1986). Sports-related violence, it is more widely agreed, is significant in the production and maintenance of hegemonic forms of masculinity (e.g. Connell, 1987; Messner, 1992).

Cricket, whilst not a contact sport, is a physical and indeed physically dangerous game. (Dunning 1992: 271). Cricket's place within the 'habitus of male upper class Englishness' (Maguire and Stead, 1996: 17) – something not unconnected to the role of violence in the game - gives the game an importance which, perhaps, is similar to that of ice hockey in Canada (Theberge, 2000; 2002). Yet what makes cricket a particularly revealing case study of gender relations is that, increasingly, male and female cricketers are competing alongside, and against, each other. There are no formal barriers in this respect. For instance, 2 years ago Kathryn Leng became the first female to play in a senior men’s league and the first female to play in the senior universities’ cricket competition (The Cricketer International, July 2001: 5).

All the women interviewed in the course of this research had played with and against males. Whilst on the one hand we might argue that 'civilizing transformations' – both in sport and more broadly – have reduced the likelihood that males will respond in violent ways to the challenge to their status posed by female emancipation (Dunning 1999), on the other, the specific structural features of cricket mean that participants (male and female) may use, and be subject to, relatively violent forms of 'play'. As mixed sex cricket becomes increasingly common, the relative capacities of males and females to use violence, alongside broader economic, political and ideological battles, become increasingly significant. This in turn will influence the kinds of 'we-image' and 'they-image' which, as discussed above, are central to the theory of established-outsider relations.

Now in a longer paper I'd focus on the way the role of women in cricket has changed over the last 150 years or so, but there isn't time or space to do that here. Suffice to say that, historically, few women have played the game which has been seen (by men) as significant to the development of masculinity. However, in recent years the women's game has strengthened for two main reasons: the
prestige to be gained through international competition (the first Women’s Cricket World Cup was played in 1973), and the conditions which the government has placed on sports bodies that wished to receive public funding. In 1998 the WCA was absorbed by the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB), partly due to fears that the WCA faced bankruptcy (and no ‘responsible’ governing body could be seen to allow this to happen), and partly because the establishment of a national lottery in Britain meant that public funding for sport increased, and that equity issues took on a greater significance in funding criteria.

Women are currently heavily dependent on men’s facilities, coaching and administrative structures but increasingly women are being selected alongside men in senior adult team. In the remaining sections of this paper, we assess the opportunities women have to participate in cricket and the reactions they experience when they do. The over-arching themes in the research were – as the established-outsider relations model suggests – identity, group identity and shifting balances of power.

Established-Outsider Relations in Contemporary Cricket: Group Charisma and Group Disgrace

Interviews with leading female players published in cricket magazines had indicated that, for most, their initial exposure to the game is mediated by their fathers. Our interviewees made similar points. ‘We used to play on the beach and the park. It was because he (my dad) loves watching cricket. From about the age of six and seven we played everything on the beach, catch and all sorts, and so when I was old enough he took me to play for a club’. ‘I used to turn up and when they (my brothers’ team) were short I used to play’ stated another. ‘My dad went into school to start a women’s cricket team. If it hadn’t been for my dad I would have just played out of school’. Conversely none of the interviewees mentioned their mother’s role in developing their sporting career.

We found this pattern of parental influence interesting for a number of reasons. First, the work of Burton Nelson (1994) and Dowling (2000) indicates that it is quite unusual for fathers actively to encourage girls to play sport and it seemed to us that this pattern may have more similarities with the kinds of bonds between fathers and sons which commonly develop in a sporting context (Messner 1992). However, whilst Messner found that ‘identifying with and living up to the power and status of one’s father’ (1992: 29) was often an onerous task for young male athletes, the female cricketers spoke only of positive encouragement from fathers and didn’t relay tales of pressure or the fear of disappointing their parent (perhaps indicative of the different degrees of importance fathers place on their male and female children’s sporting performance). Whilst young females were highly reliant on their fathers in nurturing their sporting opportunities, we must also note that the multi-polarity of interdependency ties in which humans are enmeshed, and the mixture of identities we hold (e.g. male, parent, sports enthusiast), may influence our actions in a variety of directions. Put another way, if, as Messner argues, fathers construct their own masculine identities around the sporting achievements of their sons, so, our research indicates, some of them may also carry out the apparently contradictory act of constructing their masculinity around the sporting achievements of their daughters. Men play an influential role in the
identity formation of their female children, but in so doing, their actions have implications for their own identity.

So few opportunities exist for girls to play cricket in the UK that the majority join boys' teams. Yet by playing in boys' teams the girls challenged hegemonic notions about the suitability of cricket for women/girls. However, the strength of this challenge varied. Most noted that they were isolated as the only girls playing in those teams. Consequently, successful female cricketers were often dismissed as 'one-offs' and/or 'tomboys'; that is to say, not representative of female physicality more generally. Interviewees displayed considerable tolerance of such treatment by team-mates; they had enjoyed their experiences of playing in boys' teams (though had this not been the case they might well have stopped playing the game and therefore would not have been featured in this research) and this treatment was, perhaps, the lesser of two evils. But, again, the girls' presence was also of value to the boys' self-images: by contributing to a successful sports team, these girls also contributed to the boys' developing masculine self-identity. The fragile nature of this interdependency was highlighted by an interviewee who had been chosen to captain an otherwise all-male team. Describing her relationship with team-mates prior to this point as good, her ascendancy to a position of authority altered the way some reacted to her: 'Some were really supportive and others were like, "don't listen to her". When I got older it was a lot harder because in my region a lot of boys were grammar school boys ... I felt more lonely than a boy captain would.' Significantly, this shift in the power balance, where a female's relative value to the team became the subject of a more explicit evaluation, led to male (the established) reactions which served to reiterate the girl's perception of herself as an outsider.

The self-image of female players was further influenced by the reactions of opposing players and spectators. Opposing players often made, 'the odd comment, like when you were in the field they'd sort of say there is an extra run there ... because it's just a girl fielding'. Other interviewees felt that opponents, 'would think "she's rubbish". Then you bowl and they think differently. They thought they could whack (the ball but) they would miss or hit it in the air and get caught out.' Male players, therefore, made assumptions about players' abilities on the basis of 'we-group' and 'they-group' images. These images of 'group charisma'/group disgrace' seemed to be largely derived from perceptions of biological difference. But mixed-sex competition provided an explicit and public challenge to these gender stereotypes and male spectators, interviewees noted, would also react with comments which reinforced notions of the 'naturalness' of female physical inferiority ('when lads got out, their dad shouted stuff like "fancy getting out to a girl"'). Such reactions suggest the perception that these personal male defeats, represent an identity crisis for men and masculinity more generally.

Whilst interviewees perceived their sporting success to have been significant in changing male opinions of them as individual players, it seems that no broader or more fundamental challenge to the 'group disgrace' of females/female cricketers occurred. Indeed, cricketing triumphs were often not sufficient to alter the female player's self-identity, success being attributed to luck, novelty value, etc. As one interviewee noted, 'The opposition, you know, when I bowled were really nervous
An Eliasian or Process Sociological Analysis of Cricket

about being bowled out by a girl so I probably got more wickets than I deserved.' Interviewees seemed reluctant to accept that they could be successful in a mixed sex sporting context because this contradicted their view of the (biologically determined) gender order. In turn, these beliefs are displayed in an internalised, in this context negative, self-image.

Moreover, all the interviewees mentioned that, in the past, they had experienced more overt, institutionalised, forms of prejudice. Indeed, England women’s captain, Clare Connor, has publicly spoken of how, when selected to play for her College’s boys’ team, fellow players insisted that she share a changing room with them, and how the coach supported the boys in this. Connor explained, ‘Our coach … said “Well, Clare, if you want to be part of it … You can’t pick and chose. I made sure that I turned up to games pretty much fully changed, though.’ (The Observer, 27 April 2003). Similarly one of our interviewees noted that, as a consequence of the recent introduction of women to the university cricket academy at which she played, the traditional ‘men only’ annual dinner had been re-arranged.

Yet identities are fluid and their trajectories over time are central to a figurational/process sociological approach. As female cricketers reach adulthood, the feedback which they receive from others, in part changes – ‘It’s gone from being a “girl playing cricket” response to, “Who do you play for?”’- but in part stays the same – ‘… but throughout my career I had that response, “What you play cricket?” “What with a proper ball?” “They have women sides?”’. Perceptions about the inappropriateness of cricket as a sport for females are underscored by their widespread de facto absence from the game but when this perception is challenged, the initial recourse of the established is to question whether the women’s game is valid; i.e. whether it is the same as the men’s, whether or not the women played with a ‘proper ball’. In fact, unlike e.g., golf, track and field or ice hockey, a significant characteristic of cricket is that women do play an unmodified version of the game. The absence of women’s tees, lighter discuses or rules prohibiting body checking (Theberge, 2002: 294), makes the claim for parity between the male and female games more compelling (as well as enabling mixed-sex competition). However, as a consequence of their relative success in this male preserve, adult female cricketers may also come to consider some more searching questions about their biologically, and socially constructed, identities.

Although interviewees rejected the belief that women were biologically unsuitable for a sport like cricket, the extent to which they internalised the belief that the men’s game was superior (the established’s group charisma) was quite marked. Throughout the research, perceptions of women’s lack of physical strength were prominent and, consistently, interviewees equated strength and speed with superiority. Typically one interviewee noted, ‘Women can’t be as strong as men. It would be a huge thing if women bowled at 160k (kilometres per hour). I don’t think that will ever happen.’ Another stated, ‘(The women’s game) lacks power and strength and is, therefore, less entertaining. It’s speed and strength that differs.’ Most interviewees, therefore, were affected by the ‘frailty myth’.
Moreover, by citing males bowling at speeds of 160 kph, interviewees accepted a group charisma the international elite of men’s cricket; the minority of the best. Again the image of the established is inclined ‘towards idealisation’ and the image of the outsider ‘towards denigration’ (Elias and Scotson, 1965: 7). A consequence of, or maybe a correlative to, internalising the ‘group charisma’ of the established is that empirical examples of greater speed and strength are equated with superior play and ‘entertainment’, and therefore the women’s game as a whole is classified as inferior. In the words of Van Stolk and Wouters, these women – who were otherwise making significant emancipatory strides - were thus ‘poised between resignation and resistance’ (1987: 479), believing in the right of women to participate more fully, but having difficulty in ‘detaching’ themselves from the old pattern’ (1987: 484). As one interviewee argued, women ‘play differently. We don’t hit as hard or play day-night, matches so the attraction (for spectators and the media) isn’t there’. The acceptance of this connection between the relative ‘group charisma’ of the ‘minority of the best’ male players, the ‘group disgrace’ of female frailty and the lack of interest in the women’s game meant that media bias towards the male game was, to the interviewees, understandable and largely beyond criticism.

Yet it is not our wish to underplay the resistance to the gender order posed by elite female cricketers. Rather our aim is to identify the boundaries of, and barriers to, this process. Crucially, the women in our study did not see a direct contradiction between cricket and femininity and this, to a degree, contrasts, e.g with Scraton et al.’s research (1999), which found that female footballers perceived themselves as being ‘other’ to females and femininity. It may be the case that this difference is a consequence of the different structural characteristics, and broader social perceptions, of the respective games. However, a further barrier which became apparent during the research stemmed from interviewees’ awareness of the ‘need’ to manage their self-image and, in particular, their sexual identity. The female cricketers to whom we spoke were acutely aware of the benefits of avoiding the ‘stigma’ of lesbianism by conforming to prevalent notions of femininity. Consequently, this group of ‘outsiders’, the elite female cricketers, was internally fractured. As one interviewee noted, ‘Sometimes you get comments like “Are you a bit manly then?” and stuff like that. I find that annoying. You get labelled’. However, she continued by saying, ‘I suppose if you do look around at some of the women, you know ...’ Indeed, most of the women interviewed by my co-author avoided the issue of homosexuality in women’s sports, preferring to ‘talk around’ the issue, saying things like, ‘it’s the bigger girls, if you know what I mean’. Thus there was an uneasy tension between the resentment of those whom interviewees felt were guilty of transposing the sexuality of a minority of female cricketers into the ‘group disgrace’ of all, and the tendency of the women themselves to reinforce notions of compulsory heterosexuality through the stigmatisation of players who did not conform to their own preconceptions of a femininity-appropriate demeanour.

Conclusion
The figurational approach we have employed has led us to concentrate on certain aspects of gender relations and it may be worth re-visiting those ‘core assumptions’ here. Though limited by the degree to which we have relied on
contemporary interview data, our historical/developmental approach has sought to demonstrate the fundamentally dynamic nature of gender relations, and the influence of broader social processes on the specific gender and cricket figuration. Our analysis has, we think, also been fundamentally relational in that, central to the argument in this paper has been the notion that neither males nor females hold absolute power and that, consequently, neither group acts in a unified or coherent way. More particularly, the ‘social images’ of this set of gender relations – the group disgrace of the outsiders and the group charisma (e.g. in terms of biologically determined physical capacities and sexuality) of the established – are symbiotic. Most centrally, however, our paper explores the connections between ‘changing power ratios between groups ... (and) the social habitus of group members’ (Mennell, 1992: 116).

By way of a final comment, Van Stolk and Wouters argue that the degree to which the outsiders identify with each other relative to their identification with the established is revealing of the balance of power and the stage of the emancipation process. Females in the Van Stolk and Wouters study viewed emancipation ambivalently because they had so deeply internalised the views of their husbands; in their words, ‘She takes more notice of him than he of her, she is more sensitive to his whims than he to hers’ (1987: 479). Similarly, women cricketers are much more likely to demonstrate an awareness of men’s cricket than vice versa. Published interviews with female cricketers had shown that many cited male players as amongst their cricketing heroes. Yet Davis (1998) recalls that, during his time with the England Women’s World Cup team in India in 1997, the women’s team faxed a message of support to the men’s team, who were to play in the final of the equivalent men’s tournament. The response was rude and sexually explicit, showed no awareness of the women’s team’s progress and offered no words of support for their semi final match against New Zealand. The men were not interested in the women’s game though the women had followed the men’s intently. Similarly, few female cricketers interviewed were critical of the male monopolisation of playing facilities. Rather, they made excuses or ‘understood’ why this might be the case. They repeatedly argued that the men’s game was demanding and that they had a busy county schedule; in the words of Van Stolk and Wouters, we might say that ‘their attitude towards male superiority (was) one of resigned forgiveness’ (1987: 485).

Recent organisational changes in English cricket have led to a situation where the women are now outsiders within the established organisation, rather than simply being outsiders outside the organisation. This has led to a higher degree of more direct interdependence (e.g. in terms of funding, in terms of promotional links being made between the male and female international teams), which in turn has helped, in some small measure, to elevate the status of women within cricket. Moreover, the increased finances in the women’s game have seen a development of the international programme and an increasing number of centrally funded, professional and semi-professional female players. It may be the case that the more regular contact between women cricketers will lead to a situation where are they are ‘turning less and less towards the established and more and more towards each other’ (Van Stolk and Wouters, 1987: 486) in the construction of their self-
and group-identity. Once a more coherent identity is formed, a more radical shift towards equality is likely to occur.

Notes

1 Due to the limited cooperation from the cricketing authorities (because we needed interviews to be conducted at the height of the cricket season) a snowball sampling technique was used. However, there is no reason to believe that those interviewed differ significantly from the broader population of elite female cricketers.

References


