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Conclusion

This book aimed to do three things: to explore how and why sport has been and is connected with social movements; to describe some of the key episodes in this relationship; and to thus contribute to a better understanding of the connection between sport and the political (field). The book has therefore offered a broadly developmental account of social movements and their relation to sport and sport as a site where (today) global social movements operate. Globalization creates different conditions and opportunity structures, which lead social movements to adapt their policies, practices and politics (Hobsbawm 2011). We have noted how global or transnational social movements have developed partly in response to changing national opportunities to promote their cause and partly as a response to the development of transnational governance and the growth of international agencies such as the United Nations. The book has therefore offered insight into the 'pre-history' of these global social movements, as much as their contemporary form, by considering the development of selected social movements that have most influenced sport.

It will be evident to readers that there are several limitations to it. We have predominantly used library and archive sources close to hand – which have been predominantly Western, advanced capitalist, English and French language resources – rather than undertaken extensive fieldwork. In the future, we suggest that research will need to explore the process of social movement formation around sport even more empirically, ethnographically and globally (Burawoy et al. 2000). In particular such research would seek to identify the recruitment patterns, networks and organizational structures of global social movements. We recognize that scholarship on social movements has tended to neglect sex and gender despite the fact that political protest is and has been profoundly gendered. This dimension would be axiomatic in future research. Future research would also examine the political implications of the tensions that arise as a result of the shifts we have identified in previous chapters from engaging in resistive struggles to attempts to engage with institutions, especially at the global level. Such research will enable us to understand better how global social movements operate in relation to sport, and also identify the global forces, connections and imaginations that underpin contemporary global social movements. We conclude the book with some suggestions for where more detailed research needs to be undertaken.

As stated in the introduction, we have sought to address what we consider to be key questions: How are social movements and alter-globalization influencing the current sport order as well as the wider world order? How do the different

forms of political actions spurred by social movements differ from previous forms in their reach and goals for change? Are there existing sports forms or sports organizations whose goals are consistent with global social movements? And what actual or potential influence have these organizations had on the global social order of sport?

In doing this we have often noted the ways that major sports competitions, and sports mega-events such as the Olympic and Paralympic Games and the FIFA Men's Football World Cup Finals especially, have acted as key sites for the activities of social movements related to sport. Mega-events offer an opportunity to both organisers and movements to attempt to 'seize the platform' as a vehicle for communicating their ideals and values, challenging regimes and bringing powerful corporations and organizations to account (Price 2008). This relationship between social movements, social protest and sports mega-events is not new. In the 1960s, as we have seen in Chapter 4, questions were raised by the anti-apartheid movement about the regime in South Africa that led to the country's expulsion from the IOC until 1992, and the same sanctions were applied to Rhodesia until the end of white minority rule. Yet these expulsions were exceptional. More recently, in 2012 before the London Summer Olympic and Paralympic Games, questions were raised about the inclusion of Syria at the event in the light of the massacres of civilians that had taken place there and also the conditions for workers in factories supplying Adidas, one of the main producers of sports apparel and equipment. As we noted in Chapter 2, also prior to the 2012 Olympics, several organizations combined once again as 'Play Fair' and developed a campaign around the London Olympic and Paralympic Games (Timms 2012). The Olympic 'platform', built at huge expense by large investments from others, remains an attractive 'fora to advance political and commercial messages' (Price 2008, p. 86) through legal channels of sponsorship or less mainstream ones such as ambush or guerrilla marketing and hijacking or 'piggybacking' by social movements (Price 2008, p. 87). The default setting with the IOC, however, is that involvement in the Olympic 'movement' can serve as an agent of change. Hence as Rowe (2012) remarks, mega-events such as the Olympics provide claims for 'global civil legitimacy' to be made by hosts and wannabe hosts alike.

The IOC and local mega-event organizers claim to uphold human rights. The current version of the *Olympic Charter* for example states: 'The practice of sport is a human right. Every individual must have the possibility of practising sport, without discrimination of any kind and in the Olympic spirit, which requires mutual understanding with a spirit of friendship, solidarity and fair play' (IOC 2011, p. 10 available at http://www.olympic.org/Documents/olympic_charter_en.pdf [accessed 9 October 2012]). Campaigners seek to discredit what they consider to be the hypocrisy of the organisers and/or host nations. The opening and closing ceremonies that are viewed by vast global audiences do allow space for implicit if not overt political statements to be

made. Hence the 2000 Sydney Olympics Closing ceremony is considered to be one of the 'gayest' featuring as it did several iconic gay singers and dancers (Scupham-Bilton, n.d.). In London in 2012, the opening ceremony of the Summer Olympics featured suffragettes and the opening and closing ceremonies of the Paralympic Games (with undeniably smaller global television audiences) featured an extended celebration of the UN Declaration of Human Rights, human diversity and disabled persons in particular.

Yet in struggles over the mega-event platform critics point out how there are often huge gaps between the rhetoric of promoters and the unfolding reality of the event itself. To illustrate this consider the 'High-Level Panel on Sport and the UN Declaration of Human Rights' that took place on 27 February 2012 at the 19th Session of the United Nations Human Rights Council held in Geneva, Switzerland (for details see: http://www.un.org/wcm/webdav/site/sport/shared/sport/pdfs/HRC_19th-session_High-level-panel-on-sport.pdf [accessed 9 October 2012]). The aim of the meeting was to discuss the ways in which 'sport and major sporting events, in particular the Olympic and Paralympic Games, can be used to promote awareness and understanding of the UDHR and the application of its principles. Similar to other declarations in recent years, great emphasis was placed on the value of sport as a vehicle for peace and human development. The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Dr Navi Pillay, opened proceedings by stating that sport and human rights shared many fundamental values and objectives, and that part of the Olympic Charter chimed perfectly with the UDHR. She felt however that there had been 'little interaction between the human rights movement mechanisms and the world of sports'. She urged the host organizers of the next four Olympic and Paralympic Games – to be held in London in the United Kingdom (2012), Sochi in Russia (2014), Rio de Janeiro in Brazil (2016) and PyeongChang in the Republic of Korea (2018) – to pay special attention to the promotion of human rights. Dr Pillay's comments were followed by observations from representatives of countries hosting the next three Olympic and Paralympic Games, including a United Kingdom Minister of State for the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Keith Mills, Deputy Chair of the London Organizing Committee of the Olympic and Paralympics Games (LOCOG), Carlos Nuzman, President of Rio 2016, and Vladimir Lukin, Human Rights Ombudsman and President of the Russian Paralympics Committee. In various ways each speaker affirmed the relationship between the Olympics and human rights: the UK government minister stated that when people tuned in to watch the London 2012 Olympics, there would be a wider agenda visible including human rights; Keith Mills suggested that sport could be a valuable means by which to promote peace and human rights; Carlos Nuzman stated that the Rio 2016 Games was in line with the focus of the Rio de Janeiro Master Plan which was to prioritize projects catering for young people and that between 2009 and 2011, 8,000 households had been

successfully resettled without ‘judicial authorization’; and while overcoming racism in sports remained an issue for the international community, Vladimir Lukin warned against increasing attempts to politicize the Olympic Games.

Following these statements a discussion developed that enabled interested parties to contribute. These included representatives from other nations and a representative of Amnesty International (AI). The latter raised the issue of the 1984 toxic gas leak from the Union Carbide pesticide factory in Bhopal, India, which killed between 7,000 and 10,000 people immediately and another 15,000 in the next 20 years. Since 2001 Dow Chemicals became the parent company of the Bhopal factory, but had consistently denied any responsibility. In 2010, Dow became a worldwide sponsor of the IOC through its ‘TOP’ programme. In 2011, it agreed to sponsor the fabric wrap around the stadium built for the 2012 London Olympics. This prompted calls from the Indian Olympic Association and other bodies for the IOC to terminate the relationship with Dow and LOCOG to drop the sponsorship of the stadium materials.

Taking these two statements – those about Dow and Rio – we can see the potential for gaps to open up between the rhetoric and the reality of the Olympic movement at such ‘High-Level’ meetings. While the Dow sponsorship issue remains of ongoing concern to critics of the way the Union Carbide disaster in Bhopal has been handled, no major criticisms emerged during the 2012 Olympics. There were no reports of challenges to the comments from the President of Rio 2016 made in February 2012. Yet in the period since Rio was awarded the hosting of the 2016 Summer Olympic and Paralympic Games, there have been several cases of forced evictions and the displacement of local communities identified (and also in other cities in Brazil scheduled to host the 2014 FIFA Men’s Football World Cup Finals). Development corporations continue to focus on economic and infrastructural development through the Games that are largely exploitative and unsustainable (Darnell 2012). Research by activists and groups working to identify human rights abuses related to forced evictions and displacements within Brazil would appear to challenge the complacent statement of Mr Nuzman (see Horne and Whannel 2012, pp. 138–42; Millington and Darnell, *in press*). As Chapter 4 illustrated, human rights discourse has a contested history, and so this potential for contradictions to emerge around statements about human rights and sport should not be surprising.

As we also noted in Chapter 5, the peace movement has historically been concerned with the broader social, political and economic forces at work that produce and sustain violence and conflict, namely renewed notions of national exceptionalism and the violent enforcement of global neo-liberalism. Since the 1980s, however, the increased breadth of the movement led to a decrease in the depth of its critique; in the current case of organizing sport for peace, the increased acceptance of sport as an approach to peace building and conflict resolution leads to a more politically palatable and less challenging approach

to anti-war politics. Yet in a recent critique of the Olympic Movement as a supposed force for peace and understanding around the world, Hoberman (2011) forcefully argued that the IOC has routinely promoted a version of peace that is ostensibly apolitical, neutral and universal. While the attraction of this political identity for a supra-national organization like the IOC – one that wishes to maintain a neutral basis for interacting with nations around the world – is clear, the IOC's vision and version of a sport-based peace movement is based on what Hoberman (2011, p. 21) calls 'amoral universalism, the traditional Olympic dogma that all human tribes must take part in the Games, no matter how repressive or inhumane their governments may be'. Not only has such amoral universalism resulted in dubious friendships and relationships between the IOC and a raft of political despots and human rights abusers, but also it necessarily prevents the IOC from criticizing powerful institutions and governments around issues of violence and conflict, or participating in anti-war criticism or peace activism. As a result, the IOC's credibility as a force for peace, or as part of the peace movement, is severely compromised given that, in Hoberman's (2011, p. 25) words, 'No international bodies that induct (as members) such morally compromised people in such numbers can be taken seriously as a peace lobby or as a humanitarian enterprise similar to a well-managed NGO'.

We have in this book started to examine the tensions that arise as a result of the long-term tendency for social movements to move politically and strategically from resistive struggles towards more active engagement and involvement with powerful institutions, including governments and NGOs at national, regional and global levels. We noted in Chapter 5 for example how this shift has materialized in the relationship between sport and the peace movement. While there are few other sport organizations that can be directly compared to the IOC, given its size, scope and resources, it is reasonable to argue that the position taken by the IOC aligns with the cultural turn in the peace movement towards peace education and inclusive understanding and away from resistive politics. As such, sport-focused peace initiatives of the kind proffered by the IOC are open to at least two significant criticisms. The first is the resultant lack of attention paid to structural and political causes of violence, war and conflict – issues fundamental to twentieth-century peace theory and activism (Galtung 1969) – as a focus on the fundamental structures and causes of military violence is replaced with an emphasis on encouraging individuals to account for their own positioning amidst social stratification and marginalization. From this perspective, organizations like the IOC can promote peace and understanding in and through Olympic sport and global Olympism without being beholden to any responsibility for the processes of capitalist exploitation and industrialized militarism that exacerbate violence.

A second criticism of recent sport-focused peace initiatives connects with Donnelly's (2011) reminder that we should recognize the ambivalent

relationship between sport and violence. Sport has regularly and historically demonstrated proclivities for exacerbating war as much as promoting peace and understanding, and yet much of the currently dominant model of peace building through sport promotes an essentializing and universalizing version of sport as fundamentally positive or pro-social. At issue is the need to recognize the necessity of peace-focused reforms *within* sport more so than peace *because* of sport, and to use sport as an opportunity to resist war and militarism, neither of which are regularly promoted within the cultural turn towards peace education. Indeed, the uncritical promotion of sport for peace, based on a notion of its essential characteristics, runs the risk of exacerbating violence and conflict by failing to deal with such issues.

It is here that the issue of resistive politics becomes most important. If and when sport for peace programmes, discourses and activism are championed, but done so in ways that are unaccompanied by political activity based on resistive anti-war, anti-militarism principals, a result is the downloading of the chore of peace building onto the people who suffer most from war. That is, if sport becomes a tool for peace education that primarily focuses on 'educating' young people towards cultural understanding, then it potentially and perhaps unwittingly serves to ask people to solve problems of violence not of their own making. The general acceptance of conflict resolution practices related to sport offers credence, at least to an extent, that such practices do little to produce change because even as young people 'learn' to respect one another through sport, violence and militarism continues to offer those in positions of power a legitimate political outlet to assert their dominance over others. While it is popular and politically palatable to position and promote sport in the service of peace education and understanding – both international and personal – this arguably does very little to attend to the roots of the problem.

The need to promote and implement peace initiatives and youth development in places of violent conflict like Afghanistan (through, for example, sport-focused NGOs like 'Skateistan') is not simply the result of the limitations or wrongdoing or lack of cross-cultural understanding on the part of the Afghan people, but a product of neo-liberal globalization, state exceptionalism, pre-emptive military action and violent neo-colonial policies. Yet, by promoting sport for peace as a cultural phenomenon, these relationships and structures are arguably obscured, particularly as they are replaced or overshadowed by a focus on affect, particularly pleas for compassion, care and support for the comparatively less fortunate Afghan people (see Thorpe and Rinehart 2012).

Similarly, International Relations scholars increasingly recognize that internationally created norms of proper behaviour may propel states to redefine their interests and change behaviour (Kollman and Waites 2009, p. 9). The awarding of the hosting of the Olympic Games to regimes with dubious human rights records, for example, might enable demonstrations about this situation to be developed. Perhaps this does enable a slow, evolutionary, path to social

reform through moral suasion to take place? Brownell (2012) questions if the campaigns around the Olympic Games hosted in Beijing in 2008 by human and workers' rights critics (discussed in Chapter 2) were mainly gestural politics, without any real chance of being effective? For her the IOC is not such a powerful organization and cannot bring about lasting change. For other writers, such as Hoberman as we have seen, it remains a corrupt organization that pretends to be able to achieve changes it is actually incapable of securing. The politics of moral suasion is complicated, and it can take many years to determine if an impact has been made.

At the same time, we have been careful not to adopt a teleological understanding of social movements and sport, nor have we championed one or other of the social movements analysed in this book. We recognized from the outset that there could be no guarantee of positive or progressive outcomes in the struggles they engage in. Indeed as Teeple (2005, p. 19) notes with regard to the struggle over human rights, the individual 'freedoms' that human rights protect often also support the corporate autonomy necessary for international exploitation of marginalized groups within capitalist relations. This suggests that the system of universal human rights may serve as part of a 'global enabling framework' for mobile transnational capitalism. Sport is far from exempt from such relations. Similarly Hartmann (2003, pp. 268–70) describes how the post-protest racial regime in American sport recuperated the image of the 'black power' salute made in 1968 by Smith and Carlos, and yet arguably athletes and activists in sport have no more progressive template. Over time socially radical images, objects and practices associated with the 1960s have been appropriated and transformed into commodities available to mass and mainstream markets. Capitalist consumer culture dilutes and subverts the original meaning and intentions of the protesters and critics. Critical experiences and grievances and the radical intent that prompted the 1968 Olympic, and other, demonstrations tend to become portrayed in terms of a focus on the individual courage of the athletes, and abstracted commitments to 'equality', 'dignity' and 'justice' is often all that results. Muhammad Ali is especially portrayed in this way.

Enabling mass participation in globally popular sports through various programmes (e.g. Slum Soccer) may also fail to challenge, and in fact may further facilitate, the continuously unequal flows of global capital that contribute to the 'underdevelopment' of the Global South. As Kidd (2008, p. 376) rightly points out, the need to focus on, and advocate for, sport as a human right stems in large part from diminished social welfare policies and structural inequalities characteristic of contemporary neo-liberal and neo-conservative political regimes. Similarly, Gruneau (in press) contends that sport for development and peace initiatives align more with the expansion of a rights-based culture, than with political struggles or resistance against the politics of unequal development. Attempts to address issues of human rights in and through sport have problematically tended towards the privileging of

high-performance sporting systems that exclude mass participation to the benefits of elite athletes and performance maximization (Donnelly 2008). Utilizing sport to advance a rights or social justice agenda is not easily done. Advocacy and engagement, through the work of those claiming to be public intellectuals seeking impact through public sociology (Donnelly et al. 2011), is evident in some writing about social justice and sport. This enthusiasm to engage may miss a vital point. Sport has contradictory aims and can promote diverse responses.

Nonetheless, we have seen that in the past 10–15 years, social movements have developed that are global in outlook yet operate at both local and global levels. These global social movements propose, celebrate and attempt to strengthen ‘global consciousness’, including sometimes offering alternative models of sport. These global social movements attempt to go beyond the successes and limits of earlier social movements, develop more than resistant activism and globalize issues through developing new networks of actors. As Pleyers (2010) notes alter-globalization has developed both according to subjectivity and reason. The former has involved experiments in lived experience, creating new autonomies of subjectivity. The latter has seen new forms of social and political organizing – with more egalitarian, environmentally responsible and ethical consequences for all global citizens. Changing the sporting political imaginary is, as we have shown in this book, quite complex. On the one hand, institutionalization and legislation can create ‘neutral spaces’ in which urgent social issues can be effectively depoliticized. On the other hand, alternative ways of organizing sport and organizing sports practice in relation to the environment have been and continue to be developed. We hope that this book encourages others to investigate the role that social movements play and have played in shaping, contesting and developing sport.

Throughout this book, important issues and themes from the social movements literature have been discussed in relation to sport, such as the formation of collective identity, the role of sport in facilitating social action and the relative success or failures of sport-focused social movements. At the same time, the analysis of these topics and themes remains necessarily incomplete and is therefore worthy of ongoing scholarly attention. We thus conclude with a list of themes identified in earlier chapters and an agenda for future research into sport and social movements.

First, the analysis in the book illustrates that, to a significant extent, sport offers a site or theatre for social actors to engage in particular struggles and to draw attention to issues of social justice. Notably, this effect and opportunity can be seen both through positive and through negative aspects of the organization, culture and experience of sport itself. For example, the relationship between sport and the environmental movement shows that particular sports, such as surfing and snowboarding, constitute both a site at which to celebrate and

experience the natural environment but also a node which forces sports people to confront the degradation and exploitation of the environment. Thus, sport can be a site of struggle because of the progressive action that it promotes but also in response to the injustices that it exacerbates or the inequalities in which sport is implicated. Ongoing attention should be paid to the ways in which sport-focused social movement actors and organizations negotiate this tension and the techniques they use in order to connect meanings to sport as part of the promotion and renewal of social movements locally and globally.

Second, the extent to which the values of sport, oft-contested, connect to or diverge from social movement organizations is worthy of ongoing analysis. While sport and sport culture possess no inherent values, particularly across geographies and eras, the question remains as to how and why social movement organizations embrace, adopt and even adapt and update the values of sport in pursuit of their reforms and movement goals. For example, peace movement values of pacifism and global brother- and sisterhood are likely at odds with the hyper-competitiveness, jingoism and celebration of violence found in many dominant sporting forms. And yet, the possibility to celebrate sport as a common form of humanity likely remains attractive or useful to some social movement actors. The ways in which social movement organizations reconcile such tensions requires further understanding.

Third, the ways in which sport becomes part of the formation of collective identity among social movement actors and organizations remains largely under-analysed and undetermined. Given that a sense of united interests and actions is central to the theoretical and empirical understanding of what constitutes a social movement and how movements are formed, the ways in which collective identity may (or may not) form in and around sport is of central importance. Further, given the role of sport – particularly communal dimensions of the sporting experience like fandom – in constructing collective identities, synergies may exist between fans and activists, synergies that remain less than fully understood within the study of sport and social movements.

Fourth, understanding the ways in which sport becomes an event, and by extension an opportunity, through which to advance a social movement agenda requires further investigation. This understanding of events can refer both to temporal and to staged events (such as a football fixture or the Olympic Games) that may provide a practical opportunity or backdrop for social movement organization, but should also take into account sport as a cultural phenomenon, one with social and economic significance, that may facilitate opportunities for, and recognition of, social movement efforts.

Fifth, given that the dominant sporting model remains one that is corporate led, and in addition sometimes coupled with or supported by state interest and power, the ways in which social movement organizations that connect to sport negotiate corporate influence and the interests of the state remains an important area of inquiry. While the alter-globalization framework draws

attention to the efforts of social actors to reform the meanings and values of society itself, it remains the case that social movement organizations and actors connected to sport have to work amidst the interests of corporations and the state. How they negotiate and even integrate these powerful interests into their organizing and activism is worthy of further attention.

Sixth, the significance of the media should be of interest in understanding the relationship between sport and social movements. On the one hand, the symbiotic relationship between contemporary sport and the media clearly offers social movement actors a platform from which to work for change and reform. On the other hand, sport media tends to organize and disseminate content in a conservative fashion that is likely at odds with social movement goals and values. Is it possible, then, for social movement actors connected to sport to capitalize on the opportunities that sports media provide while challenging and even reforming the ways in which sports media perpetuates many of the structures that social movements oppose? Research is needed in this area.

Finally, and seventh, tensions, contradictions and opposing forces within sport itself likely pose a challenge for social movement organizations that coalesce in and through sport culture. For example, a focus on elite sport versus sport for all, private sport versus public sport, and individual, competitive versus cooperative and communitarian sport constitute notable tensions within the culture of sport itself. As such, there is likely no single sporting form or definition through which social movement actors definitively organize or advance their cause. How do social movement actors then reconcile such tensions?

In sum, this book has demonstrated that sport in its organization and culture connects to the history and dissemination of social movements in important ways and vice versa. At the same time, many of the challenges and intricacies of social movement formation, mobilization and success or failure in relation to sport remain under-examined and worthy of ongoing investigation and assessment.