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Social Theory, the Sociology of Sport and the Study of SDP

Introduction

Popular descriptions of the SDP sector often refer to ‘the power of sport’ as a way to conceptualize sport’s contributions to international development (see Spaaij 2011). In this discourse, the utility and usefulness of sport for meeting development goals is attached, and simultaneously reduced, to the supposed essential character, organization, experience or nature of sport itself.

For critical scholars of sport, particularly those within the discipline of sports sociology, such invocations of sport are problematic, both in the ways in which they suggest and privilege a particular or universal notion of sport where many occur and the extent to which they suggest that the sporting experience is inherently positive and therefore amenable to and compatible with meeting development goals. I suggest that the notion of ‘the power of sport’, or that of sport as a universal language and a singular and positive basis for international development, is largely reductive in overlooking and depoliticizing the situated politics of sport and international development, respectively. It is further problematic in its positivist understandings of social activity as it suggests that affirmative benefits of SFD stand as ‘proof’ of sport’s utility in development. The ‘power of sport’ discourse also tends to suggest a functionalist theoretical orientation (see Coalter 2009; Giulianotti 2004; Spaaij 2010, 2011). Structural-functionalism holds some explanatory power, for it does still yield important insights into the ways in which contemporary sport is organized and interpreted (see Loy and Booth 2004), but nevertheless the functionalist notion of sport in support of international development is limited in its explanatory ability of the process and politics that produce social change (Coalter 2009). From this perspective, ‘the power of sport’ within SDP is not a truth but a popular discourse subject to interpretation and negotiation (as well as resistance) and, from a research perspective, requiring of critical attention. While there may be a utility of SFD given possibilities it affords to decentre relations of dominance and normativity – for example, in relation to gender and sexuality (Saavedra 2009) – this speaks not to the power of sport itself but to sport as a cultural site at which to deconstruct relations of power.

I am advocating here for post-positivism. Even in the cases where experience suggests that sport did or does offer a convening power towards the meeting of

development goals, such experiences, in the tradition of post-positivist critical sociology, are not evidence of 'truth' but rather that which call for understanding and explanation (Scott 1991). Rather than offering a means by which to apply sport to development, the notion of sport as a force for good or a universal experience amidst the challenges of international development becomes the site at which critical investigation, and in some cases deconstruction, is called for. Following Saavedra (2009), the study of SDP rests more on the critical study of relations of power as they are mobilized in and through sport, rather than the mobilization of the inherent power of sport towards development goals. The critical traditions of the sociology of sport are particularly useful in this regard and, in turn, offer an important basis for the substantive analyses of SDP programmes, policies and practices in subsequent chapters.

In this chapter, then, my central argument is as follows: Given the different meanings of sport, the situated politics of development and the social complexities of sport and development, respectively, the idea that practitioners, scholars or activists will ever know with certainty whether, where or how sport is positive or effective for meeting development goals is unrealistic and unreasonable. It is, for all intents and purposes, impossible to confidently assert the transferable conditions under which sport meets development goals or the means by and through which SFD works or not. This does not mean that sport offers nothing to the challenges of development, but rather that the reasonable and responsible goal, particularly of critical research, sport sociology and development studies, is to contextualize and politicize the role and place of sport in struggles for sustainable and equitable development. The role of SFD and the SDP sector is not essential but a constantly moving puzzle and to study sport in its complexities and contradictions calls for the deployment of multiple theories rather than a strict disciplinary adherence (see Horne 2006). To that end, this chapter offers some theoretical insights by which to better understand the SDP sector.

Hegemony theory and the sociology of sport

Hegemony theory, and the political philosophy of Antonio Gramsci, has been a foundational tool in the sociology of sport, given its utility in illuminating the processes by which dominant ideas are (re)produced and transitioned into the realm of common sense (see Andrews and Loy 1993; Giulianotti 2005; Gruneau 1983; Hargreaves and MacDonald 2000; Rowe 2004, among others). I argue here that hegemony theory is particularly useful for the critical study of SDP because it reminds and illustrates that the social organization of sporting practices and the social and political meanings ascribed to sport are particular and the result of negotiation between actors within relations of power.

The ways in which sport is positioned in support of development, and the ways in which sport is constructed and implemented as part of development initiatives, are not an exemplary result of the power of sport but rather produced through social interactions within a cultural and political context.

In the hegemony framework, power is mobilized and implemented not through dominant ideology, conspiracy or economic determinism, but through socially negotiated processes of domination and consent. While pioneered by Gramsci, Andrews and Loy (1993) noted that Stuart Hall (1985, 1986) made a crucial contribution to the theory by using Gramsci's ideas specifically to overcome the limitations of Louis Althusser's (1969) structural ideology, which had failed to adequately account for the processes by which particular ideologies become rooted in the popular consciousness. The result was a theory significantly more dynamic, both epistemologically and practically, than allowed by previous frameworks, because of its focus on power *in process* within historically contextual material relations. Hegemony therefore, in the cultural studies tradition, offered a reconciliation of the ahistorical determinism of structuralism and the overly romanticized notions of humanism and human agency (Andrews and Loy 1993).

A foundational Gramscian study in the field of sport took place in the early 1980s. In 1983 and 1984, Alan Ingham and Stephen Hardy published two papers focused on the social utility and logic of sport within historical relations of capitalism (Hardy and Ingham 1983; Ingham and Hardy 1984). In these works, Ingham and Hardy took the questions of whether the nineteenth-century playground movement in the United States was either an example of progressive policy reform *or* a new method of social control and argued that it fit neatly into neither of these categories. Rather, they argued, any analysis of sport's emancipatory potential must account for how and why sport, as a cultural form, is repeatedly renewed through processes of negotiation between dominant and subordinate groups. Thus, they understood the playground movement to be the result of cultural interplay between owning-class reform sensibilities and working-class demands for safe opportunities to recreate physically. In turn, Ingham and Hardy argued that the use of this framework called attention to the importance of diachronic analyses of sport's social utility and a focus on the changing social context within, as well as against, capitalism. Here, they put forth that in the United States sport was intimately connected to capitalist logic, illustrated by the shift from the playground model of youth sports based on the protection of child welfare to that of 'anticipatory child labour' or sport as a means of producing future workers (Ingham and Hardy 1984: 96). In their analyses, the capitalist-informed 'pyramid' structure of sporting achievement became institutionalized to the point that concerns for 'public control' over youth recreational practices gave way to 'productive control' over children's sporting labour (Ingham and Hardy 1984: 97), an analysis illuminated by hegemony as a theory of cultural

power. It is this tradition of the use of Gramscian hegemony to understand the social and political organization of physical recreation and sport that I argue is useful to the contemporary study of SDP. For scholars of SDP, hegemony helps to investigate the meanings ascribed to SFD and the ways in which these meanings are produced and constrained through negotiations within relations of power.

This does not mean, however, that hegemony, and its application to sport, is theoretically immutable or immune from critique. While hegemony has arguably constituted the dominant mode of inquiry in sport sociology over the past 25 years (an ironic 'hegemony of hegemony', Rowe 2004: 108) the utility and applicability of the hegemony framework for the study of sport has also been consistently revisited. For example, in the 1990s a series of debates took place within the *Sociology of Sport Journal* (SSJ) over whether a move to Chicago school anthropology would offer more to the study of sport, a debate that included a host of notable sports scholars including Ingham, Hardy, John MacAloon, John Hargreaves, Alan Tomlinson, William Morgan, Rob Beamish, Rick Gruneau and Robert Sparks.

In this debate, MacAloon (1992) and Morgan (1994, 1997) argued against hegemony as a mode of inquiry because of its limited analytical and explanatory capabilities as compared to critical ethnography. MacAloon (1992) claimed that hegemony both overemphasizes the determining capacities of the social and political modes of production and overlooks the importance of comparative understandings of meanings within cultural practice. From this perspective, hegemony as a tool for understanding international sporting practices lacks an ability to describe because, as a theory of social reproduction, it accounts for effects but not causes of social construction. Furthermore, despite its emphasis on agency and resistance within the dominance/consent relationship, hegemony offers no theoretical account of the specific mechanism by which subordinate groups wrest power from the dominant interests (MacAloon 1992). For Morgan (1994), the meanings of cultural practices, such as sport, are better understood through semiotic theory and ethnographic methodology prior to an analysis of sport's functional linkages to the modes of production. Thus, Morgan (1997) argued, hegemony supporters, in their rush to situate sport within structures of capitalism, too easily ascribe power to dominant groups resulting in the difficulty of using hegemony to perform the theoretical and explanatory tasks – resistance and counterdominance – which are its hallmarks (Morgan 1997).

Supporters of hegemony for the study of sport responded by arguing that any reduction of hegemony to a totalizing abstraction, one that overemphasized economics and failed to describe social reality, was a problem of theoretical application, not of the theory itself (Hargreaves and Tomlinson 1992). Hegemony, they argued, provides a necessary analysis of the ways in which social action is produced and constrained within material power relations,

unlike ethnography that is forever trapped by the double hermeneutic of interpreting interpretations (Ingham and Beamish 1997).

These types of debates continue within current social and political theory, particularly around the concept of post-hegemony. The post-hegemony perspective suggests that Gramscian theories are insufficient to explain current cultural politics because the instability of contemporary ideology and identity destabilizes the interplay between domination and consent (see Beasley-Murray 2003). In a recent analysis of hegemony's current viability within cultural studies, Lash (2007: 56) argued that power is now largely post-hegemonic, since postmodern relations of power are constituted less through the negotiated (re)production of ideas and more through the 'logic of invention', where power itself is ontological, part of the making of the real. In this post-structuralist view, culture is not negotiated in the realm of value, as suggested by a Gramscian neo-Marxist legacy, but produced as fact (Lash 2007).

I am amenable to many post-structuralist insights. Yet I defend hegemony here because the post-hegemony framework overlooks a key point. Though few dispute the waning stability of a contemporary ideology, this does not, in and of itself, constitute a definitive argument against hegemony theory. Pessoa (2003), for example, has responded to post-hegemony by arguing that the imposition of dominant ideologies and the processes highlighted by hegemony are not reducible to one another because ideology plays only a part in the process by which the borders of hegemonic discourse are established and (re)established. The materialism of hegemony is constituted discursively, and it is these processes that continue to stand as key sites for critical inquiry. Thus, Johnson (2007) argues that what is needed is a new, and more culturally malleable, understanding of hegemony, which embraces the cultural intersections and complexities of the contemporary, 'or postmodern', moment, not the abandonment of hegemony itself.

I concur that Gramscian hegemony continues to offer an important reminder that sport, even truly global sports like football/soccer, are not benign cultural forms but the product of complex interactions between actors produced and constrained within the cultural and political economy. For example, the global popularity of football is not inherent or inevitable but a post-colonial phenomenon enabled by global capital, migration, media and marketing and corporatization (see Giulianotti 1999a). In turn, hegemony continues to offer a means by which to foreground and contextualize the concreteness – the material conditions – of inequality that define the parameters of sport and physical activity (Bairner 2009) as well as international development, a line of thinking I examine further in Chapter 2. Together, such approaches are still required because the critical ethnography and post-hegemony perspectives outlined above potentially erase such hierarchies and inequalities by a focus on the cultural meaning of sport *a priori*. Potentially overlooked, therefore, is the extent to which the cultural impact of meaning and representation is only

intelligible through the ‘reality’ of material relations (e.g. poverty, ghettoization, war) that organize and reinforce the (inequalities of the) social world (Bailey and Gayle 2003: 91). Furthermore, as I explore in subsequent chapters, mobilizing SFD in SDP regularly assumes and (re)produces dominant ideas of sport’s emancipatory potential. Such notions of sport are not apolitical but constituted as commonsense in and through cultural and material hierarchies. While reducing these hierarchies to economics or the modes of production would be problematic, as critics like Morgan (1997) have rightly argued, this need not be the case, particularly given that hegemony theory is concerned with overcoming the economic reductionism of the Marxist base/superstructure meta-narrative (Rigauer 2000).¹

Retaining a focus on hegemony in this way does not mean that the framework should be used uncritically or be insulated from theoretical criticism and refinement. As Johnson (2007) argues, a responsible and accurate application of hegemony (in this case, to the study of SDP) must take into account how contemporary material hierarchies are constituted in and through an *array* of social and cultural components, beyond merely the economic and class-based, but including also race, gender, sexuality, globalization, neocolonial relations and even seemingly apolitical institutions such as rights-based development. For example, the neoliberal ethic of ‘individual choice and personal consumption’ that substantiates global economic systems simultaneously informs relations of dominance through transnational interpenetrations with race and gender in the post-colonial (Grewal 2005). Even universal human rights – a framework with an explicit mandate to supersede social and material hierarchies – regularly fail to transcend hegemonic relations since not all (aboriginal people, homeless, suspects in the war on terror) are afforded ‘the right to human rights’ or the political and economic capital to exercise these rights (see Teeple 2005). Thus, hegemony is only reductive, economically or otherwise, if used in a reductive manner. The utility of hegemony is in its ability to account for the ways in which social processes – including relationships, techniques and knowledge production – within a class society secure the position of dominant groups through the ideological establishment of inequality as ‘commonsense’ (Giulianotti 2005: 49). As sociologists of sport have examined, sport is precisely produced within these kinds of relationships, which is a crucial theoretical insight given the mobilization of SFD through SDP, ostensibly to redress development inequalities.²

In sum, the mobilization of sport needs to be understood within relations of power (as does the notion and practice of development itself). These relations of power are not conspiratorial but do call for explication. Even in the cases where sport has been found to be a positive force for progressive social change or meeting local demands for development (see Fokwang 2009; Kay 2009; Lindsey and Grattan, in press), given the historical and political economy and the place of sport therein, critical scholars should resist the tendency to view the

meanings or structures of sport as politically transcendent or mobilized within benign social relations. While hegemony theory constitutes the primary focus of this text, sport also becomes ‘bio-political’ when produced and constrained within a mandate of empowerment, progress and social change, an insight derived from the Foucauldian tradition of sport studies.

Foucauldian understandings of power and/in sport

While hegemony theory in the Gramscian tradition remains an important framework for critical studies of sport and physical culture, the work of Michel Foucault has also featured prominently within the sociology of sport. In particular, Foucauldian theorizing has been employed by sports scholars to make sense of the intersections of power/knowledge that privilege and secure bodily practices and regimes of discipline (see Andrews 1993; Cole, Giardina and Andrews 2004; Markula and Pringle 2006; Rail and Harvey 1995, among others). Whereas Gramsci theorized the struggles and negotiations between social and political actors, Foucault’s project can be summarized as focused on the production of knowledge within fields of study and how such knowledge ‘acts to construct humans as particular objects ... and how humans subsequently become subject to those scientific truths’ (Markula and Pringle 2006: 9). Rather than providing a blueprint for political revolution, Foucault offered a methodology for social critique and ethical reflection (Tamboukou and Ball 2002), and an exploration of the tools for political action over prescriptions for change (Markula and Pringle 2006: 18). This makes concepts of bio-politics and governmentality, as well as discourse, important to the study of SDP, particularly given recent critical studies of international development (Asher 2009; Li 2007) that offer important blueprints for marrying Gramsci and Foucault in productive ways.

Bio-power is one of Foucault’s lasting contributions to the social sciences. Foucault (1978) illustrated how the emergence of discourses of sexuality in Europe in the nineteenth century constituted a project fundamental to the cultivation of the bourgeois subject. In this analysis, the production of subjectivity was intricately tied to the power to intervene in the knowledge of how one should live (cf. Stoler 1995: 83). Foucault focused on the manner in which power over life was deployed across two poles of society: the disciplining of bodies and the regulation of populations. It was within this framework that he made the historical/genealogical distinction between the sovereign right ‘to take life or let live’ and the bio-political power ‘to make live and let die’, establishing a difference between the traditional power that dominated populations or managed bodies through force and the power to confer bio-political change through self-affirmation (Foucault 1978: 241). Such a change

could only take place within a society permeated and structured by bio-power, a political technology that 'brought life and its mechanism into the realm of explicit calculations and made knowledge/power an agent of transformation of human life' (Foucault 1978: 143). The traditional, sovereign right to intervene into the management of the population through the threat or use of physical force was replaced by new forms of bio-power that linked knowledge and power to the 'making' of life and lives.

The power/knowledge of sport's utility for meeting goals of international development infuses sport with the bio-political power to change life. Sport becomes linked to biophysical benefits for bodies that participate in physical activity or exercise, social and personal rewards of esteem and teamwork, and even economic spin-offs for communities and populations at large. Sport and play as fundamental human rights within the SDP sector potentially constitute regimes of discipline and regularization that align with the bio-political power to make life and can be understood as a manifestation of sport's positivity or the ability to motivate rather than punish or repress (Cole, Giardina and Andrews 2004). Bio-power connects development to sport because both sport and development are understood to be sites at which life is made, where life is improved, and where the body and the population are made better. As a result of this mobilization, sport – discursively intelligible as socially beneficial and culturally normative – gains legitimacy through bio-power, imbued with the ability to motivate individuals to transform life through sport-based processes of body management.

Foucault's insights into regimes and logic of bio-politics are useful to the study of SDP in at least two ways. First, neoliberalism as a political philosophy and approach to international development remains central, if not hegemonic, in the twenty-first century and in turn is intimately connected to the SDP sector (also see Levermore 2009). The Foucauldian tradition is crucial for illustrating the logic of, and connections between, bio-politics and governmentality – meaning the 'conduct of conduct' – within the neoliberal milieu.³

Second, a recurring theme in SDP logic is that of power in its productive sense – often termed 'empowerment' – by which SDP stakeholders often refer to the use of sport to encourage and support positive change in others. Through a Foucauldian lens, such invocations are not inherently repressive, but neither are they merely the benign mobilization or transference of power from one group or person to another. Rather, empowerment is a relation of power/knowledge and intimately tied to the governmental organization of the individual and population via the conduct of conduct. As such, practices of 'empowerment' call for critical analysis of the political economy and social context in which they are championed or even normalized.

Within SDP, therefore, empowerment constitutes a 'discourse' or discursive formation. In the Foucauldian tradition, discourse analysis asks 'how is this possible' more than 'what is here' (Tamboukou and Ball 2002). Discourse is

not a translation between reality and language, but instead it speaks to the practices that shape perceptions of reality (Markula and Pringle 2006: 31). To employ discourse within a research project is not to eschew cultural politics but rather to argue for more complex analyses of power and politics as compared to Marxist ideology, which, for the most part, limited political scrutiny to class struggle (Mills 1997). Discourse encourages explication, and where appropriate deconstruction, of the intelligibility and logic of power/knowledge and social relations rather than attempts at ‘revealing’ ideological truths concealed by politics. In the case of SDP, sport is never simply a tool of benevolence or emancipation, nor is it always put into practice in the act of colonizing and dominating.

Gramsci and Foucault: Neo-Marxist discourse

In the previous two sections, I explored the usefulness of theory in the tradition of Gramsci and Foucault for understanding relations of power in sport and, in turn, for critical understandings of the mobilization of SFD within SDP. Such invocations beg for some measure of reconciliation, given the differences in understandings of power between the Gramscian and Foucauldian tradition in the sociology of sport (see Pringle 2005). Specifically, I argue that the two traditions are compatible, particularly in relation to what Torfing (1999: 36) has referred to as the ‘essentialist residue’ in Gramsci’s reworking of Marx and the legacy of hegemony theory in sociology.

According to Torfing (1999: 37), despite his attempts to re-dress Marxist determinism, Gramsci nonetheless understood the economy to be an ‘ontological anchorage point’ within the constitution of relations of domination and modes of resistance. While succeeding in overcoming class reductionism, Gramsci’s consideration of class unities (i.e. dominant vs subordinate) still required a homogenous concept of the economy as an entity governed by its own systems and logic. However, this reliance on an essentialist economy breaks down (particularly considering post-structuralism) if one considers the economy itself to be socially contestable and political. In Torfing’s (1999: 37) words ‘if the economy was itself political, it would fail to provide an objective grounding for the political’ as required by hegemony theory.

Given this limit in classic hegemony theory, Torfing (1999) builds on the contributions of Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe who theorized the economy *as a discursive formation* both constituted by the social and implicated in sociopolitical relations and claims to knowledge. In other words, economic relations constitute ‘a terrain for the articulation of discourses of authority and management, technical discourses, discourses of accountancy, discourses of information, etc.’ (Torfing 1999: 39).⁴ From this critique, the clear avenue

for critical inquiry is to discourse, where signification extends without end because of the absence of a universal signified of the economy (Torfing 1999: 40). Discourse, therefore, can be understood as a 'decentred structure' in which regimes of knowledge are constantly negotiated (Torfing 1999: 40).

This is by now a familiar refrain. Hardt and Negri (2000), for example, have theorized contemporary geopolitics in which a centre of power can no longer be clearly identified, let alone ascribed to the stability of the nation state (see Darnell 2010b). For Hardt and Negri (2000), there is no centre and there are no borders, only regimes of truth that are increasingly (bio-)political and implicated in the production of the material conditions of everyday life. Discourse analysis of such politics pushes one to consider how literally every element of the material, including the body itself, is intelligible in and through the decentred negotiation of meaning (see Rose 2007).

I argue that this theorizing works as an updating of Gramsci, rather than a disavowal. Instead of supporting essentialist notions of class character and social identity, hegemonic relations take on a constitutive role, intimately tied to all social identity, including class (Torfing 1999: 42). It also supports a compound standpoint theory in which three seemingly competing interpretations of oppression – cultural, material and discursive – are simultaneously useful yet incomplete, given their inability to account for multiple standpoints of social subjugation (De Lissoy 2008a). De Lissoy (2008a: 102) argues that it is not only possible but also optimal to 'combine them as complementary evidences of an overarching social violence' if one is to make connections between their intersections. In other words, hegemony and discourse are mutually conditioned (Torfing 1999: 43), and the meanings produced in and through discourse are social and political, not logical or natural, and constitute the simultaneous conditions of possibility and impossibility in society (Torfing 1999: 44).

Discourse analysis in this tradition is useful for making sense of international development and SDP initiatives, particularly through the logic of neoliberalism. Harvey (2007: 22) describes contemporary neoliberalism as a hegemonic discourse, divergent in its applications but dominant in linking discursive notions of freedom and democracy to the primacy of markets and limited state intervention.⁵ Ong (2006: 3) similarly suggests that neoliberalism rests on capitalist logic but increasingly reflects (Foucauldian) regimes of governmentality, based on notions of individual responsibility within the management of the population. That is, whereas neoliberal policies originally focused on the reorganization of the economy (i.e. structural adjustment programmes, discussed in Chapter 2), contemporary, or second-wave, neoliberalism extends to the production of subjects, through the privileging of the (economic) logic of efficiency and the (ethical) logic of self-responsibility (Ong 2006: 11). Neoliberalism also extends into international development given that the democratic limits of globalized capitalism, evidenced by the inability of the market to produce material benefits for all, are regularly reduced

to bio-political issues of ineffective conduct amongst marginalized groups (Li 2007: 273).

The discursive weight of neoliberalism is further evident to the extent that it solidifies the sanctity of 'economism' as the most efficient and cost-effective response to international development inequalities (Gasper 2004). For example, the conception, design and implementation of the United Nation's millennium development goals were accompanied by the United Nation's insistence upon institutional reform to promote trade deregulation and support the flow of global capital (Cammack 2006). According to Cammack (2006: 234), it 'is not just that this project is imperialist, but that it represents imperialism in the most advanced form currently conceivable'. I take this 'advanced form' to refer to the extent to which the logic of the boons of capitalism – central to the cultural and political organization of physical recreation and sporting practices historically (see Ingham and Hardy 1984) – is, in the contemporary moment, socially 'productive' in the ways it underpins a range of social and political institutions as commonsense and commonplace. This now includes, at least to an extent, international development and the utility of sport therein. In other words, neoliberalism, as a market-informed basis of social organization, underpins the bio-political organization of contemporary citizenship (Ong 2006: 13) and is discursive in its intelligibility *and* hegemonic in its political recurrence (Li 2007).

I do recognize the concerns raised by scholars like Pringle (2005) about the uncritical combination of Gramscian and Foucauldian, given that hegemony implies direction and purpose within relations between class-based ruling and subordinate groups, whereas a focus on discourse rejects any such duality. I contend, however, that my referencing of the Gramscian tradition, and insistence on questions of cultural materialism in understanding SDP, need not dismiss the utility of discourse analysis or Foucauldian theories of power/knowledge. Instead, I focus on the ways in and the extent to which hegemonic relations underpin the discursive construction of current understandings of the 'power of sport' within the momentum towards SDP. Such discourses can support relations of dominance (Grewal 2005). This follows other recent analyses (Jacobs 1996; Li 2007; N. Razack 2003) that have successfully employed Gramsci and Foucault in combination in order to produce intimate and nuanced accounts. As Jacobs (1996: 29) argues, 'it is not solely that discursively constituted notions of identity have material effects' but also that the stark material inequalities of the contemporary, and post-colonial, moment should inform critical analyses.

Indeed, international development activities, like those within SDP, are optimal cultural and political sites at which to combine the insights of Gramsci and Foucault (Li 2007: 25) because development is replete with relations of power that are coercive (in Gramscian terms) but also enabling (following Foucault). In her study of development politics in Colombia, Asher (2009)

argues that state formation was produced through a discourse of modernization and micro-practices of governmentality (rather than state rule) but that such processes were necessarily produced and constrained by coercive and formative state power. Such results suggest that both Foucault and Gramsci assist in the critical analysis of development to the extent that they both show ‘that people accept and spontaneously consent to the modes of domination prevalent in society’ (Asher 2009: 93). Or, as Li (2007: 25–6) argues, in the study of development, ‘[p]owers that are multiple cannot be totalizing and seamless ... exposing how power works, unsettling truths so that they could be scrutinized and contested, was as central to the political agenda of Foucault as it was for Gramsci’.

Therefore, despite calls for the abandonment of Gramsci, and the embracing of contemporary power relations as ‘post-hegemonic’, the Gramscian necessity of connecting theory to material history remains (Bairner 2009: 198).⁶ In response, I argue for a neo-Gramscian theory of discourse in which geopolitical relations of dominance (mediated through bio-politics and bio-based economics) produce globalized, institutional understandings of the need to integrate socially marginalized populations into the neoliberal system. Such understandings can be further informed by post-colonial theory.

Sport, race and the post-colonial

From a global perspective, sport ‘is an eminently postcolonial phenomenon’ (Bale and Cronin 2003: 4), given that its current forms and popularity are propagated by a historical colonial residue. A host of recent studies have drawn attention to the parallels between contemporary SDP and the historical mobilization of sport within the European colonial project as a means to support or foster social improvement or the education of Others (see Guest 2009; Saavedra 2009). At the least, then, the current mobilization of sport through SDP to meet development goals, or the functionalist notion of sport as a tool of development, is implicated in post-colonial history. This is particularly the case in moments when the universality of sport in SDP is referenced without attendant recognition of the role of colonialism in the construction of sports like football/soccer as globally popular (not to mention the maintenance of football’s global popularity through contemporary economic and cultural globalization in ways that might be thought of as neocolonial, see Maguire 2008). As a result, critical analyses of SDP are beholden to reconciling the post-coloniality of sport within the post-colonial politics and spaces of development (see McEwan 2009). At least three connections can be made.

First and foremost, understanding the global popularity of particular sporting forms (like football/soccer but also cricket, and even basketball) to be

a product, at least in part, of the history of colonialism leads to the necessity of critical analyses of the ways in which such post-colonial histories shape contemporary relations of power within sport and SDP. While sporting forms like football or cricket have undoubtedly been reclaimed or even reinvented culturally by people and nations within the post-colonial context, the idea that they are empty cultural forms with politically neutral histories (MacAloon 1996) is problematic for the ways in which it underplays the relations of power – the hegemonic formations – in which such reclamations of post-colonial sport take place. Furthermore, historical myopia of sport and colonialism, even in the well-intentioned support of cultural and political agency, depoliticizes the ways in which contemporary development initiatives potentially align with colonial logic or constitute a neocolonizing practice.

This kind of post-colonial theoretical scrutinizing of sport within SDP does not and should not require privileging relativist perspectives on development through ‘protecting’ cultural forms (like sport) from ‘invading’ development forces. Contemporary development politics and practices are inevitably more complicated than an invade/resist binary, particularly along post-colonial lines (Asher 2009). Relapsing into a universal/relativist debate is unnecessary in contemporary development studies, given the necessity of change and the globalization of development politics (Gasper 2004). What does remain important, though, is the understanding that sport itself is subject to post-colonial relations of power and that these relations are likely exacerbated, and therefore more important, amidst the transnational politics of SDP.

This leads to the second insight, namely that post-colonial theory is useful not only for understanding how a history of colonialism informs contemporary social and political life but also, following Stoler (2002), for recognizing that the colonies constituted a site at which knowledge of the metropole, and its attendant cultures and subjectivities, was constructed. In Stoler’s analysis, the discursive regularities of sexuality spelled out by Foucault (1978) were not produced in Europe alone but rather ‘through a more *circuitous* route’ (Stoler 2002: 144, emphasis in text) that included relations, particularly with race and racialized bodies, in the colonies. The colonies constituted a testing ground from which tightly bound discourses of sex in Europe *and* in the colonies built upon one another in the production and affirmation of bourgeois subjectivity. Key tenets of contemporary northern culture (i.e. liberalism, nationalism and citizenship) are thus a result, at least in part, of successful social experiments played out in the colonies (Stoler 2002: 147). Such insights encourage us to think of SDP not only as a potential (though never inherent) site of neocolonialism but also, more intimately, as a sector in which sport and its attendant subjectivities are now being (re)created and conceptualized in response to development challenges. In my interviews with interns who served within the SDP sector, their knowledge of sport and its organization and social

utility were often challenged within the field of SDP, an experience that aligns with Stoler's post-colonial history.

Finally, then, the post-colonial perspective, particularly as supported by the insights of transnational feminism, draws attention to the connection between sport, race and racism. As Stoler (1995) showed through her reformulation of Foucault, race did not simply result from the colonial context as a means of accounting for and dealing with racial Others; rather, racism was *fundamental* to the affirmation of European, bourgeois subjects, particularly through its interlocking with other markers of difference such as sexuality, gender and class. In turn, sport can be understood as a site at which racialized differences are recognized and marked, and where cultural cues or attributes of sporting competency such as athleticism, character or discipline are reified in racialized terms (see Hylton 2009). As I have argued previously (Darnell, 2010b) social encounters within SDP are complicated by race and the 'colonial continuities' (see Heron 2007) that SDP affords. A post-colonial perspective keeps such critical questions at the fore.

I revisit post-colonial theories of international development in Chapter 2. Here, it is reasonable to summarize that a post-colonial perspective on sport is called for within critical studies of SDP, not only in recognition of the colonial history of global sport itself but also, and perhaps more importantly, as a means of analysing how notions of 'the power of sport' in support of development may serve to depoliticize the relationships between sport and post-colonialism. Such theoretical and practical manoeuvres likely serve to sustain contemporary global hierarchies rather than challenge them in moving towards prosperity and equality for the world's marginalized people.

Sport and/as human rights

Finally, a theoretical understanding of the connections between sport and human rights is called for. Above, I argued that the political construction and legitimacy of the contemporary SDP sector rests, at least in part, on the notion of sport, and particularly sport participation, as a universal human right. In recent years, a host of researchers have explored the connections between sport and human rights (see Donnelly 2008; Giulianotti 1999b, 2004; Jarvie 2006; Kidd and Donnelly 2000; Kidd and Eberts 1982) and effectively made the case that sport and human rights are not mutually exclusive, in theory or in practice. As Jarvie (2006: 365) argues, '[i]t is not necessary to view the issue of human rights as divorced or separate from the world of sport'. Giulianotti (1999b) put forth a three-point framework for conceptualizing this relationship: (1) Access to sport constitutes a human right in itself, evidenced, at least in part, by Article 1 of the UNESCO international charter proclaiming physical

education and sport as fundamental to each person; (2) sport organizations proclaim and promote human rights through fair and respectful competition, seen most notably within the ideals of the Olympic movement; and (3) sport, development and human rights share a historical-political association, both within the context of imperialism where sport served as a vehicle of colonial interests (cf. Baker and Mangan 1987) and as a possible means of emancipation and liberation where such freedoms have been politically and/or socially denied.

It is the latter point that has piqued the interest of SFD activists and scholars. From this perspective, sport and human rights are connected principally because the notions of democracy and liberation central to a human rights framework cannot be achieved without the realization of human rights in sport and physical education (Kidd and Donnelly 2000). Achieving human rights in sport would include both social democracy of sports participation, characterized by access and opportunities for all persons, as well as the freedom *within* sport cultures for persons to participate in diverse ways (Kidd and Donnelly 2000). In this way, advocating for human rights in sports combines a focus on the right to participate with the recognition of the diversity of movement and body cultures around the world (Maguire 2006). In fact, despite evidence that sport has been complicit in the denial of human rights,⁷ its potential as a tool to promote and solidify the rights of citizens is often considered too great to dismiss (see Sidoti 1999).

At the same time, human rights and sport are linked because of the opportunity that sport affords to advocate for the realization of universal rights (Kidd and Donnelly 2000), a political logic clearly evident in SDP. Prior to the recent increase in the institutionalization or solidification of the SDP sector, the best-known example of rights advocacy through sport was the boycott of South African sports federations and national teams as a protest against the racist practices and policies that restricted sports participation for the non-White majority under the apartheid regime. Kidd and Donnelly (2000: 138) argue that the ensuing isolation of pro-apartheid sports federations constituted 'powerful symbolic condemnation' that contributed to the fall of the regime. In turn, the end of apartheid offered an opportunity to mobilize sport as a tool for development and therefore was a significant precursor to the emergence of the SDP sector, insofar as it became reasonable and intelligible to argue that marginalized people (such as Black South Africans) possessed an inalienable right to participate in sport and physical activity (Kidd 2008: 374).

With this in mind, one can argue that the notion of human rights underpins the current SDP sector in at least two ways: First, opportunities to be physically active and to participate in sport are considered rights owed to all, and programmes, interventions and activism under the banner of SDP strive to support marginalized persons and communities in the realization of these rights. Second, sport is understood and recognized as a tool for the realization of human rights, primarily through the mobilization of funds, the development

of infrastructure and as an entry point and catalyst for education, health promotion and youth development. Qualter Berna (2006: 37) summarizes this dual connection between sport and human rights in SDP in her analysis of sport as a right and a development tool:

We know sport works. We know its inherent value in addressing the well-being of children and ensuring their happiness. Sport is every child's right to play ... But sport is also a means to an end.

While Qualter Berna's positioning of sport as both a right and a tool towards social democracy and youth development is laudable, it is, at the same time, important to recognize that there are limits to human rights as a politically progressive framework and therefore as the fundamental basis and justification for social change within the organization of sport and the SDP sector. Here, I draw on Teeple's (2005) use of social and political theory to problematize the 'universality' of human rights. While often proclaimed as politically and/or culturally transcendent, human rights are, more accurately, the basis of a civil contract that individualizes citizens, connects personal freedom to ownership and reflects the historical dominance of a capitalist system (Teeple 2005). From this perspective, human rights serve to bestow citizens with rights as possessions but do little to enable or empower citizens to realize or enact these rights. For example, the right to peaceful assembly means little as a right without a concomitant infrastructure to facilitate political congress. Rights cannot be separated from the social relations of dominance that undermine equality and self-determination. However, given the general acceptance of universal human rights within a progressive social framework, rights can, in some cases, be used to obscure power relations that lead to the exploitation of workers, the poor, persons of colour who may be over-determined by their race and other marginalized groups. In the case of the SDP sector, simply recognizing or bestowing rights to sport participation may do little to support persons and communities in the struggle against the broader social and political inequality that prevented their participation in sport in the first place (also see Gruneau, *in press*).

In addition, the individual 'freedoms' that human rights protect often support the corporate autonomy necessary for international exploitation of marginalized groups within capitalist relations. This suggests that the system of universal human rights serves as part of a 'global enabling framework' of mobile transnational capitalism (Teeple 2005: 19). Sport is far from exempt from such relations. While sport participation is justifiably considered a right owed to all, global sporting forms are also closely 'tied to the opening of new markets and the commodification of cultures' (Maguire 2006: 111). In this sense, enabling mass participation in globally popular sports such as soccer/football through SDP programmes fails to challenge, and in fact may further facilitate, the continuously unequal flows of global capital that contribute to

the ‘underdevelopment’ of LMICs. In fact, as Kidd (2008: 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 neoliberal/neoconservative political regimes. Yet, because of its reliance on universal human rights, the SDP sector rarely addresses these underlying political issues. Similarly, Gruneau (in press) contends that SDP aligns with the expansion of a rights-based culture, more so than with political struggles or resistance against the politics of unequal development.

Democratizing sport or using sport to further a human rights agenda is not easily done. Attempts to address issues of human rights in/through sport have often tended towards neocolonialism through, for example, the continual dismissal of aboriginal sporting cultures and/or the privileging of high-performance sporting systems that exclude mass participation to the benefits of elite athletes and performance maximization (see Donnelly 2008).⁸ In sum, positioning sport as a human right does not necessarily offer a stable or progressive political basis for the SDP sector or usurp the power relations that sustain inequality and potentially threaten cultural autonomy. In fact, leaning on sport as a human right, and using sport to advocate for human rights, as the conceptual and practical bases of SDP initiatives potentially can overlook the sociopolitical and ethical complications of ‘doing’ development, or of SDP practice. Such tensions are worth exploring within the ongoing critical analysis of SFD and SDP.

Conclusions: Implications for studying SDP

In this chapter, I have explored social theory – particularly in the tradition of the sociology of sport – that has implications for an ongoing, critically informed analysis of SDP. Three points, in particular, can be gleaned from this chapter. First and foremost, the discipline of sport sociology illustrates that the analysis of sport, including its practice and its organization (and also now including SDP), is in substantive ways the study of power. That is, even when sport is understood to foster a productive and positive social experience, such results still beg for analysis and understanding of how they are negotiated, produced and constrained within hierarchical relations.

In turn, and second, the study of sport through the social theories I have advocated here reminds of the limitations – theoretical, representational and empirical – of ‘essentialized’ sporting forms or experiences. Despite claims of the universality of sport as a basis for SDP, sport is always interpreted and reconciled at both macro- and micro-levels, and therefore holds different meanings in different contexts. Finally, then, for the study of SDP, such

theoretically informed perspectives on sport point away from a focus on the application of sport to meeting development goals and towards questions of the politics of development as they are negotiated within SDP. Performing such analyses, I suggest, calls for understandings of the various history and politics of international development in which sport is now implicated through the SDP sector. This history and politics constitute the focus of Chapter 2.