

Sport, Public Broadcasting, and Cultural Citizenship

This book examines the social, political and cultural dimensions of access to live telecasts of sport in the digital broadcasting era. It analyzes the wide-ranging theoretical debates, ideological positions and policy calculations concerning the provision of live, free-to-air telecasts of sport as a right of cultural citizenship. In addressing the dynamic relationships between the sport, media, capital and the state, the book provides a range of international comparative case studies that engage with these key debates and issues across several contrasting global spaces.

Jay Scherer is an Associate Professor in the Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation at the University of Alberta.

David Rowe is Professor of Cultural Research in the Institute for Culture and Society at [University of Western Sydney, Australia](#).

Routledge Research in Sport, Culture and Society

- 1 Sport, Masculinities and the Body**
Ian Wellard
- 2 India and the Olympics**
Boria Majumdar and Nalin Mehta
- 3 Social Capital and Sport Governance in Europe**
Edited by Margaret Groeneveld, Barrie Houlihan and Fabien Ohl
- 4 Theology, Ethics and Transcendence in Sports**
Edited by Jim Parry, Mark Nesti and Nick Watson
- 5 Women and Exercise**
The Body, Health and Consumerism
Edited by Eileen Kennedy and Pirkko Markula
- 6 Race, Ethnicity and Football**
Persisting Debates and Emergent Issues
Edited by Daniel Burdsey
- 7 The Organisation and Governance of Top Football Across Europe**
An Institutional Perspective
Edited by Hallgeir Gammelsæter and Benoît Senaux
- 8 Sport and Social Mobility**
Crossing Boundaries
Ramón Spaaij
- 9 Critical Readings in Bodybuilding**
Edited by Adam Locks and Niall Richardson
- 10 The Cultural Politics of Post-9/11 American Sport**
Power, Pedagogy and the Popular
Michael Silk
- 11 Ultimate Fighting and Embodiment**
Violence, Gender and Mixed Martial Arts
Dale C. Spencer
- 12 The Olympic Games and Cultural Policy**
Beatriz Garcia
- 13 The Urban Geography of Boxing**
Race, Class, and Gender in the Ring
Benita Heiskanen
- 14 The Social Organization of Sports Medicine**
Critical Socio-Cultural Perspectives
Edited by Dominic Malcolm and Parissa Safai
- 15. Host Cities and the Olympics**
An Interactionist Approach
Harry Hiller

- 16 Sports Governance, Development and Corporate Responsibility**
Edited by Barbara Segaert, Marc Theeboom, Christiane Timmerman and Bart Vanreusel
- 17 Sport and Its Female Fans**
Edited by Kim Toffoletti and Peter Mewett
- 18 Sport Policy in Britain**
Barrie Houlihan and Iain Lindsey
- 19 Sports and Christianity**
Historical and Contemporary Perspectives
Edited by Nick J. Watson and Andrew Parker
- 20 Sports Coaching Research**
Context, Consequences, and Consciousness
Anthony Bush, Michael Silk, David Andrews and Hugh Lauder
- 21 Sport Across Asia**
Politics, Cultures, and Identities
Edited by Katrin Bromber, Birgit Krawietz, and Joseph Maguire
- 22 Athletes, Sexual Assault, and “Trials by Media”**
Narrative Immunity
Deb Waterhouse-Watson
- 23 Youth Sport, Physical Activity and Play**
Policy, Interventions and Participation
Andrew Parker and Don Vinson
- 24 The Global Horseracing Industry**
Social, Economic, Environmental and Ethical Perspectives
Phil McManus, Glenn Albrecht, and Raewyn Graham
- 25 Sport, Public Broadcasting, and Cultural Citizenship**
Signal Lost?
Edited by Jay Scherer and David Rowe

Sport, Public Broadcasting, and Cultural Citizenship

Signal Lost?

Edited by Jay Scherer and David Rowe



First published 2013
by Routledge
711 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017

Simultaneously published in the UK
by Routledge
2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN

*Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group,
an informa business*

© 2013 Taylor & Francis

The right of Jay Scherer and David Rowe to be identified as the authors
of the editorial material, and of the authors for their individual chapters,
has been asserted in accordance with sections 77 and 78 of the Copyright,
Designs and Patents Act 1988.

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reprinted or reproduced or
utilised in any form or by any electronic, mechanical, or other means, now
known or hereafter invented, including photocopying and recording, or in
any information storage or retrieval system, without permission in writing
from the publishers.

Trademark Notice: Product or corporate names may be trademarks or
registered trademarks, and are used only for identification and explanation
without intent to infringe.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Sport, public broadcasting, and cultural citizenship : signal lost? / edited
by Jay Scherer and David Rowe.

pages cm.—(Routledge research in sport, culture and society ; v. 25)

Includes bibliographical references and index.

1. Television and sports. 2. Television broadcasting of
sports. 3. Public broadcasting—Political aspects. 4. Sports and
society. I. Scherer, Jay, 1975—

GV742.3.S65 2013

791.45'6579—dc23

2012051247

ISBN13: 978-0-415-88603-1 (hbk)

ISBN13: 978-0-203-75839-7 (ebk)

Typeset in Sabon
by IBT Global.



SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY INITIATIVE
www.sfibprogram.org
SFI-01234
SFI label applies to the text stock

Certified Sourcing
Printed and bound in the United States of America
by IBT Global.

For Kathleen Hartford (Jay)

**For Susan Rowe and Mary Hender,
the Consummate Sister Act (David)**

Contents

| | |
|--|------|
| <i>List of Figures</i> | xii |
| <i>List of Tables</i> | xiii |
| <i>Acknowledgments</i> | xv |
| 1 Sport, Public Service Media, and Cultural Citizenship | 1 |
| JAY SCHERER AND DAVID ROWE | |
| 2 Before, During, and After the Neoliberal Moment: Media, Sports, Policy, Citizenship | 30 |
| TOBY MILLER | |
| 3 Televised Sport and Cultural Citizenship in Canada: The “Two Solitudes” of Canadian Public Broadcasting? | 48 |
| JAY SCHERER AND JEAN HARVEY | |
| 4 Selling Out: The Gaming of the Living Room Seat for the US Sports Fan | 74 |
| LAWRENCE A. WENNER, ROBERT V. BELLAMY, AND JAMES R. WALKER | |
| 5 Football for Everyone? Soccer, Television, and Politics in Argentina | 96 |
| PABLO ALABARCES AND CAROLINA DUEK | |
| 6 No Longer the Crown Jewels of Sport? Television, Sport, and National Events in the UK | 110 |
| RAYMOND BOYLE | |
| 7 The Law Not Applied: French Controversies about Television Viewer Access to the 2006 European Handball Championship | 128 |
| FABIEN OHL AND LUCIE SCHOCH | |

x *Contents*

| | | | |
|----|----|---|-----|
| 1 | 8 | Belgium's "List of Major Events" Mechanism in the Digital 2 Broadcasting Era | 145 |
| 3 | | KATRIEN LEFEVER | |
| 4 | 9 | "Events of National Importance and Cultural Significance": 5 Sport, Television, and the Anti-Siphoning Regime in Australia | 166 |
| 6 | | DAVID ROWE | |
| 7 | 10 | Millennium Blues: The Politics of Media Policy, Televised Sport, 8 and Cultural Citizenship in New Zealand | 188 |
| 9 | | JAY SCHERER, MICHAEL SAM, AND STEVEN J. JACKSON | |
| 10 | 11 | The Political Economy of Sport Broadcasting in the Arab World | 209 |
| 11 | | MAHFOUD AMARA | |
| 12 | 13 | The Global Popular and the Local Obscure: Televised Sport in 13 Contemporary Singapore | 221 |
| 14 | | CALLUM GILMOUR | |
| 15 | 16 | Sport, Broadcasting, and Cultural Citizenship in Japan | 243 |
| 16 | | DONNA WONG, ISAMU KURODA AND JOHN HORNE | |
| 17 | 18 | The Political Economy of Football Viewership in Africa | 263 |
| 18 | | MUHAMMED MUSA | |
| 19 | 20 | Watching the Football with Raymond Williams: 21 A Reconsideration of the Global Game as a "Wonderful Game" | 283 |
| 20 | | JOHN HUGHSON | |
| 21 | 22 | Afterword: Sport, Public Service Media and a "Red Button" 23 Future | 300 |
| 22 | | DAVID ROWE AND JAY SCHERER | |
| 23 | 24 | <i>Contributors</i> | 307 |
| 24 | | <i>Index</i> | 313 |
| 25 | | | |
| 26 | | | |
| 27 | | | |
| 28 | | | |
| 29 | | | |
| 30 | | | |
| 31 | | | |
| 32 | | | |
| 33 | | | |
| 34 | | | |
| 35 | | | |
| 36 | | | |
| 37 | | | |
| 38 | | | |
| 39 | | | |
| 40 | | | |
| 41 | | | |
| 42 | | | |
| 43 | | | |
| 44 | | | |
| 45 | | | |
| 46 | | | |

Figures

| | | |
|------|--|-----|
| 9.1 | Organizational submissions' recommendations concerning the anti-siphoning list. | 174 |
| 9.2 | All submissions' recommendations concerning the anti-siphoning list. | 175 |
| 13.1 | Aggregate attendances at J. League official matches. | 246 |

Tables

| | |
|---|-----|
| 4.1 Reception and Policy Matrix for Televised Sport and Consumer Citizenship | 79 |
| 7.1 The Twenty-One Sporting “Events of Major Importance” for French Society (from the Decree 2004–1392 of 22 December 2004) | 132 |
| 9.1 Types of Organizations Providing Submissions to the Sport on Television Inquiry | 173 |
| 12.1 English Premier League Television Rights Deals 2007–2013: Domestic and International Contributions | 226 |
| 13.1 Popular Professional Sports in Japan | 247 |
| 13.2 Top Fifteen Television Sports Ratings 1962–2010 (Tokyo Area) | 248 |

Acknowledgments

We would like to thank the editorial team at Routledge, especially Max Novick and Jennifer Morrow, as well as Marcela Mourao for her substantial editorial assistance. We acknowledge and appreciate the support provided by our home universities (the University of Alberta and University of Western Sydney), and especially by our immediate colleagues in our respective Faculty and Institute. Finally, Jay's research was funded by a grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada.

The idea for this book emerged over the course of many years and we have benefited from innumerable discussions with scholars and friends from around the world. We would like to thank, in particular, Steve Jackson, Mike Sam, Brett Hutchins and Larry Wenner. A special debt of gratitude is owed to Dave Whitson, who has generously shared ideas with both of us for many years, and whose work remains a source of inspiration. Finally, we sincerely thank the authors who contributed to this collection, all of whom met our various demands with forbearance and good grace.

Our most important acknowledgements, though, are reserved for members of our families: to Heather Scherer and sundry Rowes. We thank them for their support and encouragement, without which this book would simply not have been possible.

1 Sport, Public Service Media, and Cultural Citizenship

Jay Scherer and David Rowe

| | |
|--|---|
| INTRODUCTION: SPORT AND PUBLIC SERVICE BROADCASTING | 1 |
| | 2 |
| | 3 |

| | |
|---|----|
| For many of us born in the second half of the 20 th century in countries where television became an ordinary feature of domestic life, watching live telecasts of sport on public and commercial terrestrial (free-to-air) broadcasters was, until very recently, a habitual leisure activity, part of the rhythm of our lives and a key source of fun, pleasure, community and, at times, common culture. In the new millennium, television continues to carry the most popular global sporting events, including the Olympic Games and the FIFA (International Federation of Football Associations) World Cup, as well as other key elements of national popular culture, into an unprecedented number of homes thanks to the emergence of new cable and satellite systems, and a host of other pay-TV services. Yet, just as these developments have radically expanded the viewing opportunities for sub- scribers (and filled the coffers of various sports leagues, organizations, teams, and professional athletes) so, too, have they worked to undermine the longstanding ‘viewing rights’ (Rowe 2004a) of citizens irrespective of their class position or personal financial circumstances. Live access to tele- casts of sporting events of national cultural significance in locales around the world is increasingly a matter of capacity to pay. At the same time, an array of integrated mobile technologies controlled by powerful commercial telecommunication empires can now deliver a seemingly unlimited amount of sports content for paying audiences as part of ‘integrated entertainment arenas’ that have challenged the dominance of free-to-air broadcast televi- sion as the medium of choice for the distribution and consumption of sport. In many countries, therefore, and especially those with a strong history of public service broadcasting mixed with commercial free-to-air television, there have recently been extensive policy reviews and public debates about protecting sports events of national importance and cultural significance from exclusive capture by dominant, commercial pay-TV networks. That these debates have been occurring against the backdrop of the introduction of full digital services—services that are increasingly integrated into global | 4 |
| | 5 |
| | 6 |
| | 7 |
| | 8 |
| | 9 |
| | 10 |
| | 11 |
| | 12 |
| | 13 |
| | 14 |
| | 15 |
| | 16 |
| | 17 |
| | 18 |
| | 19 |
| | 20 |
| | 21 |
| | 22 |
| | 23 |
| | 24 |
| | 25 |
| | 26 |
| | 27 |
| | 28 |
| | 29 |
| | 30 |
| | 31 |
| | 32 |
| | 33 |
| | 34 |

2 Jay Scherer and David Rowe

1 commercial networks—has, as many contributors to this book note, only
2 amplified their political significance.

3 There was, though, a period when television *itself* was an emergent technology
4 and, of course, an even earlier era where ‘live’ sport spectatorship
5 was limited to in-stadium attendance and the listening opportunities provided
6 by another (once innovative) form of broadcasting: radio. For the
7 renowned social theorist and cultural critic, Raymond Williams (1974),
8 television developed as a response to new and, at times, competing, political,
9 social, and economic needs that had grown out of a much longer history
10 of capital accumulation and a host of working technical improvements by
11 public science organizations and commercial-capitalist technological innovators
12 and manufacturers of what would eventually become the standard
13 television set. For Williams, it was not solely the specific uses of television
14 or the existence of television itself that, even by the 1970s, were already
15 taken-for-granted, but entire ways of life and associated structure(s) of feeling
16 that were always better understood as long-term historical processes
17 and cultural struggles.

18 According to Williams, the development of broadcasting as an institution
19 was the outcome of “two apparently paradoxical yet deeply connected
20 tendencies of modern urban industrial living: on the one hand mobility, on
21 the other hand the more apparently self-efficient family home” (1974, p. 19).
22 The new pressures and limits of industrial capitalist social organization generated
23 greater levels of internal mobility and increased distances between living areas and places of work and government to unprecedented levels. At
24 the same time, longstanding struggles over wages, working conditions and the length of the working day resulted in significant gains in ‘free time’ and
25 substantial changes to “the distribution of the day, the week and the year between work and off-work periods” (p. 18). Together, these developments
26 spurred the need for new contacts and relationships that would be provided by emergent institutions of communication that carried information
27 into more private, familiar settings, as opposed to other public domains.
28 As a result of a host of technical advancements by various manufacturers,
29 television, following the path of radio, began to reconcile these contradictory
30 pressures. Beginning in the 1930s (only to be temporarily disrupted by
31 World War II), television took flight in the late 1940s and early 1950s, and
32 provided audiences in many countries with an entirely new social repertoire
33 of audio-visual experiences. The embryonic broadcasting model in capitalist
34 societies, therefore, contained a powerful contradiction and tension from
35 its earliest stage: centralized transmission and production of content that
36 was to be received and consumed privately in the family home via domestic
37 television sets sold by various manufacturing companies. In the UK,
38 continental Europe, as well as in Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, it
39 was only the state that could incur this substantial preliminary investment,
40 especially that related to the costly development of an expansive means of
41 distribution and the creation of expensive new content. Having already
42
43
44
45
46

Sport, Public Service Media, and Cultural Citizenship 3

| | |
|---|----|
| established public broadcasting corporations in a number of (mainly social democratic) countries, the public sector was always anxious to preserve its role as the regulator of broadcasting and the custodian of public airwaves in the name of the national interest in the post-World War II era. | 1 |
| | 2 |
| | 3 |
| | 4 |
| As the public broadcasting sector expanded, moreover, it was subject to intensive bureaucratization and administered by trained, increasingly specialized staff and ‘experts’ who managed the new public communication landscape according to two key ideas. The first of the founding principles of public service broadcasting was <i>universal accessibility</i> —the ability to make radio and television programming, to the extent that was technically possible, available to anyone with a receiving apparatus, including households in rural and remote areas (Scannell 1989). This principle was clearly aligned with a broader political agenda of distributive justice, especially under post-war reconstruction, as various governments around the world pursued policies that sought to provide for all citizens, especially those classes of people whose life choices had been historically highly circumscribed. | 5 |
| | 6 |
| | 7 |
| | 8 |
| | 9 |
| | 10 |
| | 11 |
| | 12 |
| | 13 |
| | 14 |
| | 15 |
| | 16 |
| | 17 |
| Importantly, such ‘citizen rights’ were not limited to the basic necessities of life through an economic welfare safety net, but were extended to libraries, recreation facilities, and other leisure and cultural opportunities, including access to popular radio and television content via the nation’s public broadcaster. The license fees that initially supported public broadcasting in many countries were, in this spirit, premised on the belief that every citizen ought to have “access to the television, as every citizen had access to education, health care and welfare support, in return for a universal flat-rate charge whether that individual actually used that public service or not” (King 2002, pp. 113–114). This was also an era, it should be noted, in which various nation states played crucial roles in regulating their economies and restricting foreign investment in key sectors (including the heavily regulated media sector) through taxes, tariffs and other incentives, as well as penalties and restrictions that were designed to encourage the growth of local industries, including emergent cultural ones, that sought to foster and promote elements of national identity. Of course, this process of national identity building was subject to contestation. Nevertheless, public service television became increasingly ‘naturalized’ and, through all of these developments, public broadcasts quickly became important components of ways of life in various nations as ‘public goods’ that enhanced the lives of many citizens. | 18 |
| | 19 |
| | 20 |
| | 21 |
| | 22 |
| | 23 |
| | 24 |
| | 25 |
| | 26 |
| | 27 |
| | 28 |
| | 29 |
| | 30 |
| | 31 |
| | 32 |
| | 33 |
| | 34 |
| | 35 |
| | 36 |
| | 37 |
| The second key ‘promise’ of public service television, though, was universal access to a breadth of programs that was representative of a common culture: news, current affairs, documentaries, game and quiz shows, children’s programs, dramatic content and, of course, sport. Public broadcasters in a diverse range of nations (including those mentioned above, but also in a host of Latin American and Asian nations), therefore, played pioneering roles in providing ‘emblematic’ telecasts of sporting events of national significance for all citizens in real time. They also, it can be suggested, helped | 38 |
| | 39 |
| | 40 |
| | 41 |
| | 42 |
| | 43 |
| | 44 |
| | 45 |
| | 46 |

4 Jay Scherer and David Rowe

to establish and promote various teams, leagues, and sports as national rituals and institutions, in addition to ‘personalizing’ athletes as celebrities in the eyes of national publics, thereby, incidentally, further adding to their economic image value (such as through product endorsement). Still, as sports and athletes profited from the new revenue streams offered by television, so, too, did public broadcasters benefit (financially and promotionally) from their association with the most popular sports and sporting events. It was in this very tangible sense that, in the early days of television, both public broadcasters and various sports became increasingly intertwined as pivotal symbols of nation, while access to live televised sport for all citizens was widely regarded as simply part of the ‘national estate.’

Of course, popular understandings of access to live telecasts of sport on public broadcasters as a right of cultural citizenship can be complicated and, as we shall see below, even some of the most vociferous proponents of public service television contested the presence of ‘mass’ sport on public networks that were often regarded as the preserve of intellectual, ‘high’ dramatic, and other forms of elite minority programming. Furthermore, the sport-television relationship was, from its earliest days, a predominantly masculine experience, and public broadcasters supplied an overwhelming amount of male sport that was consumed by a mostly male audience with greater levels of disposable income and influence in family households. In Canada, for example, former Olympian Bruce Kidd (1996) has rightly argued that the partnership between the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) and the National Hockey League (NHL) distorted the development of Canadian sport and culture along two key lines. First, the sheer quantity of airtime dedicated to NHL hockey on the public broadcaster reinforced the “symbolic annihilation” of women’s sport with regard to mainstream media with “public authority” (Kidd 1996, p. 259), a trend that continues to this day as the public broadcaster strives to capture a primarily male, national audience for advertisers. For Kidd, once advertisers discovered the “remarkable ability of sports broadcasts to assemble affluent male consumers for their sponsors’ appeals” (1996, p. 260), the new broadcasting terrain was quickly structured to ensure that women’s sport was heavily underrepresented. Second, telecasts of the most popular men’s sports on public networks habitually celebrated “hegemonic masculinity” (Connell 2005) and, in the early days of professional sport, encouraged the repressive labor conditions faced by many athletes. Clearly, then, any argument that supports access to live telecasts of sport as a right of cultural citizenship needs to be held up to critical scrutiny.

Nevertheless, public service television did much more than just satisfy and extend the already well-established, mutually dependent relationship between sport and the media—what we call the media sports cultural complex (Rowe 2004b)—whether involving the penny presses of an earlier era, as well as newspapers and, as noted above, radio broadcasts. Rather, as a cultural technology, television produced a host of new effects, and sport was

quickly restructured according to the codes of the entertainment industry to provide a radically different way of watching physical action. It offered new kinds of interests and new audiences; immediate commentaries and pre-and-post-match analysis by ‘experts’ who, themselves, quickly became household names; slow motion replays, multi-camera angles and color images; and, finally, it provided the platform for the further colonization of sport by the language and imagery of consumerism. While radio broadcasts certainly extended the core audiences of various sports into new geographic regions and allowed viewers to feel part of an event, “television’s pictures were often worth a thousand words” (Whitson 1998, p. 63). Moreover, unlike the daunting cost of producing new dramatic and other entertainment programming, coverage of sport was, in comparison, relatively economical precisely because it was an event “that was in any case happening or had happened” (Williams 1974, p. 24). The production of inexpensive sports content was of crucial importance for public broadcasters simply because, in its infancy, television was an extraordinarily expensive proposition that required significant initial investment in transmission services, production facilities and the cost of developing original content. These were expenses that were recouped through regimes of licensing, taxation and, eventually, a greater emphasis on commercial advertising and sponsorship revenue that, as we shall see below, was often principally acquired by popular sports programming. While the production cost of sport television, even with multiple cameras and large outside broadcast teams, remained inexpensive when compared with, for example, quality drama, the rising cost of acquiring broadcast rights began to reduce the potential pool of broadcasters, especially those that were publicly funded (Rowe 2004b).

Nevertheless, the popularity of live telecasts of sport initially worked to entrench the position of public broadcasters—and the public sector in general—as a key source of fun, pleasure, and community in the lives of ordinary citizens. The obvious exception to this pattern was, of course, the US, where more powerful private manufacturers of equipment sought to capitalize on a rapidly expanding market that lacked any significant public broadcasting presence. As Williams noted:

The early broadcasting networks were federations of prime manufacturers, who then acquired production facilities as an essentially secondary operation: secondary, that is, to the production and selling of sets. The finance for production, in this highly competitive situation, was drawn from advertising, in its two forms of insertion and sponsorship. (1974, p. 29)

From its earliest stages in the US, then, “the broadcasting public was effectively . . . the competitive broadcasting market” (p. 29), while public service “in any other than a market sense developed within a structure already dominated by these institutions” (p. 29). As Wenner, Bellamy and Walker

6 *Jay Scherer and David Rowe*

note in Chapter 4 of this collection, the early provision of free-to-air telecasts of major league sport in the US was the exclusive domain of the highly capitalized major private national networks, NBC, CBS, ABC, and later Fox (Bellamy 1998, Chandler 1988). While live access to the most popular sports remains part of the way of life for many families and households, it is important to note that regulation—primarily by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC)—has played a key role in ensuring the dominance of the national free-to-air broadcasters in the US sport broadcasting market. For example, the growth of the cable industry was actively restricted until the late 1970s to preserve free-to-air systems, while the US has been slower than its European counterparts to “allow significant competitive entry from pay-TV providers especially for premium programming” (Szymanski 2006, p. 158). Nevertheless, from its inception, US television was always predominantly a commercial proposition, and live telecasts of sport were of tremendous importance to the profit margins of the free-to-air national networks (McChesney 2008). Competition for the television rights to the most popular major league sports has always been fierce and, aided by the Sports Broadcasting Act of 1961 that exempted the collective sale of sports broadcasting rights from antitrust legislation, television contracts rapidly increased in value. Still, the sheer scope of the US market continues to allow the major networks to benefit from economies of scale, and a significant amount of live sport, with the exception of local blackout rules, remains available on the major commercial free-to-air networks, even after the full entrance of cable and satellite television. Outside the US, however, it was initially the nation’s public broadcasters that carried the new sports images and sounds into homes around the world.

29
30 **SPORT AND COMPETING BROADCAST SYSTEMS**

31 Given the tremendous popularity of live sporting events in many countries, a burgeoning private sector was predictably anxious to de-stabilize
32 the monopoly of public broadcasters and ‘get in the game’ of televising
33 key sporting events. Beginning in the 1950s, the licensing of various pri-
34 vate free-to-air networks and the inception of competition with the public
35 sector marked the “basic early development of television institutions as a
36 contrast or competition between ‘public service’ and ‘commercial’ institu-
37 tions” (Williams 1974, pp. 30–31). Even in tightly regulated broadcasting
38 markets (such as Canada and the UK), this was a contrast that would
39 become sharper and be of tremendous institutional and programming
40 significance for national television systems, not least regarding popular
41 sports content. The commercial offensive against public broadcasters was,
42 as Williams (1974) noted, grounded in promotional rhetoric and descrip-
43 tive terms like ‘free’ and ‘independent’ versus ‘monopoly’ and ‘state con-
44 trol’—the ideological precursors of ‘neoliberal newspeak’ (Bourdieu and
45 46

| | |
|--|----|
| Wacquant 2001). Of course, the primary aims and objectives of the private broadcasters (themselves conglomerates of established capital interests) | 1 |
| were always the realization “and distribution of private profit on investment capital” (p. 32), and the centralization of their monopoly power. | 2 |
| State control and public broadcaster monopoly were, therefore, actively | 3 |
| targeted to be replaced by the discipline of the ‘free’ market and the pre- | 4 |
| rogatives of capital. | 5 |
| It is important to note that, while Williams was always ready to assess | 6 |
| critically the introduction of competition and the inevitable centraliza- | 7 |
| tion of capital in the media, he also actively cautioned against nostalgic | 8 |
| interpretations of the role of the state in capitalist society, or the simplistic | 9 |
| equation of the state with the public or national interest. Williams was | 10 |
| willing to critique the insularity of the bureaucratic structure of various | 11 |
| public broadcasters and the habitual assumed superiority of public authori- | 12 |
| ties who “ruled from above” in dictating the terms of cultural production. | 13 |
| Indeed, one of the main sources of opposition to the continued role of pub- | 14 |
| lic broadcasters in providing popular sports content came from within the | 15 |
| public sector itself, supported by other ‘defenders’ of public broadcasting | 16 |
| who paternalistically held that the main role of public institutions like the | 17 |
| BBC was to educate the ‘masses’ through provision of ‘high culture.’ The | 18 |
| campaigns to commercialize television (and destabilize public broadcast- | 19 |
| ing) were, as such, evident on a number of levels: | 20 |
| as the making of programmes for profit in a known market; as a chan- | 21 |
| nel or advertising; and as a cultural and political form directly shaped | 22 |
| by and dependent on the norms of a capitalist society, selling both | 23 |
| consumer goods and a ‘way of life’ based on them, in an ethos that is at | 24 |
| once locally generated by domestic capitalist interests and authorities, | 25 |
| and internationally organised, as a political project, by the dominant | 26 |
| capitalist power. (Williams 1974, pp. 36–37) | 27 |
| Indeed, for the newly established commercial free-to-air broadcasters (like | 28 |
| ITV in the UK and CTV in Canada), popular live sporting events rep- | 29 |
| resented extraordinarily valuable opportunities to secure lucrative (espe- | 30 |
| cially weekend) audiences for major manufacturers in search of national | 31 |
| audiences further to entrench themselves as national brands as part of | 32 |
| the predominant ‘promotional culture’ (Wernick 1991). The sport-driven | 33 |
| ‘audience commodity’ (Smythe 1977)—a very predictable and stable demo- | 34 |
| graphic composition of mostly male viewers—was always the overriding | 35 |
| product for the free-to-air, advertiser-supported private networks. As a | 36 |
| result of these new advertising revenue possibilities, the private sector soon | 37 |
| began to argue that the public sector should simply leave the most profit- | 38 |
| able sports ‘to the market,’ and not try to duplicate the types of service that | 39 |
| the private networks would be more than happy to provide on commer- | 40 |
| cial terms. Still, in the early days of analogue television, it was often only | 41 |
| | 42 |
| | 43 |
| | 44 |
| | 45 |
| | 46 |

8 Jay Scherer and David Rowe

1 public networks that could reach truly national audiences, a fact not lost
2 on various national and continental sport organizations that, as monopoly
3 providers that restricted the supply of sport, were anxious to reach as many
4 viewers as possible and, in the case of the IOC and FIFA, to establish their
5 products as global media events (Rowe 2009). At the same time, though,
6 public broadcasters were also increasingly obliged to pursue supplementary
7 commercial revenue streams. Thus, despite pressure from its new private
8 competitors and ongoing criticism from cultural elites (strange bedfellows
9 by any stretch of the imagination), public service broadcasters were anxious
10 to retain the most popular sport properties and aggressively pursued
11 these properties in order to retain their ‘public relevance’ (Rowe 2004c).
12 Public broadcasters, as a result, acted increasingly strategically in the new
13 competitive era; for example, the 1950 formation of the European Broad-
14 casting Union later allowed (mainly) public broadcasters to join forces “as
15 a response to the growing cartelization of sporting supply (e.g., IOC, FIFA,
16 etc.) in order to use collective bargaining power for obtaining lower rights
17 fees” (Evens and Lefever 2011, p. 36).

18 The new competitive landscape involving commercial and public free-
19 to-air networks increased, at least initially, the price of sports broadcasting
20 rights, and provided greater sums of money for various leagues, sport orga-
21 nizations, and teams around the world. In North America, for example,
22 the cartel structure of the major leagues (protected by anti-trust legislation)
23 allowed sports to sell their products to television collectively (although the
24 distribution of television revenue was not always equal), thus cementing
25 their dependence on steadily increasing television contracts. In an impor-
26 tant regulatory distinction, on the demand side, cooperative joint bids were
27 banned in the US, “partly for fear that the reduced competition between
28 broadcasters would depress the value of sports broadcasting rights” (Evens
29 and Lefever 2011, p. 36). Outside the US, though, a number of leagues and
30 organizations in mature media sport markets around the world complained
31 that the duopolistic structure of the television industry was depressing the
32 value of television contracts. For example, throughout the 1980s, the chair-
33 men (gender here used advisedly) of British football clubs routinely argued
34 that the longstanding BBC-ITV duopoly diminished the value of football
35 telecasts and radically reduced their profit margins (King 2002). As we shall
36 see, the introduction of greater levels of competition from emergent cable
37 and satellite companies like BSkyB in the ensuing decades produced more
38 capital for particular sports and the most powerful sports clubs, although
39 it also had the effect of exacerbating economic inequality between them.
40 Nevertheless, as Maurice Roche (2001) has noted, in the early days of regu-
41 lated competition in mixed broadcasting systems: “State-based and com-
42 mercially based versions of wide-access terrestrial ‘free to view’ TV were
43 competitive, but they could also be compatible. They could even be comple-
44 mentary, in terms of sharing the broadcasting of a given year’s major sport
45 events” (p. 91).

46

| | |
|---|---|
| All of these developments would provide even greater amounts of media sports coverage for fans in a post-war era characterized by growing levels of disposable income and leisure time, and larger family homes with well-equipped leisure and entertainment centers, including television sets. The expansion and popularity of free-to-air telecasts of sport on public and private networks, it can also be suggested, accelerated what David Whitson (1998) has referred to as the “delocalization” of sporting tastes and loyalties, spurring the rise in ‘elective affinities’ among fans who were now able to follow a variety of “teams based elsewhere, in contrast to older loyalties based on geography” (65). Television, moreover, also had the noted effect of highlighting the biggest and most popular clubs and franchises in public consciousness, and these new patterns of followership—now increasingly drawing on discourses of personal and consumer choice—would serve to expand political-economic divisions between teams as television companies regularly focused on the biggest clubs that were, as a result, able to capitalize on growing sponsorship and merchandising markets. In North America, the National Football League’s (NFL) Dallas Cowboys was subsequently able to claim to be “America’s Team,” while other franchises like the Los Angeles Raiders and the National Basketball Association’s (NBA) Chicago Bulls developed national and, indeed, continental followings on free-to-air networks. As Gruneau and Whitson have noted: | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 |
| Television became the ultimate medium for the pursuit of continental audiences by all of the major league sports, and those that used television most effectively—for example, the NFL and, later, the NBA—would vastly increase the followings for their sports and all the products associated with them. (2001, pp. 344–345) | 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 |
| In Britain, meanwhile, football coverage on the BBC’s <i>Match of the Day</i> and ITV’s <i>The Big Match</i> further popularized the positions of the ‘Big Five’ clubs (Manchester United, Liverpool, Arsenal, Everton, and Tottenham Hotspur) and entrenched their power and influence. | 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 |
| By 1970, coverage of sport was, for Raymond Williams, one of the only redeeming cultural forms of the institution of television. Writing in the BBC’s weekly journal <i>The Listener</i> , he consoled readers, “[t]here’s always the sport. Or so people say, more and more often, as they become sadder about what is happening to the rest of television” (Williams 1970/1989, p. 95). Indeed, if television was failing to realize its promise as a genuine public service and promoter of breadth of inexpensive, local programming—which, at a broader level, might have been a contemporary tool of the “long revolution” (Williams 1961) toward an educated and participatory democracy—it could still be relied on to deliver sport to good effect and to sizeable audiences on public and commercial free-to-air networks. However, other substantial developments were on the horizon, including the growth of cable television and satellite services that would have a remarkable | 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 |

1 impact upon the ability of public and commercial free-to-air networks to
2 deliver the most popular sport content, and would challenge the ‘viewing
3 rights’ of fans in many places across the world to have access to live, free-
4 to-air telecasts of sport.

5

6

7 **SIGNAL LOST?**

8

9 If, by the early 1970s, Williams lauded many aspects of televised sports
10 programming (excepting the increasing role of commentators), he was criti-
11 cal of the broader political-economic and technological developments that
12 were quickly tilting the conflict between public service broadcasting and its
13 commercial counterparts in favor of the latter. Thanks to the production
14 of new television receivers and a host of deregulatory policies that encour-
15 aged the growth of cable/satellite services and set the stage for unpre-
16 cedented patterns of convergence and concentration, Williams anticipated
17 the eventual probability of “[m]onopoly transmission, by subscription, of
18 many national and international sporting events” (1974, p. 145). All of
19 these developments, Williams noted, would radically transform existing
20 television institutions and policies, as well as the broader social order. In
21 combination, they would be:

22

23 para-national, financed by para-national corporation advertising,
24 with cable distribution systems or manufacturing subsidiaries in many
25 countries. It would command funds which would drive out competi-
26 tion from other kinds of service, most general entertainment, including
27 backlog, many international news services, and almost all international
28 sport, which would be tied in by sponsorship and monopoly contacts.
29 There might well be two or three competing monopolies on this giant
30 scale, though there are strong reasons against this, in satellite costs,
31 and in the relative monopoly of ground-station and cable distribution
32 systems. There would be choice *within* such a system, but choice on its
33 terms. (1974, p. 151)

34

35 It was the landmark five-year, £304 million broadcasting deal between
36 Rupert Murdoch’s BSkyB and the English Premier League (EPL) in 1992
37 that marked the full arrival of this seismic shift in the production and
38 consumption of coverage of televised sport. Following SKY’s displace-
39 ment of rival start-up company BSB, BSkyB was formed and aggressively
40 outbid all rivals to secure the exclusive live rights to the nascent league.
41 The deal, nurtured by the longstanding sympathetic relationship between
42 the Conservative Thatcher-Major governments (1979–1997) and media
43 mogul Rupert Murdoch, provided a massive injection of capital that
44 fuelled the explosive growth of the salaries of professional footballers in
45 the modern era of increased player mobility (especially following the 1995
46

| | |
|--|----|
| Bosman ruling by the European Court of Justice that facilitated player mobility) that would radically exacerbate the ‘revenue gap’ between the most prosperous clubs and their less affluent competitors. According to the sociologist Anthony King (2002), beyond the political-economic significance of the new broadcasting arrangement, of equal importance was the symbolic value of the new contract in affirming a host of free-market Thatcherite ideals that were crucial not only to the transformation of English football in the 1990s, but also to the broader reformation of post-Keynesian British society. | 1 |
| Indeed, the full embrace of deregulatory policy initiatives in Britain and beyond throughout the 1990s, coupled with the deep cuts implemented to reduce the size and scope of the public sector (including those to public broadcasters in Canada and New Zealand), only served to sharpen the criticisms of private sector advocates and their ideological allies against an expansive state that once provided an array of public programs and social services for all citizens. In the neoliberal era, citizens were expected to be ‘self-sufficient’ and personally responsible for their own welfare (Brown 2006) and, crucially, encouraged to adopt and embrace new patterns and habits of consumption that were now on offer from global media conglomerates like News Corporation providing new, discretionary pay-TV services. To this day, citizens are regularly reminded that older viewing traditions and the types of services on offer from free-to-air public services broadcasters are ‘out of date,’ ‘archaic,’ and ‘constrained’ in comparison to the array of 24-hour specialty sport channels like EPSN (owned by wealthy corporations like, in ESPN’s case, Disney). These expansive discourses of consumer choice articulate smoothly with ideologies that continually reinforce popular perceptions of the market as ‘provider’ and source of our most vivid experiences of fun, community, and popular culture (including telecasts of the most popular sports) that were, in many instances, once provided by the public sector (Hall 1984). There is now, indeed, an entire younger generation that has grown up watching sport on cable, satellite and other pay-TV services (and now on mobile phones and other privatized platforms). Such commercial viewing practices and ways of thinking have established new structures of feeling that are widely experienced as not only sensible and ‘right,’ but as entirely natural and inescapable. | 10 |
| During the 1990s, for example, Murdoch (in)famously remarked that the sport would serve as the ‘battering ram’ of his burgeoning global media empire as he sought to capture local communication markets around the world and gradually normalize the practice of watching television on satellite pay-TV (Rowe 2004b). Sports rights were, in this respect, arguably the most important catalyst for the growth of pay-TV, and exclusive rights to the most popular professional sports events played a crucial role in enticing ‘upmarket’ viewers to subscribe to cable and satellite packages. As Scherer and Whitson have remarked: | 37 |
| | 38 |
| | 39 |
| | 40 |
| | 41 |
| | 42 |
| | 43 |
| | 44 |
| | 45 |
| | 46 |

12 *Jay Scherer and David Rowe*

1 There are, moreover, many advocates of pay-TV in the sports indus-
2 tries themselves, both in the major professional sports and some of
3 the Olympic sports, too. These stakeholders argue that subscription
4 television has brought unprecedented sums of money into their sports,
5 money that has been used to improve facilities and fund development
6 programs, as well as substantially increasing both players' salaries and
7 owners' profits. Indeed the 'old order,' in which bidding was typically
8 restricted to two free-to-air networks (one public, the other private), is
9 now alleged to have led to an 'under-pricing' of sports rights, insofar
10 as the prices paid by the broadcasters were probably below what con-
11 sumers might have been willing to pay. Certainly, the EPL's successive
12 contracts with BSkyB have led to an immense increase in the money
13 flowing into English professional football (at least at the top end), and
14 a corresponding increase in the capacity of the biggest English clubs to
15 compete for the best players internationally. (2009, p. 221)
16

17 In North America, meanwhile, sport has increasingly played a key role
18 in the continental and now global entertainment industries thanks to the
19 rapid development of digital television services and unprecedented levels
20 of concentration and convergence in the communications and "infotain-
21 ment" industries (Whitson 1998). It is worth re-emphasizing that this
22 new stage in the commodification of sport was only made possible via
23 the introduction of new digital technologies, as well as by the wholesale
24 embrace of deregulatory agendas (in Canada and the US) that removed
25 barriers once separating print, broadcasting, and telecommunications
26 and information/computer sectors, and triggered an unprecedented accel-
27 eration of mergers and acquisitions (Mosco 2003). According to Richard
28 Gruneau and David Whitson:
29

30 This was the context in which big international media players such as
31 Disney, News Corp., Time-Warner, Blockbuster Video, and Viacom
32 began in the late 1980s and 1990s to acquire greater holding in sports,
33 including the ownership of a large number of major league teams.
34 Sports not only provided valuable content for the network and cable
35 operations run by these companies, they also promised a wealth of pro-
36 motional possibilities. The most commonly cited example is Disney's
37 cross-marketing of theme parks, movies, cable television, and merchan-
38 dice with its major league teams in hockey and baseball (Mighty Ducks
39 of Anaheim in the NHL and Anaheim Angels in MLB). (2001, p. 253)
40

41 In Canada, where the CBC once played the pivotal role in providing free-to-
42 air telecasts of sport for all citizens, vertically integrated media conglomer-
43 ates like BCE and Rogers—conglomerates that own multiple professional
44 sports franchises¹—now aggressively compete for premium live sport con-
45 tent that can be distributed and cross-marketed to affluent subscribers
46

| | |
|---|----|
| through a host of integrated information and entertainment service arenas. | 1 |
| It should also be noted that Rogers and BCE can also over-pay for vari- | 2 |
| ous sports broadcasting rights and amortize those costs over a wide range | 3 |
| of properties and platforms (numerous television channels, internet, radio, | 4 |
| and other print and magazine properties). The ‘bundling’ of sports rights | 5 |
| (television, new media, radio, etc.) by the monopoly providers of profes- | 6 |
| sional sport (notably the most popular international sporting events like | 7 |
| the Olympic Games and the FIFA World Cup) is, of course, an attempt | 8 |
| to capitalize on the new political-economic landscape dominated by these | 9 |
| media giants. | 10 |
| The tendency toward cross-ownership and cross-marketing by corpora- | 11 |
| tions with substantial interests in related leisure and media businesses was | 12 |
| on full display when, in 2012, BCE and Rogers joined forces to purchase | 13 |
| the majority stake in Maple Leaf Sports and Entertainment (MLSE) for | 14 |
| CDN\$1.32 billion—an unprecedented sale of sport assets and the broad- | 15 |
| cast rights that accompany those assets. MLSE currently owns the Toronto | 16 |
| Maple Leafs, the Toronto Raptors, the Toronto Marlies, and Toronto FC, | 17 |
| various specialty channels (Leafs TV, Gol TV and NBA TV Canada), sport | 18 |
| facilities (Air Canada Centre), and other real estate developments and hold- | 19 |
| ings (Maple Leaf Square). As noted above, BCE and Rogers have extensive | 20 |
| telecommunication networks and a vast array of media holdings that will | 21 |
| benefit from the long-term promotional ‘tie-ins’ to the MLSE teams and | 22 |
| other cross-marketing opportunities aimed primarily at affluent men. The | 23 |
| landmark deal between the two rival companies speaks directly to <i>the rare</i> | 24 |
| <i>capacity of live sport events to command significant audiences and sub-</i> | 25 |
| <i>scribers in the digital era.</i> This is an era in which the explosive growth of | 26 |
| channels and new viewing opportunities (for example, multiple domestic | 27 |
| home television screens, and new mobile television services on laptops, tab- | 28 |
| lets, and mobile handsets) have fragmented audiences, while new PVR tech- | 29 |
| nologies allow consumers not only to ‘skip’ advertising, but to watch at their | 30 |
| leisure. The sudden popularity of internet-based technologies such as Net- | 31 |
| flix, Apple TV, Google TV and gaming devices like Xbox and PlayStation | 32 |
| that can also deliver online content ‘on demand,’ has further contributed to | 33 |
| audience fragmentation and, for some, heralds the arrival of the ‘internetiza- | 34 |
| tion’ of the living room and a new era of digital consumer choice. | 35 |
| Despite these developments, broadcast television remains for now the | 36 |
| medium of choice for most sport fans, and it is the dramatic and unpredict- | 37 |
| able quality of televised sport’s ‘liveness’ that continues to attract significant | 38 |
| mass audiences and markets for advertising and subscription on a stable | 39 |
| and consistent basis. Indeed, while new internet services will continue to | 40 |
| appeal to a growing number of sports fans (and advertisers), it is the com- | 41 |
| petitive global television advertising and subscription market that, for now, | 42 |
| remains the dominant revenue drivers. Indeed, the sale of broadcast rights | 43 |
| is currently combined with those for other delivery modes and platforms | 44 |
| in ways that are enhancing, rather than damaging, the economic value of | 45 |
| | 46 |

14 Jay Scherer and David Rowe

1 ‘networked media sport’ (Hutchins and Rowe 2012). Thus, despite appearing
2 to be highly inflated, the global demand for the best sports “properties”
3 will only continue to escalate as the world’s largest corporations compete
4 for predictable and saleable audiences by tailoring broadcasts and advertising
5 to specific local markets (Gruneau & Whitson 2001). This is also why,
6 for example, Disney and News Corporation recently dissolved a 16-year
7 partnership in Asia; both corporate giants are now aggressively competing
8 for the rights to baseball, soccer, and cricket in the burgeoning markets of
9 China and India, where there is room for significant growth and prospects
10 of capitalizing on greater levels of spending by (mainly) male consumers.

11 As the cost of sports rights continues to escalate, consumers are also
12 faced with higher subscription fees and other charges as companies look
13 to recoup their content-related expenses. The expansion of cable, pay-TV
14 satellite and other subscription services has, in this very real material
15 sense, destroyed the principle of equality of access for all to entertainment
16 (including sport), information, and other cultural resources that were once
17 in the common public domain via public broadcasters or free-to-air commercial
18 networks (Scannell 1989, p. 139). This is why, in our opinion,
19 the movement of once freely available televised content to subscription
20 networks like Sky TV needs to be understood as nothing less than a new
21 stage in the enclosure of the digital/cultural commons (Scherer and Sam
22 2012). Although it is clear that much more sport television content is now
23 available thanks to the emergence of 24-hour sports networks, and that
24 the viewing experience can be significantly improved through superior
25 vision, flexible screening and instant provision of sport information, the
26 imposition of significant entry costs and ever-growing monthly subscription
27 fees has inevitably introduced a two-tier system of access that is significantly
28 related to levels of wealth and income. Given the sheer level of
29 public investment that was required to initiate the era of televised sport in
30 so many nations, then, the recent dominance of pay-TV, and the energetic
31 acquisition of sport content and key elements of national popular culture
32 by various media conglomerates, needs to be recognized as another example
33 of what the Marxist geographer David Harvey (2003) has described as
34 ‘accumulation by dispossession.’

35 These developments have, of course, not gone uncontested, and other
36 claims have been put forward by various interest groups to protect mediated
37 access to key sporting events deemed to be of national interest and so invoking
38 rights of cultural citizenship (New and LeGrand 1999). As
39 Raymond Boyle notes in Chapter 6 of this book, in Britain the debate over
40 whether access to certain sports events on free-to-air television should
41 be ‘protected’ intensified in the late 1980s and early 1990s as sports like
42 cricket and rugby followed EPL soccer onto satellite television (in particular,
43 onto BSkyB). Complaints that access to major British sports events and
44 television sport ‘heritage’ like *Match of the Day* was becoming restricted
45 to satellite subscribers led the British government to designate, under the
46

Broadcasting Act of 1996, a list of events for which exclusive rights could not be granted to pay-TV (Department of Culture, Media and Sport 1998, cited in New and Le Grand 1999). In 1997, meanwhile, the European legislator introduced the listed major events mechanism in the Television Without Frontiers Directive that provides every member state with a legal framework to categorize and protect key sporting events of national cultural significance from being exclusively aired on pay-TV. The selection of listed events, the type of required provision (such as live, delayed and/or highlights), access to subscription television services and technologies across European Union member states, the regulation of monopoly and the required diversification of television sport suppliers, all remain matters of significant debate—and litigation—in the European Union (Evens and Lefever 2011, Rowe 2011, pp. 52–53). In this dynamic technological and policy environment, questions of cultural citizenship and mediated sport come into play as received notions of the ‘public’ and of ‘common culture’ are continually challenged by an unprecedented emphasis on consumer sovereignty and market segmentation.

In the light of such high political and economic stakes, it is unsurprising that television sport has been something of a regulatory battleground, as public service, free-to-air commercial, cable/satellite subscription and now online and mobile forms of television have jostled for key sports content. Indeed, the competing claims over issues surrounding access to live telecasts of sport have only sharpened in the past decade, especially as various nations move from debates about public service *television* to those concerning *media*. With digitization, in particular, re-shaping the meanings and forms of mediated sport spectatorship, the emergence of the aforementioned ‘networked media sport’ (Hutchins and Rowe 2012) has led to the proliferation of publics and of the claims that may be made on the ‘common culture’ that Raymond Williams conceived in an earlier, ‘simpler’ era. On this note, we do not wish to evoke nostalgia for earlier analogue times when audio-visual sport provision was restricted to a comparatively small number of offerings made available by a small cluster of public and commercial free-to-air broadcasters. Nor do we want to exaggerate the depth and scope of sport’s appeal across whole populations, and downplay its often-problematic relationships with forms of social power in both the pre- and current digital era (see, for example, the matters of gender inequality raised in Fuller (2010)). Despite the growth of commercial subscription specialty channels, for example, the coverage of women’s sport remains woeful. In Canada, as a case in point, the Women’s Television Sports Network, the world’s first 24-hour specialty channel exclusively devoted to broadcasting women’s sport (2001–2003), was unable quickly to capture a profitable female market, and was rapidly jettisoned by its parent company BCE as a result (Neverson 2010).

Indeed, the pressures of the ‘bottom line’ (subscription fees and/or advertising revenue) for discretionary commercial specialty channels, coupled

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46

16 Jay Scherer and David Rowe

1 with the widespread belief within the sports industry that male sport
2 remains the cultural ‘gold standard’ of sports programming, are doing little
3 to advance the promotion of women’s amateur and professional sport, or
4 of any other televised sport content that is deemed to be ‘unprofitable.’
5 Thus, despite the prominence of female athletes during a major sport event
6 like the Olympics (although quantity is not equivalent to quality—see Billings
7 (2008)), ‘normal service’ of male-dominated televised sport is quickly
8 restored. As a consequence, there are those within the sports broadcasting
9 industry who believe that women’s sport and less visible amateur sports
10 should simply be left to the public sector, and that those sports should be
11 grateful for any amount of airtime that they receive. Although such ‘quar-
12 antining’ of women’s sport is dubious, and privately-owned media should
13 not be exempt from the ethic of gender equality, there is little doubt that
14 there must be a renewed effort on the part of public broadcasters to fulfill
15 a wider mandate and provide more equitable and diverse sports program-
16 ming that will be at the heart of any full definition of cultural citizenship.
17 As Rowe has earlier argued, given their political and socio-cultural remits,
18 public broadcasters are well-positioned to pursue an innovative and, hope-
19 fully, more radical role in the provision of a much wider spectrum of sport
20 content, especially in the digital era:
21

22 Free of demands for ‘shareholder value,’ public broadcasters can
23 promote the values of *critique* and *diversity*; experiment with differ-
24 ent forms of sport commentary and discourse; provide coverage of
25 neglected sports and sportspeople (including women and non-Anglo
26 minorities); and engage reflexively with sport as a significant cultural
27 institution in its own right . . . (2004c, p. 396)

28 Still, the sheer cost of establishing new publicly-owned digital sport chan-
29 nels may prove to be too steep for underfunded public broadcasters that are
30 now increasingly called upon to operate as businesses, especially given the
31 new era of fiscal austerity that has followed the 2008 global financial cri-
32 sis. Here, public online sport platforms may provide a cheaper alternative
33 and, consequently, a greater hope for establishing a digital commons that
34 includes a full spectrum of male and female sport. Despite significant gains
35 over the course of the past thirty years by women in sport, there remains
36 much work to be done to transform recalcitrant ideological structures and
37 beliefs surrounding issues of gender and sport in the media. It is also clear
38 that financial pressures and increasingly fragmented viewing audiences are
39 proving to be enduring barriers to gender equity in sports coverage in the
40 expansive contemporary digital universe.
41

42 We disagree, however, with the claims that the most desirable sports—
43 those that have played significant roles in various national popular cul-
44 tures—should be left to the market, while the public sector provides
45 coverage of non-profitable and less visible sports, or simply abandons
46

all sports coverage in favor of the production of original drama, news and current affairs, and educationally-oriented programming that promotes high cultural forms. The problem with such positions is that they would surely only heighten the struggles of public broadcasters to remain 'relevant' in a competitive digital broadcasting landscape dominated by media conglomerates and a 'reinvigorated master ideology of consumerism' (Murdock 2004, p. 30). We contend that public service media must play a broader role in popular life in various nations around the world, and can't be allowed to withdraw into domains of elite and specialist taste cultures. Thus, they must continue to produce popular sport and other content that resonates with millions of citizens, and in particular with younger generations who are exposed to a wide variety of shows and sports on private networks, satellite/digital channels, the internet, and mobile and gaming devices. Such cultural remit issues, then, involve broader debates over the public sector in contemporary life and *the future of public media*. These are not just questions for sport fans, therefore, but are pressing matters of wider national interest and cultural citizenship. It is for this reason that *Signal Lost?* constitutes an intervention not only on the subject of the mediation of sport, but also engages with the politics of contemporary and future public culture with far-reaching implications and ramifications.

BOOK RATIONALE AND CONTENT

The principal objectives of this edited collection, then, are twofold. The first is to outline and chart the broad theoretical debates, political positions, and policy calculations over the provision of free-to-air telecasts of sport as a right of cultural citizenship. These remain touchstone issues that require an analysis of complex economic, political, and cultural questions pertaining to the increasingly tenuous ability of both public broadcasters and free-to-air commercial networks to compete for the broadcasting rights to the most popular and desirable sports and sporting events. These issues also bring into sharp relief the daunting financial interests at stake in the new economy of sport and the limits and pressures associated with the development of media policy by various governments flowing from digitization. As Des Freedman (2008) has argued, the construction of media policy is far from a disinterested process:

Policy practice is a decisive arena in which different political preferences are celebrated, contested or compromised. This is far from the mechanical or administrative picture that is often painted, whereby faceless civil servants draft legislation on the advice of 'experts' and 'scientists,' in the interests of a 'public' and at the behest of a 'reasonable' government. (p. 3)

18 *Jay Scherer and David Rowe*

To date, however, little has been written about these matters in a concerted manner in the field of media sport research. As such, the second related objective is to provide readers with a number of comparative case studies that explore these debates and issues in various global spaces. These instances offer an important historical background and context to debates taking place in particular countries, while outlining and analyzing contemporary transnational issues and the rapid political-economic and technological developments that are the inevitable consequences of the unstable, crisis-prone, deregulated economic landscape.

For example, following the global financial recession, in June 2009 the Irish-owned subscription broadcaster Setanta saw its UK operation spectacularly collapse after missing payments to the Scottish Premier League and the EPL. This development created the possibility for ITV or the BBC—both free-to-air broadcasters—to acquire the EPL rights (and so partially reclaim the prominent place in English football broadcasting that they had held prior to the establishment of the EPL in 1992). Nevertheless, the US subscription sports broadcaster EPSN subsequently won the rights to broadcast the 46 live Premier League matches formerly held by Setanta, as well as to the 23 matches that it was to broadcast in each of the following three seasons. Thus, a door was briefly opened for free-to-air television to regain a premium sport offering, only for it to be quickly closed by the capital of subscription television. When the three-year EPL rights became available once again, the giant British telecommunications company BT bought 114 games for £738 (US\$1,150m), with the rest to be carried by BSkyB, the long-term dominant broadcaster (*The Observer* 2012). Significantly for the broadcasting sector, BT's proposed streamed delivery to its broadband network subscribers via IPTV, and commitment to enhanced interactivity, indicates a decisive shift away from conventional broadcast models (Hutchins and Rowe 2012).

The interrelated issues of power and influence in the development of media and cultural policy remain as salient as ever in light of the new competitive pressures of the digital era. When James Murdoch, then Chairman and Chief Executive (Europe and Asia) of News Corporation (and, of course, son of the Corporation's Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Rupert Murdoch), gave the MacTaggart Lecture at the Edinburgh International Television Festival in late August 2009 entitled, 'The Absence of Trust,' he overtly attacked both the BBC for being too well-resourced and powerful, and regulators like Ofcom and the European Commission for being too intrusive in, for example, insisting that BSkyB could not acquire the rights to all 'live' EPL matches. Murdoch's aggressive criticism of public broadcasters and state regulators in sport (and other domains of television) continues to have global implications given the power of News Corporation in many sports television markets. While the 2012 phone hacking scandal has radically diminished the already dubious ethical standing of this position, leading News Corporation to withdraw its full takeover offer for the

61 percent of the highly profitable BSkyB that it did not own, the present and future of public service media remain uncertain and the subject of intensive debate (see, for example, RIPE, 2012). Therefore, this collection, while concentrating on sport, public service broadcasting and other media, also seeks to throw light on wider questions concerning the quality of public culture in the 21st century, as major processes such as globalization, digitization and marketization challenge the foundational claims of public service media provision (see, for example, Donders, Pauwels, and Loisen 2012). Media sport's relationship to cultural citizenship is, then, an important test case for a much more extensive debate that, ultimately, goes to the heart of questions concerning the relative powers of the state and civil society over the construction/positioning of citizens and consumers. Although this distinction has been criticized, and modified through new figures such as that of the 'citizen-consumer' (Hesmondhalgh and Pratt 2005, Livingstone, Lunt, and Miller 2007), taken together the chapters in this book affirm the continuing relevance of rights of cultural citizenship that should not be subordinated to the vagaries of media sport commerce in the name of spurious conceptions of consumer sovereignty and of unimpeachable market wisdom.

In the spirit of Raymond Williams (1985), Toby Miller (Chapter 2) sets the stage for this collection by outlining several keywords (citizens, the media, policy, and sport) for readers. He then proceeds to chart the relevant theoretical issues that are essential to any debate over issues related to cultural citizenship and access to live telecasts of sporting events of national significance. Miller argues that the dominant forces in the media sport policy arena remain capital accumulation (notably, the preservation of conditions that are favorable to capitalists) and the desire to govern the conduct of the public. In the UK, for example, both of these tendencies have been evident in the broader political responses to sport-related hooliganism; the public and private policing of stadia (and, indeed, the construction of new stadia altogether that was fuelled by media revenue); and the embracement of deregulatory agendas and the subsequent growth of companies like BSkyB that captured sport in order to attract paying (especially middle-class) audiences to their subscription services. For Miller, the "embourgeoisement" of soccer has decisively shifted the sport "upmarket" and, as a result, soccer's new investors have destroyed some of the sport's working-class atmosphere and longstanding cultural traditions—albeit almost exclusively male ones. The effects of these processes are, inevitably, both good and bad (see Foer 2006). Some of these developments (for example, the replacement of old-fashioned, standing only terraces, places where fans were habitually treated as little more than cattle and where, tragically, significant numbers of fans have been injured and killed) have been long overdue. Nevertheless, the desire to promote the association football (soccer) experience to families and more affluent consumers via new stadia and new pay-per-view arrangements has, in turn, pushed the game out of reach for many working-class

20 Jay Scherer and David Rowe

1 fans, or at least has imposed a heavy financial burden on them. Hegemony
2 is, however, always a complex and unfinished ‘work-in-progress,’ and
3 Miller concludes by providing a number of cultural responses and alterna-
4 tive visions that might buttress public interests against commercial ones,
5 including (but not limited to) the ongoing role of the state in preserving the
6 viewing rights of citizens.

7 It is precisely the complexity of this last point that is explored by Jay
8 Scherer and Jean Harvey (Chapter 3) regarding the debates over the pre-
9 carious role of Canada’s public broadcaster—the CBC in English and la
10 Société Radio-Canada in French—in providing free-to-air telecasts of the
11 national sport of hockey for all Canadians in English and French in the dig-
12 ital era. After tracing the inception of competition with the private sector in
13 the 1960s, the authors examine the growth of telecommunication empires
14 (like Rogers, BCE, and Quebecor) that are increasingly competing for the
15 exclusive rights to the most popular sports content for their range of media
16 platforms. As the central element of Canadian popular culture, the authors
17 note that the sport of hockey remains the most significant and sought after
18 media property, simply because of the national audiences that hockey tele-
19 casts can deliver to advertisers. Yet, while the CBC has, for now, been able
20 to retain the rights to *Hockey Night in Canada*, since 2004 broadcasts of
21 NHL games have aired exclusively on the French-language sport specialty
22 network, Réseau des sports prior (RDS), marking the end of the iconic show
23 *La Soirée du Hockey* and the ability of Francophone viewers to watch live
24 hockey telecasts on Radio-Canada. Scherer and Harvey argue that such a
25 profound cultural division in the viewing rights of Canadians needs to be
26 understood against the backdrop of the longstanding historical distinctions
27 in the programming structures of CBC and Radio-Canada and, indeed,
28 between English and French markets, that continue to set limits and exert
29 powerful pressures upon aspects of the production and consumption of
30 popular culture in Canada.

31 Chapter 4 by Lawrence Wenner, Robert Bellamy, and James Walker
32 shifts the focus to Canada’s larger continental neighbor, the US, a nation
33 without a significant public broadcasting presence. After charting some
34 of the limitations of contemporary definitions of cultural citizenship in a
35 purely consumer economy, the authors explore the structure of the adver-
36 tiser-driven, free-to-air model of the US broadcasting sector and focus on
37 the viewing rights of sports fans in the context of the evolution of access
38 to coverage of Major League Baseball (MLB) and NFL games. As they
39 note, the most popular US sports continue to provide access to desirable
40 and sizeable advertising markets, hence remaining widely available on the
41 highly capitalized, national free-to-air networks. Basic cable and satellite
42 subscription services (for example, ESPN) also carry an increasing amount
43 of sport even to less affluent urban neighborhoods and homes across the
44 country. Given the importance of advertising markets to the dominant,
45 vertically-integrated media players, the competition for the most sought
46

| | |
|---|----|
| after sports rights continues to escalate. In 2011, for example, NBC paid US\$4.38 billion for the rights to the 2014, 2016, 2018, and 2020 Olympic Games, while a year later, ESPN—a massive profit driver for Walt Disney Corporation—signed another record deal, this time an 8-year, US\$5.6 billion contract with MLB for the US broadcast television and digital rights. | 1 |
| Still, the authors observe a growing tendency toward the ‘premiumization’ of viewing rights in the digital era through new satellite packages such as MLB’s ‘Extra Innings’ and the NFL’s ‘Sunday Ticket,’ and the sharp growth of regional contracts. As noted above, however, a fear of Congress remains a relevant, if informal, ‘mechanism’ to ensure that most sports remain widely available, precisely because of the concern that antitrust exemptions (for television rights) could be endangered if access to live telecasts of sport is too overtly restricted. | 2 |
| Next, we turn to Latin America, and Pablo Albaraces’ and Carolina Duek’s analysis (Chapter 5) of the recent ‘revolutionary developments’ in the turbulent Argentine sports broadcasting industry. In a striking contrast to the commercially-dominated approach of the US market, in 2009 the government of Argentina (re)nationalized first division football telecasts, thus re-establishing the viewing rights of Argentine citizens, and marking the return of live football matches to the public broadcaster Televisión Pública. These rights were further strengthened two years later when the state introduced a formal list of protected events that mandated live, universal access to sporting events of national significance. These populist developments marked a striking shift away from the monopolistic structure of a privatized national media sector dominated by new private sports media companies like TyC that, in conjunction with the powerful Clarín Group, had for many years secured the exclusive rights to football matches. | 3 |
| For Albaraces and Duek, though, the re-establishment of the viewing rights of sports fans by Cristina Fernández de Kirchner also needs to be understood in the context of the longstanding tradition of political leaders utilizing soccer for promotional purposes and political image-making. Still, as the authors note, while state intervention and the provision of free-to-air soccer telecasts may not guarantee votes, these developments have marked a radical change in a sports broadcasting landscape that was, only a few years earlier, completely privatized. | 4 |
| The next three chapters examine some of the recent debates over the enshrinement of the viewing rights of citizens in lists of protected events in the UK and continental Europe. In the first of these, Raymond Boyle (Chapter 6) examines the conflicts and competing claims made by various interest groups concerning the role and purpose of the list of protected events in the UK in the context of the increasing dominance of pay-TV networks like BSkyB. Boyle notes that the list of protected events enacted in 1998 became the subject of a full review by the Department of Media, Culture and Sport in 2009 (headed by former broadcaster and Football Association Chief Executive, David Davies). Notably, the subsequent | 5 |
| | 6 |
| | 7 |
| | 8 |
| | 9 |
| | 10 |
| | 11 |
| | 12 |
| | 13 |
| | 14 |
| | 15 |
| | 16 |
| | 17 |
| | 18 |
| | 19 |
| | 20 |
| | 21 |
| | 22 |
| | 23 |
| | 24 |
| | 25 |
| | 26 |
| | 27 |
| | 28 |
| | 29 |
| | 30 |
| | 31 |
| | 32 |
| | 33 |
| | 34 |
| | 35 |
| | 36 |
| | 37 |
| | 38 |
| | 39 |
| | 40 |
| | 41 |
| | 42 |
| | 43 |
| | 44 |
| | 45 |
| | 46 |

22 Jay Scherer and David Rowe

Davies Report re-emphasized the value of the list of protected events in the digital age, while also affirming the key role of sporting events to the range of collective identities across a politically devolved UK. Yet, as Boyle observes, the political fallout of the Davies Report was almost instantaneous as various sports governing bodies spurned the adoption of policy recommendations that in their view would radically reduce their revenue streams by obstructing the exclusive sale of sports broadcasting rights to pay-TV networks. Predictably, the network executives from BSkyB also lobbied both Labour and Conservative politicians to restrict the proposals contained in the Davies Report. The re-assertion of the viewing rights of citizens was, in fact, tempered by the election of a Conservative/Liberal Democrat Coalition and (by July 2010) the Government made it clear that the Report's recommendations would not be addressed until after the digital switchover in 2013. Boyle's analysis, then, offers a timely reminder of the importance of power relations and political calculations in the contested media policy arena, and of just how difficult it can be to summon the resources for any type of sustained resistance to the agenda of influential power blocs.

The political process associated with the selection and, indeed, regulation of the list of protected events in France, is the focus of Chapter 7 by Fabien Ohl and Lucie Schoch. In response to the migration of telecasts of live sport to pay-TV networks like Canal+, in 2004 France amended a decree that guaranteed free-to-air access to 21 major sporting events that were designated of national significance to French society and culture. The authors note, though, that only two years after the enactment of this protective legislation, one of the major events on the list, the 2006 European handball championship (ironically won by France), was not made available on free-to-air television simply because Canal+ and France Télévisions (the public broadcaster) failed to reach an agreement on the financial terms under which the event would be televised. For Ohl and Schoch there remains an obvious lack of clarity, openness, and transparency regarding the determination and selection of events of national significance and associated aspects of French tradition and culture. These issues can also be observed in the absence of an explicit regulatory/policy mechanism to ensure that both public and commercial broadcasters adhere to the legal requirements of the list of protected events in the digital era. Beyond this sizeable gap in French media policy, however, the authors also raise important political questions about the processes through which the consumption of mediated commercial sporting events have become equated with rights of cultural citizenship in contemporary France.

Katrien Lefever (Chapter 8) explores similar themes, tensions, and contradictions relating to the legal politics of Belgium media and cultural policy. As in many other European states, public broadcasters once monopolized the Belgium analogue media market. This market has been radically expanded to include a host of commercial and pay-TV networks offering

| | |
|--|---|
| an unprecedeted amount of sport content, although it is important to note that digital television is still in its infancy in Belgium, and that cable remains the dominant distribution network. Like many of its continental neighbors, Belgium has enshrined a list of protected events and has, in fact, tailored these policies to the sporting tastes of three cultural and linguistic communities. Lefever examines critically the criteria—or lack thereof—through which sporting and cultural events are classified as ‘of major importance’ to society and, hence, must be aired live on free-to-air networks. She also, crucially, points to a number of other discursive issues and debates over the use of terms such as ‘free-to-air’ and ‘substantial portion of the public’ that remain problematic as legislators endeavor to create new policies in anticipation of the impending full digital switchover in 2013. For example, there is a risk in Belgium (as elsewhere) that, as free-to-air broadcasters begin to offer digital-only channels, they may lose, at least temporarily, their universal character until citizens have full access to new technologies. Lefever reminds us that these issues will continue to pose powerful challenges to the relationships between sport, media, and cultural citizenship, especially as new digital consumer sensibilities gradually become established. | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 |
|--|---|

24 Jay Scherer and David Rowe

1 developments, the authors note, were the subject of a broad review of digital
2 broadcasting that was initiated by the Labour Government in 2006.
3 Yet, while the review concluded that there was initial support for the need
4 to protect access to live telecasts of sport, in April 2009 a newly elected
5 pro-business National Government abruptly overturned this recommendation
6 without additional public discussion or debate, and simply announced
7 that the Review would proceed no further and that the broadcasting market
8 was ‘workably competitive.’ However, despite this endorsement of a
9 deregulatory approach to media and cultural policy, only weeks later the
10 National Government intervened to prevent *Māori* Television (an emergent
11 Indigenous public broadcaster) from securing the exclusive free-to-air
12 rights to the 2011 Rugby World Cup. The authors examine the politics of
13 this decision and argue that, even in a deregulated digital broadcast environment
14 judged to be ‘workably competitive,’ there remain key instances
15 when the state can be politically compelled to become a market participant
16 and thus distort the very market that it refuses overtly to ‘regulate.’

17 The following two chapters examine the debates over cultural citizenship
18 and access to telecasts of live sport in regions with neither ‘classic’
19 public broadcasters (funded by taxes or license fees) nor lists of protected
20 events but, instead, increasingly powerful ‘quasi-public’ networks. First,
21 Mahfoud Amara (Chapter 11) assesses the most recent political-economic
22 developments in the Arab sport broadcasting industry. Interestingly, this
23 is an industry that is now dominated by the state-owned Aljazeera Sports,
24 which distributes popular sport content on numerous subscription/pay-
25 per-view and free-to-air channels throughout the Arab region. Despite the
26 expansion of sport content on offer in the digital era by Aljazeera Sports,
27 however, Amara notes that Arab sports fans are now increasingly obliged
28 to pay to watch their national soccer team compete in continental and
29 international competitions. Here he focuses on the wide range of cultural,
30 economic, and religious divisions that opened up when access to live tele-
31 casts of the 2006 FIFA World Cup, the rights to which were owned by
32 the private Arab Radio and Television Network, was restricted to paying
33 audiences. In the absence of legislation akin to a list of protected events
34 that would preserve the viewing rights of Arab viewers, Amara argues
35 that other ‘virtual’ battles are taking place over the ‘decoding’ and ‘scram-
36 bling’ of broadcast signals, while piracy via a growing black market for
37 television smart cards and satellite receiver boxes is becoming a political
38 problem for some Arab governments. Finally, Amara notes that, due to
39 its rapidly expanding profit margins, Aljazeera Sports has emerged as not
40 only a key media player in the Arab region, but as an increasingly influ-
41 ential contender in the broader competition for the most popular global
42 sports properties.

43 In Chapter 12 Callum Gilmour raises a number of similar themes and
44 issues, this time in the context of the Southeast Asian city-state of Sin-
45 gapore, where the sports broadcasting landscape is dominated by two
46

| | |
|---|----|
| competing ‘quasi’-public/free-market broadcasters and telecommunications companies. The picture he paints is not a particularly pretty one. In the competitive sports broadcasting market, the escalating cost of premium sports rights has resulted in exorbitant subscription fees that only affluent citizens, roughly half of the population, can afford. Policy interventions in Singapore, meanwhile, have been essentially limited to cross-carriage measures designed to protect the financial viability of state-linked telecommunications providers. These developments, the author suggests, have only served to marginalize discourses that promote access to live telecasts of sport as a right of cultural citizenship. Gilmour also observes the spread of global tastes and interests into Singapore, and makes the important point that Singaporeans have been encouraged to expand their consumption horizons through an engagement with global cosmopolitanism, including the most popular Western sports commodities, most notably the EPL (as is the case in neighboring Malaysia). Yet, these new patterns of consumption and the significant presence of the EPL on Singaporean television screens (and mobile phones and computers) have also served to undermine domestic sporting culture. Singapore’s semi-professional football competition (the S-League), for example, struggles to maintain visibility and relevance against the sophisticated marketing, glamour and star-power of the most prestigious European football leagues. Gilmour’s analysis is a timely reminder that, as global tastes and the values of a transnational consumer culture are made increasingly ‘normal,’ other attachments and cultural traditions can become unhinged. | 1 |
| | 2 |
| | 3 |
| | 4 |
| | 5 |
| | 6 |
| | 7 |
| | 8 |
| | 9 |
| | 10 |
| | 11 |
| | 12 |
| | 13 |
| | 14 |
| | 15 |
| | 16 |
| | 17 |
| | 18 |
| | 19 |
| | 20 |
| | 21 |
| | 22 |
| | 23 |
| | 24 |
| The next two chapters return to questions surrounding the deregulation of media markets, the erosion of once-dominant public broadcasters and public service ideals, and the subsequent marginalization of local sports content in light of the entrance of new television ‘products’ such as the EPL. Following the deregulation of the Japanese media market and the recent switchover to digital broadcasting services, Donna Wong, Isamu Kuroda, and John Horne (Chapter 13) reveal that new commercial distribution networks and platforms have substantially enhanced the presence of international sports in the lives of Japanese viewers. In an analysis that offers many parallels with Gilmour’s account of the decline of local sport in Singapore (and in parallel research in Malaysia—Gilmour and Rowe 2012), Wong, Kuroda, and Horne suggest that the embracement of the EPL and of other European leagues has challenged the survival of wholly local sports (like Sumo), especially as audiences continue to fragment. In the new digital era, moreover, pay-TV networks are now aggressively competing for, and luring away, sport-based audiences (and hence markets) from the public broadcaster NHK, while public attitudes—especially those of younger viewers who have grown up in an era of wide consumer choice involving the direct purchase of cultural goods and services, as well as ‘free’ internet provision—appear to be militating against the imposition of license fees in the new millennium. | 25 |
| | 26 |
| | 27 |
| | 28 |
| | 29 |
| | 30 |
| | 31 |
| | 32 |
| | 33 |
| | 34 |
| | 35 |
| | 36 |
| | 37 |
| | 38 |
| | 39 |
| | 40 |
| | 41 |
| | 42 |
| | 43 |
| | 44 |
| | 45 |
| | 46 |

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46

26 Jay Scherer and David Rowe

Chapter 14 by Muhammed Musa focuses on the rapid deregulation of the Nigerian broadcasting sector that was once monopolized by the Nigerian Television Authority, and the entrance of new satellite providers and other pay-TV services that now air extraordinarily popular EPL matches. Musa picks up on the themes of the previous two chapters in the Asia context, and argues that EPL matches and the most visible European clubs (especially those with Nigerian players) are now so popular in Nigeria that the visibility of the national professional league, and even the status of the national team (the Nigerian Super Eagles), have been undermined. Yet, only a very small segment of the most affluent Nigerians can afford to subscribe to these new satellite services in the private environment of the family home. As a result of this inequality, new commercial ‘show houses’ have emerged as ‘quasi-public’ venues that air the most popular EPL matches and provide new forms of sociality for ordinary football fans. However, as Musa documents, these venues are almost exclusively men’s cultural sites pointing, once again, to the highly gendered nature of viewing practices, football sociality, and of national popular culture in Nigeria that, as we have noted, has been evident in other places and epochs.

Fittingly, in Chapter 15 John Hughson takes us back to the critical ideas contained in the writing of Raymond Williams, including the role of television in the context of the ascendancy of mobile privatized relations and consumerist values. Williams was a self-confessed admirer of football and, as noted above, once remarked: “Sport, is of course one of the very best things about television; I would keep my set for it alone” (1989, p. 34). Hughson questions whether Raymond Williams would make the same proclamation if he were still alive today. He observes the persistently significant role of sport television in British ‘common culture,’ and the pleasurable popular aesthetics of the game that so appealed to Williams. Speculating on Williams’s likely reaction to developments in sport television after his death in 1988, Hughson imagines that Williams would be both attracted by its technological enhancements (including the internet) but troubled by the restrictions imposed on football as ‘common culture’ given the need to subscribe to a service, and by the distractions of advertising as the pre-eminent national public service broadcaster, the BBC, lost further ground to commercial media enterprises. Once again, the consumer-citizen divide and the debates surrounding cultural citizenship come to the fore.

In concluding the book, David Rowe and Jay Scherer (Chapter 16) offer a brief reflection on its principal themes in the light of the BBC’s coverage of the 2012 London Olympics. They argue that this sport media *tour de force* by a national public service broadcaster may not be easily replicated in other national environments, but that it may be regarded as an encouraging sign for those who, like the editors, believe that public service media should discharge a crucial role of protecting cultural citizenship through the maintenance and development of sports coverage and engagement for all, irrespective of their capacity to pay. Mediated sport is by no means

the only test bed where such matters can be debated and resolved, but it
is a crucial one, as is indicated by the intensity of the disputation over its
control and distribution played out in the news media, courts, parliaments,
reviews, commissions, and the zones of sport fan discourse. These high-
profile considerations of what properly counts as national ‘common cul-
ture,’ and the institutional frameworks required to safeguard, promote and
develop it, emphasize their relevance to the quality of life in contemporary
societies. While the relationships between public service media, sport and
cultural citizenship have been under significant strain, clearly they are far
from lost.

NOTES

1. Rogers owns the Toronto Blue Jays of MLB, while BCE has a minority own-
ership stake of the Montreal Canadiens.

REFERENCES

- Bellamy, R.V., 1998. The Evolving Television Sports Marketplace. In: L. A. Wenner, ed., *MediaSport*. London: Routledge, pp. 73–87.
- Billings, A.C., 2008. *Olympic Media: Inside the Biggest Show on Television*. London: Routledge.
- Bourdieu, P., and Wacquant, L., 2001. Neoliberal Newspeak: Notes on the New Planetary Vulgate. *Radical Philosophy*, 108, pp. 1–6.
- Brown, W., 2006. American Nightmare: Neoliberalism, Neoconservatism, and De-Democratization. *Political Theory*, 34(6), pp. 690–714.
- Chandler, J.M., 1988. *Television and National Sport: The United States and Britain*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.
- Connell, R.W., 2005. *Masculinities*. 2nd ed. Cambridge: Polity.
- Donders, K., Pauwels, C. and Loisen, J., 2012. All or Nothing? From Public Service Broadcasting to Public Service Media, to Public Service “Anything”? *Special Issue of International Journal of Media and Cultural Politics* 8(1), pp. 3–10.
- Evens, T., and Lefever, K., 2011. Watching the Football Game: Broadcasting Rights for the European Digital Television Market. *Journal of Sport and Social Issues*, 35(1), pp. 33–49.
- Foer, F., 2004. *How Soccer Explains the World: An Unlikely Theory of Globalization*. New York: Harper.
- Freedman, D., 2008. *The Politics of Media Policy*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Fuller, L.K., ed., 2010. *Sexual Sports Rhetoric: Global and Universal Contexts*. New York: Peter Lang.
- Gilmour, C., and Rowe, D., 2012. Sport in Malaysia: National Imperatives and Western Seductions. *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 29(4), pp. 585–505.
- Grunneau, R., and Whitson, D., 2001. Upmarket Continentalism: Major League Sport, Promotional Culture, and Corporate Integration. In: V. Mosco and D. Schiller, eds., *Continental Order: Integrating North America for Cybercapitalism*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, pp. 235–264.
- Hall, S., 1984. The Culture Gap. *Marxism Today*, January, pp. 18–22.
- Harvey, D., 2003. *The New Imperialism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

28 Jay Scherer and David Rowe

- 1 Hesmondhalgh, D., and Pratt, A.C., 2005. Cultural Industries and Cultural Policy.
2 *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, 11(1), pp. 1–14.
- 3 Hutchins, B., and Rowe, D., 2012. *Sport Beyond Television: The Internet, Digital*
4 *Media and the Rise of Networked Media Sport*. New York: Routledge.
- 5 Kidd, B., 1996. *The Struggle for Canadian Sport*. Toronto: University of Toronto
Press.
- 6 King, A., 2002. *The End of the Terraces: The Transformation of English Football*
7 *in the 1990s*. Revised. Leicester: Leicester University Press.
- 8 Livingstone, S., Lunt, Peter, and Miller, L., 2007. Citizens, Consumers and the
9 Citizen-Consumer: Articulating the Interests at Stake in Media and Communi-
cations Regulation. *Discourse and Communication*, 1(1), pp. 85–111.
- 10 McChesney, R., 2008. *The Political Economy of Media: Enduring Issues, Emerg-
ing Dilemmas*. New York: Monthly Review Press.
- 11 Miller, T., 2006. *Cultural Citizenship: Cosmopolitanism, Consumerism, and*
12 *Television in a Neoliberal Age*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- 13 Mosco, V., 2003. The Transformation of Communication in Canada. In: W. Clem-
14 ent and L. Vosko, eds., *Changing Canada: Political Economy as Transforma-
tion*. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, pp. 287–308.
- 15 Murdoch, J., 2009. *The Absence of Trust: MacTaggart Lecture* [online]. Edin-
16 burgh International Television Festival, 28 August. Available from: http://www.newsCorp.com/news/news_426.html [Accessed 25 June 2012].
- 17 Murdock, G., 2004. Past the Posts: Rethinking Change, Retrieving Critique, *Euro-
18 pean Journal of Communication* 19(1), pp. 19–38.
- 19 Neverson, N., (2010). Built it and the Women Will Come? WTSN and the Advent
20 of Canadian Digital Television. *Canadian Journal of Communication*, 35, pp.
21 27–48.
- 22 New, B., and Le Grand, J., 1999. Monopoly in Sports Broadcasting. *Policy Studies*,
23 20(1), pp. 23–36.
- 24 RIPE, 2012. *Re-Visionary Interpretations of the Public Enterprise* [online]. Avail-
25 able from: <http://ripeat.org/> [Accessed 8 September 2012].
- 26 Roche, M., 2001. Citizenship, Popular Culture and Europe. In: N. Stevenson, ed.,
27 *Culture and Citizenship*. London: Sage, pp. 74–98.
- 28 Rowe, D., 2011. *Global Media Sport: Flows, Forms and Futures*. London: Blooms-
29 bury Academic.
- 30 Rowe, D., 2009. Power Trip: Sport and Media. *International Journal of Sport
Management and Marketing*, 6(2), pp. 150–166.
- 31 Rowe, D., 2004a. Watching Brief: Cultural Citizenship and Viewing Rights. *Sport
in Society*, 7(3), pp. 385–402.
- 32 Rowe, D., 2004b. *Sport, Culture and the Media: The Unruly Trinity*. 2nd ed. Maid-
33 enhead, UK: Open University Press.
- 34 Rowe, D., 2004c. Fulfilling the Cultural Mission: Popular Genre and Public Remit.
35 *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, 7(3), pp. 381–399.
- 36 Scannell, P., 1989. Public Service Broadcasting and Modern Public Life. *Media,
37 Culture and Society*, 2, pp. 134–166.
- 38 Scherer, J., and Whitson, D., 2009. Public Broadcasting, Sport, and Cultural Citi-
39 zenship: The Future of Sport on the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation? *Inter-
national Review for the Sociology of Sport*, 44(2–3), pp. 213–229.
- 40 Scherer, J., and Sam, M., 2012. Public Broadcasting, Sport, and Cultural Citizenship:
41 SKY's the Limit in New Zealand? *Media, Culture & Society*, 34(1), pp. 101–111.
- 42 Smythe, D.W., 1977. Communications: Blindspot of Western Marxism. *Canadian
43 Journal of Political and Social Theory* 1(3), pp. 1–27.
- 44 Szymanski, S., 2006. Why Have Premium Sports Rights Migrated to Pay-TV in
45 Europe but not in Europe? In: C. Jeanrenaud and S. Kesenne, eds., *The Eco-
nomics of Sport and the Media*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, pp. 148–159.

Sport, Public Service Media, and Cultural Citizenship 29

| | |
|---|----|
| The Observer, 2012. BT Gambles that Premier League Deal will Pay off Faster than Broadband [online]. Available from: http://www.guardian.co.uk/business/2012/jun/17/bt-sacrifices-broadband-advances-to-get-a-foot-in-the-game [Accessed 25 June 2012]. | 1 |
| Wernick, A., 1991. <i>Promotional Culture</i> . Newbury Park: Sage. | 2 |
| Whitson, D., 1998. Circuits of Promotion: Media, Marketing and the Globalization of Sport. In: L.A. Wenner, ed., <i>MediaSport</i> . London: Routledge, pp. 57–72. | 3 |
| Williams, R., 1989. <i>Resources of Hope</i> . London: Verso. | 4 |
| _____, 1985. <i>Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society</i> . New York: Oxford University Press. | 5 |
| _____, 1974. <i>Television: Technology and Cultural Form</i> . London: Fontana. | 6 |
| _____, 1970/1989. There's Always the Sport. In: A. O'Connor, ed., <i>Raymond Williams On Television: Selected Writings</i> . Toronto: Between the Lines, pp. 95–99. | 7 |
| _____, 1961. <i>The Long Revolution</i> . London: Chatto & Windus. | 8 |
| | 9 |
| | 10 |
| | 11 |
| | 12 |
| | 13 |
| | 14 |
| | 15 |
| | 16 |
| | 17 |
| | 18 |
| | 19 |
| | 20 |
| | 21 |
| | 22 |
| | 23 |
| | 24 |
| | 25 |
| | 26 |
| | 27 |
| | 28 |
| | 29 |
| | 30 |
| | 31 |
| | 32 |
| | 33 |
| | 34 |
| | 35 |
| | 36 |
| | 37 |
| | 38 |
| | 39 |
| | 40 |
| | 41 |
| | 42 |
| | 43 |
| | 44 |
| | 45 |
| | 46 |

2 Before, During, and After the Neoliberal Moment

Media, Sports, Policy, Citizenship¹

Toby Miller

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

10 INTRODUCTION

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

17 POLICY

18 Policy refers to a regularized set of actions based on a principle. It's a very
19 Weberian concept.² The authority of policy is based on transparent ratio-
20 nality rather than ancestral tradition or individual charisma. All entities
21 make policies, in the sense of regularized plans of action and norms that
22 they follow. In terms of media and sporting policy, I suggest that we under-
23 stand the terms as applying both to private and public concerns. From dif-
24 fering political perspectives, both functionalists and Marxists consider the
25 private-public distinction under capitalism to be problematic, and policies
26 are certainly developed and implemented by businesses as often—if less
27 publicly—as governments. The same doctrine applies to the third sector,
28 where sports and the media live hybrid lives as creatures of the state, com-
29 mercial, and voluntarism.

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

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

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

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

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

In addition, because sport and the media transcend both state boundaries and commercial rents, they are often managed by international organizations. This phenomenon is neither new nor entirely dissociated from national citizenship. Away from the utopic hopes of world government on a grand scale, international organizations have been working for a long time, sometimes quietly and sometimes noisily, to manage trans-territorial issues—telecommunications, football, accreditation, Catholicism, postage, airways, sea-lanes, cricket, smallpox, and athletics come to mind. Their business is sometimes conducted at a state level, sometimes through civil

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46

society, and sometimes both. In almost every case, they encounter or enact legal and political doctrines that make them accountable in certain ways to the popular will of sovereign-states, at least in name. Whilst that popular will may frequently be overdetermined or overrun—by technocratic mandarinism, superstitious god-bothering, or corporate shill—it remains a key site of change via representative government. We have seen this phenomenon operate, for both good and ill, in sporting and media debates over everything from ceding legal sovereignty to underwriting stadium construction. It is sometimes referred to as a “New Medievalism,” because it weakens central state control in favor of a patchwork of associations, localities, and internationalisms (Strange 1995, p. 56).

THE MEDIA

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

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

ownership that the media capitalize on at the expense of the public. When US, European, or Chinese legislation identifies copyrighted elements or territorial rights of television, internet, or radio coverage, it has implications for audience pleasure and price, state participation, team ownership, and media profit (Court of Justice, 2011, Evens et al. 2011, Song 2011,).

SPORT

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

CITIZENS

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

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

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

16 Beginning in the 1970s, there was a change in economic citizenship away
17 from the welfare of the public and toward the welfare of the private in ways
18 that inflect and infect citizenship *tout court*. In addition to fundamental
19 policy decisions that redistributed wealth upwards and internationally, this
20 radical change had an ideological dimension—neoliberalism. One of the
21 most successful attempts to reshape individuals in human history, neoliberal-
22 alism's achievements rank alongside such productive and destructive sectar-
23 ian practices as state socialism, colonialism, nationalism, and religion. Its
24 lust for market regulation over democratic regulation was so powerful that
25 true-believing prelates opined on every topic imaginable, from birth rates
26 to divorce, suicide to abortion, and performance-enhancing drugs to altru-
27 ism. Rhetorically, it stood against elitism (for populism); against subvention
28 (for markets); and against public service (for philanthropy) (Grantham and
29 Miller 2010). In keeping with neoliberalism's class project, economic citi-
30 zenship has changed dramatically from social welfare to corporate welfare.
31 Begging/demanding firms are handed taxpayers' money while individuals
32 and social groups are told to fend for themselves. In direct contradic-
33 tion to equality and social justice, this is socialism for capitalists and capital-
34 ism for workers. It is exemplified by Thatcher's notorious quotation from
35 *Women's Day* above and endless neoclassical true believers' claims about
36 human conduct (rote renditions relevant to this book include Forrest *et al.*
37 2004 and Noll 2007).

38 My basic argument is that political citizenship's role in sport and media
39 policy has been overdetermined by economic citizenship in its latest form,
40 while cultural citizenship offers a riposte to this domination by right-wing
41 economism. Political citizenship is the entity by which laws are created
42 about access to media coverage, as parliaments speak on behalf of their
43 electorates, and where large organizations such as Fédération Internation-
44 ale de Football Association (FIFA) undermine national sovereignty over
45 space and people (Bond 2010, Hyde 2010). Economic citizenship invokes
46

the citizen as a consumer while actually aiding corporate interests by charging rent for previously uncommodified goods. And cultural citizenship resists these forms of domination through a politics of spectacle and belonging that both appeals to and questions the other forms of citizenship. It can be used to argue for democratic interventions in and responses to changes in sport and the media via cultural citizenship (Scherer and Whitson 2009, Rowe 2009).

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

THE GREAT UNWASHED/THE PAYING AUDIENCE

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

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

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

4
5 Along with the great opportunities and changes that accompanied urban-
6 ization and the Industrial Revolution came new fears and ways of inculcat-
7 ing and managing them. The prospect of a long-feared 'ochlocracy' of 'the
8 worthless mob' (Pufendorf 2000, p. 144) afflicted both hegemons and the
9 critics and scholars who served them. In the wake of the French Revolution,
10 Edmund Burke was animated by the need to limit popular exuberance via
11 "restraint upon . . . passions" (1994, p. 122). John Stuart Mill spoke with
12 horror of "the meanest feelings and most ignorant prejudices of the vul-
13 garest part of the crowd" (1861, p. 144), while the Latin@ founder of the
14 'American Dream,' John Truslow Adams, regarded "[t]he mob mentality
15 of the city crowd" as 'one of the menaces to modern civilization' (1941,
16 pp. 404, 413). Élite theorists from both right and left, notably Vilfredo
17 Pareto (1976), Gaetano Mosca (1939), Gustave Le Bon (1899), and Rob-
18 ert Michels (1915), argued that newly literate publics were vulnerable to
19 manipulation by demagoguery and the simple fact of gathering together
20 in large numbers, whether for sporting events or political demonstrations.
21 These critics were frightened of socialism, democracy, and popular reason
22 (Wallas 1967, p. 137).

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

26
27 On the one hand, it can have an anti-barbaric and anti-sadistic effect
28 by means of fair play, a spirit of chivalry, and consideration for the
29 weak. On the other hand, in many of its varieties and practices it can
30 promote aggression, brutality, and sadism, above all in people who do
31 not expose themselves to the exertion and discipline required by sports
32 but instead merely watch: that is, those who regularly shout from the
33 sideline. (2010)

34
35 The last century and a half of scholarship, policy, and punditry has seen
36 obsessive attempts to correlate the popular classes with anti-social conduct:
37 where they came from, how many there were, and what they did as a con-
38 sequence of being present. The effect has been to create what Harold Gar-
39 finkel called the 'cultural dope,' a mythic figure who is imagined to act "in
40 compliance with pre-established and legitimate alternatives of action that
41 the common culture provides" (1992, p. 68). For Adorno, the issue was:

42
43 whether people who no longer have any clear idea of their own job or
44 vocation, and who are therefore said to be able to adapt themselves and
45 get used to a new area of work with relative ease, whether this really

Before, During, and After the Neoliberal Moment 37

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Biopower made the relationship of populations to their environments a central strut of governance. It linked productivity and health both performatively and indexically to work and leisure. Each aspect was subject to human intervention and hence governmental interest, via forecasting, measuring, and estimating. Foucault proposed three concepts of biopower to explain life today. The first element utilizes economics to mold the population into efficient and effective producers. The second is an array of apparatuses designed to create conditions for this productivity, via bodily interventions and the promotion of fealty and individuality. The third exchanges methods between education and penology, transforming justice

| | |
|---|----|
| into human ‘improvement.’ Put another way, we might understand this exercise of biopower as the indoctrination of the social by the state and the infestation of sovereignty with demography (Foucault 2003, 2007, and 2008). | 1 |
| | 2 |
| | 3 |
| | 4 |
| The idea of sport as a release for otherwise unruly forms of public life and as a means of generating profit ran into problems through an apparent regression to its ungoverned origins in the 1970s. In Western Europe, football became the crucible of such concerns, often impelled by anxieties about nationalistic, racist, misogynistic, and hyper-masculinist conduct and the desire to control such urges as part of state power and commercial expansion. The term ‘hooligan’ was applied to describe such ‘dross.’ A wonderfully onomatopoeic coinage, it borrowed from Marx’s Dickensian taxonomy of: | 5 |
| | 6 |
| | 7 |
| | 8 |
| | 9 |
| vagabonds, dismissed soldiers, discharged convicts, runaway galley slaves, sharpers, jugglers, lazzaroni, pickpockets, sleight-of-hand performers, gamblers, procurers, keepers of disorderly houses, porters, literati, organ grinders, rag pickers, scissors grinders, tinkers, beggars. (1987, p. 63) | 10 |
| | 11 |
| | 12 |
| | 13 |
| | 14 |
| Hooliganism was redisposed to cover a group of young white proletarian men in Northern Europe dealing with the stagflationary chaos of the 1970s as jobs were lost, social services disappeared, unemployment rose, and immigration became a tinderbox because people from former colonies came (in small numbers) to a reactionary deindustrializing metropole. | 15 |
| | 16 |
| | 17 |
| | 18 |
| | 19 |
| | 20 |
| THE NEOLIBERAL HEGEMONY | 21 |
| One response to this hooliganism was strict private and public policing of stadia. Another was the confluence of media deregulation and emergent companies’ subsequent search for relatively cheap programming guaranteed to attract middle-class audiences to subscription services; hence US television offering more than 43,000 hours of live sports in 2009 (Nielsen 2010). The amounts paid to televise sport may seem large, but they are risible when compared to producing drama, because development costs and salaries are borne by the sports themselves rather than television stations. As a consequence of new admissions policies and prices and the televisualization of football as a paying service, the armchair customer has largely displaced the terrace hooligan. Along the way, new zones of citizenship have appeared below and above the nation, under the sign of football. | 22 |
| | 23 |
| | 24 |
| | 25 |
| | 26 |
| | 27 |
| | 28 |
| | 29 |
| | 30 |
| | 31 |
| | 32 |
| | 33 |
| | 34 |
| | 35 |
| | 36 |
| | 37 |
| | 38 |
| | 39 |
| | 40 |
| | 41 |
| It is hard to imagine a better example of collectivity, individuation, substructure, and superstructure in policy tension than European football and television over the last three decades. Prior to this period, football clubs were small urban businesses, run rather like not-for-profit fiefdoms that | 42 |
| | 43 |
| | 44 |
| | 45 |
| | 46 |

drew upon and represented local cultures. Then they were commodified and made into creatures of exchange. In the course of this radical transformation, football clubs fell prey to fictive capital, becoming sources of asset inflation for rentiers to service other debts through the cash flow of television money and gate receipts. At the same time, this *embourgeoisement* addressed a policing problem for states, as the great unwashed could no longer afford tickets. During the first five years of the English Premier League, which commenced in 1992 and is now the Barclays Premier League, sixty matches were on television each season; by 2006, the number was 138. Enter a transnational policy entity with even greater neoliberal governing lust than national governments, which were beholden to local media—the European Commission. It expressed major concerns about the prospects for new entrants competing to cover the competition. That opened the way for Setanta, a satellite channel that was moving from its original home in Irish pubs around the world to private homes around the British Isles and the US Setanta and Sky paid £2.7 billion for national and international rights between 2007 and 2010. But the neoliberal dream was going awry, as we all know. With the major rights-holders through 2013 being a subsidiary of News Corporation, which had manifold debts, and Setanta, which operated under serious financial strictures, and many teams themselves owned by debtors, the bubble grew tighter yet more tumescent. Then Setanta UK and US collapsed, and many teams that were highly geared faced similar futures. More and more mavens and pundits thought that the entire sport of football would trip, stumble, and perhaps even fall, although ESPN, a Disney subsidiary, took up Setanta's slack.

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

The road of sport and media policy in the Global North inevitably leads to the new economic powerhouses of the world. Here, cricket is of particular interest. India, once a minor player in the administration of the world game, is now hegemonic due to its sizeable middle class and wealthy television rights regime. This development is conventionally understood as what happens to

| | |
|--|--|
| a sport when a very large population interested in it grows wealthy and exercises economic power to take control from residual, decadent imperialism. So far so good: but that argument forgets the element of media policy. For the narrative also relies on the notion that cricket has a special cultural meaning for Indians beyond other sports. But until neoliberalism, cricket was of much less significance than hockey or, arguably, football. The triumph of cricket derived from a complex field of media deregulation, televisual investment, middle-class expansion, nationalistic Hinduism, and satellite innovation (Mehta 2009, Nandy 2000). | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 |
| At the same time, we must beware of reducing media sports policy to any of its constituent terms. The Olympic Games and the men's FIFA World Cup of football are among the world's most important events. Policy discussions have generally focused on rights issues as host broadcasters and major rights-holders negotiate who covers what and from where (NBC pays the most so it gets priority). But the wider impact of the coverage has wider policy implications. The media have begun to fetishize efforts to clean up the environmental destruction of such parties by focusing on the policies of corporations to make their activities greener. Endless stories are concocted through public-relations experts about the beneficence of polluters and the seriousness with which host committees and governments and presiding bodies take environmental policy, as per the seemingly altruistic tales of social responsibility mentioned earlier. The Vancouver Games of 2010 boasted via <i>Advertising Age</i> that: | 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 |
| visitors will find café furniture made from pine-beetle-salvaged wood, drink out of bottles made from 30% plant-based materials, and their beverages will be delivered via hybrid vehicles and electric cart. All are elements of [corporate name censored by me]'s first zero-waste, carbon-neutral sponsorship. (Zmuda 2010) | 24 25 26 27 28 29 |
| That year's South African World Cup proclaimed that nine teams had their jerseys made from recycled polyethylene terephthalate bottles. Coincidentally, they were sponsored by a major sporting goods company, which remorselessly promoted its good deed (Menon 2010). None of these initiatives touched on the real issue: that the very possibility of free corporate media publicity depended on environmental despoliation through air travel by businesses, teams, the media, and fans. This was a step too far—or too close—to take. It would have signaled serious intent on the part of media organizations, sports, and states to diminish the worst carbon footprint in the world outside the Pentagon's, and engage the fact that the 2010 World Cup racked up twice the greenhouse-gas emissions of its predecessor (Bond 2010, Shachtman 2010). | 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 |
| If we move to a very different arena, to the high priest of <i>bourgeois</i> individualism called golf, we see destructive and literally sickening environmental developments at the nexus of sport and media policy. Along with state clearance of space on behalf of capital through the doctrine of eminent domain, the media are crucial players in the problem. Whereas | 41 42 43 44 45 46 |

the *mythos* of golf declares it to be a conservationist's delight, based on the notion that rabbits grazing, birds shitting, and other wild things burrowing naturally produced St Andrew's grass, the model television course for the four majors (conducted in just two countries, and reliant on keeping people off course for many months in advance of media exposure) has become the standard worldwide.

CULTURAL RESPONSES

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

At a more organic level, supporters frequently draw on the discourse of citizenship to reject wholesale corporate control. Consider the League of Fans, which the noted consumer advocate Ralph Nader formed in the 1970s. Its 2011 *Sports Manifesto* notes today's almost unbridled commodification, as the newer media join their elderly and middle-aged counterparts in 'a frenetic rush for money.' The League is concerned that this tendency diverts attention from the communalities of sport, and erodes its capacity for cultural and civic expression and togetherness. One side effect is a lopsided relationship between spectatorship and participation, such that the media

emphasize the former, notably sports in which they have financial interests.
In the US, attempts to create lists of sports and events that should be available
on free-to-air media have long been ruled unconstitutional, so nowadays attempts
are made to argue on the basis of consumer interest rather than culture (see the chapter by Wenner, Bellamy, and Walker in this volume). This tension amounts to a struggle between one corner of capital and another, such as network affiliates *contra* cable companies. Fans become their alibi and plaything.

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

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

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

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46

1 its outward bearer but that with the society actually society is played.
2 (1949, p. 258)

3
4 In the face of corporate juggernauts, other stakeholders *can* pursue diver-
5 gent agenda, via negotiations with states, leagues, laws, and businesses as
6 well as refusal, negation, and critique. As the chapters in this collection
7 illustrate, the agenda to be drawn on will vary. If it is to take the form of
8 progressive citizenship action, the brief outline I have provided here points
9 to certain key concerns: opposition to neoliberal dogma, commodification,
10 *embourgeoisement*, corporate Astroturfing, and environmental irresponsi-
11 bility. The tasks are as great as they are varied.

12
13 NOTES

- 14
15 1. Thanks to the editors for commissioning this work.
16 2. The editors want a reference for this adjective. I suggest readers consult either
17 of the Weber entries in the reference list.

18
19 REFERENCES

- 20
21 Adams, J.T., 1941. *The Epic of America*. New York: Triangle Books.
22 Adorno, T., 2010. Education after Auschwitz [online]. *Canadian International*
23 *Youth Letter* Available from <http://paep.ca/doc/CIYL%20-%20Theodor%20Adorno%20-%20Education%20after%20Auschwitz.pdf> [Accessed 28 May 2012].
24 Adorno, T., and H. Becker., 1999. Education for Human Development. Trans. R.
25 French, J. Thomas, and D. Weymann. *History of the Human Sciences* 12(3),
26 21–34.
27 Adorno, T.W., 1945. A Social Critique of Radio Music. *Kenyon Review* 7(2),
28 208–217.
29 Arnold, M., 2003. *Culture and Anarchy* [online]. Project Gutenberg. Available from
30 <http://www.gutenberg.org/dirs/etext03/7cltn10.txt> [Accessed 28 May 2012].
31 Australian Government. Independent Sport Panel., 2009. *The Future of Sport*
32 *in Australia* [online]. Available from <http://www.sportpanel.org.au/internet/sportpanel/publishing.nsf/Content/crawford-report> [Accessed 28 May 2012].
33 Ballard, T., and Bye, B., 2008. Pub Football and the Future of European Broadcast-
34 ing. *The In-House Lawyer*, 42–43.
35 Bond, P., 2010. What South Africa Really Lost at the World Cup [online]. *Trans-
36 national Institute*, June. Available from <http://www.tni.org/article/what-south-africa-really-lost-world-cup-0> [Accessed 28 May 2012].
37 Bourdieu, P., 1980. The Aristocracy of Culture. Trans. R. Nice. *Media, Culture & Society* 2, 225–254.
38 Brecht, B., 1964. Emphasis on Sport. In: J. Willett, ed. *Brecht on Theatre*. London:
39 Macmillan, 6–9.
40 Burke, E., 1994. The Restraints on Men Are among Their Rights. In: P.B. Clarke,
41 ed. *Citizenship*. London: Pluto Press, 121–123.
42 Court of Justice of the European Union, 2011. A System of Licences for the Broad-
43 casting of Football Matches which Grants Broadcasters Territorial Exclusivity on
44 a Member State Basis and Which Prohibits Television Viewers from Watching the
45
46

| | |
|---|----|
| Broadcasts with a Decoder Card in other Member States is Contrary to EU Law [online]. Court of Justice of the European Union, Press Release, October 4, Luxembourg. Available from http://curia.europa.eu/jcms/upload/docs/application/pdf/2011-10/cp110102en.pdf [Accessed 28 May 2012]. | 1 |
| Eichberg, H., 1986. The Enclosure of the Body: On the Historical Relativity of 'Health,' 'Nature' and the Environment of Sport. <i>Journal of Contemporary History</i> 21(1), 99–121. | 2 |
| Elias, N., 1978. On Transformations of Aggressiveness. <i>Theory and Society</i> 5(2), 229–242. | 3 |
| Elias, N., and Dunning, E., 1986. <i>Quest for Excitement: Sport and Leisure in the Civilizing Process</i> . Oxford: Basil Blackwell. | 4 |
| Evens, T., and Lefever, K., 2011. Watching the Football Game: Broadcasting Rights for the European Digital Television Market. <i>Journal of Sport & Social Issues</i> 35(1), 33–49. | 5 |
| Evens, T., Lefever, K., Valcke, P., Schuurman, D., and De Marez, L., 2011. Access to Premium Content on Mobile Television Platforms: The Case of Mobile Sports. <i>Telematics and Informatics</i> 28(1), 32–39. | 6 |
| Flint, J., 2010. NBC Affiliates Tell FCC to Make Sure Comcast Keeps Sports on NBC after Merger [online]. <i>Los Angeles Times</i> , June 10. Available from http://latimesblogs.latimes.com/entertainmentnewsbuzz/2010/06/nbc-affiliates-tell-fcc-to-make-sure-comcast-keeps-sports-on-nbc-after-merger.html [Accessed 28 May 2012]. | 7 |
| Forrest, D., Simmons, R., and Szymanski, S., 2004. Broadcasting, Attendance and the Inefficiency of Cartels. <i>Review of Industrial Organization</i> 24, 243–265. | 8 |
| Foucault, M., 2008. <i>The Birth of Biopolitics: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1978–79</i> . Trans. G. Burchell., ed., M. Senellart. Houndsills: Palgrave Macmillan. | 9 |
| _____, 2007. <i>Security, Territory, Population: Lectures at the Collège de France 1977–1978</i> . Trans. G. Burchell., ed., M. Senellart. Basingstoke: Palgrave. | 10 |
| _____, 2003. "Society Must Be Defended": <i>Lectures at the Collège de France 1975–1976</i> . Trans. D. Macey., ed., M. Bertani and A. Fontana. New York: Picador. | 11 |
| Frow, J., 2007. The Practice of Value. <i>Textual Cultures: Texts, Contexts, Interpretation</i> 2(2), 61–76. | 12 |
| Garfinkel, H., 1992. <i>Studies in Ethnomethodology</i> . Cambridge: Polity Press. | 13 |
| Grainger, A., and Andrews, D.L., 2005. Resisting Rupert through Sporting Rituals?: The Transnational Media Corporation and Global-Local Sport Cultures. <i>International Journal of Sport Management and Marketing</i> 1(1–2), 3–16. | 14 |
| Grantham, B., and Miller, T., 2010. The End of Neoliberalism. <i>Popular Communication</i> 8(3), 174–177. | 15 |
| Guattari, F., 1989. The Three Ecologies. Trans. C. Turner. <i>New Formations</i> 8, 131–147. | 16 |
| Hoggart, R., 1965. The World We Offer. <i>Health Education Journal</i> , 23, 34–40. | 17 |
| Human Rights Watch, 2008. <i>China's Forbidden Zones</i> [online]. Human Rights Watch. Available from http://www.hrw.org/en/node/62149/section/3 [Accessed 28 May 2012]. | 18 |
| Hyde, M., 2010. Fans, Robbers and a Marketing Stunt Face Justice, FIFA Style [online]. <i>Guardian</i> , June 20. Available from http://www.guardian.co.uk/football/2010/jun/20/world-cup-2010-fans-marketing-justice-fifa [Accessed 28 May 2012]. | 19 |
| Keay, D., 1987. AIDS, Education and the Year 2000! Interview with Margaret Thatcher. <i>Woman's Own</i> , October 31, 8–10. | 20 |
| League of Fans, 2011. <i>Sports Manifesto</i> [online]. League of Fans. Available from http://leagueoffans.org/2011/06/29/the-sports-fans-manifesto [Accessed 28 May 2012]. | 21 |

- 1 Le Bon, G., 1899. *Psychologie des foules*. Paris: Alcan.
- 2 Levermore, R., 2010. CSR for Development through Sport: Examining its Potential
3 and Limitations. *Third World of Quarterly* 31(2), 223–241.
- 4 Longman, J., 2011. \$1 Billion World Cup TV Deal Reflects Soccer's Rise in US
New York Times, October 22, A1.
- 5 Maguire, J., 1993. Bodies, Sportscultures and Societies: A Critical Review of Some
6 Theories in the Sociology of the Body. *International Review for the Sociology
7 of Sport* 28(1), 33–52.
- 8 Marx, K. 1987. *Capital: Vol. 1: A Critical Analysis of Capitalist Production*. 3rd
9 ed. Trans. S. Moore and E. Aveling., ed., F. Engels. New York: International
Publishers.
- 10 Mazrui, A.A., 1977. Boxer Muhammad Ali and Soldier Idi Amin as International
11 Political Symbols: The Bioeconomics of Sport and War. *Comparative Studies in
12 Society and History* 19(2), 189–215.
- 13 Mehta, N., 2009. Batting for the Flag: Cricket, Television and Globalization in
14 India. *Sport in Society* 12(4–5), 579–599.
- 15 Michels, R., 1915. *Political Parties: A Sociological Study of the Oligarchical Ten-
16 dencies of Modern Democracy*. Trans. E. and C. Paul. London: Jarrold & Sons.
- 17 Mill, J.S., 1861. Considerations on Representative Government [online]. Constitu-
18 tion Society. Available from http://www.constitution.org/jsm/rep_gov.htm
[Accessed 28 May 2012].
- 19 Miller, T., 2010. *Television Studies: The Basics*. London: Routledge.
- 20 Miller, T., 2007. *Cultural Citizenship: Cosmopolitanism, Consumerism, and Tele-
21 vision in a Neoliberal Age*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- 22 Mosca, G., 1939. *The Ruling Class*. Trans. H.D. Kahn., ed., A. Livingston. New
23 York: McGraw-Hill.
- 24 Nandy, A., 2000. *The Tao of Cricket: On Games of Destiny and the Destiny of
25 Games*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- 26 Nielsen, 2010. The Changing Face of Sports Media [online]. Nielsen, January. Avail-
27 able from [http://www.nielsen.com/us/en/insights/reports-downloads/2010/The-
29 Changing-Face-of-Sports-Media-Jan2010.html](http://www.nielsen.com/us/en/insights/reports-downloads/2010/The-
28 Changing-Face-of-Sports-Media-Jan2010.html) [Accessed 28 May 2012].
- 30 Noll, R.G., 2007. Broadcasting and Team Sports. *Scottish Journal of Political
31 Economy* 54(3), 400–421.
- 32 Nunn, S., and Rosentraub, M.S., 2003. Sports Wars: Suburbs and Center Cities
33 in a Zero-Sum Game. In: J. Lewis and T. Miller, eds. *Critical Cultural Policy
34 Studies: A Reader*. Malden: Blackwell, 211–223.
- 35 Ofcom., n.d, Code on Sports and other Listed and Designated Events [online]. Ofcom.
36 Available from [http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/broadcasting/broadcast-codes/
code-sports-events](http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/broadcasting/broadcast-codes/
37 code-sports-events) [Accessed 28 May 2012].
- 38 Pareto, V. 1976. *Sociological Writings*. Trans. D. Mirfin., ed., S.E. Finer. Oxford:
39 Basil Blackwell.
- 40 Project for Excellence in Journalism, 2008. The Media's Olympics [online]. Project
41 for Excellence in Journalism, August 22. Available from [http://www.journalism.org/node/12484/feed](http://www.journalism.
42 org/node/12484/feed) [Accessed 28 May 2012].
- 43 Pufendorf, S. 2000. *On the Duty of Man and Citizen According to Natural Law*.
44 Trans. M. Silverthorne., ed., J. Tully. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- 45 Rowe, D., 2009. Media and Sport: The Cultural Dynamics of Global Games. *Soci-
46 ology Compass* 3(4), 543–558.
- Said, E., 1993. An Interview with Edward Said. *Boundary 2* 20(1), 1–25.
- Scherer, J. and Whitson D., 2009. Public Broadcasting, Sport, and Cultural Citi-
zenship: The Future of Sport on the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation? *Inter-
national Review for the Sociology of Sport* 44(2–3), 213–229.
- Schiller, H. I., 1991. Corporate Sponsorship: Institutionalized Censorship of the
Cultural Realm. *Art Journal* 50(3), 56–59.

Before, During, and After the Neoliberal Moment 47

- Shachtman, N., 2010. Green Monster [online]. *Foreign Policy*, May/June.
Available from http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2010/04/26/green_monster?page=full [Accessed 28 May 2012]. 1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
- Shor, E., 2010. In Search of a Voice: Arab Soccer Players in the Israeli Media. *Viewpoints*, 7–10.
- Silk, M., Andrews, D.L., and Cole, C.L., eds., 2005. *Sport and Corporate Nationalisms*. Oxford: Berg.
- Simmel, G. 1949. The Sociology of Sociability. Trans. E.C. Hughes. *American Journal of Sociology* 55(3), 254–261.
- Song, S.H., 2011. How Should China Respond to the Online Piracy of Live Sports Telecasts? A Comparative Study of Chinese Copyright Legislation to US and European Legislation. *University of Denver Sports and Entertainment Law Journal* 9, 3–21.
- Strange, S., 1995. The Defective State. *Daedalus* 124(2), 55–74.
- Thompson, E.P., 1971. The Moral Economy of the English Crowd in the Eighteenth Century. *Past and Present* 50, 76–136.
- Thompson, E.P., 1967. Time, Work-Discipline and Industrial Capitalism. *Past and Present* 38, 56–97.
- Wallas, G., 1967. *The Great Society: A Psychological Analysis*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.
- Weber, M., 2005. Remarks on Technology and Culture. Trans. B. Zumsteg and T.M. Kemple., eds., T.M. Kemple. *Theory, Culture & Society* 22(4), 23–38.
- Weber, M., 1981. Some Categories of Interpretive Sociology. Trans. E.E. Graber. *Sociological Quarterly* 22(2), 151–180.
- Wells, H.G., 1902. *Anticipations of the Reaction of Mechanical and Scientific Progress upon Human Life and Thought*. 2nd ed. London: Chapman & Hall.
- Wolverton, B., 2010. NCAA Agrees to \$10.8-Billion Deal to Broadcast Men's Basketball Tournament [online]. *Chronicle of Higher Education*, April 22. Available from <http://chronicle.com/article/NCAA-Signs-108-Billion-De/65219/> [Accessed 28 May 2012].
- Zmuda, N., 2010. Coca-Cola Goes Completely Green at Olympics [online]. *Advertising Age*, February 1. Available from <http://adage.com/article/news/coca-cola-completely-green-vancouver-winter-olympics/141839> [Accessed 28 May 2012].

3 Televised Sport and Cultural Citizenship in Canada

The “Two Solitudes” of Canadian Public Broadcasting?

Jay Scherer and Jean Harvey

INTRODUCTION

This chapter examines the role of Canada’s public broadcaster—the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) in English and la Société Radio-Canada in French—in providing free-to-air telecasts of sport, most notably National Hockey League (NHL) games. We begin by outlining the pioneering role played by the CBC and Radio-Canada in establishing shows like *Hockey Night in Canada* (HNIC) and *La soirée du hockey* as ubiquitous elements of Canadian popular culture and longstanding cultural traditions for Anglophones and Francophones alike. In the early days of television, these weekly Saturday night hockey telecasts were not only the most popular programs across the country, but they also helped fulfill the public broadcaster’s mandate of nation building. This was an era, as the historian Paul Rutherford (1990, p. 45) has noted, when the CBC and Radio-Canada enjoyed a monopoly position as a national service, and when television was ambitiously designed as a public service to “please as wide a spectrum as possible of Canadian people, whether they lived in Toronto or Rivière-du-Loup, with programming that would reflect and enrich the soul of the country.”

Of course, the political project of nation building via the public broadcaster was, and continues to be, ripe with tensions, especially in light of the ‘two solitudes’ of Canada’s main linguistic groups. Indeed, the historical structure and functioning of the public broadcaster as a split national service in English and French has resulted in two very different networks—with very different types of programs—that have developed in fundamentally distinctive environments and in response to discrete competing demands. As we will see, these enduring cultural differences in Canadian public broadcasting continue to structure sports programming on the CBC and Radio-Canada—and the viewing experiences of sports fans across the country—in, at times, contradictory and conflicting ways.

In what follows, we trace the inception of competition for sports broadcasting rights between the public broadcaster and the private sector in the 1960s that marked the end of the CBC’s monopoly of popular sports

| | |
|---|---|
| content. We then focus on the explosive growth of satellite and cable television as well as specialty sports channels like The Sports Network (TSN), Réseau des sports (RDS), and Sportsnet: an expansion that has occurred against a backdrop of economic deregulation and a host of technological developments associated with digitization. These channels are highly profitable platforms in the respective Bell Canada Enterprises (BCE) and Rogers (Communications) telecommunication empires that provide subscribers with unprecedented access to premium sports content (including regional NHL hockey games) in the digital era. | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 |
| The growth of the power and concentration of telecommunication companies like BCE and Rogers—companies that control vast amounts of popular sports content and a host of television, mobile/internet, print and radio distribution outlets—coupled with the unwillingness of successive Liberal and Conservative governments to support public broadcasting has, however, substantially eroded the ability of the CBC and Radio-Canada to ‘stay in the game’ in the competition for the most desirable sports broadcasting rights, including NHL hockey. Yet, while the CBC has, for now, been able to retain the broadcasting rights to NHL hockey, thus securing the ‘viewing rights’ of Anglophone fans to watch <i>HNIC</i> in the new millennium, Radio-Canada was unwilling to make an equivalent investment. Since 2004, broadcasts of NHL games have aired exclusively on the cable sport specialty network RDS, marking the end of <i>La soirée du hockey</i> and the ability of fans to watch matches involving the Montreal Canadiens in French on Radio-Canada (Harvey and Law 2005). | |
| In the remainder of the chapter we review this key difference between English and French sports programming on the public broadcaster. We will argue that these broader political-economic developments, coupled with historical distinctions in the programming structures of CBC and Radio-Canada, continue to set limits and exert powerful pressures upon aspects of the production and consumption of popular culture in this country that have, in this case, resulted in unequal access to free-to-air telecasts of NHL matches. | |
| THE EARLY DAYS OF CANADIAN TELEVISION | |
| To fully understand the place of hockey broadcasts on the CBC and Radio-Canada in Canadian life, though, we must return to the early days of both the NHL and Canadian broadcasting. By the late 1920s, the NHL had succeeded in establishing itself as one of North America’s major sports leagues, and hockey fans took patriotic pride in the prowess of the Montreal Canadiens and Toronto Maple Leafs, following their fortunes in the English and French popular press (Gruneau and Whitson 1993). | |
| However, it was radio that made it possible to carry the live drama of NHL hockey into homes across the country, and in 1929, MacLaren | |

50 Jay Scherer and Jean Harvey

1 Advertising purchased the rights to broadcast Toronto Maple Leaf games
2 on the radio from Leafs' owner Conn Smythe. MacLaren sold the broad-
3 casts to radio stations across the country and sponsorship of the radio
4 broadcasts to companies that sought to reach national audiences. The first
5 *General Motors Hockey Broadcast* was heard on 12 November 1931; it
6 featured the Toronto Maple Leafs and the Chicago Blackhawks, with Fos-
7 ter Hewitt calling the action. A game between the Montreal Canadiens and
8 the New York Rangers was simultaneously broadcast to listeners in Que-
9 bec. An *ad hoc* network of radio stations quickly grew, carrying Saturday
10 night hockey games from either Toronto or Montreal, and by the end of the
11 1933–34 season, the broadcasts were reaching almost a million listeners, in
12 every region of Canada (see Gruneau and Whitson 1993).

13 In the 1936–37 season Imperial Oil took over from GM as the lead
14 sponsor, and in mid-season—on 1 January 1937—the CBC, freshly
15 launched as Canada's new public radio network, assumed carriage of the
16 program, now named *HNIC*. This was the start of a long and mutually
17 beneficial association between MacLaren's, Imperial, the CBC, and Can-
18 ada's two NHL teams.¹ Equally important, in 1936, also with the support
19 of Imperial Oil, Radio-Canada radio started to broadcast games of the
20 Montreal Canadiens.

21 Both shows captured significant mass audiences and these broadcasts
22 drew even larger ones in the late 1940s, as Canadians resumed their 'nor-
23 mal' post-war lives and listening to NHL games became a well-loved Satur-
24 day tradition for Anglophones and Francophones alike. This was, however,
25 a tradition that was clearly structured along linguistic lines thanks to the
26 CBC's institutionalization of separate services for French and English pro-
27 gramming. Thus, even from the very early days of public broadcasting, its
28 advocates and original policy-makers were unable to reconcile competing
29 claims and interpretations of the Canadian 'nation.' For Raboy (1990, p.
30 52), the introduction and establishment of a split linguistic public service
31 underlined one of the "great paradoxes of public broadcasting: the promo-
32 tion and sustainment of the French-Canadian, later Quebecois, difference
33 by a system set up expressly to promote pan-Canadian national unity."

34 It was the introduction of televised hockey in 1952, first on October 11,
35 in French on Radio-Canada with René Lecavalier calling a game between
36 the Montreal Canadiens and Detroit Red Wings, and three weeks later on
37 CBC with Foster Hewitt calling games from Toronto and Danny Galli-
38 van from Montreal, that enabled Canada's baby-boom generation to grow
39 up watching hockey from autumn until spring. Despite the initial trepi-
40 dation of League President Clarence Campbell who, echoing the fears of
41 the Canadian high-brow establishment called the arrival of television "the
42 greatest menace of the entertainment world" (Rutherford 1990, p. 242),
43 by the mid-1950s, watching *HNIC* on CBC and *La soirée du hockey* on
44 Radio-Canada had become a quintessential Canadian pastime, inserted
45 into the rhythms of the Canadian year. Revenues from *both broadcasts*

| | |
|--|----|
| had become a significant factor in the profits of the Montreal and Toronto teams, and in the finances of the public broadcaster itself. While sports like football, in fact, lost money in the early days of television, hockey broadcasts were a key source of revenue for the CBC and Radio-Canada (Rutherford 1990). ² | 1 |
| The popularity of these hockey broadcasts also provided much needed Canadian content for the CBC, which was, to the chagrin of many high-brow cultural nationalists, dependent on popular US imports to please audiences and attract advertising revenue. Conversely, Radio-Canada was insulated from US-English language programming, and locally produced French-Canadian shows remained dominant, further cementing the popularity of the public broadcaster in Quebec: | 2 |
| Radio-Canada produced approximately three-quarters of its own programming: that achievement was the result of both a lack of French-language alternatives available from elsewhere in the world and the existence of a distinct sense of identity that could feed, and boost, an indigenous programming. In fact French Canada already had its own brand of popular culture, its own myths, heroes and villains, and traditions that diverged from North American norms. (Rutherford 1990, p. 80) | 3 |
| Indeed, even at this emergent stage of public broadcasting television, the differences between the English and French networks were striking, although live hockey telecasts allowed citizens to be part of a national conversation, albeit with the obvious caveat of a nearly impermeable linguistic barrier. As we shall see, the widely celebrated vitality and variety of Radio-Canada's programming, and the lack of competition for popular French programs, would remain an enduring cultural distinction between the English and French markets for decades, and, incidentally, would play a role in the demise of <i>La soirée du hockey</i> in the new millennium. | 4 |
| The early days of television have been widely acknowledged as a 'golden age.' This was a time when the CBC and Radio-Canada enjoyed a monopoly position as national broadcaster and regulator of other broadcasters (i.e., the private sector) with a mandate to express and promote a separate Canadian consciousness and sense of identity, especially given the steady flow of US popular culture into Canadian living rooms. It is important to emphasize the obvious historical and political tensions associated with this mandate in light of the distinctiveness of Quebec society. During the 1950s, for example, Francophone viewers insatiably followed the fortunes of the Montreal Canadiens on Radio-Canada, and continued to embrace popular players like Jean Bélieau and Maurice Richard as heroes. These were cultural icons who, especially in the latter's case, quickly emerged as symbolic representatives of the political grievances felt by many French Canadians who resented their status as a subordinate group, dominated | 5 |
| | 6 |
| | 7 |
| | 8 |
| | 9 |
| | 10 |
| | 11 |
| | 12 |
| | 13 |
| | 14 |
| | 15 |
| | 16 |
| | 17 |
| | 18 |
| | 19 |
| | 20 |
| | 21 |
| | 22 |
| | 23 |
| | 24 |
| | 25 |
| | 26 |
| | 27 |
| | 28 |
| | 29 |
| | 30 |
| | 31 |
| | 32 |
| | 33 |
| | 34 |
| | 35 |
| | 36 |
| | 37 |
| | 38 |
| | 39 |
| | 40 |
| | 41 |
| | 42 |
| | 43 |
| | 44 |
| | 45 |
| | 46 |

1 and discriminated against by a wealthy and powerful English minority in
2 Quebec (Harvey 2006).

3 These political issues aside, it was during this emergent television broad-
4 casting era that Canadians were introduced to a diverse and ambitious
5 array of visual programs (musical games shows, highbrow quizzes, histori-
6 cal docudramas, concert music, and intellectual panel discussions) and a
7 host of sporting events, including CFL football, wrestling, boxing, wom-
8 en's softball, roller derby, and, of course, ongoing coverage of hockey on
9 *HNIC* and *La soirée du hockey*. In fact, by 1958, sports programming—
10 with hockey at the forefront—accounted for nearly 10 percent of the CBC's
11 television schedule. A growing appetite for weekend sports coverage across
12 the country prompted the CBC and Radio-Canada to expand their pro-
13 gramming to include curling, soccer, international hockey, bowling, ski-
14 ing, swimming, figure skating, and golf (Rutherford 1990). Still, it was
15 nationally significant events that captured the biggest audiences: 5 million
16 Canadians watched the 1959 Grey Cup match—only the final game of the
17 Stanley Cup playoffs gained a larger audience (Cavanaugh 1992).³ By the
18 early 1960s, *HNIC* and *La soirée du hockey* were the most widely watched
19 television programs on the CBC and Radio-Canada, drawing audiences of
20 millions of viewers per week (Rutherford 1990).

21
22
23 CTV AND THE NEW ERA OF COMPETITION
24

25 However, the CBC's dual role as national broadcaster and regulator was
26 soon to end thanks to the longstanding struggle by private broadcasters
27 and their ideological allies to establish an independent broadcasting regu-
28 lator, non-government stations (second stations) in cities where the CBC
29 was installed, and the first national private network. The ambition of the
30 private sector to move beyond an ancillary role in the national broadcasting
31 system was enthusiastically supported by a newly elected Progressive Con-
32 servative Government under Prime Minister John Diefenbaker through the
33 establishment of the Broadcasting Act (1958) and the creation of a separate
34 broadcasting regulator, the Board of Broadcast Governors (BBG).

35 While the CBC was left to operate a national public system, the new
36 public agency would profoundly reshape the Canadian broadcasting land-
37 scape as an equal partnership between public and private interests. Indeed,
38 as Raboy (1990) has noted, the establishment of the BBG was intended, in
39 part, to assuage the concerns of the private sector that had long resented
40 the regulatory power of the CBC, but also the perceived liberalism of the
41 public broadcaster. In addition to these significant developments, the CBC
42 would now face even greater political and financial pressures as, according
43 to the new legislation, the public broadcaster was to be financed through
44 annual parliamentary grants (as opposed to a statutory grant or license
45 fees) and would subsequently be exposed to partisan influence. The CBC
46

| | |
|---|----|
| acknowledged the devolution of its power and responsibilities but, as we shall see, was disinclined to concede its ascendancy in a rapidly changing broadcasting landscape now regulated by the BBG. | 1 |
| Between 1958 and 1963, Canadian broadcasting ceased to be primarily an agency for nation building and “was reshaped in the image of the private sector, maximizing the potential for economic profit” (Raboy 1990, p. 137). The BBG, for example, moved quickly to award private licenses for second stations in major Canadian cities across the country, creating an immediate alternative to the public broadcaster in the most populous urban settings. These were markets that were hitherto reserved for the CBC and Radio-Canada. Amidst fierce competition, the BBC awarded the license for the lucrative Toronto market to businessman John Bassett and his station, CFTO, would go to air in January 1961. Bassett also owned the strongly pro-conservative newspaper, <i>Telegram</i> , and the CFL’s Toronto Argonauts football club, foreshadowing the patterns of convergence that would solidify in the decades to come. These developments would immediately alter the sports broadcasting landscape and, to the surprise of the CBC, Bassett purchased the 1961 and 1962 rights to broadcast the Big Four (Eastern CFL) games and the first right of refusal for the Grey Cup (Nolan 2001). In response to losing the CFL matches, the CBC aired National Football League (NFL) content on Sundays; a ‘unique’ position for a public broadcaster charged with the mandate to promote a separate Canadian consciousness and identity (Rutherford 1990). | 2 |
| Bassett, however, lacked the facilities and a national network to distribute his newly acquired CFL content and, as such, he was unable to provide the games with sufficient exposure for advertisers. However, Spencer Caldwell—one of Bassett’s rival applicants for the television station in Toronto—had received BBG approval to form a network in December 1960. Bassett would ultimately join with Caldwell’s network (with CFTO-TV as a flagship station) to secure a distribution system for the CFL games; an action that, in turn, prompted the other seven newly licensed private stations to also sign up to the network. It was precisely the merger between Caldwell’s national distribution network and Bassett’s sports content—an alliance that was motivated purely by economic self-interest—that secured the BBG’s final approval in April 1961 for CTV to begin operating. The network would go to air five months later, and, from that point forward, the principle of a public monopoly for national network broadcasting was irrevocably ruptured. | 3 |
| In this respect, the role of sport was paramount in the establishment of Canada’s second national network. As Nolan (2001, p. 27) argues, “(w)ithout the ‘Big Four’ eastern conference of the CFL, CTV might never have emerged as a network.” ⁴ Nicknamed “The Network That Means Business,” CTV’s emergence ran in stark contrast to the birth of the CBC, which was intended to be a public instrument of nationhood. While financial matters unabashedly motivated the businessmen who had invested in CTV, they | 4 |
| | 5 |
| | 6 |
| | 7 |
| | 8 |
| | 9 |
| | 10 |
| | 11 |
| | 12 |
| | 13 |
| | 14 |
| | 15 |
| | 16 |
| | 17 |
| | 18 |
| | 19 |
| | 20 |
| | 21 |
| | 22 |
| | 23 |
| | 24 |
| | 25 |
| | 26 |
| | 27 |
| | 28 |
| | 29 |
| | 30 |
| | 31 |
| | 32 |
| | 33 |
| | 34 |
| | 35 |
| | 36 |
| | 37 |
| | 38 |
| | 39 |
| | 40 |
| | 41 |
| | 42 |
| | 43 |
| | 44 |
| | 45 |
| | 46 |

also shared an ideological affinity to showcase Canadian private enterprise and to de-stabilize the public broadcaster's dominance over an expansive national television industry (Nolan 2001). These developments, in turn, set the stage for a new era of competition for sports broadcasting rights between the public and private networks, resulting in significant increases in television revenues for various sports leagues. Meanwhile, Canadian sports fans from coast to coast would enjoy an even greater amount of televised sports coverage. From this point forward, though, the CBC and Radio-Canada would be obliged to meet its private sector competitors "on their own ground in order to remain 'competitive'" for the most popular sports broadcasting rights (Raboy 1990, p. 149).

Related to this new set of limits and pressures, access to telecasts of sport—in particular live broadcasts of sporting events considered to be of national significance—quickly emerged as a contentious political issue in the newly competitive broadcasting landscape regulated by the BBG. Still, in the early stages of competition, the public broadcaster enjoyed a competitive advantage over its private rival.⁵ In its formative years, CTV was underfinanced, while the public broadcaster—supplemented by its private affiliates—was able to reach nearly all Canadians. Conversely, only 60 percent of potential Canadian viewers could receive CTV's signal. All of these issues came to the forefront in 1962 when a significant controversy erupted over the broadcasting of the 1962 Grey Cup match, the rights to which were owned by CTV. Due to CTV's limited capacity to reach a national audience the two networks began negotiations to provide full coverage of the championship game, an event of national significance for Canadians. However, initial discussions between the CTV and the CBC were strained to the extent that "there was a real danger that many Canadians would be deprived of the broadcast of the game" (Stewart and Hull 1994, p. 109). One of the key obstacles in the negotiations was the refusal of the CBC to air the commercials of CTV's sponsors (e.g., British American Oil, Nabob, and Labatts).

The BBG was forced to adjudicate on the dispute and the new regulator eventually ordered the CBC to carry the CTV feed of the game, complete with all CTV commercials. Predictably, the CBC refused to accept CTV's commercial messages and publicly challenged the BBG's authority to regulate the matter. An agreement was reached only days prior to the Grey Cup after the CBC agreed to provide sponsors with five 'courtesy' announcements (at no cost) during the broadcast, and arranged to sell the same sponsors airtime prior to, and immediately, following the Grey Cup broadcast (Stewart and Hull 1994). The 1962 Grey Cup (colloquially known as the 'Fog Bowl' thanks to the presence of a thick fog that prevented a large portion of the game from being watched) subsequently aired on both networks. The key issue in the debate, though, was not whether the CBC would carry the commercial messages of sponsors under contract to CTV, but whether an effective mechanism existed to regulate disputes between broadcasters in the new competitive era. This issue was especially important when

telecasts of national significance interest were at stake: in this case, access to a key element of national popular culture as a right of cultural citizenship. The dispute over the broadcast of the 1962 Grey Cup matter was not resolved to everyone's satisfaction, although an important outcome was a long-term agreement between the CBC, Radio-Canada, and CTV to share future broadcasts of the CFL's championship game. Still, while the BBG gave serious consideration to a regulation akin to the type of legislation that existed in the UK "prohibiting any broadcaster from entering into an exclusive contract to carry certain sports events of outstanding national interest" (Stewart and Hull 1994, p. 109), no further political action was taken to prevent similar issues from recurring, or to entrench the viewing rights of Canadians in cultural policy.

By the mid-1960s, in the midst of a long post-war economic boom that would last until the early 1970s, 92 percent of Canadians homes were considered to be television households (Skinner 2008). Here it is crucial to emphasize the impact of these new levels of prosperity, especially for Canadian working people, whose "postwar life and expectations came to be defined by unprecedented levels of geographical mobility, individualized consumption, home-centered recreations, and, significantly, the baby boom (Gruneau and Whitson 1993, p. 105). It was in a climate of low unemployment, high disposable incomes, suburbanization, new levels of home and car ownership, and substantial increases in the purchase of light consumer goods that, together, both CBC and CTV continued to stake their claims and battled to build significant weekend audiences for advertisers via expanded sports programming. Importantly, CTV's sports coverage increased with the expansion of microwave facilities that allowed the network to reach a greater number of Canadians. The network subsequently began to show less expensive broadcasts of *Wide World of Sports*—obtained through an arrangement with ABC—that blended major US and international sporting competitions and Canadian sporting events to deliver "the younger, larger, higher income families in CTV's ten vital marketing areas" (Nolan 2001, p. 143). CTV also quickly took aim at the broadcasting rights for the Olympic Games and established a notable presence in providing coverage of a succession of Winter Olympics beginning with the 1964 Games in Innsbruck.⁶

Still, the CBC and Radio-Canada enjoyed a significant presence in homes across the country through telecasts of professional and amateur events, including Canadian college athletics, track and field meets, skiing, and the Summer Olympic Games. However, it was the sport of hockey and weekly broadcasts of *HNIC* and *La soirée du hockey* that remained the most valuable and popular sport program for the public broadcaster. The "value of these (largely male) audiences increased strikingly through the 1960s, as television became the major publicist of the new postwar consumer society, educating people about new consumer goods and services and new consumer identities" (Gruneau and Whitson 1993, p. 106).

1 While CTV began to capture a more significant proportion of the English
2 sports broadcasting market, similar developments began to progressively
3 erode the monopoly of Radio-Canada. In 1961, Télémétropole was created
4 and immediately targeted the Montreal market with a strong focus on in-
5 house-produced entertainment and other original programming, including
6 a small news production section.⁷ Germane to this chapter, CTV and Télé-
7 métropole soon began weekly broadcasts of NHL games on Wednesday
8 nights; these were broadcasts that secured significant midweek audiences
9 for advertisers. Again, it is important to emphasize the value of hockey
10 broadcasts to both CTV and the CBC. Unlike Radio-Canada, these shows
11 provided much-needed Canadian content for both networks that continued
12 to rely heavily upon popular primetime US programs (Rutherford 1990).

13 By the early 1960s, however, another new element had begun to radi-
14 cally transform the continental media landscape. It was at this point that
15 entrepreneurs began developing and building coaxial cable and television
16 systems in Canadian cities, thus opening the door to US signals and threat-
17 ening to further overwhelm the broadcasting system with foreign content,
18 while siphoning audiences away from both CTV and CBC (Skinner 2008).
19 Not yet subject to similar legislation to that of direct broadcasting (cable
20 did not utilize the radio spectrum), cable television would develop accord-
21 ing to the sole prerogative of market forces, and, by 1963, there were
22 already 323 cable systems operating across the country, reaching 200,000
23 households (Raboy 1990). Cable quickly provided subscribers with an
24 expansive array of viewing options, better reception, and, for Anglophone
25 viewers, the most popular US programs. The ongoing expansion of cable
26 also fragmented audiences and undermined the notion of public broad-
27 casting based on understandings of a ‘mass’ audience, while naturalizing
28 the idea of ‘markets’ of subscribers and, beyond this concept, discourses
29 of consumer choice. However, despite these challenges both Anglophones
30 and Francophones “demonstrated a marked preference for their own news
31 and current affairs, as well as for Canadian sportscasts” (Rutherford 1990,
32 p. 141) on CTV and CBC.

33 All of these issues were the subjects of renewed attention of a newly
34 elected Liberal government. This was a government that intended to bring
35 the cable industry into the national regulatory framework while ensuring
36 that the public broadcaster had a mandate to promote national unity (espe-
37 cially on Radio-Canada) to quell the growing threat of Quebec national-
38 ism spurred by the Quiet Revolution. The subsequent introduction of the
39 Broadcasting Act (1968) established a new regulatory agency, the Canadian
40 Radio-Television Commission (CRTC), to supervise, regulate, and license
41 all broadcasting undertakings, including traditional transmitting enter-
42 prises, and the new receiving enterprises associated with the cable industry.
43 The Act did very little, however, to alter the dominant structures or rela-
44 tionships of Canadian broadcasting, and, importantly, it “did not stop the
45 pendulum from continuing to swing in favor of the private sector” (Raboy
46

1990, p. 180). As Raboy (*Ibid*) has argued, the Broadcasting Act's main impact was ideological: "[w]hile it strengthened the idea of the public as the ultimate value in broadcasting, it tied that value to a specific conception of national purpose."⁸ From this point forward, though, it would be up to the CRTC to regulate a rapidly changing broadcasting landscape, and to determine what was in the 'nation's' interest.

As the competition between public and private sector escalated over the course of the next decade—a development that further escalated the cost of sports properties—the amount of airtime dedicated to sport on the public broadcaster emerged as the target of criticism on two widely different fronts. First, CTV's executives resented having to compete against the public broadcaster for the most popular sports broadcasting rights that captured lucrative national audiences for advertisers. CTV, like its public competitor, was also losing market share to a burgeoning cable industry; by 1974, 38 percent of households already subscribed to cable services, and revenue from cable operations totaled nearly 50 percent of television revenues (Raboy 1990). Second, many of Canada's cultural elite openly disagreed with the CBC's emphasis on professional sport and other examples of mass/commercial entertainment (especially popular US programs) at the expense of other 'highbrow programming.' The CBC was attacked on both fronts during its CRTC license renewal hearings in 1974. Despite these dual criticisms, the CRTC ultimately supported the concept of public broadcasting and the centrality of the CBC and Radio-Canada within the Canadian system in its licensing decision. However, while it also encouraged the public broadcaster to continue to provide popular sporting programs for all Canadians, the CRTC rejected the notion that the CBC and Radio-Canada should target a mass audience.

The Commission has never believed that the CBC should abandon entertainment programming, including popular presentations and sports . . . It is understood that the national broadcasting service should retain a suitable proportion of this kind of programming . . . However, despite the need for the CBC to continue to provide "popular" broadcasting service, the Commission is of the belief that the CBC, as a public service institution, should guard against considering itself as a "mass-medium" and particularly against considering its audience as a "mass" . . . The CBC must not consider its audience as an agglomeration of 20 million more or less accessible revenue-producing consumers, but rather as an active community of people, with real and varying communication needs. (CRTC 1974, p. 11)

In light of the ongoing threat of Quebec secession, the CRTC also took aim at the contradictions between the public broadcaster's national unity mandate and its split services for "reinforcing the feeling of solitude and seclusion inherent when two distinct linguistic and cultural groups share" (CRTC

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46

1974, p. 20). Yet, despite discouraging the CBC and Radio-Canada from airing programs that targeted a mass, national audience, the CRTC paradoxically recognized that it was only broadcasts of NHL hockey games—a commercial product that was explicitly aimed at a mass audience—that continually connected English and French Canadians on shared occasions:

There have been “common endeavours” which have accomplished a unity of feeling and expression, and this was pointed out at the hearing. But the CBC is evidently not playing an adequate role in this regard if Hockey Night in Canada is the only regular “national event” which transcends a feeling of separation between the two major groups. Consequently, the Commission would be evading its fundamental responsibility if it did not call on the CBC for a more specific commitment to programming which bridges the differences between English-speaking and French-speaking Canada. (1974, p. 30)

While the CRTC had generally supported public broadcasting, the hearings “had shaken the CBC’s image of itself, and the public image of the CBC” (Raboy 1990, p. 246), and had provided a platform for not only its opponents, but also its advocates, to criticize sharply the public broadcaster and its role in Canadian social life. When we take into consideration the growing impact of the cable industry, by the mid-1970s, the public broadcaster was under siege from a variety of fronts.

The question of what counted as a ‘suitable proportion’ of commercial sports programming for the public broadcaster, and, at a broader level, the differences between both English and French networks, were revisited during the CBC’s license renewal hearings in 1979. At this point, the CRTC bluntly noted that: “(a) major problem faced by both television services, was that of sports” (1979, p. 36). Even the CBC’s most influential power brokers, including Tom Kent, openly argued that the public broadcaster had:

Allowed live sports events to roar like a cannon-ball freight train through our prime time schedules at certain times of year, mostly during playoffs. This has been particularly disruptive on the English network where the combination of live prime time sports and US programs has been a significantly limiting factor in expanding Canadian-produced programs . . . Moreover, we’ve been forced to reduce the length of our season for our major news and current affairs programs because of sports gobbling up prime time in the early spring. (*Ibid*)

The escalating critique of the English network’s emphasis on commercial sport in many ways demonstrated just how different the CBC and Radio-Canada had become by the late 1970s. On the one hand, the English network was already fully dependent on professional sport to attract audiences and had willingly embraced standard North American marketing and mass

programming practices in its longstanding competition with US-dominated
1 private stations. Radio-Canada, on the other hand, functioned more as
2 a regional enterprise that, despite growing competition from the private
3 sector, offered a more diverse and ambitious platform of popular French-
4 language programming without relying almost exclusively on professional
5 sport to attract sizeable and loyal audiences. These tensions would become
6 even more pronounced over the course of the next decade, while the pres-
7 ence of sport on both networks (but especially the CBC) would be chal-
8 lenged more acutely due to the continued expansion of cable television and
9 satellite services and specialty sport channels.

**THE NEW DIGITAL BROADCASTING LANDSCAPE:
REQUIEM FOR PUBLIC BROADCASTING?**

By the early 1980s, “(w)ith economic tremors from the end of the postwar
16 boom rocking the economy and US satellite signals nibbling at the edges
17 of the broadcast system, the federal government developed a new policy
18 vision for the communications sector” (Skinner 2008, p. 7). Central to this
19 vision—and set against the ‘threat’ of foreign satellite broadcasters—was an
20 expanded subscription cable system to provide an increased range of spe-
21 cialty Canadian and foreign programming services to help retain Canadian
22 audiences. These new specialty channels would be restricted to the discre-
23 tionary tier, to be purchased by household subscribers on top of a basic fee
24 paid to local cable companies (Sparks 1992). In this respect, the new chan-
25 nels would be considered private undertakings regulated by market forces.
26

It was within this deregulatory context that Canada’s first 24-hour cable
27 sports specialty channel, TSN (owned by the Labatt Brewing Company)
28 was licensed by the CRTC in 1984. Its sister network, the all-sport French-
29 language service RDS, was licensed in 1989. While TSN was formed to
30 promote the Labatt brand and products, it was also a valuable circuit of pro-
31 motion (Whitson 1998) for the brewery to market its Major League Baseball
32 team, the Toronto Blue Jays, to a principally male demographic that adver-
33 tisers wanted to target. These developments would foreshadow the patterns
34 of cross-ownership and cross-marketing that would fully materialize in
35 the new millennium as vertically integrated media conglomerates merged
36 their distribution networks with popular sporting content to capitalize on
37 a host of promotional synergies. Despite its early licensing conditions, TSN
38 emerged as a competitor to the major national networks (Sparks 1992), and,
39 of course, quickly attracted subscribers to cable in a cost-effective manner.
40 As a result of its sole focus on sport, TSN was able to offer complete cover-
41 age of entire tournaments or sporting events without disrupting regularly
42 scheduled programming. The ability to offer full coverage was a competitive
43 advantage that “offered guaranteed exposure for sporting events, which in
44 turn enticed other leagues and event organizers to side with TSN rather than
45

10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46

any of the other ‘big three’ Canadian conventional broadcasters (Global, CTV, and CBC)” (Neverson 2010, p. 37). As we will see, the ability of RDS to air unprecedented amounts of hockey games would lure the NHL away from Radio-Canada in the new millennium. Finally, in 1989, TSN gained access to the analogue cable system as discretionary services that could be purchased on top of basic cable; TSN was subsequently able to accrue both advertising and cable subscription revenues that would further solidify its financial foundation and ability to secure sports properties.

In addition to these developments, other political pressures were also on the horizon for the CBC. In 1984, a new Conservative Government gained power and Prime Minister Brian Mulroney declared the country to be ‘open for business,’ setting the stage for the landmark free trade agreement with the US in 1988. The federal government immediately directed the CBC to cut its budget by 10 percent (Raboy 1990) and initiated a host of market reforms that would eventually lead to the further expansion of the broadcasting system according to the prerogatives of private capital. These trends were further heightened during the early 1990s as a result of the impacts of globalization, market liberalization, and the emergence of new satellite and digital technologies that were radically transforming the broadcasting and telecommunication industries (Skinner 2008). All of these developments were reflective of “a ‘power shift’ towards the subordination of the public interest to private, commercial interests” (Winseck 1995, p. 101), and the ascension of a new era of ‘consumer-driven’ digital television characterized by unprecedented levels of consumer choice and customized channels (Skinner 2008).

The vast increase in channel capacity, though, also sharpened the competition for popular sport programming. It was at this point that private broadcasters and their ideological allies – most notably *The Globe and Mail*—stepped up their lobbying efforts to force the CBC and Radio-Canada to abandon its coverage of the most lucrative and desirable sports, most notably NHL hockey and the Olympic Games. First, over the course of the CBC’s license renewal hearings in March 1994, the public broadcaster’s executives were grilled by CRTC chairman Keith Spicer and other commissioners about the presence of professional sport on the public broadcaster when other private networks were more than willing to take over those broadcasting rights. CTV further fuelled these criticisms two months later with the release of a document entitled “A Perspective on the CBC” that attempted to demonstrate that the public broadcaster lost a significant amount of money on sports, especially in light of the growing cost of broadcasting rights.⁹ This was a document that was explicitly aimed at damaging CBC Sports during a time of fiscal austerity. Indeed, between 1993 and 1997, the CBC’s budget was cut by almost one third (significantly impacting on local programming services), while the Opposition Conservatives intensified their calls to privatize the public broadcaster (Skinner 2008).

All of these pressures contributed to the CRTC's (1994, p. 38) recommendation in July 1994 that the CBC, "particularly the English-language network," decrease its emphasis on professional sport. For the CRTC (1994, p. 38), most Canadians now simply had access to "alternative sources of such coverage, including commercial broadcasters and dedicated spots channel on cable." CTV continued its attack on the CBC during a parliamentary committee on Canadian Heritage and accused the public broadcaster of "using public dollars to engage in bidding wars with private broadcasters for pro sports" (as cited in Manera 1996, p. 124). *The Globe and Mail* (Why The 1994, p. A2) further fanned these arguments in an editorial entitled "Why the CBC should get out of pro sports" that argued: "With the 500-channel universe nearly upon us, CBC needs to focus on the things that make it distinctive, the things that others fail to do. Sports [sic] is not one of them. The CBC should hang up its sports blazers and let private broadcasters take the mike." This was, incidentally, a vision of public broadcasting shared by many elite cultural nationalists who have long complained that the CBC has strayed from its mandate as a public service network by airing popular sporting content. For both the private sector and many cultural nationalists, then, the CBC should simply function like a 'PBS of the North' and embrace a much narrower mandate, one in which the role of the public broadcaster is excellence in news and current affairs, original Canadian drama, and 'specials' (in the arts, in Canadian history, and in documentary). Such a mandate would, in other words, cater to providing minority programming that attracts small enough audiences as to be not commercially viable (Scherer and Whitson 2009).

In light of this ongoing campaign, the role of sports on the CBC, and beyond that, the mandate of the public broadcaster, were taken up by the House of Commons Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage only two years later, and it was recommended once again that CBC and Radio-Canada should dramatically reduce its coverage of professional sports. Their report suggested that both the CBC and Radio-Canada should remain in the business of broadcasting NHL hockey, but that it should avoid the congestion that occurs at playoff time—when games are shown in prime-time hours almost every evening for seven or eight weeks—by sharing the rights with private sector broadcasters. Committee members complained about what they saw as the public broadcaster's "excessive enthusiasm for sports programming":

For the past decade, CBC and Radio-Canada have both chosen to provide blanket coverage of each round of the Stanley Cup playoffs. It involves one or more playoff games for up to six nights a week, for a period of at least seven or eight weeks in April and May. Despite Canada's ongoing love affair with hockey, we believe that the CBC has simply lost its sense of proportion. It disenfranchises millions of viewers (who are not hockey fans) for several months, completely pre-empts

62 Jay Scherer and Jean Harvey

1 other parts of the program schedule that a public broadcaster might
2 be expected to telecast, and consistently delays the major nightly news
3 and current affairs shows on both of its networks. (Mandate Review
4 Committee *et al.* 1996, p. 79–80)

5
6 Just as they had done for the past two decades, however, CBC and Radio-
7 Canada executives vigorously defended the commitment they had made to
8 *HNIC* and *La soirée du hockey* in general, and to televising the playoffs
9 in particular, pointing to the huge audiences that hockey attracts and the
10 advertising revenues that hockey telecasts brings to the network, revenues
11 that subsidize other programming.

12 However, just as the public sector was dealing with significant cutbacks,
13 the CRTC continued to license new specialty sport channels owned by
14 major corporate players in the broadcasting industry (e.g., Sportsnet¹⁰),
15 while longstanding regulatory frameworks that kept broadcasting and tele-
16 communications markets separate were rescinded by the federal Liberal
17 government. Barriers that once separated print, broadcasting, and telecom-
18 munications and information/computer sectors evaporated and triggered
19 an unprecedented acceleration of mergers and acquisitions (Mosco 2003).
20 In 2000, for example, BCE bought CTV (the country's largest private tele-
21 vision network) and, with it, acquired TSN/RDS. BCE then struck an alli-
22 ance with premier national newspaper *The Globe and Mail* and combined
23 CTV and the Sympatico-Lycos portal (and its other content creation assets)
24 to form Bell Globemedia. That same year, in Quebec, Quebecor purchased
25 Videotron (the largest cable service provider in Quebec) and the private
26 French-language television network, TVA. A year later, Rogers (the owner
27 of the Toronto Blue Jays) acquired Sportsnet from CTV.

28 Coinciding with these patterns of convergence and concentration was
29 the entrance of digital television and, in 2001, over 200 CRTC-approved
30 digital television channels were launched in Canada, including a host of
31 new specialty sport channels (ESPN Classic Canada, Fox Sports World
32 Canada, Leafs TV, the NHL Network, the Racing Network, Raptors NBA
33 TV, X-Treme Sports, and the ill-fated Women's Television Sports Network).
34 It will be of no surprise to readers to learn that all of new digital channels
35 were backed by the most successful and, indeed, pre-established media play-
36 ers in the Canadian market (Neverson 2010). All of these developments, of
37 course, point toward tighter integration in the communications and 'info-
38 tainment' industries as deep-pocketed media conglomerates like BCE and
39 Rogers compete for premium sport content that can now be distributed
40 and cross-marketed to subscribers through a host of integrated digital
41 information and entertainment service arenas. It should also be noted that
42 Rogers and BCE can also over-pay for various sports broadcasting rights
43 and amortize those costs over various properties and platforms (television
44 channels, internet, radio, and print properties), including recently approved
45 multiple feeds (e.g., TSN2, RIS, RDS2, Sportsnet ONE, etc.) and mobile
46

| | |
|--|----|
| phones. ¹¹ Or they can simply join forces as a consortium to secure broadcasting rights, just as they did to win the rights to the 2010 Winter Olympic Games in Vancouver and the 2012 Summer Games in London with an exorbitant and entirely unprofitable bid of \$CAD153 million. | 1 |
| Prepared to overpay for sports broadcasting rights in the present as an investment in the future growth of pay-TV, internet, and mobile handset revenues (among other distribution outlets), these companies are now able to vastly outbid a CBC/Radio-Canada inevitably limited by constraints on the public purse and lacking similar distribution networks. Unlike the CBC and Radio-Canada, Rogers and BCE can, crucially, recover some of their costs through multiple revenue streams: ads, subscription rates, and the ‘fees for carriage’ that they receive from other satellite and cable companies. Predictably, in the new millennium, a number of properties that had previously aired on the public broadcaster (e.g., CFL football, curling, the Olympic Games, the FIFA World Cup, MLS Soccer, and the Toronto Raptors) were purchased by the BCE and Rogers to supply much-needed popular content to their growing number of distribution networks. Despite these pressures, however, the public broadcaster has been able to maintain its most popular and lucrative sports property—NHL games—but only for its English language network. It is to a discussion of these developments that we now turn. | 2 |
| | 3 |
| | 4 |
| | 5 |
| | 6 |
| | 7 |
| | 8 |
| | 9 |
| | 10 |
| | 11 |
| | 12 |
| | 13 |
| | 14 |
| | 15 |
| | 16 |
| | 17 |
| | 18 |
| | 19 |
| | 20 |
| | 21 |
| | 22 |
| | 23 |
| THE DEMISE OF LA SOIRÉE DU HOCKEY AND THE RETENTION OF HNIC | 24 |
| In May 2002, Radio-Canada announced that its broadcasting deal with the NHL and the Montreal Canadiens would expire at the end of the 2001–02 hockey season because tentative discussions with the specialty channel RDS (owned by Bell Media) had failed. RDS had, in fact, purchased the rights to a minimum of thirty regular season games and playoff games up to the conference finals for the Montreal Canadiens and the Ottawa Senators (Reuters 2002). The withdrawal of Radio-Canada—and the potential demise of coast-to-coast, over-the-air coverage of hockey games on <i>La soirée du hockey</i> —outraged French-speaking Canadians inside and outside of Quebec, who would either have to watch HNIC in English or subscribe to cable or satellite television. Importantly, cable penetration at the time was only 85 percent, and a number of households would simply not have been able to access the games (personal communication, Francois Messier). | 25 |
| The demise of this cultural tradition did not go unnoticed at the federal political level and Federal Heritage Minister Sheila Copps (the Minister responsible for national unity, sports and the CBC/Radio-Canada) expressed concern that [freely translated] “throughout Canada, the French-speaking public would not have any more access to Canadiens games on <i>La Soirée du Hockey</i> ” (Canadian Press 2002a). Meetings of the House of | 26 |
| | 27 |
| | 28 |
| | 29 |
| | 30 |
| | 31 |
| | 32 |
| | 33 |
| | 34 |
| | 35 |
| | 36 |
| | 37 |
| | 38 |
| | 39 |
| | 40 |
| | 41 |
| | 42 |
| | 43 |
| | 44 |
| | 45 |
| | 46 |

Commons Standing Joint Committee on Official Languages were subsequently scheduled to look at the issue, and this political pressure spurred RDS and the Canadiens to begin new negotiations with Radio-Canada (Canadian Press 2002b). A three-year deal with RDS was eventually announced that allowed Radio-Canada to broadcast between 20 and 25 matches on Saturday nights, as well as the Canadiens' post-season games (Radio-Canada 2002). In 2004, though, this agreement was not renewed, thus sealing the fate of *La soirée du hockey* at Radio-Canada.¹² As we shall see below, both the Canadiens and the NHL wanted all of the team's games to be carried exclusively on only one channel. Radio-Canada was not only unwilling to overpay for those rights (which the public broadcaster considered to be over-valued given the team's lack of success at the time), but the public broadcaster was equally unwilling to dedicate a greater portion of its television schedule to coverage of NHL hockey.

In 2006, it was widely speculated that *HNIC* would suffer a similar fate, with the CBC's \$CAD65 million/year contract with the NHL due to expire in 2008. Several media reports, in fact, also suggested that a battle was looming between CBC and CTV-TSN, with the latter reported to be willing to pay \$CAD140 million a year for NHL broadcast and cable rights. In June 2006, these concerns were further provoked by a Senate Transport and Communications Committee report that argued that "CBC television focus its efforts on providing a range of services that do not inappropriately duplicate those of the private sector. In particular, the CBC should leave coverage of professional sports and the Olympics to the private sector" (Standing Senate Committee on Transport and Communications 2006, p. 36). Doubts over the future of *HNIC* were further amplified in September 2006 when CBC senior managers appeared before the all-party Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage and publicly speculated that it was distinctly possible that the CBC could lose its broadcast deal to CTV. If this were to happen, management warned, "almost everything about English television" would have to be re-evaluated (CBC 2006). Not only would the CBC face a serious loss in revenue without weekly hockey broadcasts, but the network would also have to fill a massive 400-hour programming hole on Saturday nights from October to April. By late 2006, even high-profile supporters of public broadcasting, including former CBC President Tony Manera, were resigned to the fact that the CBC was likely to lose *HNIC*.

It was to the surprise of many, then, that the CBC aggressively pursued a new contract with the NHL, pushing up its exclusive negotiating window period by a year. And, in March 2007, the CBC and the NHL announced a new six-year deal rumored to be worth \$CAD600 million: a stunning increase from the previous annual fee of \$CAD65 million. These developments, however, have meant that, while telecasts of NHL hockey have remained available free-to-air in English on the CBC, Francophone viewers have been denied equivalent access on Radio-Canada, fracturing the viewing rights of Canadians along linguistic lines. Such a conspicuous division

| | |
|---|----|
| in a country where questions of cultural identity and the political relations between Anglophone and Francophone regions are taken seriously, of course, begs the question: why was Radio-Canada unable or unwilling to make a similar investment in hockey telecasts as the CBC? | 1 |
| | 2 |
| | 3 |
| | 4 |
| | 5 |
| | 6 |
| | 7 |
| | 8 |
| | 9 |
| | 10 |
| | 11 |
| | 12 |
| | 13 |
| | 14 |
| | 15 |
| | 16 |
| | 17 |
| | 18 |
| | 19 |
| | 20 |
| | 21 |
| | 22 |
| | 23 |
| | 24 |
| | 25 |
| | 26 |
| | 27 |
| | 28 |
| | 29 |
| | 30 |
| | 31 |
| | 32 |
| | 33 |
| | 34 |
| | 35 |
| | 36 |
| | 37 |
| | 38 |
| | 39 |
| | 40 |
| | 41 |
| | 42 |
| | 43 |
| | 44 |
| | 45 |
| | 46 |

giant, BCE. Within this context, though, the role of Radio-Canada no longer includes broadcasting the professional sports that are ‘major league’ in Canadian popular culture. Indeed, Radio-Canada has almost completely retreated from airing sport altogether, and now primarily covers amateur sports which Canadians are not widely exposed to on the commercial networks (e.g., its seasonal Quebec University football telecasts, a 15 minute sport news show that followed the weekday evening news, and a weekly amateur sport magazine, *Tellement sport*). Moreover, what was once a cultural tradition for all—over-the-air access to telecasts of *La soirée du hockey*—has been abandoned to the market, and now exists simply as a consumer choice.

In contrast, the CBC continues to face a very different set of limits and pressures within the competitive continental English broadcasting market. Unlike Radio-Canada, the CBC has struggled to develop genuinely popular Canadian content that consistently reaches national audiences throughout the broadcasting week, especially during prime-time hours. English Canadians have, historically, enjoyed watching popular US programs, and the viewership opportunities provided by digital television have only amplified their options. Within this context, *HNIC* has been, and remains, the most popular and, indeed, profitable program for the CBC. *HNIC* provides an important promotional platform for the public network and the show continues to provide a vital revenue stream that subsidizes the CBC’s wide range of other programming. According to Richard Stursberg (the former head of the CBC’s English services), so central is *HNIC* to the financing of the public broadcaster that, without the show, “the CBC would fall into a grave financial crisis that would imperil its survival” (2012, p. 148). Moreover, unlike Radio-Canada, the CBC simply could never afford to replace the 400+ hours of prime-time Canadian content with original dramatic programs that would be expected to compete with the most popular US dramatic and entertainment programs that air on CTV and Global. As Stursberg notes:

An average one-hour drama costs the CBC between \$400,000 and \$450,000 per hour to commission on a total budget of \$1.2–1.4 million (the rest being made up from the Canadian Media Fund and tax credits). Given their normal audiences, Canadian dramas rarely make \$200,000 in advertising revenue. This means that each hour of drama commissioned by the CBC produces a loss of at least \$200,000. It can be seen, then, that if four hundred hours of hockey were replaced with four hundred hours of drama, the CBC would need to find an additional \$80–100 million. At the same time, the Canadian Media Fund would have to be supplemented with another \$80–100 million, and the government’s television production tax credits would be further drawn by a comparable amount. In other words, if the government wanted the CBC to eliminate hockey and replace it with original Canadian drama,

the costs would be somewhere between \$240 million and \$300 million.
(2012, p. 148)

This latter scenario is, of course, impossible given the recent financial cuts to the CBC and, as such, the CBC would have two remaining options to replace the hundreds of hours of popular hockey telecasts:

. . . break the Canadian-content quotas (now 80 percent on CBC prime time) by replacing *Hockey Night in Canada* with foreign shows, or replace it with repeats of shows that are already available on the prime-time schedule. Apart from making Saturday nights unspeakably boring, this latter course would also ensure a significant collapse of CBC's share of the Canadian audience, with further consequences for its reputation and relevance. (Stursberg 2012, p. 149)

It scarcely needs saying that either of these two options would profoundly erode the CBC's market share and irrevocably damage its relationship with advertisers. If the CBC were to lose *HNIC* to the private sector, moreover, the already limited presence of the public sector in the lives of Canadians (outside of educated elites) would certainly be radically reduced. Such a development would, in Stuart Hall's (1984) terms, reinforce commonsense perceptions of the market as 'provider,' and as the source of our most vivid experiences of fun and community, while the public sector—in this case the CBC—simply retreats and 'morphs' into a 'PBS of the North,' albeit on a much smaller scale given the size of Canada's population. It was for all of these reasons that CBC executives aggressively pursued a new broadcasting contract with the NHL, thus securing the viewing rights of English-speaking Canadians across the country.

CONCLUSION

In summing up, we have argued that a host of political-economic developments, coupled with the longstanding cultural and structural differences between the English and French broadcast markets, continue to set limits and exert powerful pressures upon aspects of the production and consumption of popular culture in Canada. In this instance, these issues have resulted in unequal access to over-the-air telecasts of NHL hockey games along linguistic lines. These developments, however, appear to challenge the public broadcaster's mandate to provide "a wide range of programming that informs, enlightens and entertains . . . is predominantly and distinctly Canadian" and is available "in English and French" (as cited in Skinner 2008, p. 16).

To secure the viewing rights of all Canadians to watch the most popular sports on the public broadcaster will require significant political willpower

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46

and considerable expense in the new, competitive digital broadcasting era. This will be an era in which the cost of sports broadcasting rights will grow to unprecedented levels as powerful telecommunications giants aggressively pursue the most popular content to secure subscribers across the country as they expand their digital platforms in English and French. All of these developments point to a radical expansion of the viewing opportunities for Canadian sports fans, at least for those who can afford increasingly pricey subscription/mobile fees (and the requisite technologies): the corollary of the escalation of the cost of sports broadcasting rights. Indeed, these rights are now so expensive that even the most profitable telecommunications companies are, in key moments, collaborating to secure the most lucrative sports content. For example, in December 2011, BCE and Rogers telecommunication companies paid more than \$CAD1 billion to acquire a 75 percent stake in Maple Leaf Sports and Entertainment to secure the television rights to the Toronto Maple Leafs, the Toronto Raptors, and Toronto FC (Rogers already owns the Toronto Blue Jays) that will air on the Rogers-owned Sportsnet channels and BCE's TSN/TSN2.¹³

At the same time in Quebec, TVA, a constituent of the Quebecor media conglomerate, was also granted a license for a specialty sport channel to compete against RDS (BCE). It should also be noted that Quebecor has also signed a contract with Quebec City for the management of a proposed new arena (to be built entirely with municipal and provincial public monies) with the ultimate aim of purchasing an NHL franchise. Such a development would profoundly change the Quebec media landscape and could renew the popular rivalry between the Quebec Nordiques and Montreal Canadiens from the late 1970s until 1995 when the Nordiques departed to Colorado: "la guerre de la 20" (literally, the war of the 20) in reference to the highway that runs between the two cities. While the first act of that war was a battle between two beer companies (O'Keefe, later purchased by Labbatt, owned the Quebec Nordiques, and Molson the Montreal Canadiens), in the new millennium the war would be between two major Canadian telecommunication and media conglomerates, Quebecor and BCE (Harvey and Law 2005), underscoring a radical change in the connection between professional sport and various business agendas in recent years.

While the CBC and Radio-Canada have received CRTC approval for specialty sport channels, budgetary pressures and austerity measures under a majority Conservative Government have derailed these initiatives and serious questions remain over the ability of the CBC to secure the upcoming hockey rights. Moreover, unlike the most powerful telecommunication empires, the public broadcaster lacks its own distribution networks/platforms and certainly does not own professional sports teams as part of a vertical integration strategy. As such, the public broadcaster may need to further establish its online presence and pursue minor roles in partnerships with the private sector to simply 'stay in the game'

of televising the most popular sports in Canada. It was precisely such a partnership that was envisioned by CBC executives when the public broadcaster joined with BCE to submit a \$CAD70 million bid for the rights to the 2014 Winter Olympic Games in Sochi, Russia, and the 2016 Summer Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil: a bid that was rejected by the International Olympic Committee (IOC). It was to the surprise of many industry insiders, then, that the embattled CBC and Radio-Canada subsequently submitted an exclusive bid rumored to be worth between \$CAD65–80 million that was accepted by the IOC. The ‘replacement value’ of the Games may, in fact, be worth more for the CBC than its private competitors, thus allowing the public broadcaster to recoup some of the expense of the costly deal. According to the journalists Bruce Dowbiggin and Steven Chase (2012):

Replacement value is one of the key points that make the Olympics viable for CBC when it might not work for a private broadcaster. For a private network such as CTV, the difference in audience and, therefore, ad revenues between an Olympic opening ceremony and the season finale of an American program such as *CSI* is not that great. The Olympics don’t move the needle that greatly for ratings. For CBC, however, the gap in audience between its domestically generated programming and an Olympic opening ceremony is much greater. That means CBC can generate more revenue with an Olympics telecast than it might with its usual broadcasting. Likewise, CBC would have to pay the costs of filling those hours that would be occupied by the Olympics.

The CBC will also be able to air Olympic programming on its other non-sport digital channels and boost viewership on its website.

Despite this most recent victory, there is unprecedented pressure from private broadcasters and their allies for the CBC to leave the national NHL rights to the market and it has, once again, been widely predicted that the public broadcaster will be unable to retain the rights to *HNIC* when the current contract expires at the end of the 2013–14 season (Stursberg, 2012). If this were to happen, though, an important national tradition would fade from the screen, while the viewing rights of Anglophone Canadians, like their Francophone counterparts, would be restructured and naturalized as consumer choices and eventually depoliticized altogether, especially as rates of cable and satellite penetration continue to grow. We should not be surprised, indeed, if the CBC *further* retreats from professional sport, that the public broadcaster would largely disappear from the lives of much of the population. And, in these circumstances, political support for the public broadcaster would surely continue to decline, just the result that CBC critics in the Conservative Party actively wish for as they pursue the ultimate conclusion of their pro-market political project: the day when the CBC disappears from Canadian television screens altogether.

1
2
ACKNOWLEDGMENT

3 This research was funded by a grant from the Social Sciences and Humani-
4 ties Research Council of Canada.
5
6

7
NOTES

- 8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
1. By the time war broke out in 1939, audiences had grown to almost two million, making *HNIC* the first Canadian radio program to reach genuinely national audiences (Rutherford 1978).
 2. A license-fee was abandoned in 1953 and replaced by a 15 percent excise tax on television sets and parts that, for two years, produced surpluses as a result of the initial widespread demand for televisions. However, the buying boom declined and, by 1955/56, the CBC was faced with a deficit (Rutherford 1990).
 3. The audience numbers for football matches were so significant that the CBC paid the CFL \$325,000 for the rights to broadcast the 1960 season (Peers 1979).
 4. As part of Caldwell's application to operate the network, he applied to the BBG for permission to distribute telecasts of the 1961 Big Four football games beginning August 11. At that time, though, it was only possible to link four stations by microwave (Toronto, Ottawa, and two in Montreal), thus excluding thousands of households across the country that had access to these matches on the CBC only a year earlier. To address this discrepancy, Bassett offered to incorporate CBC affiliates outside Toronto, Ottawa, and Montreal into the CTV network to broadcast the games. Under the Broadcasting Act (1958), however, stations affiliated with the CBC could not operate "as part of another network without the approval of the BBG, and the BBG could not grant approval without the permission of the CBC" (Stewart and Hull 1994, p. 106). Reluctant to allow CTV to further extend its audience through the CBC's affiliated stations, the CBC predictably declined Bassett's offer. Without the possibility of including CBC affiliates, Bassett ultimately sold the 1961 Big Four football rights to the CBC.
 5. At the time of its licensing CTV owned no station of its own and had no production capabilities. The new network was, in turn, reliant on providing sponsored programs (most from the US) for the eight affiliated private stations across the country.
 6. In addition to the network's widely lauded role as host and domestic broadcaster for the 1988 Calgary Winter Olympic Games CTV, would later air the 1994 and 2010 Winter Olympics. CTV also previously hosted the 1984 Summer Olympic Games in Sarajevo and the 1992 Barcelona Olympics (both with TVA as its French counterpart), and the 1994 Lillehammer Winter Olympics (with TVA as well).
 7. In 1971, Télémétropole joined forces with other local TV operators across the province to become TVA, the first private French language network in Canada (now part of the Quebecor media conglomerate). In 1972, the government of Quebec launched Télé-Québec a state owned TV operator whose mandate was focused on quality educative TV and the promotion of Québec culture. Finally, another generalist French network, TQS (now V) was launched in 1986, adding to competition in the small French Canadian market.

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| 8. | Indeed, over the course of the next fifteen years, the public broadcaster aired nationally-significant events, including the 1976 Summer Olympic Games in Montreal and the 1978 Commonwealth Games in Edmonton. These were opportunities for the federal Government to promote a nationalist agenda in the face of concerns about Quebec secession (Cantelon and Macintosh 1986). | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 9. | Notably, the CBC had just won the broadcast rights to the 1996 Atlanta Olympic Games by outbidding the CTV/TVA consortium (which had paid \$US16.5 million for the 1992 Barcelona Olympics). CTV, however, accused its public rival of over-paying for the rights and benefiting from "a safety net provided by its parliamentary appropriation" (Manera 1996, p. 121). The CBC's bid of \$US20.75 million was strengthened by the public broadcaster's multiple platforms: English and French, radio and television, Newsworld, satellite, and additional pay-per-view elements that were not present in the CTV/TVA's bid. | 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 |
| 10. | Launched in 1998 by CTV as a regional network (with four feeds for different regions), Sportsnet provided coverage of local teams, providing an important revenue stream for those franchises. | 14 15 |
| 11. | In a move to prevent mobile content hoarding, in 2011, the CRTC ruled that vertically-integrated telecommunication companies like BCE must make their sports content available under reasonable terms (i.e., price) to competing mobile phone and internet providers (e.g., Telus). | 16 17 18 19 |
| 12. | For Mario Clément, director of programming at Radio-Canada at the time, the blame for the demise of <i>La soirée du hockey</i> and the non-renewal of the 2002 deal fell squarely on the shoulders of Pierre Boivin, the General Manager of the Canadiens. According to Clément, Radio-Canada was unable to air all the games of the Canadiens (including playoffs) for strategic and financial reasons and, therefore, the Canadiens simply turned to RDS. Moreover, financially, the 2002 deal was not good for the CBC as it had to pay all of the production costs while the revenues were going to RDS (Dumas 2004). It is important to note that a subsequent agreement between Radio-Canada and RDS allowed the public broadcaster to televise Canadiens games in areas in Canada where minority Francophones were unable to access RDS either via cable or via satellite. This development, in turn, created a situation where Quebecers had to pay to watch the Canadiens on RDS (those who did not subscribe to cable were excluded altogether), while Francophones outside Quebec were able to access the games for free on Radio-Canada (Cauchon 2004). | 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 |
| 13. | They also now control MLSE's other distribution channels including Leafs TV, NBA TV Canada, and GolTV Canada. | 33 34 35 36 37 |
| REFERENCES | | 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 |
| Canadian Press, 2002a. | <i>L'avenir de la Soirée du Hockey à la Radio-Canada est Assuré Pour Trois Saisons</i> [online]. Available from: http://cf.sports.yahoo.com/020723/1/7ko6.html [Accessed 16 January 2003]. | |
| Canadian Press, 2002b. | <i>La Survie de la Soirée du hockey à la Radio-Canada sera discutée au Parlement</i> [online]. Available from: http://cf.sports.yahoo.com/020531/1/77ml.html [Accessed 16 January 2003]. | |
| Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission, 1994. | <i>Renewal of the English-Language and French-Language Television Network Licences</i> . Ottawa. | |

72 Jay Scherer and Jean Harvey

- 1 _____, 1979. *Renewal of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation's Television*
2 *and Radio Network Licences*. Ottawa.
3 _____, 1974. *Renewal of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation's Television*
4 *and Radio Network Licences*. Ottawa.
5 Cantelon, H. and Macintosh, D., 1986. Televised Sport as a Purveyor of Canadian
6 Government Sports Policy. *Leisure Studies* 5(2), pp. 147–158.
7 Cauchon, P., 2004. La soirée du hockey disparaît des ondes de Radio-Canada. *Le*
8 *Devoir*, 3 June, p. b7.
9 Cavanaugh, R., 1992. The Development of Canadian Sports Broadcasting 1920–78.
10 *Canadian Journal of Communication*, 17, pp. 301–317.
11 CBC, 2006. Heritage Committee Grills CBC Bosses on Reality TV, Hockey [online].
12 Available from: <http://www.cbc.ca/arts/story/2006/09/28/cbc-heritage-committee.html> [Accessed 15 October 2006].
13 Dowbiggin, B., and Chase, S., 2012. Industry Curious about How CBC Can
14 Afford Olympics [online]. Available from : <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/sports/industry-curious-about-how-cbc-can-afford-olympics/article4459451/>
15 [Accessed 1 August 2012].
16 Dumas, H., 2004. La soirée du hockey mise en échec. *La Presse*, 29 April, p. 2.
17 Gruneau, R., and Whitson, D., 1993. *Hockey Night in Canada: Sport, Identities*
18 *and Cultural Politics*. Toronto: Garamond Press.
19 Hall, S., 1984. The Culture Gap. *Marxism Today*, January, p. 18–22.
20 Harvey, J., 2006. Whose Sweater Is This? The Changing Meanings of Hockey in
21 Quebec. In: D. Whitson and R. Gruneau, eds., *Artificial Ice: Hockey, Culture,*
22 *and Commerce*. Toronto: Broadview Press, pp. 29–52.
23 Harvey, J., and Law, A., 2005. ‘Resisting’ the Global Media Oligopoly? The Can-
24 ada Inc. Response. In: M. Silk, D. Andrews and C.L. Cole, eds., *Sport and*
25 *Corporate Nationalism*. Berg: Oxford, pp. 187–225.
26 Mandate Review Committee, CBC, NFB, Telefilm, 1996. *Making Our Voices*
27 *Heard: Canadian Broadcasting and Film for the 21st Century*. Ottawa.
28 Manera, T., 1996. *A Dream Betrayed: The Cattle for the CBC*. Toronto: Stoddart
29 Publishing.
30 Mosco, V., 2003. The Transformation of Communication in Canada. In: W.
31 Clement and L. Vosko, eds., *Changing Canada: Political economy as trans-*
32 *formation*. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, pp.
33 287–308.
34 Neverson, N., 2010. Build it and the Women will Come? WTSN and the Advent
35 of Canadian Digital Television. *Canadian Journal of Communication*, 35, pp.
36 27–48.
37 Nolan, M., 2001. *CTV: The Network that Means Business*. Edmonton: The Uni-
38 versity of Alberta Press.
39 Peers, F., 1979. *The Public Eye: Television and the Politics of Canadian Broadcast-*
40 *ing 1952–1968*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
41 Raboy, M., 1990. *Missed Opportunities: The Story of Canada’s Broadcasting*
42 *Policy*. Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press.
43 Radio-Canada, 2002. *La Soirée du hockey se poursuit à la télévision de*
44 *Radio-Canada* [online]. Available from:<http://radio-canada.ca/regions/greg/fichiers/20020724hockey.pdf> [Accessed 16 January 2003].
45 Reuters, 2002. *Fin de la Légendaire Soirée du hockey à Radio-Canada* [online].
46 Available from: <http://cf.sports.yahoo.com/020530/3/77am.html> [Accessed 16
 January 2003].
 Rutherford, P., 1990. *When Television Was Young: Primetime Canada (1952–1967)*.
 Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
 Rutherford, P., 1978. *The Making of the Canadian Media*. Toronto: McGraw Hill-
 Ryerson.

Televised Sport and Cultural Citizenship in Canada 73

| | |
|--|----|
| Scherer, J., and Whitson, D., 2009. Public Broadcasting, Sport, and Cultural Citizenship: The Future of Sport on the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation? <i>International Review for the Sociology of Sport</i> , 44(2ñ3), pp. 213–229. | 1 |
| Skinner, D., 2008, Television in Canada: Continuity or Change? In: D. Ward, ed., <i>Television Public Policy: Change and Continuity in an Era of Global Liberalization</i> . Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, pp. 3–26. | 2 |
| Sparks, R., 1992. Delivering the Male: Sports, Canadian Television, and the Making of TSN. <i>Canadian Journal of Communication</i> , 17, pp. 319–342. | 3 |
| Standing Senate Committee on Transport and Communications, 2006. <i>Final Report on the Canadian News Media</i> (Vol 1). Ottawa. | 4 |
| Stewart, A. and Hull, W., 1994. <i>Canadian Television Policy and the Board of Broadcast Governors, 1958–1968</i> . Edmonton: The University of Alberta Press. | 5 |
| Stursberg, R., 2012. <i>The Tour of Babble: Sins, Secrets and Successes inside the CBC</i> . Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre. | 6 |
| Whitson, D., 1998. Circuits of Promotion: Media, Marketing and the Globalization of Sport. In: L. Wenner, ed., <i>MediaSport</i> . London: Routledge, pp. 57–72. | 7 |
| Why the CBC Should Get out of Pro Sports. 1994. <i>The Globe and Mail</i> , October 27, p. A2. | 8 |
| Winseck, D., 1995. Power Shift? Towards a Political Economy of Canadian Telecommunications and Regulation. <i>Canadian Journal of Communication</i> , 20(1), pp. 81–106. | 9 |
| | 10 |
| | 11 |
| | 12 |
| | 13 |
| | 14 |
| | 15 |
| | 16 |
| | 17 |
| | 18 |
| | 19 |
| | 20 |
| | 21 |
| | 22 |
| | 23 |
| | 24 |
| | 25 |
| | 26 |
| | 27 |
| | 28 |
| | 29 |
| | 30 |
| | 31 |
| | 32 |
| | 33 |
| | 34 |
| | 35 |
| | 36 |
| | 37 |
| | 38 |
| | 39 |
| | 40 |
| | 41 |
| | 42 |
| | 43 |
| | 44 |
| | 45 |
| | 46 |

4 Selling Out

The Gaming of the Living Room Seat for the US Sports Fan

*Lawrence A. Wenner, Robert V. Bellamy
and James R. Walker*

INTRODUCTION

For the US sports fan, gaining access to a ‘big game’ at the stadium—a place that Kidd (1990) views as a citizen-subsidized ‘men’s cultural center’—means taking stock of one’s resources. Going to the game, even for rabid fans, is discretionary. In another era, with empty pockets, one could peer through a hole in the stadium fence to see a game. With limited resources, one might head to the bleachers or upper level ‘nose bleed’ seats. Better-resourced fans might pay for seats on the fifty-yard line or in field boxes near the dugout. Wealthier fans could gravitate to ‘gated communities’ in luxury boxes for premium service and to avoid rubbing elbows with the chattering crowd. The stratified stadium has always provided a case study in cultural geography driven by market segmentation.

Because stadiums can sell out, televised sport elasticized the number of spectators who could watch a game live, providing ‘cheap seats,’ with none bad. This seemed a bargain as entry was thought to be ‘free.’ Yet, there is no ‘free’ television just as there is no free lunch. Instead of fans buying seats at the stadium, the broadcaster bought fans for their value in attending to commercials along with the game. Thus, fans paid for their seats in another way as they subsidized sponsors by buying their products. Such transactions undergird the dynamic of US cultural citizenship. They build on the American dream touted as an egalitarian free enterprise system and promulgate the belief that consumption can play an integral role in cultural citizenship (Cohen 2003). In this chapter, we consider how US cultural citizenship rights may be seen in the evolution of access to broadcasts of professional baseball and football.

CULTURAL CITIZENSHIP AND CONSUMPTION

A consensus definition of cultural citizenship remains elusive. The basic notion speaks to the rights of all citizens to partake in essential parts of cultural life that define what it means to belong in an egalitarian society.

While many scholars agree that cultural citizenship rights should be placed upon the pillars of civic, political, and social rights seen in Marshall's (1950) classic conception of citizenship, questions linger about whether "one can in fact articulate a notion of cultural rights" without identifying obligations like those accompanying rights in other citizenship domains (Turner 2001, pp. 13–14). Similarly, essential debates remain over the contours and instrumentalities of cultural citizenship. Miller (2007), for example, struggles to answer 'what is cultural citizenship?' by assessing seven theoretical strains differing in disciplinary and political concerns. Nonetheless, some commonalities do exist:

[C]ultural citizenship can be described as cultural empowerment, namely the capacity to participate effectively, creatively and successfully within a national culture. Superficially such a form of citizenship would involve access to educational institutions, the possession of an appropriate 'living' language, the effective ownership of cultural identity through national citizenship membership and the capacity to hand on and transfer to future generations the richness of a national cultural heritage. (Turner 2001, p. 12)

Cultural citizenship can be said to have been fulfilled to the extent to which society makes commonly available the semiotic and material cultures necessary in order to make social life meaningful, critique practices of domination, and allow for the recognition of difference under conditions of tolerance and mutual respect. (Stevenson 1997, p. 42)

There is disagreement, however, about how to advance such noble conceptions of cultural citizenship. Many see using capitalism, markets, and consumption to fuel cultural citizenship as problematic because they extend the logic of neoliberalism by conflating consumer and citizen rights, something unacceptable to those who view the interests of consumption and citizenship as oppositional. Such critics hold consumption and self-interested individual choice to be in conflict with citizenship and the advancement of the common good (Trentmann 2007). Thus, quests for cultural citizenship rights often look to the state for answers even while recognizing that this is a 'lesser of two evils' strategy in a globalized world with cultural lines often offset from national borders (Rowe 2004).

Others view the framing of a stark standoff between traditional consumer and citizen roles as misguided, and suggest that their interplay now takes place in an increasingly fused arena defining the public sphere (c.f., Soper and Trentmann 2008). Noting the rise of the 'citizen-consumer,' Trentmann (2007, p. 147) observes that "[w]hile a generation ago, consumption and citizenship tended to be located in opposing spheres of

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46

private and public, associated with competing inner- and outer-regarding norms and actions, they are today increasingly recognized as porous, indeed overlapping domains.” Such hybridization of the citizen-consumer in the US has become naturalized and shapes both the contours of cultural citizenship and the role that television sports plays within it (Cohen 2003).

CONSUMER CITIZENALITY AND REFRAMING COMMONALITY IN US SPORTING IDENTITY

For good or ill, the consumer culture model has so influenced cultural citizenship that Cohen (2003) calls the US a ‘consumers’ republic.’ We argue that faith in the elasticity of the model has led to a rather uncommon set of understandings about how experiences become ‘common’ in cultural citizenship (Stevenson 2007). Further, we reflect on whether ‘uncommon’ experiences can have sufficient commonality to service cultural needs for citizenship and citizen needs for culture. We also explore how the dialectic between common and uncommon relates to the interaction between televised sport with identities and cultural citizenship. Finally, we frame how our case histories of professional baseball and football broadcast strategies illuminate tolerance for US cultural citizenship rights.

No scholar has contributed more to understanding the consumer culture model than the sociologist, Zygmunt Bauman. For Bauman, consumer culture “is a *circulum vitiosus*, magic circle with an osmotic circumference—easy entrance, no exit” (cited in Rojek 2004, p. 304). He characterizes a postmodern ‘liquid modern life’ with a ‘consumer sociality’ where pleasure rules and choices abound. With this form of sociality comes an obligatory ‘market-mediated mode of life’ with a ‘consumerist attitude’ that views life as series of challenges to be solved through individual action. He argues that a ‘collateral casualty’ of consumerism has been a ‘syndrome’ with a ‘masturbatory sociality’ focused on individual pleasure and instant gratification that has enabled aesthetics to overtake ethics (Bauman 2007, Blackshaw 2005). As a result, the ability to transact with the public realm for the common good may diminish because of the inadequacies of individual choice in solving social problems through marketplace solutions (Bauman 2007).

Bauman (2008) regrets the decline of ‘*homo politicus*’ and the rise of ‘*homo consumens*.’ Yet, he sees hope. First, consumers, however flawed as citizens, still wish to engage with social problems and have not fully lost sight of the common good and the public sphere. Second, while conceding that individuals have little choice but to act as consumers, Bauman argues that, in looking for citizenly action, we must look to consumers. Like Bauman, we see looking beyond ‘consumer sociality’

to what might be thought of as ‘consumer citizenship’ as a necessarily imperfect but necessary endeavor. We join a diverse group of scholars unblinded by neoliberalist dogma (Cohen 2003, Soper and Trentmann 2008, Schudson 2007) for whom citizens and consumers are not inherently at odds. These scholars, however, also recognize the limitations of consumption to enact fully the rights and responsibilities of citizenship. Jubas (2007, p. 251), for example, argues that consumption may be a “marker of democratic citizenship” but that “[c]itizenship remains more than consumption.” Schudson (2007, p. 247), too, notes that “[c]itizenship differs from consumerism because it is more likely to involve the question of fairness in the distribution of resources.” Yet, the two roles can dialectically inform each other; and citizenship can be enacted through consumerism (Cronin 2000). Civic engagement may come through ‘virtuous’ or ‘ethical’ consumption seen in green shopping and consumer boycotts (Lewis and Potter 2011) and citizen-consumers may enact the “citizenship dimension” to the point of “consumer disaffection to consumerism” (Soper 2007, p. 205).

As individuality and choice in consumption can at times fuse with civic engagement, collective identity, and the citizen role, Stevenson (2007) sees the need to raise questions about the role of the ‘common’ in cultural citizenship. While cultural citizenship is about commonalities, little is more common than consumption. For example, all consume in Western societies, but far fewer vote (Bauman 2008). We struggle to locate the commonality that defines a ‘common culture,’ let alone its role in citizenship. Certainly, Williams’ (1989) call for ordinary people to have “adequate participation in the process of changing and developing meanings” (p. 35) to permit a “culture in common” (p. 37) did not mean a ‘common culture’ with all on the same page or screen. Similarly, Willis (1990) saw the vastly ‘uncommon’ strategies used by individuals and groups to negotiate and interpret differential access to commercial culture.

The notion of commonness has great elasticity. In the US, most citizens see themselves as middle class (Samuelson 2006). With little in common, many rich and poor think of themselves as ‘commoners.’ When combined with the myth of the American dream, this self-characterization has bred a culture of ‘uncommon’ commoners, regular folks who rely on resourcefulness—‘uncommon’ ways—to craft differentiated identities amidst common culture. This tendency relates to what Miller (2007, pp. 30–31) calls the “centralized project of anticentralization” through which “consumption and citizenship have become mutually constitutive.” Nowhere is this project more evident than in watching television, where we are both ‘alone together’ and share in the cultural milieu. In positioning media experience at the nexus of consumption and citizenship, Couldry, Livingstone, and Markham (2008, p. 108) call this conundrum the “mediated public connection” which is ‘dispersed’ rather than ‘integrative,’ but “crucially connected as practice.” That dispersed media

1 experiences, like integrative ones, may build the bonds of cultural citizenship,
2 mirrors Dewey's (1916) observations about communication's
3 role in building common cultural understandings, in addition to Almond
4 and Verba's (1963) ideas about what it takes to build a 'civic culture.'
5 Whether watching the same or different programs, we all experience
6 television's logic, including commercialization and its interface with citizen-
7 ality, thereby participating in the mediated public connection and,
8 hence, cultural citizenship.

9 In the case of televised sport, we may watch the same 'big game' at
10 the same time, watch different contests in the same or different sports, or
11 watch no sport at all. Still, we share a common understanding of the logic
12 and culture of televised sport and, consequently, its role in our citizenality.
13 Thus, the notion that cultural citizenship rights concerning watching tele-
14 vised sport requires egalitarian access to our biggest sporting spectacles
15 (Rowe 2004, 2009) demands further interrogation. We begin consider-
16 ation by recognizing that the US approach has been anchored in a 'free-
17 to-air' commercial model. In contrast to other countries where access to
18 big sporting events have been protected through 'listing' and limited to
19 distribution over national, free-to-air services (Rowe 2004), the US has
20 neither engaged its public broadcasting service in sporting responsibili-
21 ties nor enforced 'listing' on commercial broadcasters. As a result, sports
22 broadcasting, from 'free' to 'fee,' has responded to little other than mar-
23 ket forces that, today, are dominated by the 'mega-capital' of a handful
24 of national broadcasters and cable channels that are part of large media
25 conglomerates (CBS/Viacom, NBC/Comcast, ABC/ESPN/Disney, FOX/
26 News Corporation, TBS/Time Warner, etc.). Putting aside that 'free televi-
27 sion' comes with a price (through tax subsidies or consumer purchases),
28 free-to-air television for big games continues to be the norm. Increasingly,
29 with high cable penetration, even in poorer urban neighborhoods, this
30 norm has been extended to fees associated with 'basic' and less expensive
31 'packages' that include sports networks such as ESPN, FOX, and others
32 that now televise virtually all US marquee sports events. Higher cost pay
33 packages tend to be reserved for special pay-per-view events, such as big
34 boxing matches, or premium packages for diehard fans desiring access to
35 all games in a sporting season.

36 In other key ways, US sporting identity exists in a 'world unto itself,'
37 dominated by the importance placed on the homegrown professional
38 major leagues. The ethnocentric naming of pinnacle events, such as
39 Major League Baseball's (MLB) 'World Series' and the National Football
40 League's (NFL) 'Super Bowl,' speaks to their role in US cultural iden-
41 tity. Such events overshadow achievement in Olympic competition or in
42 other events like the FIFA World Cup—competitions less integral to the
43 everyday cultural pastiche. US fans enjoy World Cup soccer or hockey
44 'gold,' but fervor pales in comparison to following local, major league
45 and college teams. As a result, most sport viewing shared in 'common'
46

is *de facto* unshared, and thus ‘uncommon,’ with fragmented affinities for, and identification with, teams competing with each other. In this regard, we are not so much ‘alone together’ as pitted against each other in commonality.

In the next sections, we consider communication strategies and policies for two major sports—professional baseball and football—that set the tone for US sporting identities. We explore their evolution and role in citizen identity and cultural citizenship and assess marketplace changes for sport on US television. We situate our analysis in a conceptual matrix of relations characterizing televised sport’s reception and policy and its relation to consumer-citizenality (see Table 4.1). The matrix pits commonality against costs. Televised sport that is ‘free’ and ‘common’ is the *de facto* benchmark underlying cultural citizenship rights and the goals of a common or shared culture (Roche 1998, Rowe 2004). Yet, much television, even in today’s ‘fee’ and ‘pay’ environment, offers sport that is ‘free’ but ‘uncommon.’ For example, golf or tennis, both sports that are followed by fewer fans, have significant events that are televised by free-to-air broadcasters. A fulcrum point strategy, televised sports that are ‘fee’ and ‘uncommon’ reveal both the flexibility of reception and the presses of the marketplace. Here, ‘uncommon’ sports such as professional hockey have largely moved away from free-to-air coverage to fee environments in basic and less expensive cable/satellite packages, as well as premium pay packages. Similarly, more popular sports, such as professional baseball, football, and basketball, as well as elite collegiate football and basketball, have accelerated migration to the ‘fee’ and ‘uncommon’ domain with varying strategies and degrees of success. As we will see, the ‘premiumization’ of the ‘common’ holds risks as it becomes ‘uncommon’ and requires greater resources to gain access. This observation raises key questions about televised sport’s continued role in a broadly based cultural citizenship. At this point, ‘premiumization’ is largely a gateway strategy, testing the tolerances and logic of consumer citizenality. It remains to be seen whether the capitalist’s dream of making televised sport ‘fee’ and ‘common’ is feasible. In our two case studies, we consider emerging strategies for this final frontier and their impacts on cultural citizenship.

Table 4.1 Reception and Policy Matrix for Televised Sport and Consumer Citizenality

| | | Free | Fee | |
|--------|------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|
| | | Common | Fee and Common | Fee and Uncommon |
| Common | Free | Free and Common | Fee and Common | Fee and Uncommon |
| | Fee | Fee and Common | Fee and Uncommon | |

1
2 **THE NATIONAL PASTIME:**
3 **MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL (MLB)**

4 Baseball's special place in US sports culture has seen a gradual transform-
5 ation from a privately owned, media-wary, public institution to a cor-
6 poratized, new media-savvy, sport cartel. Evolving from various games
7 of English origin, baseball's transformation into the national pastime in
8 the second half of 19th century coincided with growing continental domi-
9 nance, a rise in world prominence, and a need for a clearly 'American'
10 game. Baseball embodied several key US myths. It was a melting pot that
11 blended all comers, including small town 'rubes,' recent immigrants, and
12 even African-Americans, if only in segregated leagues. Baseball was rooted
13 in the land, its great players emerging from the 'bushes' to dominate teams
14 worshipped in the nation's industrialized urban centers. Although a team
15 sport, baseball celebrated rugged individualism, and became obsessed with
16 competitive accounting of player statistics and honoring its heroes in the
17 first professional sports hall of fame. The sport's dominant image is televi-
18 sion's centerfield camera shot of the 'man-on-man' confrontation between
19 pitcher and batter. Baseball was the glue that bonded fathers to sons and
20 blended culturally and ethnically diverse regions. The game was the first
21 to play the national anthem at every contest and, after 9/11, to sing 'God
22 Bless America' at every seventh inning stretch. The rise of baseball also
23 coincided with that of newspapers and national magazines, whose coverage
24 made MLB the first truly national team sport and gave it primacy as the
25 dominant US sport until the later decades of the 20th century.

26
27 **THE RADIO PROLOGUE**

28 This central role of baseball, especially MLB, in US culture forced the game's
29 owners to regard their teams as not only a private business, but also a public
30 trust, and popular component of cultural citizenship. Despite the growing
31 commercialization of radio during the 1920s and 1930s, and the financial
32 opportunity presented by popular World Series broadcasts, the sporting
33 contests remained unsponsored until 1934, at the insistence of baseball's
34 all-powerful commissioner, Kennesaw Mountain Landis, who viewed the
35 World Series as too ingrained in the nation's cultural heritage to be compro-
36 mised by commercial sponsorship. The era's owners were also hesitant to
37 allow broadcasts of regular season games, fearing that radio coverage would
38 reduce attendance. In fact, local broadcasts of games in the nation's largest
39 market, New York, were banned until 1939 (Walker 2011). In this formative
40 radio era, Major League broadcasts were free (advertising supported),
41 although coverage of regular season games was less frequent. After the New
42 York blackout ended, free radio coverage of home games became univer-
43 sal. Gradually, owners began to see radio as a great promoter of ballpark
44
45
46

attendance, increasing consumption of both games and sponsors' products.
Radio made MLB coverage both free and common for local teams.

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20

THE BROADCAST TELEVISION ERA

In the US, the station-centered television of the late 1940s demanded local programming to fill airtime. To satisfy this need, local stations covered baseball extensively from 1947–49, with most teams providing a significant number of games. As networks began to fill more time, baseball telecasts were pushed to independent (non-network) stations. When MLB owners began to experience steep attendance declines in the early 1950s, and many observers claimed that over-exposure on television was sabotaging attendance (Daniel 1952), coverage of regular season games declined for most teams. Outside New York and Chicago, the most common pattern was for teams to allow telecasts of just a few (or no) home games, and to provide some coverage of road games. Owners believed that these restrictions reduced any negative effect of television on attendance, while also enabling them to exploit the medium's promotional power, thus increasing total revenues.

The two New York National League teams, the Dodgers and Giants, relocated to the West Coast in 1958 partially as the result of declining attendance that their owners now attributed to overexposure on television. In their new markets, Los Angeles and San Francisco, these owners virtually eliminated 'free' television coverage, while attempting to exploit a new opportunity in pay-TV. However, a voter referendum in 1964 killed this first attempt at pay-TV (Gunzerath 2000), providing strong evidence that US consumers still wanted advertising-supported televised sports. During the broadcast television era, then, coverage of regular season games was free, but games were not widely available.

The first nationally televised regular season games went to air in 1953. Initially, games were broadcast only into non-MLB television markets, later being shown nationally but with blackouts remaining in the competing teams' markets. Beginning in 1947, the post-season, consisting of four to seven World Series games, was sponsored by a single company (Gillette), a promotional relationship that lasted until 1966. Initially, Gillette offered the games to any station willing to carry them but, in 1951, NBC began a twenty-six-year run of exclusive coverage (Walker and Bellamy 2008). Thus, World Series coverage was, as it had been in the radio era, both free and common.

In 1966, the national television contract was made exclusive to one of the three national networks (NBC) and included both a 'game of the week' and the World Series. In 1976, a second network (ABC) began to share the national contract with NBC. Beginning in 1969, the post-season included a five-game playoff in both the National and American Leagues.

21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46

Two networks alternated covering the playoffs and the World Series for the next twenty-four years, with ABC offering Monday night games and NBC airing matches on Saturday afternoon (Walker and Bellamy 2008). For the nation, the regular season remained free but less common, while the post-season remained both free and common. Baseball, although challenged by the NFL, continued its role as a central component in Middle America's concept of cultural citizenship, with growing commercialism limited to increasingly long advertising breaks.

THE CABLE TELEVISION ERA

The cable television era coincided with what Bauman (2008) sees as the transformation of *homo politicus* to *homo consumens*, and what Cohen (2003) views as the creation of a consumers' republic where consumption became an obligation that was foundational to an individual's contribution to society. For baseball viewers, the result was more choice but at a greater cost. Deregulated broadcast policies led to less oversight of broadcasters by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and a growth in television outlets. Needing relatively cheap original programming, as was the case with broadcasters in the late 1940s, some emerging national cable networks turned to baseball for the summer months. Ted Turner, founder of the original cable superstation, WTBS, bought the Atlanta Braves of the National League (and the Atlanta Hawks of the National Basketball Association (NBA) for the winter months) to provide hundreds of hours of rights-free programming for his fledgling cable network. But the emerging giant of US sports television, ESPN, became the regular cable home for MLB in 1990 (Gerard 1989), and has expanded its presence to multiple games each week in the current contract. In 2008, TBS (the rebranded WTBS) added a national package of Sunday afternoon baseball games. In addition to regular season games, both ESPN and TBS now telecast parts of the post-season playoffs, with the FOX broadcast network carrying some playoff games and the World Series (Hiestand, 2006). During the cable era, MLB maintained a contract with a national broadcast network for game of the week telecasts, at times for only part of the regular season, and also for the post-season.

Beginning in the 1980s, the emergence of regional sports networks on cable led to a vast expansion of the number of regular season games available to sports fans. Rising salaries, triggered by the advent of free agency in 1976 pressured owners to generate additional revenues. They found one new money stream in regional cable television. Local 'free' broadcasts of regular season games subsequently declined as coverage shifted to regional sports networks, representing a substantial shift from free to fee-based television. Thus, the cable era brought a substantial increase in the number of televised regular season games; watching an MLB game became a common,

almost daily, experience for fans with cable television. However, the era represented a significant transfer of games from free to fee, as some post-season games and many regular season contests moved from 'free' broadcast television to cable/satellite networks. Moreover, many MLB teams, previously run as family businesses, were increasingly absorbed by corporations. Corporate ownership focused more closely on improving profits by expanding media revenues, increasing merchandising opportunities, and threatening cities with franchise loss unless new publicly-funded stadiums with income-generating luxury suites and corporate boxes were constructed. Increasingly, baseball's public trust was shifting from the team owners to state and local governments bent on preserving 'big league' ball in their communities.

THE DIGITAL ERA

Three digital era technologies, the internet, satellite television, and satellite radio, helped MLB bring many more games and an enhanced game experience to US consumers. Free coverage continued much as in the broadcast era, with the World Series, some playoff games, and a regular season game of the week available on advertising supported broadcast television. On fee-based cable, most local team regular season games were available for viewers within a team's regional sports channel's reach. The new digital channels, available through the internet, digital cable/satellite services, and satellite radio, allowed for the transmission of virtually every regular season game for every MLB team to a national audience willing to pay a premium.

In 1996, MLB launched Extra Innings on the satellite service DIRECTV, which made up to 80 out-of-market regular season games available to subscribers. Other digital cable and satellite providers followed in 2001. In 2007, MLB negotiated a US\$700 million deal with DIRECTV for the exclusive rights to the Extra Innings package, a move that denied access to millions of non-DIRECTV subscribers. Fan outrage and political pressure spearheaded by Senator John Kerry forced MLB to reconsider the contract and make the package available to other multichannel providers through the iN DEMAND subscription service. As part of the deal, MLB received access for its proposed MLB Network from DIRECTV and other cable providers. In 2000, MLB launched its Advanced Media division (MLBAM), with revenues divided evenly among the 30 major league franchises (Isidore 2005). For a fee, MLBAM first provided out-of-market audio of all MLB games over the internet and then added video presentations (MLB.TV). MLB's current internet video service provides an enhanced service (MLB.TV Premium) for US\$110 a year that gives out-of-market digital viewers in-game highlights and statistics, a video archive, pitch-by-pitch graphics, alternative audio options, a fantasy player tracker, DVR-like video controls, multiple game views (PIP), and on-demand line scores (see MLB.TV).

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46

In 2005, MLB contracted with XM satellite radio (now Sirius/XM) to provide a second distribution channel for its audio coverage of MLB games (MLB Network Radio). MLB launched its own cable/satellite channel, The MLB Network, on January 1, 2009, providing '24/7' year-round baseball programming, including some live games (see <http://mlb.mlb.com/network/about/>). Currently, in the US most MLB games are received by most viewers for a fee: 90 percent of television households pay for a cable or satellite service that usually includes regional sports networks. In addition, millions of households subscribe to the 'Extra Innings' out-of-market package for a fee of about US\$220 per season (see http://www.directv.com/DTVAPP/content/sports/mlb_schedules).

The digital era coincided with the reign of Bud Selig, the first MLB Commissioner to come from the ownership ranks, ending the illusion of the MLB Commissioner as an independent baseball 'czar' who ruled in 'the best interests of the game.' The digital era also followed a major confrontation between owners and the players union (the MLB Players Association), which resulted in a disastrous strike and cancellation of the 1994 World Series. Emerging digital technology allowed MLB to exploit new revenue streams that enriched its total revenues from US\$1.4 billion in 1995 to about US\$7 billion in 2010 (McNeal 2011). Thus, MLB was able to pursue a much more cooperative relationship with the players union, avoiding the work stoppages that plagued the sport in prior decades. Through video and audio transmission of MLB games, the digital era has ushered in a widely accessible and richly varied experience for the consumer. However, each new enhancement costs fans more, as the games have shifted for most viewers from free to fee media. The first 'CEO' Commissioner working in a firmly established 'consumer republic' has transformed baseball from a public trust to another example of Bauman's *circulum vitiosus*. Fans now enjoy easy entrance via over-the-air radio and television and boundless choice, albeit for a fee, through digital media.

AMERICA'S GAME: THE NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE (NFL)

MLB may have the nickname of the 'American' or 'National' Pastime but, when it comes to popularity, no sport has a greater hold on the US public than professional football (i.e., 'American football' outside the US). Even in a time of diminishing ratings for almost every type of television content, NFL ratings remain strong and growing (Guthrie 2012). Media coverage of the NFL is a year-round phenomenon with free agency and draft news filling up tens of millions of words and bytes of information. A recent Harris Poll on US sport confirms the popularity of the NFL, with 31 percent of respondents who follow at least one sport identifying football as their favorite, versus 17 percent for baseball and 12 percent for college football ('While Gap Narrows' 2011).

| | |
|---|---|
| The rise in popularity of football almost perfectly parallels the rise of television as the dominant medium in the US. In the promotion and televising of NFL games, and the sale of access to an increasing number of viewers to advertisers, the US broadcast networks presented “the shared rituals of national corporate life” (Cardiff and Scannell 1977, p. 4; quoted in Whannel 2009, p. 206) in a more direct and explicit way than perhaps any other type of television programming. Football, of course, reflects cultural myths of urbanization, industrialization, and militarization that had particular resonance in mid-20 th -century America. These are myths that continue to have salience in the new millennium. One of the primary myths of football is that it represents what people (principally men) can accomplish by working together. The organization of the game and its emphasis on marching into and taking ‘enemy’ territory is like military action. Winning a game requires a high degree of cooperation among the team members and often a willingness to sacrifice oneself physically for the good of the team (Real 1989). Football is a rugged and dangerous game that rewards those whose approach is serious, team-oriented, and relatively conservative. A term of endearment and respect for many football players and certain teams is ‘blue collar,’ the idea that tough and generally quiet men do what it takes to win without putting on ‘airs’ or ‘grandstanding.’ Although media ‘circuits of promotion’ have made huge stars of several NFL players, deviance from the blue collar ‘norm’ is still largely frowned upon in the league and by many fans (Carmichael 2011, Shore 2003, Wexel 2008, Whitson 1998). | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 |
| The ideas of teamwork and the accomplishment of rugged and dangerous tasks naturally resonated with millions of mid-20 th -century males whose own life experience often included military service and industrial jobs. Although the proportion of Americans who work in industry or have ever served in the military continues to decline, the idea that the warrior and the blue collar worker are more ‘authentic’ and even ‘better’ than those who are neither is an enduring myth, and one closer to reality for the average citizen than the US pastoral vision of baseball (Frank 2008, Tapper, 2008, <i>United State Census</i> 2010). | |
| PRE-TELEVISION US FOOTBALL | 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 |
| The NFL was established in 1922 from the remnants of the two-year old American Professional Football Association. Although there were some successful franchises from these early years in markets both large (Chicago) and small (Green Bay), it took until the late 1930s for the league to stabilize its membership with teams in major markets after years of shifting membership of teams in many smaller markets. While stability resulted in increased media attention, professional football continued to have limited coverage, and typically was relegated to the ‘back pages’ of newspapers and given only sporadic broadcast coverage (Peterson 1997). Unlike the | |

1 national pastime of MLB, pro football was never a mainstay of radio pro-
2 gram schedules in the pre-television era. It is a good historical example of
3 a ‘free and uncommon’ media sport, one where advertiser and presumed
4 consumer (listener) interest was limited.

5
6
7 **THE NFL AND TELEVISION ‘MARRIAGE’**

8 As television diffused in the 1950s and early 1960s, NFL football became
9 more and more popular. By the 1960s, there was little doubt that the game
10 was now more ‘free and common’ than any other professional sport on a
11 national level. There are overlapping aesthetic, economic, and structural
12 reasons for the rise of pro football as the dominant US television sport. The
13 US football field is a rectangle, providing a good match for the 4:3 aspect
14 ratio of standard definition television. Much of the field can be seen in a
15 single shot (a virtual impossibility for baseball), allowing viewers to wit-
16 ness an entire play. The emergence of the instant replay in the early 1960s
17 was another key aesthetic and technological development because replays:
18 (1) made a relatively static game with many time outs and ‘huddles’ appear
19 to be full of action, and (2) allowed close up shots of players, which led to
20 many NFL players (particularly quarterbacks) becoming media stars (Bell-
21 lamy 1998, 2006, MacCambridge 2005)

22
23 The football season closely parallels the time of the year when televi-
24 sion viewing increases because of the beginning of the school year, shorter
25 periods of daylight, and colder weather for large parts of the US. It also
26 parallels the holiday shopping season, the most important time for retailers
27 and television advertising sales. From its early days, pro football was also a
28 Sunday afternoon sport ritual, avoiding competition with college football
29 on Saturdays and high school football on Friday nights. Sunday, as the tradi-
30 tional ‘day of rest’ in Christian-oriented societies, happens to be the most
31 viewed day of the week on US television.

32 Scarcity of product is one of the most salient structural elements of US
33 football. The rigors of this brutal game make it difficult to play more than
34 one game a week, making each game more important than would be the
35 case of other sports which play many more games per season. This factor
36 increased the attraction of the sport to television and made it possible for
37 every game to be made available on network television on a regional basis.
38 Scarcity, then, can be seen as an important part of the reason that pro foot-
39 ball became an increasingly common part of US cultural citizenship.

40 Pro football also, importantly, pioneered cartel behavior in its nego-
41 tiations with the television industry. Unlike baseball, which continues to
42 this day to have a group of owners who often act more like rivals than
43 as partners, the AFL and the NFL both eagerly embraced a ‘share and
44 share alike’ model for the distribution of television money. In fact, then
45 NFL Commissioner Pete Rozelle is often and rightly given credit for his
46

successful lobbying on behalf of the Sports Broadcasting Act (SBA) of 1961 (15 U.S.C. 32), which granted professional sports leagues an antitrust exemption that allowed league members to jointly sell broadcasting rights (Fortunato 2006). Such an arrangement was of enormous benefit to the NFL in extracting ever-increasing amounts of money from the broadcast networks for television rights. Having spent huge sums of money on those rights, the broadcast networks, in turn, devoted more and more of their schedules both to games and other league-oriented programs such as pre- and post-game programs. By the mid-1960s, every AFL and NFL game was on network television, with split regional feeds except for the games subject to the league's blackout rule. This rule states that no television signal that reaches within 75 miles of a league stadium may carry a home game from that stadium unless the game is sold out 72 hours in advance. The popularity of the league means that there are not nearly as many blackouts as was once the case, but the policy does limit access for the citizen-fan of local teams who cannot afford or otherwise cannot attend games that are not sold out (Bellamy 1998, 2006, Fortunato 2006). Forcing people to go to the game or to travel outside the blackout zone to see a blacked-out game can be seen as a 'fee-uncommon' model of presenting sport.

CABLE AND THE NFL

With all regular season and post-season games on either national or regional network television, there was little incentive for the NFL to enter into arrangements with cable until this new television distribution method could provide substantial new revenue opportunities for the league (Freeman 2001, Miller and Shales 2011). For each NFL game that went to cable, there would be one fewer available on free-to-air (i.e., advertising-supported) television. To move games from free to cable is an example of the 'siphoning' that many predicted would happen with the entrance of pay-TV. Notably, 'siphoning' was prohibited by FCC rules until the early 1980s (Becker 1977, Garay 2004). Acting cautiously, the NFL developed a regular Sunday Night Game that appeared on ESPN or TNT from 1987–2005. In order not to upset local fans or, perhaps more importantly, politicians who might threaten the league's antitrust exemption if it removed games from free-to-air television, the NFL made these games available to local broadcasters in the cities of the participating teams, although the blackout rule still applied for home markets. The granting of—and periodic threat of rescinding—anti-trust exemptions for sports leagues in the US, is a unique regulatory feature in that it both implies state intervention should the 'market' be insensitive to serving the common good, and fuels unfettered market privilege for leagues such as the NFL and MLB. The expansion of the regular NFL season from 14 to 16 games also served to reduce criticism of the move to cable, because the expansion incrementally increased the total

1 number of games and the broadcast networks did not actually lose games
2 (Freeman 2001, Miller and Shales 2011).

3 The burgeoning success of cable in the 1990s and 2000s made it an
4 increasingly large part of the NFL's television plans. The long-running and
5 highly successful Monday Night Football telecasts left ABC for its sister
6 ESPN network in 2006, with the Sunday night games going to NBC. ESPN
7 now pays more per year to telecast NFL games than any other television
8 entity. Cable's dual revenue stream of advertising sales and subscriber fees
9 is likely to further weaken the stranglehold of broadcast television on NFL
10 regular season games (Owens 2011). For the most part, the rise of cable,
11 satellite, and fiber optic pay-TV distribution systems has had but a slight
12 effect on the 'free and common' model of NFL television coverage. The
13 only two exceptions are: (1) when blackout rules are triggered, and (2) the
14 games that gravitated to 'basic' cable. By using one of the largest cable
15 services in the nation (ESPN) as a cable partner, the league uses a 'fee and
16 common' model, but one that may not even be recognized as such by many
17 viewers simply because paying for television has become normalized in the
18 US in the last twenty years.

19
20
21 **THE DIGITAL ERA**

22
23 The cable and digital eras obviously intersect and overlap. Both are about
24 the creation of new channels of information for sale and distribution to
25 consumers. As early as 1994, the NFL entered into a deal with DIRECTV,
26 the largest direct broadcast satellite (DBS) provider in the US and now co-
27 owned with the league's FOX broadcast network partner for 'NFL Sunday
28 Ticket,' a package of out-of-market games. There is now a 'Sunday Ticket
29 To Go' feature that allows subscribers without access to DIRECTV to
30 watch the games on computers and portable devices. The 'Sunday Ticket'
31 service also provides live tracking of fantasy stats, allows viewers to watch
32 multiple games at the same time on split screens, and has a separate 'Red
33 Zone' channel which switches from game to game to cover action when any
34 team gets within the 20-yard line of its opponent. The price for 2011 was
35 US\$335 for the season (*NFL Sunday Ticket 2011*). Obviously, this cost is
36 above and beyond that for the DIRECTV service, and also forces consum-
37 ers/fans/citizens to purchase a specific type of television distribution system
38 even to have the option of paying the fee. This 'fee and uncommon' model is
39 instructive because it demonstrates that, at least for the NFL, new methods
40 of television distribution are seen as incremental and additional, that is, the
41 charge is for people to obtain something previously unavailable to them.
42 A person who chooses not to subscribe to DIRECTV and 'NFL Sunday
43 Ticket' does not lose existing coverage of league games.

44 In 2003, the NFL Network went to air as a dedicated cable/satellite chan-
45 nel for information and coverage of all aspects of the league. Beginning in
46

2006, a partial season package of Thursday night games was added. The movement of games to the new league-owned network was both politically and economically problematic for the league. The Thursday night games were supposed to be exclusive to NFL Network, but the initial lack of carriage for the network when it added the Thursday night games, in addition to pressure from such politicians as Senator John Kerry, led the league to make NFL network games available to local broadcasters (Barron 2009, Cohen 2007, Isidore 2006). Importantly, fear of Congress remains a relevant factor for the NFL and the other major professional sports leagues precisely because of the concern that antitrust exemptions (for television rights) could be threatened. Despite difficulty in getting the clearance rates that it had hoped for on lower level cable packages, the league has successfully used the NFL Network to control its message, provide an outlet for its NFL Films division, and further to brand the league as year-round entertainment. However, the league's attempt to make more of its games 'fee and common' on its own network became problematic because the NFL Network failed to secure support and carriage from major cable corporations, and the game subsequently became 'fee and uncommon.' The league's decision, made under political pressure, would seem to indicate that the 'fee and uncommon' model exists only in a limited way along with both 'free' and 'fee' common models.

FAN ACCESS AND THE FUTURE

From a cultural citizenship perspective, the NFL still offers the most advertising-supported 'free and common' options of all the major US sports. Assuming that one's local team sells out a particular home game, one can watch that game and at least 3 others on broadcast television every Sunday. For the price of a basic cable/satellite/fiber optic service, which now exists in over 90 percent of US television households, fans can watch the ESPN Monday game. Perhaps for the same price or a little more, viewers can add the Thursday NFL Network game. Of course, if one's local team is involved in the ESPN or NFL Network games in a given week, they can be seen on local broadcast television. Further, if a viewer has the desire and financial resources to pay US\$335, they can have access to most out-of-market games via DIRECTV's 'Sunday Ticket' and 'Sunday Ticket To Go.' And, when the post-season comes around, all games are on broadcast television.

While more regular season games will likely be diverted to fee platforms as the money available through dual or even multi-revenue streams increases, such a scenario is unlikely for post-season play. The amount that broadcasters pay for the playoffs and the potential political threat to antitrust exemption means that the movement of playoff games to a pay platform is simply too risky for the NFL to consider. In essence, the success of NFL programming will keep it in the common consumer cultural domain for the short and, likely, long term.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has examined the prospects for a cultural citizenship that entails rights to broadcast sports in a distinctly US context. The broadcast case histories of MLB and the NFL illuminate the gaming for the living room seat of the US sports fan. In a setting where public broadcasting has very little presence in the sporting panorama, these cases provoke thinking about prospects for cultural citizenship rights in a consumer economy. While not joining those who see neoliberalism driven by market forces as a panacea, we cannot ignore the lived realities of the consumer's republic (Cohen 2003) that has long characterized the US experience and increasingly does so elsewhere. Following Bauman (2007), we conclude that there is little choice in a world of consumer sociality but to approach cultural citizenship through the lens of consumption, but note a number of caveats.

First, the notion of cultural citizenship is malleable, a characteristic of debates over definition, implementation, and of the understanding of cultural 'rights.' This malleability opens the door to consider consumer citizenality. Yet, when extended to entitlements for broadcast sports, we are stymied by Turner's (2001) questioning of whether cultural rights of citizens can exist without accompanying obligations as seen in other domains of citizenship. Still, we value the ideal of cultural citizenship as a heuristic device, finding merit in thinking about how sport, and its ready availability on 'free-to-air' broadcasting, fits into the cultural citizenship picture.

Second, when proposing sports as foundational to broad-based cultural citizenship, we face a 'round-peg-square-hole' dilemma. Earlier we noted Kidd's (1990) characterization of stadia as citizen-subsidized 'men's cultural centers.' Historically, sport has been predominantly a male practice and remains ideologically a male domain. Indeed, the culturally important sports upon which we consider overlaying cultural citizenship rights through ready access to spectatorship experience are without exception male-dominated sports. Embracing cultural policy that subsidizes men's physical performance on our main cultural stages for men and women to admire and bond their citizenality seems ethically suspect and misguided. Further, cultural fascination with sport is often over-estimated. A recent Pew poll shows that only 26 percent of men and 10 percent of women in the US follow sports 'very closely' (Pew Research Center 2006). Thus, one wonders about other, more egalitarian cultural options for sharing in citizenship.

Third, the evolution of the sport fan's access to MLB and NFL broadcasts needs to be placed in a broader set of expectations for cultural fare. Here, as observed earlier of free-to-air television, there is no 'free lunch.' While in many countries access to national museums and local libraries remains free, they, too, are subsidized by taxes, with some citizens contributing more, others less and some not at all. Many cultural offerings, such as civic symphonies or national operas, have admission fees, while not all citizens locate their identity in a national dance company or musical idiom.

Consumption of this kind of cultural fare and sport has many parallels. As noted earlier, access to the stadium has only been free—whether to watch the national team or commercialized team sport—when viewing through a peephole in the fence that contains and privileges paid spectatorship. Certainly this, too, is not an egalitarian arrangement. But, it may be necessary to subsidize the spectacle—whether it is sport, dance, music, or cinema—that we celebrate in our cultural shrines. Thus, our approach in this chapter recognizes both these tensions and realities.

Differing from other cases in this volume, we have looked at two sports—professional baseball and football—that, together, comprise broad swatches of US sporting cultural identity. Baseball, drawing on myths of the US agrarian past, idealizes leisure spectatorship and bonds it to regionalized identities. Football's rise, paralleling television's, represents modern sport's predisposition for spectacle, conflict, and aggression. Both persist as remarkable television products. Alongside the NBA these leagues define a national identity with sport built on localized fanship loyalties. As noted earlier, US sporting identity exists as a 'world unto itself.' Transient captivation with Olympic or FIFA World Cup success is overshadowed by the staying power of fragmented affinities that US fans have for their local, professional teams. Here fanship experience is common. But it is an uncommon 'commonality,' as through our fanship identities we ritualize being pitted against each other in support of 'our' teams.

Tensions surrounding 'common' and 'uncommon' are paired with those on the 'free' to 'fee' continuum, defining a matrix of relations that contextualize the dynamics in the evolution of sport as it relates to broadcasting and cultural citizenship. In our stocktaking, the strategies of MLB and the NFL have far more parallels than differences because many 'cheap seats' remain for the television spectator. For the most important games, most of these seats remain 'free.' Further, 'fee and common' access to much everyday competition is comparatively cheap with broad subscription to basic cable and satellite services bringing sport even to less affluent urban neighborhoods and homes. Still, as such tariffs disproportionately burden poorer citizens, we understand that consumption is an imperfect "marker of democratic citizenship" (Jubas 2007, p. 251). It is open to debate whether such imperfections doom the prospects for a cultural citizenship that is increasingly enacted through consumerism. With sport consumption a lesser part of citizen identity than is often imagined, gauging the severity of damage to cultural citizenship is a tricky business. In our reflections on the US experience and the evolving broadcast sport marketplace, the "mediated public connection" (Couldry *et al.* 2008, p. 108) remains largely accessible for 'commoners,' a key criterion for exploring the egalitarian possibilities in consumer citizenship. As we stand today, claims about the 'free' sports on television and the 'end of television' in the digital era seem premature. As television's biggest tent event, sports continue to 'float the boat' of broadcast networks. Yet, it is difficult to see how 'free and common' access to

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46

broadcast sport will continue to grow as a norm. While aimed at the diehard fan, the rising trend of ‘premiumization’ strategies such as MLB’s ‘Extra Innings’ and the NFL’s ‘Sunday Ticket’ raises questions about the erosion of commonality. It is a hopeful sign that much televised sport remains available today for ‘free’ or comparatively so, and there is a sense among consumers that they are entitled to it, even in a nation without a significant public broadcasting tradition. Their willingness and abilities to ‘push back’ and enlist policymakers in this resistance will decide the fate of the US sport fan in the ‘consumer’s republic’ (Cohen 2003) in the decades to come.

REFERENCES

- Almond, G. and Verba, S., 1963. *The Civic Culture*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Barron, D., 2009. Comcast, NFL network reach programming accord [online]. *Houston Chronicle*, May 19. Available from <http://www.chron.com/disp/story.mpl/front/6430877.html#ixzz1P5yg8qHv> [Accessed 1 July 2011]
- Bauman, Z., 2008. Exit *Homo Politicus*, enter *Homo Consumens*. In: K. Soper and F. Trentmann, eds., *Citizenship and Consumption*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 87–110.
- , 2007. *Consuming Life*. Cambridge: Polity.
- Becker, J.A., 1977. Unleashing Cable TV, Leashing the F.C.C.: Constitutional Limitations on Government Regulation of Pay TV [online]. *Fordham Urban Law Journal*, 6(3). Available from <http://ir.lawnet.fordham.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1114&context=ulj&csei-redir=1#search=%22jo+ann+becker+fordham+urban+law+journal%22> [Accessed 1 July 2011].
- Bellamy, R.V., 2006. Sports Media: A Modern Institution. In: A.A. Raney and J. Bryant, eds., *The Handbook of Sports and Media*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 66–79.
- , 1998. The Evolving Television Sports Marketplace. In: L.A. Wenner, ed., *MediaSport*. London: Routledge, 73–87.
- Blackshaw, T., 2008. Bauman on Consumerism: Living the Market-Mediated Life. In: M.H. Jacobsen and P. Poder, eds., *The Sociology of Zygmunt Bauman: Challenges and Critiques*. London: Routledge, 117–135.
- , 2005. *Zygmunt Bauman*. London: Routledge.
- Cardiff, D. and Scannell, P., 1977. *The Social Foundations of British Broadcasting*. Milton Keynes: Open University Press.
- Carmichael, E., 2011. The Myth of America’s Team [online]. *Deadspin.com*, February 1. Available from <http://deadspin.com/5748116/the-myth-of-americas-team> [Accessed 1 July 2011].
- Census. 2010. *United States Census 2010* [online]. *Census*. Available from <http://2010.census.gov/2010census/> [Accessed 1 July 2011].
- Cohen, L., 2003. *A Consumer’s Republic: The Politics of Mass Consumption in Postwar America*. New York: Knopf.
- Cohen, R., 2007. All Fans Will Have Access to Pats Game [online]. *The Huffington Post*, December 26. Available from <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/huff-wires/20071226/fbn-patriots-giants-tv/> [Accessed 1 July 2011].
- Couldry, N., Livingstone, S., and Markham, T., 2008. “Public Connection” and the Uncertain Norms of Media Consumption. In: K. Soper and F. Trentmann, eds., *Citizenship and Consumption*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 104–120.

Selling Out 93

| | |
|--|----|
| Cronin, A. M., 2000. <i>Advertising and Consumer Citizenship: Gender, Images and Rights</i> . London: Routledge. | 1 |
| Daniel, D., 1952. TV Must Go—Or Baseball Will. <i>Baseball Magazine</i> , November (6). | 2 |
| Dewey, J., 1916. <i>Democracy and Education</i> . New York: Macmillan. | 3 |
| DIRECTV, 2011. NFL Sunday Ticket [online]. DIRECTV. Available from http://www.directv.com/DTVAPP/content/sports/nfl [Accessed 1 July 2011]. | 4 |
| Fortunato, J., 2006. <i>Commissioner: the legacy of Pete Rozelle</i> . New York: Taylor. | 5 |
| Frank, T., 2008. Joe the plumber and GOP “authenticity” [online]. <i>Wall Street Journal</i> , October, 22. Available from http://online.wsj.com/article/SB122463199532056477.html [Accessed 1 July 2011]. | 6 |
| Freeman, M., 2001. <i>ESPN: The Uncensored History</i> . New York: Taylor. | 7 |
| Garay, R., 2004. Pay Cable [online]. In: H. Newcomb, ed., <i>The Encyclopedia of Television</i> , 2nd ed. Available from http://www.museum.tv/eotvsection.php?entrycode=paycable [Accessed 1 July 2011]. | 8 |
| Gerard, J., 1989. ESPN Will Pay \$400 Million for Baseball-Game Rights. <i>The New York Times</i> , January 6, Section D, p. 1. | 9 |
| Guthrie, M., 2012. Super Bowl XLVI becomes Most Watched Program in U.S. TV History [online]. <i>The Hollywood Reporter</i> , February 6. Available from http://www.hollywoodreporter.com/live-feed/super-bowl-ratings-giants-patriots-287279 [Accessed 7 May 2012]. | 10 |
| Gunzerath, D., 2000. Darn that Pay TV: STV’s Challenge to American Television’s Dominant Economic Model. <i>Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media</i> , 44, 655–673. | 11 |
| Harris Interactive, 2011. While Gap Narrows, Professional Football Retains Lead over Baseball as Favorite Sport [online], <i>Harris Interactive</i> , January 20. Available from http://www.harrisinteractive.com/vault/HI-Harris-Poll-Favorite-Sport-Football-2011-01-20.pdf [Accessed 1 July 2011]. | 12 |
| Hiestand, M. 2006. TBS Lands Share of Postseason Baseball [online]. <i>USA Today</i> , October 18. Available from http://www.usatoday.com/sports/columnist/hiestand-tv/2006-10-17-hiestand-tbs-baseball_x.htm [Accessed 7 May 2012]. | 13 |
| Isidore, C., 2006. Cable Stuffing the NFL this Thanksgiving [online]. <i>CNN Money</i> , November 22. Available from http://money.cnn.com/2006/11/22/commentary/sportsbiz/index.htm [Accessed 1 July 2011]. | 14 |
| ———, 2005. Baseball’s Secret Success Story [online]. <i>CNNMoney.com</i> , December 25. Available from http://money.cnn.com/2005/12/23/commentary/column_sportsbiz/sportsbiz/index.htm [Accessed 1 July 2011]. | 15 |
| Jubas, K., 2007. Conceptual Con/fusion in Democratic Societies: Understandings and the Limitations of Consumer-Citizenship. <i>Journal of Consumer Culture</i> , 7, 231–254. | 16 |
| Kidd, B., 1990. The Men’s Cultural Centre: Sports and the Dynamic of Women’s Oppression/Men’s Repression. In: M.A. Messner and D.F. Sabo, eds., <i>Sport, Men, and the Gender Order: Critical Feminist Perspectives</i> , Champaign: Human Kinetics, 31–44. | 17 |
| Lewis, T. and Potter, E., eds., 2011. <i>Ethical Consumption: An Introduction</i> . New York: Routledge. | 18 |
| MacCambridge, M., 2005. <i>America’s Game</i> . New York: Anchor. | 19 |
| Marshall, T., 1950. <i>Citizenship and Social Class</i> . Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. | 20 |
| McNeal, S., 2011. MLB. <i>The Sporting News</i> , June 6, 35. | 21 |
| Miller, J.A. and Shales, T., 2011. <i>Those Guys Have All the Fun: Inside the World of ESPN</i> . Boston: Little, Brown. | 22 |
| Miller, T., 2007. <i>Cultural Citizenship: Cosmopolitanism, Consumerism, and Television in a Neoliberal Age</i> . Philadelphia: Temple University Press. | 23 |

94 Lawrence A. Wenner, Robert V. Bellamy and James R. Walker

- 1 Owens, S.J., 2011. ESPN to Pay NFL over \$1 Billion for Television Rights without
2 Super Bowl [online]. *Orlando Sentinel*, January 6. Available from http://articles.orlandosentinel.com/2011-01-06/mobile/os-espn-to-pay-nfl-over-1-billion-01062011_1_nfl-playoffs-nfl-lockout-nfl-players [Accessed 1 July 2011].
- 3 Peterson, R.W., 1997. *Pigskin: The Early Years of Pro Football*. New York:
4 Oxford.
- 5 Pew Research Center, 2006. Who's a Sports Fan? [online]. *Pew Research Center Social and Demographic Trends*, June 14. Available from <http://pewsocialtrends.org/pubs/?chartid=135> [Accessed 1 July 2011].
- 6 Real, M.R., 1989. Super Bowl Football versus World Cup Soccer. In: L.A. Wenner,
7 ed., *Media, Sports and Society*. Newbury Park: Sage, 180–203.
- 8 Roche, M., ed., 1998. *Sport, Popular Culture, and Identity*. Aachen: Meyer and
9 Meyer Verlag.
- 10 Rojek, C., 2004. The Consumerist Syndrome in Contemporary Society. *Journal of Consumer Culture*, 4, 291–312.
- 11 Rowe, D., 2004. Watching Brief: Cultural Citizenship and Viewing Rights. *Sport in Society*, 7, 385–402.
- 12 Samuelson, R.J., 2006. Myths and the Middle Class [online]. *Washington Post*,
13 December 27. Available from <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/12/26/AR2006122600772.html> [Accessed 10 May 2011].
- 14 Schudson, M., 2007. Citizens, Consumers, and the Good Society. *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 611, 236–249.
- 15 Shore, B., 2003. *Family Time: Studying Myth and Ritual in Working Families* [online]. Working Paper No. 27. Atlanta: Department of Anthropology, Emory University. Available from <http://www.marial.emory.edu/pdfs/Short028-03.pdf> [Accessed 1 July 2011].
- 16 Soper, K., 2007. Re-thinking the "Good Life": The Citizenship Dimension of
17 Consumer Disaffection with Consumerism. *Journal of Consumer Culture*, 7, 205–229.
- 18 Soper, K. and Trentmann, F., eds., 2008. *Citizenship and Consumption*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- 19 Sports Broadcasting Act, 15 U.S.C. 32 (1961).
- 20 Stevenson, N., 2007. Cultural Citizenship: Questions of Consumerism, Con-
sumption and Policy. In: T. Edwards, ed., *Cultural Theory*. Los Angeles: Sage,
21 255–273.
- 22 ———, 1997. Globalization, National Cultures and Cultural Citizenship. *Socio-logical Quarterly*, 38, 41–66.
- 23 Tapper, J., 2008. Obama Out to Prove Blue-Collar Authenticity [online]. *ABC News*, April 28. Available from <http://abcnews.go.com/WN/Vote2008/story?id=4743929&page=1> [Accessed 1 July 2011].
- 24 Trentmann, F., 2007. Citizenship and Consumption. *Journal of Consumer Culture*, 7, 147–158.
- 25 Turner, B.S., 2001. Outline of a General Theory of Cultural Citizenship. In: N.
26 Stevenson, ed., *Culture and Citizenship*, London: Sage, 11–32.
- 27 Walker, J.R., 2011. The Baseball-Radio War, 1931–1935. *NINE: A Journal of
28 Baseball History & Culture*, 19, 53–60.
- 29 Walker, J.R. and Bellamy, R.V., 2008. *Center Field Shot: A History of Baseball on
30 Television*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.
- 31 Wexel, J., 2008. *Steeler Nation: A Pittsburgh Team, an American Phenomenon*. Pittsburgh: Pittsburgh Sports Publishing.
- 32 Whannel, G., 2009. Television and the Transformation of Sport. *ANNALS. The American Academy of Political and Social Science*, September, 625, 205–218.
- 33 Whitson, D., 1998. Circuits of Promotion: Media, Marketing, and the Globaliza-
34 tion of Sport. In: L.A. Wenner, ed., *MediaSport*. London: Routledge, 57–72.
- 35
- 36
- 37
- 38
- 39
- 40
- 41
- 42
- 43
- 44
- 45
- 46

Selling Out 95

| | |
|--|----|
| Williams, R., 1989. The Idea of a Common Culture. <i>Resources of Hope: Culture, Democracy, Socialism</i> . London: Verso. | 1 |
| Willis, P., 1990. <i>Common Culture: Symbolic Work at Play in the Everyday Cultures of the Young</i> . Milton Keynes: Open University Press. | 2 |
| | 3 |
| | 4 |
| | 5 |
| | 6 |
| | 7 |
| | 8 |
| | 9 |
| | 10 |
| | 11 |
| | 12 |
| | 13 |
| | 14 |
| | 15 |
| | 16 |
| | 17 |
| | 18 |
| | 19 |
| | 20 |
| | 21 |
| | 22 |
| | 23 |
| | 24 |
| | 25 |
| | 26 |
| | 27 |
| | 28 |
| | 29 |
| | 30 |
| | 31 |
| | 32 |
| | 33 |
| | 34 |
| | 35 |
| | 36 |
| | 37 |
| | 38 |
| | 39 |
| | 40 |
| | 41 |
| | 42 |
| | 43 |
| | 44 |
| | 45 |
| | 46 |

5 Football for Everyone?

Soccer, Television and Politics in Argentina

Pablo Alabarces and Carolina Duek

INTRODUCTION

Any serious analysis of the relationship between sport and politics in Argentina must begin with the consideration of two factors. The first is the taken-for-granted mediation of sport via television. That is, of course, the mediation not only of sport—its practices, institutional organization, systems of rules and its practitioners called “sportsmen”—but also the wider world that is composed of a host of social, economic, political and cultural dimensions and power relations. As a result of its mediation and, crucially, its visualization, sport has become above all a representation, a show, in which television is presented as the fundamental narrator. These are developments and transformations that are widely understood in the world of the fans, club authorities and journalists, and notably in Argentina, in literary circles. In a narration of Jorge Luis Borges and Adolfo Bioy Casares (with the pseudonym of H. Bustos Domecq), originally published in 1963 and titled “Esse est percipi,” a sports authority confesses:

The last match of soccer was played in this city on June 24th 1937. From that precise moment, soccer, as the wide range of sports, is a dramatic genre, in charge of one man in a cabin or actors with a t-shirt in front of a cameraman. (Borges and Bioy Casares 1996, p. 133)

In the imagination of the authors an incredible possibility is unleashed: sport is socially constructed in the media and now does not exist beyond its narration as a television product to be consumed by mass audiences. Together, Borges and Bioy Casares announce a semiotic and a technological possibility: with digitalization, sport in Argentina exists as pure simulacrum and is no longer dependent on a ‘real event.’

To this principal factor—the impossibility of analyzing sport beyond its existence as a mediated show—we add another, localized one that we will call the *Valentín Suárez syndrome*. In 1967, at the beginning of one of the many dictatorships that dominated Argentina between 1955 and 1983, the military government ‘occupied’ the Association of Argentine Football

| | |
|---|----|
| (AFA) by installing Valentín Suárez. Prior to ascending to this position, | 1 |
| Suárez had been the President of Banfield, a first division football club. | 2 |
| That same year, Suárez created a new tournament (in addition to the first | 3 |
| division championship) that would allow smaller provincial clubs to com- | 4 |
| pete against the most traditional and powerful clubs from Buenos Aires, | 5 |
| Rosario and La Plata (three of the most important cities in the country). | 6 |
| Although the main championship would continue to be played in Bue- | 7 |
| nos Aires and its surrounding areas, the new tournament, simply entitled | 8 |
| "National," added a significant number of matches to the soccer calendar. | 9 |
| At the same time, Argentine clubs were also encouraged to participate in | 10 |
| the broader continental tournament called 'Copa Libertadores' created in | 11 |
| 1960 as an imitation of the European Cup. Besides these key developments, | 12 |
| though, Suárez pursued contracts for the free-to-air television transmission | 13 |
| of all soccer games, and the sport was soon to be televised four days a week | 14 |
| (including local and international matches). For Suárez, the political logic | 15 |
| behind these developments was simple: "Soccer keeps people's minds busy" | 16 |
| (Palomino and Scher 1985). | 17 |
| Suárez was, of course, reproducing the slogan that regards sport (tele- | 18 |
| vised sport in this instance) as a modern and secular opium of the people, | 19 |
| one that prevents 'the masses' from engaging in more dangerous activities | 20 |
| such as unionism, political mobilization or, worse, <i>guerrilla</i> warfare (in | 21 |
| 1967, the Argentine revolutionary Che Guevara was assassinated by the | 22 |
| Bolivian army). Suárez's affirmation, we will argue, is still relevant today, | 23 |
| and actively structures political conceptions of the relationship between | 24 |
| soccer, television, and audiences: the more televised soccer, the more <i>con-</i> | 25 |
| <i>trol</i> over audiences, a new expression of the old concept of alienation. ¹ | 26 |
| Popular understandings of 'bread and circuses,' though, remain ideological | 27 |
| fallacies. Social mechanisms of control and power relations in the modern | 28 |
| world are infinitely more complex than the simple indefinite transmission | 29 |
| of sport through television. ² Nevertheless, throughout this chapter we will | 30 |
| argue that, even today, Argentine political decisions in relation to sport | 31 |
| and television are regularly organized according to the <i>Suárez syndrome</i> | 32 |
| and other contemporary political pressures. Thus, the mass mediation of | 33 |
| soccer (with its implications for the analysis of sport as a <i>mise en scène</i> and | 34 |
| an audiovisual narration, among other elements) must be read as a political | 35 |
| phenomenon in which, real or imaginary, the construction of social hege- | 36 |
| mony is disputed. ³ | 37 |
| Discussions of the relationship between televised sport and politics have, | 38 |
| as a result, regularly focused on audience 'manipulation' and, prior to 2000, | 39 |
| issues of access to live telecasts of sport and the civil 'rights' of audiences | 40 |
| and publics (Rowe 2004a, Rowe 2004b, Scherer and Whitson 2009). These | 41 |
| questions and debates have, however, only recently been ignited in Argen- | 42 |
| tina, in the context of a new monopolistic structure of a privatized national | 43 |
| media sector that threatened access to live, free-to-air reception of the 2002 | 44 |
| World Cup. In response to these developments and other contemporary | 45 |
| | 46 |

political pressures, in 2009, the government of Argentina (re)nationalized football telecasts, thus marking the return of all first division matches to the public broadcaster Televisión Pública. Two years later, moreover, the viewing rights of sports fans in Argentina were enshrined in a broader list of protected events that mandated live, universal access to sporting events of national significance. Yet, as we shall see, even in the new millennium the polemics surrounding the nationalization of soccer telecasts continue to be oriented to arguments concerning the manipulative capacity of the Argentine government in relation to the audiences (i.e., the *Suarez syndrome*). The Argentine case, therefore, must be analyzed with this specific history in mind.

TELEVISION AND SOCCER IN ARGENTINA

There has, for many years now, been a close affinity between soccer and television in Argentina. Briefly, Argentine television was not born *because of* soccer but *with* soccer. The first experimental transmission on 17 October 1951 televised a mass rallying celebration of Peronism (the political movement then in power). Historically, this was the only live, televisual appearance of Eva Perón, who would die soon after because of cancer. Only a month and a half later, the second live transmission of *creole television*—as Varela (2005) called it—was of a soccer match between San Lorenzo and River Plate. Under the direction of Samuel Yanquelevich, who was the head of the new Channel 7 (property of the new national broadcaster) this telecast announced a long and happy marriage between soccer and television. Peron, of course, used television as both a public service and as an ideological state apparatus to promote the Peronist form of populism. Such an approach maintained strict control over news information, but also sought to provide key elements of national popular culture. The two initial transmissions of television (the political act and the soccer match), then, were articulated with that ideology,

The first soccer telecast was sponsored by YPF (the state oil company). The images of the match were captured by two cameras (one behind each goal) and received by approximately 1,300 television sets. The early telecasts of soccer followed the visual structure and narratives of the cinema, especially the soccer films of the 1930s (like the pioneering *Los tres berretines*, produced by Lumiton) and many years would pass before the development of any significant changes to the narrative practices of soccer telecasts.⁴ In the early days of television, there was an average of fifteen viewers per television set, and the sport audience was situated either in private (family homes that could afford television sets) or in semi-public places (such as in front of electrical appliance stores). Still, in 1951 telecasts of soccer were events in themselves and not necessarily part of the programming flow or content of the emergent medium. This situation changed, as Varela (2005)

| | |
|--|----|
| has remarked, only after television audiences were more systematically measured and targeted as the industry matured. | 1 |
| | 2 |
| Twenty-seven years later, the International Federation of Football Associations (FIFA) World Cup of 1978 constituted the most ambitious and significant television event in Argentine history, one with overt political overtones. Related to this latter point, the World Cup was recognized by the then military dictatorship of General Jorge Rafael Videla (who came to power after a 1976 coup d'état that deposed Argentina's President, Isabel Martinez de Peron) as a major opportunity to help quell local unrest and political instability. The World Cup was also widely regarded as a key moment to present to the world an image of national 'efficiency' and politeness to counter criticism in the international community directed at the dictatorship's habitual violation of human rights, detentions, disappearances, torture, and murders. The international televisual transmissions, thus, were considered to be decisive political platforms to consolidate the dictatorship's 'preferred' image of Argentina. By then, Argentina had several television networks, but all of them had been nationalized and were controlled by the state (the private networks had been nationalized in 1974 by the previous Peronist government). | 3 |
| | 4 |
| | 5 |
| | 6 |
| | 7 |
| | 8 |
| | 9 |
| | 10 |
| | 11 |
| | 12 |
| | 13 |
| | 14 |
| | 15 |
| | 16 |
| | 17 |
| | 18 |
| | 19 |
| | 20 |
| | 21 |
| | 22 |
| | 23 |
| | 24 |
| | 25 |
| | 26 |
| | 27 |
| | 28 |
| | 29 |
| | 30 |
| | 31 |
| | 32 |
| | 33 |
| | 34 |
| The 1980s marked the inception of more reliable color images in Argentina and, from that moment on, soccer clubs were able to use (and promote) the colors of their shirts unconstrained by the limitations of black and white television transmission. The 1982 FIFA World Cup was the first to be seen in color in Argentina, allowing spectators to appreciate a new visual dimension of the soccer 'show' that was, until then, inaccessible to them. The slow development and spread of new receivers and the growing demand of consumers to watch the tournament in color (the Argentine team was a favorite to win the tournament, but failed) spurred the re-emergence of a residual practice that saw thousands of fans watch the telecasts in front of electrical appliance shops as in the 1950s. ⁵ | 35 |
| | 36 |
| | 37 |
| | 38 |
| | 39 |
| | 40 |
| | 41 |
| | 42 |
| | 43 |
| | 44 |
| | 45 |
| | 46 |

1 It was also at this time that cable television began to emerge and spread
2 throughout the country. The difficulties of transmission in a very large
3 territory (Argentina is 3,694 kilometers long from North to South and
4 1,423 kilometers from East to West, with highly variable terrain), and the
5 centralization of television production in Buenos Aires, resulted in innu-
6 merable technological difficulties in the reception of signals in cities and in
7 remote towns. Crucially, the most important soccer matches were played
8 in Buenos Aires, and many households in the provinces simply could not
9 receive these signals. Eventually, though, local cable networks developed
10 the capability to download and distribute satellite signals. Again, soccer
11 promoted a technological expansion, one that would be perfected in the
12 mid-1990s when soccer transmissions were increasingly encoded, thereby
13 forcing people to adopt a ‘pay-per-view’ arrangement. The birth of pay-
14 per-view services in Argentina, then, was strictly related to the popularity
15 of soccer telecasts.

17 **PRIVATIZATION AND MONOPOLIZATION**

19 Halfway through the 1980s, a ‘media empire’ called Torneos y Compe-
20 tencias (TyC) began to gain to emerge. Headed by Carlos Avila, an entre-
21 preneur fascinated by the growing revenue from advertising in televised
22 North American sport, TyC aggressively pursued similar strategies in local
23 television in Argentina. After successfully televising golf, in 1985 Alvila
24 made two decisive steps. First, he signed an exclusivity contract with the
25 AFA to broadcast and commercialize first division matches. Therefore,
26 all soccer content became Avila’s ‘property,’ forcing the rest of the image
27 producers (for example, news shows) to follow his programming decisions.
28 As a second step, a television show called *Fútbol de Primera* was created,
29 hosted first on Channel 7 by Enrique Macaya Márquez and Mauro Viale,
30 the latter being replaced by Marcelo Araujo when the program was moved
31 to Channel 9. *Fútbol de Primera* replaced *Todos los Goles*, a program
32 that showed all the goals of the day presented on Sunday nights and was
33 hosted by many journalists who offered their commentary on individual
34 matches. In 1991, *Fútbol de Primera* finally arrived at Channel 13 as a key
35 property of the media conglomerate Clarín, thus widening the dimensions
36 of its production and technology, and transforming its classic narrative
37 structures and aesthetics in accordance with international developments
38 in sport television.

39 Such a radical overhaul of televised sports production and TyC’s exclusive
40 contract with AFA provided an influx of money and cemented the sport’s
41 dependency on television revenue in the context of much broader economic
42 reform. From 1989, the new President, the Peronist Carlos Menem, imple-
43 mented a range of neoliberal policies that included the privatization of all
44 public services (that had been nationalized during the first Peronist regime
45

- 1945–1955), including television. The government, however, retained the old Channel 7 (ATC) as a public service broadcaster. In addition to these developments, the government eliminated any anti-monopoly legislation related to media, a move that resulted in heightened levels of concentration and the emergence of powerful media conglomerates, the most important of which was Clarín. Until that point, Clarín had been the most important national newspaper but, through a host of takeovers and mergers, formed the apex of an immense media group that included other newspapers, radios, television channels, telephone services, internet services and, crucially, cable television companies throughout the country. Soccer was the focal point of Clarín's monopolistic position in cable services in Argentina (70 percent of the national market of cable television came under the control of Clarín (see Mastrini and Becerra, 2006)).
- The combination of the production of TyC and the technological emphasis in the institutional image of the new Channel 13 would have new and marked effects on *Fútbol de Primera*. The presentation of the program tended to include a proliferation of futuristic themes, an atmosphere created by the choice of Vangelis as its music (the theme of the movie *Blade Runner*). The multiplication of images and the broader transformation of the show and its narrative structure were further reinforced in the studio by the proliferation of video walls and screens akin to popular North American sports production techniques. These developments signaled a new mode of presentation: the matches could be viewed from all angles, and the most important games began to be shot with up to 18 cameras. Of course, no spectator can see all that television captures, and the cameras condense, in an imaginary way, all points of view, even those that are impossible for a 'common spectator' to discern. These new production values tended to focus on 'close-up' shots and details (for example, of the referee) that many viewers and critics consider 'gimmicky' and hyperbolic (Rowe 2004b, p. 395).
- The expansion of soccer in Argentine television and, especially, the significant amount of capital that flowed into the sport were, however, not unprecedented. The 1990s were the global peak of televisual transmissions as television developed into the main economic driver of soccer around the world. The appearance of new cable technologies and, eventually, the domestic satellite antenna, further commercialized the sport, and merchandising logics soon began to dominate. It became apparent that, from this point, soccer in Argentina would simply not survive without the income provided by television, even though the exclusive contract between TyC and the AFA was an unequal one that allowed TyC to secure immense profits while many clubs found themselves in economic crisis due to incompetent administration and widespread structural corruption. At the same time, the economic crisis of the clubs meant an absolute dependency on TyC resulting in a weak bargaining position regarding many critical decisions associated with the sport, including even programming schedules.

1 Still, the commercial expansion of televised soccer was unstoppable.
2 Paying audiences provided virtually unlimited merchandising opportuni-
3 ties, while sports channels were created allowing viewers to spend an
4 entire day watching sport.⁷ Nevertheless, the first signal of resistance to
5 this ascendant model began to appear in 2000 when it was announced that
6 the 2002 FIFA World Cup would be broadcast only by satellite and cable
7 television (Clarín also owned the satellite television company called Direct
8 TV). This was, moreover, the first moment when arguments of cultural
9 citizenship and the public's right to watch events of national interest began
10 to be debated. With the impending threat of restricted access to the FIFA
11 2002 World Cup, the Argentine Congress eventually defended live televi-
12 visual access to the event as a right of cultural citizenship. The journalist Vic-
13 tor Hugo Morales, a renowned soccer radio commentator, was prominent
14 in criticizing the AFA and Clarín Group. Finally, Law 25342 was passed in
15 October 2000 obliging owners of the television rights to the matches played
16 by the national team to "commercialize those rights in order to guarantee
17 the live transmission of those matches to all the national territory." The law
18 included international soccer tournaments organized by FIFA, the Inter-
19 national Olympic Committee (IOC) or the South American Football Con-
20 federation (*Confederación Sudamericana de Fútbol* (CONMEBOL)), but
21 access to local professional soccer matches and other sporting events did
22 not receive the same protection under the law.⁸ Within the decade, though,
23 a challenge to the Argentine television sport monopoly would emerge.

24

25 FOOTBALL FOR EVERYONE (FÚTBOL PARA TODOS)?

26

27 On 11 August 2009, the unthinkable happened: the AFA cancelled its
28 exclusive contract with TyC, thus dismantling the monopolistic structure
29 of the televised sport industry. The measure was taken in the context of a
30 wider political crisis: the government, presided over by the Peronist Cris-
31 tina Fernández de Kirchner, was in a heated dispute with Clarín Group,
32 by then the country's most powerful media conglomerate (the owner of
33 television channels and radios, 70 percent of cable television, 85 percent of
34 paper for newspapers and the main newspaper, *Clarín*). Unsurprisingly, the
35 media empire had an impact on public opinion and the Clarín Group had
36 recently criticized official positions and policies, and offered its support to
37 the government's opposition. The Argentine government, then, took the
38 offensive: it put before the Parliament a bill concerning audiovisual com-
39 munication services that effectively forbade the monopolistic concentration
40 of media. The bill was subsequently passed in October 2009.

41 The monopolistic position of the Clarín Group had, until then, perme-
42 ated all levels of soccer: it was the AFA's television 'partner,' and the Group
43 owned the exclusive television rights to local and international soccer
44 matches on the free-to-air Channel 13 and the specialty cable channel TyC
45

| | |
|---|----|
| Sports. Importantly, Clarín could deny this content to other cable operators, thus crippling competitors that simply could not survive without the most popular soccer games. By refusing to share its signal, the Clarín Group was, in turn, able to purchase those companies for a very cheap price. The acquisition of the smaller cable companies, moreover, allowed Clarín to transmit throughout the country, thereby further concentrating its power. | 1 |
| Clarín's power, however, extended beyond the delivery of popular sports content. Julio Grondona, the President of the AFA since 1979 and the Vice President of FIFA, had long been suspected of corruption. Through a pact with Clarín Group, all potential criticisms and accusations were silenced in the media, and the relationship between the AFA and TyC was mutually beneficial beyond strict economic matters. | 2 |
| In the context of the broader political confrontation between the monopoly Clarín and the government, the latter sought to secure the television rights to soccer. TSC (an associate of TyC) offered the AFA \$US60 million per year for the broadcasting rights. The football clubs, however, were reported to be seeking \$US180 million. When the government made an offer of \$US150 million per year, the AFA quickly accepted it and cancelled its contract with TyC (the contract was due for renewal in 2014). Despite threats of court action, the AFA conceded the monopoly of soccer broadcasting to the state, and <i>Fútbol Para Todos</i> (Football for Everyone) began to air on Televisión Pública. These developments marked the end of the private monopoly of encoded cable and satellite signals, and marked the 'return' of all first division matches of local tournaments on the public network, ⁹ while the Clarín Group maintained control over minor league matches. ¹⁰ | 3 |
| On the day that the new contract was announced (20 August 2009), President Kirchner described the previous private monopoly of soccer telecasts as a 'confiscation of the goals,' and compared those practices with the disappearance of people during the military dictatorship of 1976: | 4 |
| it is not possible that the ones who can pay, can watch a match, moreover that they confiscate the goals until Sunday even though you pay, as they confiscate your word or images, as they kidnapped and disappeared 30,000 Argentines. (Kirchner cited Anon. 2009) | 5 |
| "Fútbol Para Todos" can be understood as an economic, discursive, and semiotic operation aimed at democratizing mediated reception of the most popular sports content, albeit for populist political purposes. Given that Televisión Pública is accessible to anyone who has a television in any part of the country, live access to all soccer matches is nearly guaranteed. However, the political slogan that soccer telecasts are "for everyone" does not imply automatic democratization. | 6 |
| The intervention of the national government in the financing of "Fútbol para todos" implies live access to all the matches and goals (previously restricted and exclusive to Channel 13 and "Fútbol de primera"), while all | 7 |
| | 8 |
| | 9 |
| | 10 |
| | 11 |
| | 12 |
| | 13 |
| | 14 |
| | 15 |
| | 16 |
| | 17 |
| | 18 |
| | 19 |
| | 20 |
| | 21 |
| | 22 |
| | 23 |
| | 24 |
| | 25 |
| | 26 |
| | 27 |
| | 28 |
| | 29 |
| | 30 |
| | 31 |
| | 32 |
| | 33 |
| | 34 |
| | 35 |
| | 36 |
| | 37 |
| | 38 |
| | 39 |
| | 40 |
| | 41 |
| | 42 |
| | 43 |
| | 44 |
| | 45 |
| | 46 |

other sports and news channels are able *instantly* to show goal highlights. However, the new contract simply created a new monopoly of soccer content and images for the state and the public broadcaster. Other channels (cable channels 26 and Crónica television, and the free-to-air America and Channel 9) that re-transmit the matches and compete with the state channel are now forced to broadcast official transmissions. Notably, the production of these telecasts was granted to a private company, La Corte, which was hired by Televisión Pública, while commentary on the soccer telecasts was provided by Marcelo Araujo, who was, as mentioned earlier, the face of Channel 13 for many years (and in the middle of a court case with the dismantled monopoly).

The decision to retain Araujo—a voice closely associated with the former private monopoly (and with his series of expressions, twists, aggressive statements and vulgarities)—leaves some doubt about the democratization process. Is this a new type of state-based, ideological monopoly? The decision that Marcelo Araujo would be the “official” voice of “Fútbol para todos” can be interpreted both as a “declaration of war” to Clarín or as recognition of his skills as a commentator. Aníbal Fernández, Chief of Staff of the President and a soccer authority (of the club called Quilmes), was the most important negotiator of the new contract between the government and the AFA. Fernandez stated in an interview with the authors that the choice of Araujo was related only to ratings, although it was rumored among sports journalists that it was demanded by Julio Grondona, the President of AFA, in a political maneuver against the government (see Hamilton and Hernández 2010). The selection of Araujo was probably a combination of two logics: that of the market (the “popularity” of the journalist) and of individual power and nepotism (Grondona’s nickname in the world of soccer is “The Godfather”).¹¹

Since the nationalization of the soccer telecasts there have not been any visual or linguistic innovations in the narration of the sport. The melodramatic narration, (ab)use of close-up images, the technological paraphernalia that shows as many points of view as possible, the colloquial and vulgar language, the strong and sexualized jokes, and even some racist comments sentiments, all persist. The possibility of constructing a new and more progressive style of broadcasting, one not linked with the mercantile values of the cultural industry, has clearly not been encouraged in this instance. If, as Rowe (2004a, p. 396) remarks, one of the advantages of public broadcasting is the possibility of innovation and quality, *Fútbol para Todos* has chosen continuity, repetition, and aesthetic conservatism. If there is one innovative aspect, however, it has been the reduction of commercial advertising during telecasts, although government propaganda has easily filled this void. Some sport films air in place of commercials, showing various historical aspects of soccer clubs that are not well known by the general audience (almost every club of First Division is 100 years old).

Articulating with these developments is unabashed support for the national government. Even though a technical monopoly of transmission was not created (as commercial television sport providers still operate in Argentina), the production dimension is restricted and there are certain choices (such as of the narrator and other personnel) conditioned by ideological affinities. The participation of the government in material terms has been barely criticized by opposition parties, although they maintain that “there are more serious situations to solve with state money than pay per view soccer” (Anon. 2010). Those who were against the ‘de-commercial monopolization’ of soccer argued that it was little more than political posturing aimed at cementing the government’s popularity and securing votes. Against these claims, supporters of the decision noted that advertising income will comfortably finance the contract. Nevertheless, since February 2010, all private advertising has disappeared and the only advertisements that now air are exclusively those of the government except for of IVECO, the tournament’s sponsor. After former President Nestor Kirchner’s death in October 2010, though, even this sponsorship disappeared and the 2011 tournament was named in his honor.

With regard to audiences, a space has been filled that was previously restricted by corporate capital through the purchase of ‘packages’ of encoded and pay-per-view matches. State intervention and the provision of free-to-air soccer telecasts may or may not guarantee future votes, but it has marked a radical change in the sports broadcasting landscape that was once, essentially, completely privatized. These developments appear to be widely supported among Argentine political parties and the wider population. Thus, for example, in the 2011 general elections there were no proposals to eliminate “Fútbol para Todos” and, evidently, all Argentine politicians understand that there remains a significant consensus in favor of the nationalization of soccer telecasts and against the former private monopoly.

CONCLUSION: THE ARGENTINE CROWN JEWELS AND THE PATRIMONIALIZATION OF SPORT

At the beginning of 2011, the Federal Authority of Audiovisual Communication Services (AFSCA), a legal entity created by to organize and regulate the media, took another step toward enshrining viewing rights of sports fans in Argentina. The AFSCA, in accordance with recently passed media legislation, now regulates what it calls “the universal access of informative content of relevant interest,” including sport. A list similar to that in the United Kingdom covering national and international sports events was established that mandated live, universal access to certain events as a right of cultural citizenship while forbidding the exclusive transmission of the most popular sport events via cable or pay-per-view. This decision was

1 announced by President Kirchner on the program “Deporte para todos”
2 (Sport for everyone) in a press conference. She was accompanied in mak-
3 ing the announcement by the CEOs of the most important sport networks
4 (TyC, Fox and ESPN). Some of the most important events included on the
5 list are:

6 **A. SOCCER (A SELECTION OF THE EVENTS)**

7 World Cup: all the matches played by the national team, the semi-
8 finals and the final even though Argentina is not part of it.

9 Confederation Cup: all the matches played by the national team.

10 Qualifications for the World Cup: all the matches played by the
11 national team.

12 Clubs World Cup: Final match with Argentine participation.

13 Under-20 World Cup: all the matches played by the national team.

14 Libertadores Cup: Semifinal and final matches if there is an Argen-
15 tine team in them.

16 Summer Olympic Games: all the matches played by the national
17 team.

18 **B. OTHER SPORTS: IOC**

19 All the matches played by the national team of Basketball, volley-
20 ball, rugby and hockey in the Olympic Games.

21 All the matches in finals in individual sports.

22 **Tennis: ITF**

23 Semifinals and finals of the Davis Cup if Argentina is part of them.

24 Semifinal and final of a Grand Slam if an Argentine is part of them.

25 **Hockey: FIH**

26 All the matches played by the national team in the World Cup.

27 **Basketball: FIBA**

28 All the matches played by the national team in the World Cup.

29 **IOC**

30 Pre-Olympics in which Argentina takes part.

31 **Volleyball: FIVB**

32 All the matches played by the national team in the World Cup.

Rugby: IRB

All the matches played by the national team in the World Cup.

The list, as can be seen, includes a series of both local and international sporting events. However, it is limited to the most popular sports and omits smaller sports such as track and field, cycling, or handball that have significant participant numbers, but smaller television audiences. Although this development might be understood as an extension of the democratization of television access to certain cultural goods and sport practices, it is clearly driven by the logic of supply and demand in the cultural industries. This can be called a public patrimonialization of sport events as symbolic goods. These 'popular' cultural-political decisions that have established Argentine viewing rights, then, are also constituted by the logic of profit and political calculation: even if, in this case, it is only 'profit' measured in audience size and a political 'return' for the government.¹²

This chapter has shown how, in the Argentine case, the relationship between soccer and television can be read as a tension between commercial and political logics. Soccer is not only a sport: it's a major market in which capitalism organizes its strategies to widen its business. But soccer, like all sports, can be unpredictable. The weakest team can beat the strongest and, match after match, we can witness the tension of the unpredictable outcome. This is the only dimension that can't be controlled entirely by television, capital and the state. Some of the recent elements in the Argentine situation perhaps indicate a change in the relationship between media and sport. With the appearance of "Fútbol para todos" accompanied by the new Media Law, there is a new contextual foundation from which we can analyze sport, nationalization, and the media. Still, there can be no easy conclusions with respect to the significant political-economic developments that have taken place in Argentina over the past decade. These changes have transformed the role of its media and their relationships with audiences, especially when they are seen as citizens with implied rights to receive free-to-air transmissions of nationally significant sport events.

NOTES

1. For a discussion of these ideas, see Sebreli (1981).
2. In the last five decades, there has been a significant and ongoing discussion about sport and the concept of alienation. In Latin America as elsewhere, the first arguments tended to use the classic metaphor of sport as the opium of the masses (Archetti 1998, Da Matta 1982). Readers can find a balancing history of this discussion in the construction of a Latin American field of social studies of sport in Alabarces (2005).
3. See Frydenberg and Daskal (2010).
4. For a discussion of these and other Argentinean sport films, please see Alabarces (2002).

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46

5. Again, for an extended analysis of the 1978 World Cup, please see Alabarces
6. Figures are taken from Gilbert and Vitagliano (1998).
7. Besides the 1978 World Cup, viewers may have seen in color the Malvinas
8. (Falklands) War that was happening at the exact same time. However, the
9. dictatorship strictly censored and controlled what was being shown in this
10. context.
11. By the end of 1990s, it was possible to access four specialty channels that
12. aired sport throughout the day. One of them was owned by Clarín Group,
13. which was also the owner of the cable company through which the matches
14. were seen.
15. We have reconstructed this process through journalistic sources. The law, for
16. example, is available on line in [http://www.infoleg.gov.ar/infolegInternet/
17. anexos/60000-64999/64834/norma.htm](http://www.infoleg.gov.ar/infolegInternet/anexos/60000-64999/64834/norma.htm) (accessed 4 May 2012). Academics
18. in Communication Studies have played an active role in recent discussions
19. about the new media law but have not studied the case of sport. They also
20. examined the monopoly of the Clarín Group in the media structure, but did
21. not examine the importance of soccer content in the media conglomerate.
22. 9. That is how ATC was renamed after a period as Canal 7. It is the only Argentine
23. open free-to-air channel owned by the state.
24. 10. The television rights to minor league soccer matches (from National B to D
25. Division) had been in the hands of another company, Trisa, which also, incidentally,
26. belonged to the Clarín Group. In 2011, the relegation of River Plate,
27. the second most important soccer club in Argentina, forced the government
28. to nationalize the transmissions of the “National B” tournament (an equivalent
29. of a second division championship). All matches of the “National B” are
30. also broadcast by Public Television.
31. 11. After early chaos, the show incorporated the sport journalists identified with
32. the government’s progressive populism or the ones who were traditionally
33. conservatives but claimed to be opposed to the Clarín Group. The most
34. important, perhaps gestural innovation, was the incorporation in 2012 of a
35. female commentator, Viviana Vila.
36. 12. In April 2012, a new state program was created: “Automovilismo para todos”
37. [Motoring for everyone]. Once again, a contract was cancelled at the Clarín
38. Group’s expense. “Carburando,” the company owned by the Clarín Goup
39. that transmitted all the local races, lost the rights and, from that moment
40. onwards, all races are televised on the public broadcaster.

REFERENCES

35. Alabarces, P., 2005. Veinte años de Ciencias Sociales y Deporte en América
36. Latina: Un Balance, una Agenda. *Revista Brasileira de Informação Bibli-*
37. *ográfica en Ciências Sociais*, n. 58, São Paulo: ANPOCS, 2do. semestre, pp.
38. 159–180.
39. Alabarces, P., 2002. *Fútbol y Patria. El Fútbol y las Narrativas Nacionales en la*
40. *Argentina*. Buenos Aires: Prometeo libros.
41. Anon., 2010. Piden Crear una Comisión Investigadora Sobre el Programa “Fútbol
42. para Todos” [online]. *Clarín*. August 19. Available from: http://www.clarin.com/politica/Piden-comision-investigadora-programa-Futbol_0_319768241.html [Accessed 4 May 2012].
43. Anon., 2009. “Nos habían secuestrado los goles” [online]. *La Gaceta*. August
44. 20. Available from: http://www.lagaceta.com.ar/nota/340308/Deportes/Nos_habian_secuestrado_goles.html [Accessed 14 July 2011].

Football for Everyone? 109

| | |
|--|----|
| Archetti, E., 1998. Prólogo a Alabarcos. In: Di Giano and Frydenberg, eds., <i>Deporte y Sociedad</i> . Buenos Aires: Eudeba. | 1 |
| Borges, J.L., and Biyo Casares, A., 1996. <i>Crónicas de Bustos Domecq</i> . Buenos Aires: Losada. | 2 |
| Da Matta, R., ed., 1982. <i>O Universo do Futebol: Futebol e Sociedade Brasileira</i> . Rio de Janeiro: Pinakothek. | 3 |
| Frydenberg, J., and Daskal, R., eds., 2010. <i>Fútbol, Historia y Política</i> . Buenos Aires: Aurelia Rivera Libros. | 4 |
| Gilbert, A., and Vitagliano, M., 1998. <i>El Terror y la Gloria. La Vida, el Fútbol y la Política en la Argentina del Mundial 78</i> . Buenos Aires: Norma. | 5 |
| Hamilton, M., and Hernández, C., 2010. 'Así como Estaba el Fútbol iba a la Muerte,' interview with Aníbal Fernández. <i>Un caño</i> . April, 13–19. | 6 |
| Mastrini, G., and Becerra, M., 2006. <i>Periodistas y Magnates. Estructura y Concentración de las Industrias Culturales en América Latina</i> . Buenos Aires: Prometeo Libros. | 7 |
| Palomino, H., and Scher, A., 1985. <i>AFA: Pasión De Multitudes y de Elites</i> . Buenos Aires: CISEA. | 8 |
| Rowe, D., 2004a. 'Fulfilling the Cultural Mission: Popular Genre and Public Remit.' <i>European Journal of Cultural Studies</i> , 7(3): 381–399. | 9 |
| Rowe, D., 2004b. 'Watching Brief: Cultural Citizenship and Viewing Rights.' <i>Sport in Society</i> , 7(3): 385–402. | 10 |
| Scherer, J., and Whitson, D., (2009). 'Public Broadcasting, Sport, and Cultural Citizenship: the Future of Sport on the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation?' <i>International Review for the Sociology of Sport</i> , 44(2–3), 213–229. | 11 |
| Sebreli, J., 1981. <i>Fútbol y Masas</i> . Buenos Aires: Galerna. | 12 |
| Varela, M., 2005. <i>La Televisión Criolla. Desde sus Inicios hasta la Llegada del Hombre a la Luna. 1951–1969</i> . Buenos Aires: Edhsa/Ensayo. | 13 |
| | 14 |
| | 15 |
| | 16 |
| | 17 |
| | 18 |
| | 19 |
| | 20 |
| | 21 |
| | 22 |
| | 23 |
| | 24 |
| | 25 |
| | 26 |
| | 27 |
| | 28 |
| | 29 |
| | 30 |
| | 31 |
| | 32 |
| | 33 |
| | 34 |
| | 35 |
| | 36 |
| | 37 |
| | 38 |
| | 39 |
| | 40 |
| | 41 |
| | 42 |
| | 43 |
| | 44 |
| | 45 |
| | 46 |

6 No Longer the Crown Jewels of Sport?

Television, Sport and National Events in the UK

Raymond Boyle

1 Talking Point: Is the ‘crown jewels’ sports list past its sell-by date?
2 *Broadcast*, the UK broadcasting industry journal, 24, April, 2009.
3
4
5

INTRODUCTION

8 Some of the most intriguing battles in sports culture take place far
9 away from the stadium or the sporting arena. With its cocktail of poli-
10 tics, big business, television and nationalism, the issues involving access
11 through television to national and international sporting events in the
12 United Kingdom (UK) offer a rich insight into the current relationship
13 between sporting and political culture. This chapter examines the current
14 debate in the UK around national television access to sports events. This
15 political and cultural debate takes place against a backdrop of a range
16 of technological, political, and economic issues around the relationship
17 between sport, television, and national identity across the UK. The cur-
18 rent ‘listed events’ of sports which enshrine in law live universal access to
19 key sporting moments (such as the Football Association and Scottish Cup
20 finals), and also protect other events from being shown only on pay-TV
21 (Six Nations Rugby), has been in place since 1998. However, 2009–10
22 saw this arrangement reviewed by the Department of Media, Culture and
23 Sport (DCMS).

24 This review took place against considerable public debate about the role
25 of sport, television, and citizenship in different parts of the UK. For example,
26 in Scotland the Scottish Parliament now has devolved power over cultural
27 policy, but finds broadcasting policy reserved to the London-based Westmin-
28 ster Parliament. As a result, the Scottish government, despite its stated aim,
29 has no powers to make international football matches involving the national
30 team available live, free-to-air. Meanwhile, in England, the decision in Octo-
31 ber 2009 to make a World Cup qualifier involving the national team only
32 available live on the web provoked considerable public and political protest.
33 This chapter, then, outlines the broad political, economic and cultural context
34

| | |
|--|----|
| within which arguments about access to television sport are being made across a devolving UK television market. | 1 |
| | 2 |
| The opening section highlights the key drivers of change in this process and also examines the particular challenges that the relationship between sport and national identity across the UK pose for policy makers. This discussion is followed by an analysis of the recent (2009–2010) review into the 'listed events' carried out for the UK government. At the center of this section is an argument about the importance of the politics of media policy in shaping and framing the wider debate and the key role that lobbying by powerful broadcasting organizations plays in this process. Finally, this very UK-focused case is placed within the wider context of the growing influence of European Union decision makers in shaping the sports media environment in member states and the tensions generated by positioning sports rights as an economic commodity, albeit one with cultural impacts. | 3 |
| | 4 |
| | 5 |
| | 6 |
| | 7 |
| | 8 |
| | 9 |
| | 10 |
| | 11 |
| | 12 |
| | 13 |
| | 14 |
| | 15 |
| | 16 |
| | 17 |
| | 18 |
| Debates about sports rights in the UK sit at the intersection between politics, business, and national identity. The establishment of a pay-TV market in the UK over the last two decades has been driven by the BSkyB service (often referred to as 'Sky') and at the core of its strategic development has been the acquisition of exclusive sports rights. In 2009, for example, well over two-thirds of Sky's 9 million subscribers were household subscribers to Sky Sports (BBC 2009, p. 2). By 2011, Sky had become the most profitable commercial media organization in the UK, dominating the pay-TV market with revenues that outstripped the BBC's £3.7 billion license fee income. The delivery of exclusive sports content had been a central component in the success of the Sky business. Significantly, the imposition by statute of a set of protected listed sports events (discussed in more detail below) has not impacted on the company's success. However, Sky's market dominance has altered dramatically the sports rights market. The steady migration of sports from free-to-air television in the UK (BBC, ITV, Channel 4 and Channel 5) over the last two decades represents an example of what may be termed 'policy lag.' As broader market or technological change takes place, policy intervention tends to lag behind given its notoriously slow pace of development and implementation. | 19 |
| | 20 |
| | 21 |
| | 22 |
| | 23 |
| | 24 |
| | 25 |
| | 26 |
| | 27 |
| | 28 |
| | 29 |
| | 30 |
| | 31 |
| | 32 |
| | 33 |
| | 34 |
| | 35 |
| | 36 |
| | 37 |
| Such a temporal divergence provides another important framing element in understanding the relationship between sports rights and television in the UK; the politics of media policy. By this I mean the extent to which, first, media policy in the UK is not a coherent set of integrated policy strands, but rather an <i>ad hoc</i> set of arrangements driven by competing agendas from differing parts of the government machine. Thus, the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) will often be driven by broader cultural concerns around sport in a way that, for example, the Department of | 38 |
| | 39 |
| | 40 |
| | 41 |
| | 42 |
| | 43 |
| | 44 |
| | 45 |
| | 46 |

Business Innovation and Skills (BIS) will not. The latter will have as its key remit the promotion of competition in particular markets and a concern with economic impact and the growth of media sectors. The DCMS will also have economic concerns, and indeed one might argue that it has been economic rather than cultural imperatives that have shaped policy thinking in the media sector in recent decades (DCMS 1998, 2008, Schlesinger 2007). Nonetheless, the important point, as illustrated in the case study examining the review of sports rights in the UK, is that differing parts of the policy machine often have competing and even contradictory agendas in shaping and implementing policy change.

A second conceptual issue informing this area of research requires recognizing the extent to which media policy (however incoherent) is deeply political in nature. By this I mean both in terms of party politics, with, for example, policy differences between the UK Coalition and that of the Scottish National Party (SNP) governments, but also broader political terms in that media policy is a terrain shaped by various interest and lobby groups. The idea that media policy formation is a bureaucratic exercise driven purely by 'evidence' is a strong discourse advocated by those in government, but it quickly crumbles when placed under any scrutiny or analysis (Freedman 2008). As the case study below demonstrates, media policy formation is a highly politicized and contested arena occupied by powerful organizations and lobby groups that all act as policy-shapers albeit with differing levels of power and influence. As sports rights occupy such an important part of the media landscape, not least economically as key media content, then invariably we see a spillover of politics into the arena of sports rights policy formation. In short, to understand the sports media rights context in the UK, we are required to examine briefly the nature and tensions of the politics of a devolved UK political system.

SPORT AND NATIONAL IDENTITY IN THE UK

The links between sporting and political identities is, of course, well documented (Bairner 2001, Holt 1990). The complexity in the UK is that a single state (often mistakenly referred to as Britain) contains a number of distinct nations: England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland. In the sport of football, all the 'home nations' are recognized by the International Federation of Association Football (FIFA) and the Union of European Football Associations (UEFA), and each has their own governing body. Thus, in cultural terms, each has a strong international presence across sports from football to rugby. Even these cultural distinctions, though, are not straightforward. In the case of Northern Ireland there exists a Northern Irish football team, but 'all-Ireland' rugby and cricket teams, while the legacy of class, politics, and history continue to shape Irish sporting cultures in a direct and dramatic manner (Cronin, 1999).

For many years, these sporting cultures were often the only international arena through which these identities (or symbolic displays of Scottishness, Welshness, etc.) could be given an international media profile. Politically, these nations had little or no power or distinctive identity within the overarching UK state. Even today, many international media commentators still refer to England when they mean Britain or the UK and, in so doing, confer invisibility on these other parts of the UK. However, the last decade or so has seen the processes of political devolution across the UK change the rules of political engagement for the constituent parts of the UK state. Since 1999, a Scottish Parliament has sat in Edinburgh with considerable devolved powers over health, education, and other areas of Scottish society. A Welsh Assembly has fewer powers than the Scottish Parliament, but still allows an element of power to be devolved from Westminster. Following a number of abortive starts, a similar arrangement exists in Belfast for the Northern Ireland Assembly. These divergent provisions form the backdrop of the contemporary narratives around sports, media and citizenship in the UK. Among the anomalies of the devolution settlement for Scotland, for example, is that cultural policy has been devolved to the Edinburgh Parliament, while broadcasting policy remains a reserved power for the Westminster Parliament. The contradiction here is that cultural policy often has broadcasting as a key element of cultural or creative industries policy (DCMS 1998, 2008).

The reason for this anomaly in the architecture of the devolved framework was a fear among the then UK Labour Government that devolving broadcasting policy to Scotland would enhance nationalist sentiment in the country and politically strengthen the hands of the Scottish National Party (SNP), a party committed to the establishment of an independent Scotland and, thus, the breakup of the UK (Birt 2002). By 2007, however, the SNP was in power in Edinburgh and formed a minority government. It subsequently proceeded to argue for greater powers in broadcasting for the Scottish Parliament and specifically advocated for the establishment of a Scottish digital network (Jenkins 2011). This policy debate initially took place largely among media and cultural policy ‘wonks,’ but the First Minister Alex Salmond placed it firmly on the public agenda when he raised the issue of free-to-air access to sports events. He highlighted the migration of Scottish international football from free-to-air to pay-TV as a leading edge example of why Scots needed greater control over their broadcasting policy, rather than having a London-based DCMS make such decisions.

At a speech at a Royal Television Society event in Glasgow in February 2008, and before a crucial upcoming FIFA World Cup qualifying match involving Scotland and Italy, Salmond argued that:

In Scotland, the only games shown on terrestrial television will be England’s home matches. It is an extraordinary and unacceptable position—and it reveals carelessness in the attitudes of broadcasters to their

1 wider responsibilities. Think of the literally hundreds of thousands who
2 can't watch their national team compete in our national sport. Think
3 of the young in our society who are desperate to be inspired by a new
4 generation of sporting heroes. You see, we aren't talking about just a
5 game of football. Rather, we are talking about maintaining a cohesive
6 society able, collectively, to celebrate its national identity. The impera-
7 tive for action is obvious. Sporting success can only be one catalyst for
8 a united, confident, ambitious nation. Let me simply say that when it
9 comes to getting the national team back on the screens of all our citi-
10 zens, it can be done and it must be done. (Salmond 2008)

11
12 With his usual political flair for identifying and securing a newspaper
13 headline (the story was 'splashed' the next day in one of Scotland's biggest
14 selling newspapers, *The Daily Record*), Salmond emphasized sport as an
15 integral aspect of collective Scottish identity and subsequently argued that
16 citizens had a right to access live telecasts of matches featuring the Scottish
17 national team on publicly-funded broadcasters. For a nationalist politician
18 it was a populist and compelling argument to make.

19 These political concerns were, of course, not unique to Scotland, as the
20 Davies Report (2009) that reviewed the listed events for the Secretary of
21 State at the DCMS noted:

22
23 Inside the Welsh Assembly in June 2009, the Assembly Government's
24 Cabinet confirmed its view that Six Nations Rugby Union Champion-
25 ship matches involving Wales should be guaranteed free-to-air and live.
26 According to Minister for Heritage, Alun Ffred Jones "[t]he public is
27 the most important part of the jigsaw when it comes to viewing rights"
28 he said. "We must act in the best interests of the people of Wales." His
29 statement mirrored the comment of Scotland's First Minister, Alex Sal-
30 mond. As BBC Scotland mentions in its evidence, when talking of the
31 widest TV availability of international football matches involving his
32 country, the First Minister has said "This could be done, and should be
33 done." (Davies 2009, p. 29)

34
35 However, both in the case of the Scottish Parliament and the Welsh Assem-
36 bly, the powers devolved to them from Westminster only covered the for-
37 mation of cultural policy, while control of actual broadcasting policy was
38 retained in London. The 'listed events' of sport which Parliament decreed
39 by law must make certain sports events available to all on free-to-air
40 television was a responsibility of the Department for Culture, Media and
41 Sport (DCMS) and an area over which neither the Scottish Parliament nor
42 the Welsh Assembly had any powers. Surreptitiously, however, the then UK
43 Labour government was keen to revisit the 'listed events' legislation and, in
44 2009, established a review under the auspices of the former broadcaster and
45 Football Association (FA) Chief Executive, David Davies. Policy shapers,
46

politicians, broadcasters, and sporting bodies soon found themselves arguing about the relative merits of citizen access, the role of sporting events in national life, and the threat that any change to the ‘policy *status quo*’ may have on the economics of elite professional sport in the UK.

THE ‘LISTED EVENTS’ OF UK NATIONAL TELEVISION

The ‘listed events’ were established in 1956 and drawn up by the BBC and the regulator of commercial public service broadcasting at the time, the Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA). The aim was to protect for the largest broadcast audience possible events deemed of national significance. In the UK, this list consisted of major sporting events. Elsewhere in Europe, similar lists were established, although they often included non-sporting events; for example, in Austria, the Vienna Opera Ball was protected. In total, nine countries in Europe had ‘listed events.’ In the UK, the list became known in broadcasting circles as the ‘crown jewels’ of sports broadcasting and was reviewed, adapted and changed in 1984, 1989, 1991, and 1998. Significantly, after a long period of stability, it was the advent of satellite and cable delivery systems that promoted reviews in the UK during the 1980s. These reviews then increased as new technology and a more liberal and commercial television marketplace developed apace during the late 1980s and 1990s (Freedman 2008, Goodwin 1999).

The 1998 review’s recommendations updated the 1996 Broadcasting Act and divided the list into two. The A list was concerned with live events and covered ten sport events, while the B list dealt with highlights packages.¹ These two lists were enshrined in the 2003 Communications Act. Under European Commission (EC) law and, most recently, the Audio Visual Media Directive, member states have the right to construct such lists. The Davies Review of 2009 was established by the then DCMS Secretary of State Andy Burnham, who was concerned with examining the benefits of the listed events, the suitability of the criteria being used, and whether any changes needed to be made to the existing arrangement. As is normal in such reviews, a set of recommendations would be made by the panel to the Secretary of State, who would, after consultation with any affected rights holder or broadcaster, make a final decision on any need to alter arrangements. The 2009 independent advisory panel received submissions from key broadcasters, sports governing bodies and politicians, and undertook a process of extensive consultation. In total, fifty-two organizations submitted responses or gave evidence to the panel, from all the free-to-air broadcasters, BSkyB, through to FIFA and domestic governing bodies of Scottish, English, and UK sport. In addition, nine other key individuals including former senior executives at the BBC, Sky and ITV all gave evidence to the panel. The British Market Research Bureau (BMRB) also carried out a public attitude survey, while Frontier Economics provided an impact analysis on

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46

viewing patterns of any changes to the list. What emerged in the wealth of data generated by the Davies Review was the centrality of sport in the broad viewing patterns of the UK audience, with almost 75 percent of viewers classifying themselves as either 'sports fans' and/or 'main eventers,' the latter being interested in the major sports events such as the Olympics (BBC 2009, p. 10). There was significant public support (84 percent) for the continuation of access key sporting events through free-to-air (Davies 2009, point 50). There was also overwhelming opposition from the governing bodies of sport to the listed regime, and they argued that it prevented them from maximizing revenue that they could reinvest in grassroots sport. Not surprisingly, it also emerged that the BBC was unquestionably one of the key beneficiaries of the listed regime, while the dominant pay-TV broadcaster Sky argued robustly for the listed events to be removed and for sporting bodies to decide how best to manage their rights (Sky 2009, p. 1). Of equal importance was a growing perception that, in the digital age, the value of highlights had been reduced. However, there was also a sense that live 'event' sports had not only become national 'appointments to view,' but that 'liveness' and immediacy were an intrinsic element in shaping the cultural experience of the event. To that end it was recognized by many that Sky had transformed sport on UK television through its high production values and its early adoption of a range of interactive and digital technologies, including HD and 3D (Deloitte LLP, 2009).

One of the most insightful pieces of evidence submitted to the Davies Review came from Value Partners in their market impact assessment for the BBC Trust of the listed events regime. Although conducted for the BBC, its analysis of the lack of impact of the listed events regime on Sky's spectacular growth over the last two decades was telling. It concluded:

Overall, the evidence above suggests that the negative market impact on broadcasters from listing events is likely to be minimal. Pay-TV has historically grown steadily in the UK despite the listed events regime, and the volume of sport that Sky now has to show is likely to be sufficient in the future to ensure that any one event or a small schedule of events is likely to be substitutable unless it is a key property, like the Premier League. For a new entrant it is possible that there could be an impact from denying them the opportunity to construct a consumer proposition by purchasing a desirable but inexpensive bundle of rights.

To date, there does not appear to have been an impact; in the future, market impact is only likely if a volume of events are listed. For a new entrant, there is also a benefit to listing events as it prevents an incumbent pay-TV operator buying all sports rights and becoming the only serious option for consumers. In the sports rights market, it is hard to make generalizations about the impact on a rights holder of listing. While there are benefits of being broadcast on free-to-air television, it is clear that

pay-TV may well be able to pay more for some events and the presence
of pay-TV as a bidder is likely to mean that qualifying broadcasters end
up paying more. Sports properties which are best suited to pay-TV—long
running tournaments, with one-two matches per week in primetime or
at weekends—are most likely to be adversely affected by listing. Smaller
competitions of major sports, which are attractive to pay-TV and which
depend financially on UK television revenues, could also be vulnerable.
(Value Partners 2009, p.50)

The Davies Independent Panel delivered their report at the end of 2009
(Davies 2009). It proposed a radical shift in the listing of events of national
significance. At its core was a recommendation to move to one list, keeping
many of the key events from list A in place, including the FIFA World Cup
Finals and the Summer Olympic Games. But, as Appendix 1 indicates, it
also argued for some events (like the Winter Olympic Games and the Derby)
to be dropped, the highlights list B abolished, and certain events such as
home and away European Championship football qualifiers involving home
nations added to the list. The Panel suggested that their task had been to
re-evaluate what the public viewed as being events of national significance,
and so merited being on free-to-air as part of a national conversation that
should be as inclusive as possible. They also robustly re-stated the value of
the listed events in the digital age and the centrality of key sporting events
that helped contribute to the range of collective identities that exist across a
politically devolved UK. If the conclusions of the review were surprising in
terms of their re-statement of the cultural, as opposed to economic, value of
sport, the political and sporting reactions to their recommendations were
both swift and illuminating.

THE POLITICS OF MEDIA SPORT

If timing is a key element in politics, then the Davies Review (2009) could
not have been more ill-timed in terms of potential impact. The report was
submitted to the Secretary of State at the DCMS just as political energies
and public attention were turning to the General Election that would be
called for May 2010. It soon became clear that any political decision on the
Review's recommendations would not be taken before the election in 2010.
Of immediate and sustained impact, however, was the hostile reaction of
the governing bodies of sport that had made submissions to the panel. The
English and Wales County Cricket Board (ECB) lambasted the proposal to
have live home test cricket and the Ashes back on free-to-air television, cit-
ing the massive drop in revenue that would potentially follow such a move.
The Scottish FA also claimed that millions of pounds of income from pay-TV
that helped support grass roots football development would be lost if they
had to sell the rights to qualifying games for major championships to free-to-
air broadcasters. Sports governing bodies argued that no economic impact

1 analysis had been carried out regarding the financial damage resulting from
2 moving sports back from pay-TV to free-to-air broadcasters.

3 In the public war of words that followed, David Davies made it clear
4 that, as Chair of the Independent Panel, the remit had been to place the
5 viewer and citizen at the center of their review of the value and shape of
6 the listed events, and not the broadcasters or governing bodies of sport
7 (although all had had their evidence considered). The lobbying that informs
8 the shaping of any public policy (Schlesinger *et al.* 2001, Schlesinger 2009a)
9 began in earnest as the DCMS indicated that it would now listen to the eco-
10 nomic concerns of both the governing bodies of sport. Meanwhile Sky also
11 pressed both Labour and Conservative politicians to rein in the proposals
12 contained in the Report. The only constituency happy with it appeared
13 to be the general (or at least sport-following) public, who through radio-
14 phone-ins and comment and opinion pieces broadly welcomed the return of
15 key football and cricket matches to free-to-air television screens.

16 As Freedman (2008) has argued, the development of media policy is
17 never free from political influence and is far from being an anodyne and
18 bureaucratic process. When the Conservative/Liberal Democrat Coalition
19 replaced the Labour government in May 2010, it did not take long for the
20 new Minister of Sport, Hugh Robertson, to distance the new government
21 from the Report and its findings. Prior to the election, the Conservative
22 Party had made clear through its Shadow Culture Minister Jeremy Hunt
23 that, in policy terms, they viewed the BBC (a potential beneficiary of the
24 Report's recommendations) as being in need of significant reform. Hunt,
25 who would become Culture Secretary in the new government, was also
26 on record as praising the contribution that Rupert Murdoch had made to
27 British television culture (Hunt 2008) and the Conservatives had been keen
28 to re-establish a closer relationship with the Murdoch media empire. This
29 was a relationship that had waned over the last decade as Murdoch had
30 supported the New Labour administration. By July 2010, Robertson had
31 indicated that the report and its recommendations would not be addressed
32 until after the 2012 digital switchover in the UK. In addition, he cited the
33 economic downturn (no different in severity to that which existed during
34 the Panel's deliberations) as another reason to defer making any decisions
35 on the review until 2013. Thus, while the uncertainty over the shape of
36 the future broadcasting ecology was given as one of the key reasons for
37 leaving the list as it had been since 1998, in reality both political ideology
38 and intense lobbying from the sports and broadcasting elite had shaped
39 this decision. The argument around the uncertainty concerning the digital
40 switchover was simply one of convenience for the new government. When
41 has there not been uncertainty over the future shape of broadcasting in the
42 UK over the last two decades? If nothing else, the retention of the 1998 list
43 was endorsed by the new Minister, who stated his full support for the prin-
44 ciple of protecting major sporting events for free-to-air coverage, one of
45 the key elements to emerge from a review that had been asked to report on
46

the principle of having listed events in the first place. There are, however, two other factors that shaped this debate in the UK that are worth highlighting. One is specific to the broadcasting and political culture of the UK; the other has wider European broadcasting ramifications.

THE FUTURE OF BBC SPORT

When the UK broadcasting industry magazine *Broadcast* (April 24, 2009) ran a survey among this sector asking whether the 'crown jewels' sports list was redundant, the overwhelming response (76 percent) was that it was still a valid mechanism for protecting nationally significant events. What was unsurprising in the discussion piece that followed was that support for retaining the list came from senior ITV and BBC executives, as well as an independent producer, while the Director of Corporate Affairs at BSkyB predictably argued that sports rights holders should be free to sell to whomsoever they wished. This split between free-to-air public service broadcasters and the pay-TV sector dominates industry thinking on the future of the list. However, the broader financial crisis faced across the UK public and commercial media sectors has meant that even the BBC has had to re-think its sports rights strategy.

In a controversial agreement between the BBC and the new UK Coalition completed over a 48-hour period, the license fee was frozen until 2016, while the Corporation accepted new responsibilities (and costs). The deal was struck with none of the usual public scrutiny or transparency associated with license fee negotiations that, in the past, have taken up to six months. The result left the BBC seeking 20 percent cuts across its departments by 2014. For the sports department at the BBC this meant 'cost savings' of £60m. As a response to the subsequent internal review across BBC outputs, a number of stories were leaked to newspapers indicating that certain high-profile BBC sports events were at risk. The Corporation was, in turn, forced to argue in public for the retention of national sports as stories continued to suggest that the BBC would have to drop some of its 'crown jewels' in the new financial era. Indeed, the Director General of the BBC had to announce that no decisions had been finalized and that the Corporation was reviewing all aspects of its content provision.

The BBC, which suffered significant losses of sports rights in the 1990s both to Sky and ITV, only to reclaim its prominent free-to-air position in the last decade, has now embarked on another decade of financial uncertainty which will see some of its top sports content migrate, if not to Sky, then to a resurgent commercial FTA ITV, which is keen to rebuild sport as part of its national brand. In late 2011, the Corporation secured the rights to the Wimbledon tennis championship until 2017. However, ITV took the rights to the French Open tennis tournament from the BBC from 2012. This process of change will continue as strategic decisions regarding the

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21

22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46

allocation of a reduced BBC sports budget impact on future rights negotiations (BBC Trust, 2011). The BBC situation resonates with the argument made by Scherer and Whitson (2009) in relation to the increasingly precarious ability of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation to air the most popular sports content for all Canadians. They argued that, if key elements of national popular culture and international sporting events were simply left to private broadcasters, the profile and presence of the CBC in the lives of Canadians would be radically reduced. In other words, the danger for the BBC of any diminution of its sports profile is one that has potentially wider political and cultural ramifications for the organization as it attempts to retain its popular appeal and funding legitimacy across its audiences. For Sky, the key to its growth as the largest (in revenue terms) media organization in the UK has been exclusive sports coverage. Thus, the retention of the listed events is regarded by this media conglomerate as a blockage for its profit margins and continual expansion. However, another variable, from seemingly humble origins, threatens to disrupt the broader sports rights ecology not simply in the UK but across Europe.

LET THE (COURT) BATTLE COMMENCE: THE ECJ AND THE FAPL

While not directly related to the listed events debate in the UK, the statement in February 2011 from Advocate General of the European Court of Justice (ECJ) regarding the *Murphy v. Football Association Premier League* (FAPL) case is indicative of the ongoing and unforeseen impacts of the growth of digital media sports coverage. At its core is the issue of whether sports rights are like any other commodity in the EU marketplace (Evans *et al.* 2009, Evans and Lefever 2011). The Murphy case (Case C-403/08 *FA Premier League v. QC Leisure* and Case C-429/08 *Karen Murphy v. Media Protection Services Limited*) has potential implications for the main UK media organizations in sports rights. The case saw Karen Murphy, a public house owner in England, challenge the FAPL and its contractual arrangement to sell exclusive rights to watch live English Premier League (EPL) football to Sky. Murphy imported a Greek decoder and card and showed the Greek coverage of the EPL in her pub. In so doing, she saved around £5000 a year in subscription fees (Sky charges Sky £700 a month).

The initial statement and final ruling from the ECJ in 2011 upheld Murphy's complaint under EU laws on free movement of goods. This position was vindicated by the UK High Court in 2012. What the ruling made clear was that exclusive clauses that prohibit other EU individuals from purchasing broadcast content were, in fact, illegal under competition law. There remain legal debate and dispute as to what the ramifications of this decision will be for rights holders, clubs and media organizations.² Sky

is probably one of only two pan-European broadcasters (the other being Canal Plus in France) with the capacity to buy European wide rights from the FAPL. Yet, evidence from the television industry suggests that the sale of pan-European broadcast rights is unlikely and individual terrestrial selling will still take place in the pay-TV market, with a recognition that the firewalls between markets will not be as rigid as is currently the case (Dunne 2011, p. 1). The idea that we will have an open, single market in Europe for football remains unlikely for cultural reasons. Put simply, French football rights have a premium in the French market that they simply do not have in, say, the Greek market. What was of particular note in the ruling was that the live games were not covered by copyright legislation, but the recorded material (logos, graphics, etc.) was. This interpretation meant that Karen Murphy was not breaking copyright law (which was the accusation of the FAPL) in showing the actual games in her pub, but that she was infringing copyright by showing the television graphics and studio content embedded in that broadcast (including for example the FAPL logo)

In a less publicized decision of The General Court also in 2011, the EU's second highest court threw out a challenge by governing bodies FIFA and UEFA to overturn the 'listed events' legislation in both the UK and Belgium that reserved World Cup and European Championships finals for free-to-air television. FIFA and UEFA viewed this legislation as interfering with their property rights (i.e., they were worth less without pay-TV competition). The EU re-affirmed the right of member states to list such events in order to allow the greatest public access to these national events. The decision was welcomed in the UK by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport in London.

CONCLUSION

A number of issues concerning public service broadcasting and cultural citizenship emerge from this case study. The economic and cultural value of sports events to the governing bodies of sport and commercial and pay-TV broadcasters is going to remain significant in the years to come. Even if the ECJ ruling disrupts the current relationship, the broadcast rights to popular sports such as football will remain important for particular media organizations. In addition, the shaping of media policy is set to become more overtly political in the UK as it becomes a focal point of wider political, cultural and economic tensions across the devolved nations and regions. The disruptive nature of rapid technological change and the resultant issue of policy lag were also highlighted during the Davies Review. When the aforementioned England World Cup qualifier was shown exclusively live on the internet in 2009, the public outcry was substantial across political divides. As the Panel noted:

The growth of viewing on the internet reached a new landmark during the Panel's Deliberations. Whatever the technical quality of the coverage of the England v. Ukraine FIFA World Cup qualifying match in October 2009, and however unacceptable it was for supporters to be informed at the last moment (and after an investment of up to £11.99) that highlights would be available on the BBC, the reality is that in many parts of Europe and beyond, where such matches are generally listed, it would have been regarded as an unacceptable way of viewing the national team in the national sport. The Panel remains convinced that, at least for the foreseeable future, and as far as the biggest sporting events are concerned, most people's first choice of how to view them will be by means of what is still identifiably a television set. (Davies 2009, point 158)

Indeed, what is striking about the Davies Review and the political fall-out surrounding its recommendations is precisely the new level of complexity that surrounds the sports-media nexus. At one level, the policy process and political posturing surrounding this example appears similar to the types of debate that took place during the analogue era. This was a time when the spectrum was controlled and policy levers could be pulled to shape the viewing experience of millions of viewers. Yet, in another way, this case study demonstrates what Hutchins and Rowe (2009, p. 366) have called the 'moving media sports game' that views the disruption of the production, distribution and consumption of sports media content as part of a wider digital shift across the cultural industries that sports administrators and regulators are struggling to understand.

The UK experience alerts us to the fact that, while new relationships, networks and structures are emerging, these arrangements are not simply sweeping the old 'paradigms' away (something acknowledged by Hutchins and Rowe [2009, p. 367] who recognize the key role of television in live media sport). These developments also remind us that, in this age of interconnectedness and internationalization, the local and national still have a key role to play in shaping cultural, social, and political identities. Sports events, moreover, will continue to occupy an important place in that process subject to local, national and international legislation.

The Davies Report (2009) was important because it publicly re-stated the cultural and social role that key sporting events play in the expression of a range of collective identities across the UK. It reminded citizens of the complexity of the relationship between cultural and political identities within a multi-nation state with differing forms of devolved political power. It should have also reminded the custodians of sport that balancing the economic wellbeing of their game with its broader cultural and social impacts should be an ongoing process that is constantly reviewed, rather than a principle to be abandoned for short-term commercial gain through the sale of its television rights. Addressing the sporting audience as consumers and

| | |
|---|----|
| customers in the lexicon of the market has both significant limitations and also long-term consequences for sport. The Review also underscored that, for all the rhetoric about the national importance of sporting events, these are cultural forms to which the state offers little in terms of financial input. | 1 |
| Elite professional sport in the UK is largely free from public subsidy (unlike the arts), and is run entirely for commercial gain and, thus, is dependent on its main financial underwriter—television. As a result, certain tensions between public good and commercial viability are ‘built into the DNA’ of contemporary sports governing bodies, and it is worth reminding politicians and policy shapers that such tensions are not easily resolved and have sizeable consequences in terms of the decisions that such bodies make. | 2 |
| As noted, sport remains a crucial aspect of the BBC’s public profile at a time when it faces a challenging decade of ongoing financial cutbacks. Freedman (2008) and O’Malley and Jones (2009) have argued that the BBC will always be embroiled in political and public policy tensions because of its distinctive position in British life, its impact on the rest of the media landscape, and its funding mechanism. Withdrawing from national sporting events only diminishes the broader public profile that is vital for the Corporation in helping galvanize support for public service content. While the phone hacking scandal that finally engulfed Rupert Murdoch’s News International in 2011 has resulted in a cooling in the relationship between political and media elites, and has irreparably damaged Murdoch’s bid to exercise full ownership and control of BSkyB, it has not strengthened the BBC’s position. Indeed, as Tumber (2012) has argued, despite the Lord Justice Leveson enquiry into press standards set up by the Prime Minister in July 2011, the attacks on the BBC from the print and online media of the political Right have actually intensified since the hacking scandal. | 3 |
| The Davies Review also highlighted various media policy anomalies that directly impact on the sport-media relationship. The retention of broadcasting policy in Westminster means that issues around television and national sporting events in Scotland and Wales are not addressed at the devolved level, but remain UK-wide issues. While Alex Salmond and the SNP government call for greater control over rights policy involving the Scottish national team, politically, the parliament in Edinburgh has no policy-making powers in this arena. This tension, not simply concern television and sport, but broadcasting autonomy more generally will remain a central element of political debate over media policy and citizenship (Schlesinger 2009b). | 4 |
| Late spring 2011 saw the Scottish National Party (SNP) re-elected with its first overall parliamentary majority (the first ever for any party in the Scottish Parliament’s post-1999 history). As a result, the SNP government secured an agreement with the UK government to hold a referendum on Scottish independence in the Autumn of 2014. Sports rights and sport on television may appear well down the list of political priorities in such an intense political environment. However, sport has always been disproportionately important in small countries. The 2014 Commonwealth Games to | 5 |
| | 6 |
| | 7 |
| | 8 |
| | 9 |
| | 10 |
| | 11 |
| | 12 |
| | 13 |
| | 14 |
| | 15 |
| | 16 |
| | 17 |
| | 18 |
| | 19 |
| | 20 |
| | 21 |
| | 22 |
| | 23 |
| | 24 |
| | 25 |
| | 26 |
| | 27 |
| | 28 |
| | 29 |
| | 30 |
| | 31 |
| | 32 |
| | 33 |
| | 34 |
| | 35 |
| | 36 |
| | 37 |
| | 38 |
| | 39 |
| | 40 |
| | 41 |
| | 42 |
| | 43 |
| | 44 |
| | 45 |
| | 46 |

1 be held in Glasgow, one of the few international events at which a distinct
2 Scottish athletics team competes, will no doubt be mobilized by nationalist
3 politicians to help galvanize support among the public in the referendum.
4 Should Scots decide to break-up the political union of the UK, then London
5 2012 will have been the last Olympics at which a Team GB competes. Even
6 if the referendum does not produce a majority in favor of independence,
7 then political unionists in the UK will need to move to a more federal struc-
8 ture if they want to construct a new narrative around the union and, thus,
9 the emergence of a Scottish listed events policy may be part of that pro-
10 cess. Yet, even the SNP acknowledges the strong social union that exists
11 between Scotland and England (and the role played by sport in this), and
12 that this longstanding association would not disappear with the break-up
13 of the UK.

14 Regardless of whether independence comes to Scotland, the next decade
15 in UK politics looks increasingly fraught and uncertain. The issue of sports
16 representation and the rights of citizens in different parts of a fragmenting
17 UK to access national conversations through various media (whatever nation
18 that may be or they may feel part of), will remain a fascinating touchstone as
19 to the wider shifts in politics, culture and citizenship that are taking place.
20 Perhaps in the UK we are witnessing the break-up of the “Crown Jewels” of
21 sport, but not in the manner that many may have anticipated.

24 APPENDIX 1

25 Key Recommendations of the Davies Review (2009)

26 *Proposed single list of live events protected for free-to-air television*

27 The new list is as follows:

28 The Summer Olympic Games, the FIFA World Cup Finals Tourna-
29 ment, and the UEFA European Football Championship Finals Tourna-
30 ment should continue to be listed.

31 The Grand National should continue to be listed.

32 The FA Cup Final should continue to be listed in England, Wales, and
33 Northern Ireland.

34 The Scottish FA Cup should continue to be listed in Scotland.

35 Home and away qualification matches in the FIFA World Cup and
36 UEFA European Football Championships should be listed in the Home
37 Nation to which they relate.

No Longer the Crown Jewels of Sport? 125

| | |
|---|--|
| The All-England Wimbledon Lawn Tennis Championship should be listed in its entirety. | 1 2 3 |
| The Open Golf Championship should be listed. | 4 5 |
| Cricket's Home Ashes Test matches should be listed. | 6 7 |
| The Rugby Union World Cup Tournament should be listed in its entirety. | 8 9 |
| Wales matches in the Six Nations Rugby Championship should be listed in Wales only. | 10 11 12 |
| <i>The Panel recommends that the following current Group A events should be de-listed:</i> | 13 14 15 |
| The Winter Olympic Games, The Derby, The Rugby League Challenge Cup Final. | 16 17 18 |
| <i>And as a consequence of its recommendation that highlights and delayed coverage should not be protected, the Panel recommends that the following, currently Group B, events should also be de-listed:</i> | 19 20 21 22 |
| Cricket Test Matches played in England (apart from the Ashes series); The Commonwealth Games; The World Athletics Championships; The Cricket World Cup Final, Semi-Finals and matches involving Home Nations-teams; The Ryder Cup. | 23 24 25 26 27 28 |
| ACKNOWLEDGMENTS | 29 30 31 32 |
| Thanks to the editors for their helpful comments on an earlier draft. | 33 34 |
| NOTES | 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 |
| 1. List A events: The Olympic Games, the FIFA World Cup Finals Tournament, the FA Cup Final, the Scottish FA Cup Final (in Scotland), the Grand National, the Derby, the Wimbledon Tennis Finals, the European Football Championship Finals Tournament, the Rugby League Challenge Cup Final and the Rugby World Cup Final. List B events: Cricket Test Matches played in England, non-finals play in the Wimbledon Tournament, all other matches in the Rugby World Cup Finals Tournament, Six Nations Rugby Tournament matches involving home countries, the Commonwealth Games, the World Athletics Championship, the Cricket World Cup (final, semi-final and matches involving home nations teams), the Ryder Cup, the Open Gold Championship. | 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 |
| 2. In personal discussion in March 2011 with Ross Biggam, the Director General of the Association of Commercial Television in Europe, he indicated | 44 45 46 |

1 that this issue was dominating his association's agenda as commercial broad-
2 casters in Europe tried to work through what the end of exclusive country-
3 by-country rights selling would have not only for sports, but other related
4 content as well.

5 REFERENCES

6

- 7 Bairner, A., 2001. *Sport, Nationalism and Globalization: European and North*
8 *American Perspectives*. Albany: SUNY.
- 9 BBC, 2009. *The BBC Response to the Government's Free-to-Air Events Consulta-*
10 *tion*. May. London: BBC.
- 11 BBC Trust, 2011. *The BBC's Processes for the Management of Sports Rights*.
12 Review by MTM London Ltd presented to the BBC Trust's Finance and Com-
13 pliance Committee. 13 January. London: DCMS.
- 14 Birt, J., 2002. *The Harder Path*. London: Little Brown.
- 15 Cronin, M., 1999. *Sport and Nationalism in Ireland: Gaelic Games, Soccer and*
16 *Irish Identity since 1884*. Dublin: Four Courts Press.
- 17 Davies, D., 2009. *Review of Free-to-Air Listed Events, Report by the Independent*
18 *Advisory Panel to the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport*. Novem-
19 ber. London: DCMS.
- 20 DCMS, 1998. *Creative Industries Mapping Document*. London: Department for
21 Culture, Media and Sport.
- 22 DCMS, 2008. *Creative Britain: New Talents for the New Economy*. London:
23 Department for Culture, Media and Sport.
- 24 Deloitte LLP, 2009. *The Impact of Broadcasting on Sports in the UK: An Inde-
25 pendent Economic Study commissioned by British Sky Broadcasting Limited*.
26 London: Deloitte.
- 27 Dunne, F., 2011. EJC Ruling not Expected to Hit Rights Values Hard. *TV Sports*
28 *Markets*. 15(18) October, Page 1.
- 29 Evans, T., Lefever, K., Valcke, P., Schuurman, D., Marez, Lieven, D., 2009. Access
30 to Premium Content on Mobile Television Platforms: The Case of Mobile Sports.
31 *Telematics and Informatics*, 28, pp. 32–39.
- 32 Evans, T., and Lefever, K., 2011. Watching the Football Game: Broadcasting Rights
33 for the European Digital Television Market. *Journal of Sport and Social Issues*,
34 35(1), pp. 33–49.
- 35 Freedman, D., 2008. *The Politics of Media Policy*. Oxford: Polity Press.
- 36 Goodwin, P., 1999. *Television Under the Tories: Broadcasting Policy 1979–1997*.
37 London: BFI.
- 38 Holt, R., 1990. *Sport and the British: A Modern History*. Oxford: Clarendon
39 Press.
- 40 Hutchins, B., and Rowe, D., 2009. From Broadcasting Scarcity to Digital Plen-
41 iitude: The Changing Dynamics of the Media Sports Content Economy. *Televi-
42 sion and New Media*, 10(4), pp. 354–370.
- 43 Hunt, J., 2008. Interview. *Broadcast*, 13 August, pages 20–22.
- 44 Jenkins, B. (2011) *Scottish Digital Network: Final Report*, Edinburgh: Scottish
45 Government.
- 46 O'Malley, T., and Jones, J., eds., 2009. *The Peacock Committee and UK Broad-
47 casting Policy*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- 48 Salmond, A., 2008. Campbell Swinton Lecture, Royal Television Society. Glasgow,
49 27 February.
- 50 Scherer, J., and Whitson, D., 2009. Public Broadcasting, Sport and Cultural Citizen-
51 ship. *International Review of the Sociology of Sport*, 44(2–3), pp. 213–229.

No Longer the Crown Jewels of Sport? 127

| | |
|--|----|
| Schlesinger, P., Miller, D., and Dinan, W., 2001. <i>Open Scotland? Journalists, Spin Doctors and Lobbyists</i> . Edinburgh: Polygon. | 1 |
| Schlesinger, P., 2007. Creativity: From Discourse to Doctrine? <i>Screen</i> 48(3), pp. 377–387. | 2 |
| Schlesinger, P., 2009a. Creativity and the Experts: New Labour, Think Tanks, and the Policy. <i>International Journal of Press Politics</i> , 14(1), pp. 3–20. | 3 |
| Schlesinger, P., 2009b. Culture and Communications Policy and the Stateless Nation. <i>Catalan Journal of Communication and Cultural Studies</i> , 1(1), pp. 9–14. | 4 |
| Sky, 2009. <i>Free-To-Air Listed Events Review: Submission from BSkyB</i> . May. London: BSkyB. | 5 |
| Tumber, H., 2012. Business as Usual: Enough of Phone Hacking, Let's Attack the BBC. <i>Television and New Media</i> , 13(1), pp. 12–16. | 6 |
| Value Partners, 2009. <i>Listed Events: Market Impact Potential</i> . 15 July. London: Report for the BBC Trust. | 7 |
| Wimbledon, Formula One at risk as BBC seeks sports cuts, <i>The Guardian</i> , 12 March, 2011, page 12. | 8 |
| | 9 |
| | 10 |
| | 11 |
| | 12 |
| | 13 |
| | 14 |
| | 15 |
| | 16 |
| | 17 |
| | 18 |
| | 19 |
| | 20 |
| | 21 |
| | 22 |
| | 23 |
| | 24 |
| | 25 |
| | 26 |
| | 27 |
| | 28 |
| | 29 |
| | 30 |
| | 31 |
| | 32 |
| | 33 |
| | 34 |
| | 35 |
| | 36 |
| | 37 |
| | 38 |
| | 39 |
| | 40 |
| | 41 |
| | 42 |
| | 43 |
| | 44 |
| | 45 |
| | 46 |

7 The Law Not Applied

French Controversies about Television Viewer Access to the 2006 European Handball Championship

Fabien Ohl and Lucie Schoch

INTRODUCTION

The European Convention on Transfrontier Television, amended in 1989, created a media regulatory and policy framework for the European Union (EU). In 1997, the European Parliament and the Council of Europe voted to support a directive that specified this Convention and encouraged Member States of the EU to engage in national cultural protectionism by intervening in the broadcast market and guaranteeing free access to key television events, including popular sporting ones. As a member of the EU, France, a country whose media policy had been focused on market regulation and cultural diversity but not necessarily sport, amended a decree in 2004 that guaranteed free-to-air access to twenty-one major sporting events of importance to French society and French citizens. However, only two years after the adoption of this decree, one of the major events on the list, the 2006 European handball championship, was not aired on free-to-air television. This omission was all the more unfortunate because the French team won the championship! Thus, the French public was denied an opportunity to watch an event deemed to be of major importance and, predictably, the French Handball Federation, a large number of handball fans, and politicians made a series of complaints about this policy failure.

Many important questions follow from these events relating to the principle of the law and, especially, to citizenship and sporting events. When and why are certain sports considered to be fundamental aspects of cultural identity and key components of citizenship? A second set of questions relates to the apparent gap between media policy and practice. Indeed, this case illustrates that the law, policies, and markets do not always fit neatly together in the digital broadcasting era. These developments also highlight broader questions about the political will to shelter access to telecasts of sport from market forces, the types of regulation that are legitimated in policy, and the actual implementation of policy; in this case, the decision to overlook the criteria set out in the list of protected events. The 2006 European Handball Championship also provides an opportunity to analyze the

| | |
|--|----|
| resultant complaints and concerns from citizens and various interest groups relating to the decision to revoke the “viewing rights” of French citizens to have access to this event. | 1 |
| To this end, we outline the French broadcasting context and the recent key developments in media policies and sport broadcasting. We pay particular attention to the important changes in French television regulation prior to the 2006 European handball championship. Next, we document the new structure of the French media market, especially the laws that frame general television broadcasting and the 2004 decree that governs sports broadcasting. Our focus here is on illustrating the vagueness of the European Directive in defining what should be understood as a ‘sporting event of major importance’ and, in turn, the lack of clarity that surrounds the list of twenty-one events that are enshrined in French law. In the second part of the chapter, we examine the debates and tensions that surrounded the non-accessibility of the 2006 European handball championship. Finally, we discuss the legitimacy of sporting events in French society, and show that the building of citizenship through the consumption of sporting events is based on an unlikely consensus of competing interpretations and ways of defining what counts as cultural citizenship. | 2 |
| SPORT BROADCASTING AND MEDIA POLICY DEVELOPMENTS IN FRANCE | 3 |
| Since the 1980s, many European and French lawmakers have grappled with the task of ensuring greater levels of freedom and competition for the media while also trying to protect national culture from being inundated by US products in a more liberalized market. However, the unintended consequences of these seemingly contradictory pressures included the spread of mass international products such as US television and sports. In France, a watershed moment in the new ‘quasi-market’ of broadcasting was the passing of a 1986 law under François Mitterrand’s presidency that signaled the end of state broadcast monopoly. Such a process of liberalization might have come as a surprise from a left-wing President who had presided over the nationalization of large sectors of French industry. In fact, though, this process was not intended to create a completely ‘free’ media market, but to attempt to shift control toward citizens by encouraging individuals, groups and associations to establish their own media outlets. | 4 |
| Although it took five years to prepare and vote on this law, a number of significant developments had already occurred since Mitterrand’s election in 1981. In June 1982, the President expressed the desire to create a new pay-TV channel, and so eventually Canal+ was developed by the media company Havas. Canal+ was positioned as a movie channel, | 5 |
| | 6 |
| | 7 |
| | 8 |
| | 9 |
| | 10 |
| | 11 |
| | 12 |
| | 13 |
| | 14 |
| | 15 |
| | 16 |
| | 17 |
| | 18 |
| | 19 |
| | 20 |
| | 21 |
| | 22 |
| | 23 |
| | 24 |
| | 25 |
| | 26 |
| | 27 |
| | 28 |
| | 29 |
| | 30 |
| | 31 |
| | 32 |
| | 33 |
| | 34 |
| | 35 |
| | 36 |
| | 37 |
| | 38 |
| | 39 |
| | 40 |
| | 41 |
| | 42 |
| | 43 |
| | 44 |
| | 45 |
| | 46 |

1 inspired by the US channel HBO.¹ From its inception, though, sport was
2 its second main area of programming, and this content strongly contrib-
3 uted to the identity of the new channel and contributed to the growth of
4 subscriptions. Canal+ first went to air in 1984 and other private chan-
5 nels including *La Cinq* (owned by the Italian Silvio Berlusconi) and *La*
6 *Sept* followed in 1986. The 1986 law clearly opened up the market for
7 private broadcasters, but it also tried to establish quotas for French and
8 European programs. Here it specifically tried to limit the influence of a
9 standardized version of US culture exported worldwide which posed a
10 threat not only to European culture, but also to European media compa-
11 nies. This law was adopted under the influence of the European Parlia-
12 ment, but France had quite an active role in the development of European
13 media policies. Regulation by the state has always been a large part of
14 the political climate in France, where there is a long tradition of a strong
15 and centralized state.

16 In the EU, the desire to regulate television broadcasting activities
17 within a single European market was made clear in the 1989 "Television
18 without Frontiers" Directive.² But France, a country with a long history
19 of resistance to the vision of a 'free market' promoted by the European
20 Commission, "has tended to implement European regulations and direc-
21 tives in a stricter fashion and to set up specific obligations, restrictions
22 or bans whenever possible" (Vedel 2005, p. 702). The perceived threat
23 posed to European and national cultural products by the marketplace
24 is one that is directly related to the impression that US culture has colo-
25 nized most of the cultural field, especially television, cinema, and food
26 (Marchetti 2002). In response, France increased local quotas to limit the
27 broadcasting of US television programs and music, a policy that led the
28 US trade representative to complain about these new barriers of entry
29 to the French market (Bruner 2007, p. 38). The fear of threats to French
30 and European culture(s) also formed the basis of the 17 January 1990
31 decrees³ that implemented programming quotas of 50 percent for French
32 language productions and 60 percent for those in the European Union. In
33 2000, the 1986 law was amended to clarify the role of channels that are
34 subsidized by public funds and are claimed to "favor democratic debate,
35 exchanges between different parts of the population as well as integration
36 into society and citizenship."⁴ These channels have stated a duty to "carry
37 out public service assignments in the public interest" (first paragraph of
38 Article 43–11). However, sport is not a central feature of this updated
39 version of the law. The article simply suggests that media companies
40 "shall present a diversified offering of programs in analogue and digital
41 modes in the areas of information, culture, knowledge, entertainment
42 and sport" (*ibid*).

43 The promotion and protection of French culture, then, has always
44 been at the core of French broadcasting regulation. As analyzed by
45

Vedel, governments from across the political spectrum “have constantly held the view that cultural and media products are different from other forms of merchandise because they encapsulate part of the country’s identity” (2005, p. 692). Because of the growing importance of cultural citizenship (Miller 2001), France and other countries such as Canada have been at the forefront of a campaign against the application of ‘free trade’ policies to cultural goods. Sport was included in this campaign as it was widely understood that “a sense of collective national identity, often deeply emotional, can be stimulated by national sporting rituals and in national sporting competition” (Rowe 2004b, p. 386). In a similar vein, in 2005 the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) adopted a treaty that encompasses various legal means to protect local producers of cultural activities, goods and services (Bruner 2007). Given its exponential growth and expansive commodification, sport was identified as a cultural form that merited cultural protection.

Thus, it is not surprising that France is among the eight EU members out of twenty-seven that have provided a list of sporting events of “major importance” to the European Council (Evens and Lefever 2011). Thanks to the 2004 decree,⁵ France identified twenty-one sporting events that must be broadcast on free-to-air networks. Article 1 of the decree “lays down the conditions under which television services are to handle the exclusive broadcasting of events of major importance such that a substantial proportion of the public is not denied the opportunity of watching them on free access television.” While some criticism has been directed at the vagueness that surrounds the definition of a “substantial proportion”, the French free-to-air television service is clearly defined as “any television service that does not seek payment from its users and that can be received by at least 85 percent of households in metropolitan France” (Evens and Lefever 2011, p. 43). This decree is based on the “Television without Frontiers” Directive, and also on the regulation of the European single market and, especially, the European Convention on Cross-Border Television which was opened for signature on 5 May 1989 and then discussed and amended.⁶ This European Directive was intended to ensure free access to the broadcast of “Events of major importance for society.” In the absence of a clear definition of what counts as an “event of major importance” in the European Directive, the French government consulted with key interest groups—television broadcasters, politicians, and the CSA (Conseil Supérieur de l’Audiovisuel: the French national audiovisual regulatory body)—each of which provided their opinion on what should be considered “events of major importance.”⁷ Finally, twenty-one sporting events that had a collective resonance to French popular culture were incorporated in the decree (see below) and so maintained as public goods available to all citizens.

132 *Fabien Ohl and Lucie Schoch*

1 Table 7.1 The Twenty-One Sporting “Events of Major Importance” for French
2 Society (from the Decree 2004-1392 of 22 December 2004)⁸

- 3 1. The winter and summer Olympics
- 4 2. Official matches of the French national football team in the Fédération
5 Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) calendar
- 6 3. The opening match, semi-finals and final of the Football World Cup
- 7 4. The semi-finals and final of the European Football Championship
- 8 5. The final of the UEFA Cup, where a French club involved in one of the
9 French championships is playing
- 10 6. The final of the Football Champions League
- 11 7. The French Football Cup Final
- 12 8. The Six Nations rugby tournament
- 13 9. The semi-finals and final of the Rugby World Cup
- 14 10. The French Rugby Championship final
- 15 11. The European Rugby Cup final, where a French club involved in one of the
16 French championships is playing
- 17 12. The finals of the men’s and women’s singles events of the Roland Garros
18 tennis tournament
- 19 13. The semi-finals and finals of the Davis Cup and the Fed Cup, where the
20 French tennis team is playing
- 21 14. The French Formula 1 Grand Prix
- 22 15. The Tour de France (cycling, men)
- 23 16. The Paris-Roubaix cycling race
- 24 17. The men’s and women’s finals of the European Basketball Championship,
25 where the French national team is playing
- 26 18. The men’s and women’s finals of the World Basketball Championship,
27 where the French national team is playing
- 28 19. The men’s and women’s finals of the European Handball Championship,
29 where the French national team is playing
- 30 20. The men’s and women’s finals of the World Handball Championship,
31 where the French national team is playing
- 32 21. The World Athletics Championships

33 *Source: Official Journal of the European Union L 180/36, 10.07.2007, Article 3.*

THE NEW ORGANIZATION OF THE FRENCH MEDIA MARKET 1

The desires of politicians expressed in the 1986 Law on the “Freedom of Communication” or the 2004 decree that enshrined twenty-one “events of major importance,” and the increasing economic power of private companies within a media field mainly driven by market forces, do not necessarily align. Indeed, Canal+, which has dominated the market in restricted access channels, has also played an increasingly dominant role in sport broadcasting, especially football. In 1984, Canal+ signed a deal to gain the exclusive broadcast rights to the French championship (La Ligue). Canal+ also recruited sport journalists from France Télévision, the public service networks. Fed up with the “medieval sport broadcasting controlled by directors that didn’t care about sport” (Maitrot 1995, p. 82), those journalists essentially invented a new way of broadcasting football in France. They adopted a range of new visual strategies and began broadcasting half an hour prior to the start of matches, visited locker rooms, and developed a more emotional and sentimental style of journalism. This new broadcasting style combined with an ascending market-driven approach of television, including a reliance on audience research, was, at the time, the polar opposite of public broadcasting.

In the face of the growth and success of Canal+, public broadcasters, which might have been a resource to protect freedom of communication and cultural diversity in the French tradition of state-oriented policies, were thus placed in an increasingly perilous position in the liberalized media market. Unable to compete for the expensive broadcasting rights of football games, they were also disadvantaged in the broader competition for audiences to secure advertising revenues. Indeed, in the new media market, public service broadcasters have increasingly been forced to pursue audiences rather than focus on building a more diverse public broadcasting strategy and mandate. Public channels once offered a more extensive coverage of sport than their private counterparts (Marchetti 1998). However, since the introduction of Canal+ (in addition to Tf1: a private channel that dominates free-to-air programming and collects most of the advertising revenue), the most attractive sports events, including football, have migrated away from public broadcasters.

Public channels, of course, have access to the other, often less prestigious or lucrative sporting events. Even if these small sporting events fulfilled their public service mission and identity, their limited audience numbers and subsequent low advertising revenue place these networks in a diminished position. In the new media market, moreover, these revenues are increasingly vital simply because diminished state funding is not enough to balance the finances of the channels. Thus, in their competition with deep pocketed channels like Tf1 and other cable and specialty satellite channels that are now increasingly competing even for smaller sporting events, the funding through taxation that public broadcasters receive is not sufficient.

1 These issues—and the defense of the principles of public broadcasting and
2 cultural diversity in the new media market—will require significant political
3 solutions that will be difficult to achieve in the neoliberal era.
4
5

6 **WHAT IS A SPORTING EVENT OF MAJOR
7 IMPORTANCE FOR FRENCH SOCIETY?**
8

9 The 2004 French decree that enshrined the list of twenty-one events was
10 sent to the European Commission, which stated, on 25 June 2007, that the
11 measures taken by France were compatible with Article 3a(1) of Council
12 Directive 89/552/EEC. This meant that “the Commission was satisfied that
13 the events listed in the French measures met *at least two* of the criteria con-
14 sidered to be reliable indicators of the importance of events for society.”⁹
15 The first criterion is that events had to have “a special general resonance
16 within the Member State, and not simply significant to those who ordinary-
17 ly follow the sport or activity concerned.” Thus, having a traditional fan
18 base is not sufficient and a mass audience, such as that for the Olympic
19 Games or the World Cup, provides the event with legitimacy. This defini-
20 tion clearly gives recognition and preference to mass culture. The second
21 criterion is that the event must be of “recognised, distinct cultural impor-
22 tance for the population in the Member State, in particular as a catalyst of
23 cultural identity.” The globalization of media culture, especially the most
24 popular US content, has been widely viewed as a threat to other cultural
25 identities. Nevertheless, global sporting events can be important catalysts
26 for national cultural identity. The third criterion is that the sporting event
27 must involve a nationally representative side: “involvement of the national
28 team in the event concerned in the context of a competition or tournament
29 of international importance.” Finally, the fourth criterion, “the fact that
30 the event has traditionally been broadcast on free television and has com-
31 manded large television audiences,” refers to the historical precedent of
32 free-to-air telecasts reaching truly national audiences.

33 As a result, a peculiar combination of criteria mixing mass culture, audi-
34 ence numbers, market pressures, and cultural identity defines what consti-
35 tutes an event of importance for French society. Furthermore, all the criteria
36 are loose, ambiguous, and sometimes contradictory. In France, the quest
37 for cultural identity can, of course, rely on cultural products (Vedel 2005,
38 p. 692), and it is assumed that the media can play a role in citizenship and
39 social integration.¹⁰ The use of sporting events is clearly close to the “story
40 that implicates globalization in the destruction of cultural identity, and in
41 the threat to that particular subset of cultural identity that we call ‘national
42 identity’” (Tomlinson 2003, p. 270). At the same time, as suggested by
43 Tomlinson, another contradictory story about cultural identity can be told:
44 “that globalization, far from destroying it, has been perhaps the most sig-
45 nificant force in creating and proliferating cultural identity” (2003, p. 270).

Globalization and the acceleration of the ‘culturalization’ of society, in which media play a pivotal role (Rowe 2004c), has boosted the importance of sport in cultural identity and citizenship. Thus, it is not surprising that, despite the lack of clear definition of ‘events of major importance,’ the law was not controversial and was quickly accepted in the political field. Treating sporting events as socially and culturally important for society is now simply taken-for-granted and increasingly depoliticized. Even in the French Senate in 2004,¹¹ during a specific debate on ‘sports, money, media’ that involved academics, journalists, and politicians, the main debate did not involve the issue of free-to-air television and access to live telecasts of sport, or the definition of major events, but how to use major events broadcasting to encourage ‘sport for all.’ Nevertheless, the application of this law raises other problems, and an issue arose in 2006 involving coverage of the European Handball Championship final that took place on 5 February between France and Spain. This event was broadcast exclusively on Canal+, a pay-TV channel, even though the championship was one of the protected twenty-one major events enshrined in law.

THE CASE OF THE 2006 EUROPEAN HANDBALL CHAMPIONSHIP: CONTROVERSIES OVER BROADCASTING RIGHTS

Predictably, the exclusive coverage of the 2006 European Handball Championship on pay-TV spurred an outpouring of criticism that took aim at the commodification of sport and the ‘failure’ of France’s list of protected events. First, the Heads of Canal+ and France Télévisions (the state-owned free-to-air network) both tried to justify their respective stances and accused each other of non-cooperation. Alexandre Bompard, Head of Sports at Canal+, explained that “as always, we offered the event to the free-to-air channel for 400,000 euros . . . Usually this kind of event is offered between 350 to 400,000 euros.” But Daniel Bilalian, Head of Sports at France Télévisions, argued that not only was the price simply too high for the public broadcaster, but also that Canal+ had refused even to enter into negotiations over the rights: “It was exorbitant, for Canal+ it was a way of circumventing regulations, it was a disguised form of refusal to sell.”¹² Alexandre Bompard, in turn, expressed his surprise that Canal+ had not even received a proposal from the public network. He stated “usually we offer a price and then the buyer makes a counter-proposal and we start discussions. But here, none of that, we did not receive a proposal.”¹³ Furthermore, France Télévisions could have asked the CSA to arbitrate, but the public broadcaster did not pursue this strategy. For Bompard, France Télévisions’ decision not to offer a proposal was not a question of price but of competing properties: “It is because France Télévisions was broadcasting Scotland-France [Rugby Six Nation Tournament]” (AFP 2006). To justify their respective positions, Canal+ and France Télévisions used two different

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46

sets of values: the market and CSA regulation on the one hand, and limited financial resources on the other.

Other interest groups, including the French Handball Federation, fans, and politicians, also had an interest in the decision not to provide free-to-air telecasts of the European Handball Championships. The President of the French Handball Federation, André Amiel, stated: "I will study the situation from a juridical point of view. There is still a law" (AFP 2006). The President did anticipate that there would be problems and intervened one week before the event asking Canal+, France Télévisions and the Ministry of Sport to find a solution, but unfortunately none was forthcoming. In addition to the legal argument, President Amiel recalled that in 1999, 2001, and 2003, "[g]irls and boys [handball teams] attracted 10 million spectators for France Télévisions. I wonder what game the public service provider is playing" (AFP 2006).

It is also important to analyze the range of complaints from handball fans and spectators on internet forums.¹⁴ The most frequent discussions were on the following topics and values:

- Public service: commentators underlined the contradiction between the public service ethic and France Télévisions' motto 'The channel for all the sports' and the failure to broadcast the semi-final and finals.
- Cost: commentators compared the expense of broadcasting free-to-air football, cycling, and rugby events in relation to the comparatively cheap cost of broadcasting handball. They noted that public service television preferred to neglect these smaller but still nationally-significant sports for other, non-local events: "The public service prefers to invest in the Super Bowl final" (France Télévisions bought the rights to the event and broadcast it on 5 February 2006 late at night)
- The commercialization of sport: for example, "Stade 2 (the very popular sport show on France Télévisions) can keep their big money sports" or "It is sad that big money sports replaces the true values of sport (in handball no one spits on the field, no one fakes, no one makes racist insults), a real sport with real men and women, real ones." Handball, described in this case as a form of defense against the commercialization of sport, is believed to benefit young people: "Young people have been deprived of learning provided by the simple act of watching top level [handball]."

Another contributor designed a spoof poster, which openly blamed the public broadcaster for consigning the French handball team to obscurity: it depicted every team members' face hidden by a black stripe and called the team "les incognitos" or "the unknown" to replace earlier nicknames that recognized the legacy of winning teams: the "Barjots" or "Crazies" for the 1993–1996 team and the "Costauds" or "tough guys" for the team who won the 2001 World Championship. Controversies and complaints were, of

course, not limited to internet discussions, but also occurred in the political arena, especially the National Assembly and the Senate during the French version of “Question Time”: Alex Türk, Senator of the Nord Department, argued that “France won splendidly [the final] in an atmosphere of great fair play between the two teams, which could have set a beautiful example for many young people. He asked if he [the Minister] intends to sensitize the authorities to their public service mission.”¹⁵ In fact, many fans, politicians, and spectators perceived the non-broadcasting of the 2006 Handball Championship as a threat to the dominant values of French society. They saw no evidence that any notion of public service had informed the decision of France Télévisions not to pursue the broadcasting rights. More and more, they saw the actions of the public broadcaster as equivalent to those of a commercial company that had failed to negotiate a suitable price for the broadcast rights to the handball competition. For many, such a development represented a major failure of the very notion of public service broadcasting simply because the state has played such a key role throughout French history, and because French identity and the related values of ‘a fair society’ are still related to equitable and efficient policy-making.

HOW SPORTING EVENTS BECAME IMPORTANT IN FRENCH SOCIETY

The consensus opinion about the non-accessibility of the European Handball Championship final needs to be understood as the combination of several factors: the threat to live televisual access to the most popular sporting events, broader developments within the media field, and changes in the public perception of sporting events, all of which are related to the key role of media and sport regarding the ‘culturalization’ of society (Rowe 2004c). It is commonly taken-for-granted that sporting events are of major importance for society. However, in a short period of time, sporting events have also become icons of consumer culture via the media. Thus, it is necessary to understand how mass consumption, in this instance of sport, emerged as a key resource to build national identity and became equated with cultural citizenship. During the 1970s and early 1980s, sport was simply not on the agenda in discussions about culture and a so-called French cultural singularity. Sport was widely criticized by French left-wing intellectuals, trade unions and politicians as a tool for the intensification of labor alienation.¹⁶ However, with a socialist president from 1981 to 1995 and over a decade of left-wing government, it became increasingly difficult for left-wing politicians to stay critical toward such a key element of popular culture that was appreciated by many voters. Even in intellectual circles, critics of sport simply became peripheral.

In the 1980s, the wish to promote ‘cultural exceptionalism’ became a more pressing political matter as opposed to what appeared to be an

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46

unpopular fight against mass alienation. Nevertheless, the 1986 media law and its various adaptations, which was rephrased in a less polemical and more positive meaning as “cultural diversity” in 2000 (Vedel 2005, p. 692), notably did not prioritize sporting events. Although many French people cared passionately about sport—and as politicians became increasingly concerned with sport policies and medals—sport remained a secondary topic prior to the 1990s, with the relationship between media and cultural identity through sport absent from the French political agenda. Instead, the priority in France was, as in many other countries, to face the ‘threat’ of a global, US mass culture and, especially, the spread of US television series (but also other European programs fashioned in a similar style). Within the intellectual field, the threat of cultural imperialism was more of a concern (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1999) than the circulation of more ordinary goods and services (Fantasia 1994). The subsequent diffusion of mass culture in the media appeared to some intellectuals as a symbolic defeat for the expectations of ‘cultural exception’ and ‘cultural diversity.’

In this new context of a ‘threat’ to culture, sport was used as a political resource to reaffirm French cultural identity. Such a switch was no surprise. Even if sport was predominantly perceived as a kind of low-rank mass cultural icon, the changes to the perception of sporting events in France run parallel to the increasing visibility and presence of popular culture within the French media. Although right-wing newspapers already had high levels of sports coverage, the social democratic and liberal newspapers quickly followed suit. For example, the center-left intellectual newspaper *Le Monde* published a daily special section on the World Cup in 1998, the year that France hosted the event. This new development sparked a number of complaints, forcing Thomas Ferenczi, *Le Monde*'s ombudsman, to justify the newspaper's editorial decision while re-affirming the newspaper's primary role: “It goes without saying that in *Le Monde*, they [the sporting events, the celebrities, etc.] are not comparable to major life events nationally or internationally, which are the *raison d'être* of our newspaper” (*Le Monde* 1998, p. 13). Since the French victory at that tournament, though, greater levels of sports coverage have not been matched by denunciation from the readership.¹⁷ The victory, moreover, accelerated the renewal of the perception of sporting events and provided a stamp of legitimacy for sport as a key element of national popular culture in French society, and the French football team came to symbolize multicultural France (as discussed below).

A LAW PROTECTING THE CONSUMER OR PROMOTING CITIZENSHIP?

Although critics of sport still exist (see, for example, the Beijing 2008 Olympic Games boycott campaign), sport is now widely accepted, even by

| | |
|--|----|
| French intellectuals and left-wing politicians. It is a kind of omnibus subject (Bourdieu 1996) which is also a good way to attract audiences and to make money. Audiences are now even perceived as an expression of democracy and citizenship. The French state has, however, imposed a list of twenty-one protected events without explicitly expressing how the importance of those events is to be assessed. In fact, two main principles appear to underlie the list of protected sporting events: national and cultural identity, and the political resonance emanating from large, if not national, viewing audiences. But both dimensions are diverse, contested, and ambiguous because they express conflicting ways of using sporting events and of defining citizenship that do not always match. | 1 |
| | 2 |
| | 3 |
| | 4 |
| | 5 |
| | 6 |
| | 7 |
| | 8 |
| | 9 |
| | 10 |
| | 11 |
| The concept of cultural citizenship is intended to match events of national importance with a sense of collective national identity (Rowe 2004b). It was granted by the “black, white, and beur”, ¹⁸ which was the motto celebrating the diversity of the nation when the French football team won the 1998 World Cup. The desire of a nation to intensify and promote these social links is praiseworthy, but the impact of the celebration of athletes as national heroes remains, in reality, modest. The sense of collective national identity in 1998 was quite ephemeral, while major sporting events also provide an opportunity to emphasize contradictory views of French culture and social relations and to criticize the diversity of French citizenship. Some politicians, in fact, openly complain that French teams are not French and white enough. Both in 1996 and 2006, Jean-Marie Le Pen, as leader of the French right-wing Populist Party, ‘regretted’ that too many blacks and Arabs were included in the French handball and football teams. Georges Frêche, the mayor of the French city of Montpellier and deputy of the Socialist party in 2006, noted that “there are nine blacks on eleven . . . they should be three or four . . . I feel ashamed for this country.” ¹⁹ Also, the “Marseillaise,” the French national anthem sung at national sporting events, is sometimes accompanied by protests from the “jeunes des banlieues” (the working-class suburban youth from former French colonies) (Amara 2006). Furthermore, the football players of the French team were accused of not singing the anthem with sufficient enthusiasm. Although this was not the first polemic on the anthem, ²⁰ a right-wing Deputy, Jean-Claude Guibal, supported by twenty-five other deputies, submitted in January 2009 a proposal for a new law at the National Assembly that would force athletes of the national teams to sing the national anthem. From the 1986 “Freedom of Communication Act,” ²¹ the desire to build common cultural values through sport and sporting events of national importance remains increasingly complex and contested by interest groups from across the political spectrum. | 12 |
| | 13 |
| | 14 |
| | 15 |
| | 16 |
| | 17 |
| | 18 |
| | 19 |
| | 20 |
| | 21 |
| | 22 |
| | 23 |
| | 24 |
| | 25 |
| | 26 |
| | 27 |
| | 28 |
| | 29 |
| | 30 |
| | 31 |
| | 32 |
| | 33 |
| | 34 |
| | 35 |
| | 36 |
| | 37 |
| | 38 |
| | 39 |
| | 40 |
| | 41 |
| The other key dimension of the definition of the “events of major importance for society” is for the event to resonate with a large audience within France. This dimension also fits neatly with consumer interests that are not always compatible with cultural identity and citizenship. ²² The | 42 |
| | 43 |
| | 44 |
| | 45 |
| | 46 |

1 twenty-one selected events include the most important events, such as the
2 football World Cup, that regularly express cultural identity and citizen-
3 ship. But, for example, does the protection of the final of the Union of
4 European Football Associations (UEFA) Champions League that does not
5 necessarily involve French athletes and teams merit recognition as a right
6 of cultural citizenship? We doubt that it has anything to do with French
7 identity. One could argue that the “Paris-Roubaix” cycling race is part of
8 the French tradition or identity, but why is the “French Formula 1 Grand
9 Prix” which, ironically, was discontinued after 2008 (though it may return
10 in 2013)? Why, moreover, is the French Football Championship—a popu-
11 lar event part of the French sport tradition and, for many fans, intimately
12 related to local and national identity—not on the list?

13 It seems that the quasi-consensus to define the consumption of sporting
14 events as something of major importance for society articulates both with
15 consumer demand and the idea of a cultural citizenship through sport. This
16 mix of the ‘consumer’ and the ‘citizen’ is symptomatic of the rise of the
17 former as a key social figure, which was supported by a right-wing politi-
18 cal project that valorized markets and denounced monopolies and state
19 regulation. As a consequence, the figure of the consumer erased the worker
20 with the ascent of the market (Ohl 2002). Regulating access to sporting
21 events is, therefore, also a quest for consumer satisfaction. It is, as José
22 María Aznar²³ suggested during a debate on free access to football events
23 on television in the Spanish parliament, a “social conquest for the (Spanish)
24 consumer.”²⁴ Although “many consumer activists . . . have also sought to
25 proclaim the ideal of citizenship in contradistinction to the notion of the
26 consumer” (Gabriel and Lang 1995, p. 173), these categories are now much
27 more fluid and complex. Even if the consumer was simply not valorized by
28 social democrats and liberal French politicians who were more ‘sensitive’
29 to citizens as workers, consumption and markets became a political focus
30 during the 1990s thanks to economic globalization (Ohl 2002). Thus, sat-
31 isfying sports consumers was fused with cultural identity and citizenship.
32 It is a way simultaneously to defend culture, sporting traditions, consumer
33 habits and citizenship, although an explicit focus on the most popular
34 events could contribute to a gap between mediated sports and other less
35 visible sporting practices.

36 Unfortunately, public broadcasters, which are supposed to be in charge
37 of the media public service and common citizen interests, simply embraced
38 market rules to justify their refusal to broadcast the 2006 Handball World
39 Championship. This decision represents a double failure. First, the cham-
40 pionship was widely understood as an event that played an important role
41 in French cultural identity and citizenship. Second, previous broadcasting
42 patterns demonstrated both a large audience and consumer demand for
43 this event. Thus, neither consumer nor cultural rights have been satisfied
44 in this instance.

CONCLUSION

The various French laws and directives on media published since 1986 had diverse objectives which were, at times, contradictory: to challenge state monopoly, limit political control of media, give room for citizenship, and to protect the media market pressures, most notably US cultural imperialism. Still, all of the laws and decrees shared concerns about the influence of media on French cultural identity and citizenship. By the end of the last century, these concerns crystallized around sport when the meanings associated with popular sporting events became understood as matters of cultural citizenship. The 2004 law clearly expressed this development. It also reflected the tension between the desire to protect sport media consumers from a monopolistic or restricted market that would be a threat to access to televised sporting events of national significance (Scherer and Whitson 2009), and the importance of sport broadcasting rights which now comprise the bulk of the revenue for various sport organizations. Although the market, as an indication of the popularity of an event, was a criterion in selecting the twenty-one events on the 2004 list, support for access to events of national interest as part of cultural citizenship was clearly dominant. Nevertheless, the analysis of the implementation of the law demonstrates that the criteria used to select nationally important sporting events in French society were unclear and remain controversial.

The case of the 2006 European Handball Championship, in many ways, demonstrates that the policies designed to provide free access to “sporting events of major importance” as a right of cultural citizenship do not always function smoothly in the competitive digital broadcasting market. Despite the law and because of a disagreement on the broadcasting price of the event between the public and private sector—both of which were operating under market pressures—this event of major importance for French society was not carried on a free-to-air network. This development, moreover, raised important questions surrounding the lack of a formal and stated policy measure designed to overcome barriers in negotiation between various broadcasters in order to ensure that the list of enshrined events remain fully protected. At a broader level, this controversy also demonstrates that the meanings of sporting events and their association with cultural identity and citizenship are not easy to define. When the French team won the 2001 Handball Championship or the 1998 football World Cup, controversies were unimportant. But when French teams were not successful or behaved controversially, such as during the 2010 World Cup, politicians and citizens project wildly different meanings associated onto the event and, indeed, onto French identity (Beaud 2011). In these instances, sporting events that were promoted for their role in establishing and strengthening social bonds and a sense of cultural citizenship actually exacerbated social divisions and offered radically different versions of French cultural identity.

| | |
|----|------------|
| 1 | CONCLUSION |
| 2 | |
| 3 | |
| 4 | |
| 5 | |
| 6 | |
| 7 | |
| 8 | |
| 9 | |
| 10 | |
| 11 | |
| 12 | |
| 13 | |
| 14 | |
| 15 | |
| 16 | |
| 17 | |
| 18 | |
| 19 | |
| 20 | |
| 21 | |
| 22 | |
| 23 | |
| 24 | |
| 25 | |
| 26 | |
| 27 | |
| 28 | |
| 29 | |
| 30 | |
| 31 | |
| 32 | |
| 33 | |
| 34 | |
| 35 | |
| 36 | |
| 37 | |
| 38 | |
| 39 | |
| 40 | |
| 41 | |
| 42 | |
| 43 | |
| 44 | |
| 45 | |
| 46 | |

1 Still, we believe that popular sporting events feed cultural identity and
2 that live, televised access to the main events needs to be protected. But there
3 are very few possibilities to reach a consensus on which events are of major
4 importance for society and should be available on free-to-air television.
5 One option that seems a more fair and ethical way to define what is impor-
6 tant for society could be to follow Habermas' (1992) principles of "moral
7 communication." But that would mean a real public debate, canvassing the
8 opinions of various actors from sport, media, political, and economic fields
9 as well as from civil society. However, the current political context seems
10 incompatible with these values and democratic ambitions, and the estab-
11 lished mixture of dominant interests and beliefs continues to organize the
12 content of media law and policy, while access to sporting events remains
13 mainly driven by market pressures.

14 NOTES

15

- 17 1. 73 percent of French consumers watch Canal+ for sporting events alone or
18 combined with movies. Source: M. Bertrand Méheut, president of Canal+
19 Steering Committee, French Senate, ordinary session 2003–2004, Report
20 N° 319 on "Sports, Money, Media," 25 May 2004.
- 21 2. 89/552/EEC, OJ L 298 of 17 October 1989, as amended by the European
22 Parliament Directive of June 1997, 97/36/EC, OJ L 202 60 of 30 July 1997.
- 23 3. Especially the 17 January 1990 decree n° 90–66 on programming quotas and
24 the 27 March 1992 decree n° 92–280 on advertising regulations and the 9
July 2001decree n° 2001–609 on production quotas.
- 25 4. Article 43–11 inserted by Act No. 2000–719 of 1 August 2000, Article 3,
26 Official Journal of 2 August 2000 companies listed in Articles 44 and 45.
- 27 5. No 2004–1392 of 22 December 2004.
- 28 6. Published by decrees No 95–438 of 14 April 1995 and No 2002–739 of 30
April 2002.
- 29 7. It was difficult to find information on the various debates, even at the French
30 Ministry. We only found data at the CSA, which discussed which kind of
31 events were unquestionably of 'major importance.' It selected only twelve
32 events, ten exclusively male events, two mixed, and discuss four other events
33 that could also be on the list. The CSA found that too large a list would trivialize
34 what constitutes a major event. Source: notice of 12 March 2003, CSA
[\(\[http://www.csa.fr/infos/textes/textes_detail.php?id=11919\]\(http://www.csa.fr/infos/textes/textes_detail.php?id=11919\)\)](http://www.csa.fr/infos/textes/textes_detail.php?id=11919).
- 35 8. It should be noted that thirteen of the twenty-one events are exclusively male
36 and only eight are both male and female, thus defining citizenship primarily
37 as a predominantly male category. We question why very few critics write
38 about the equation of an essentially masculine sports entertainment com-
39 plex, produced by male journalists for a male audience, with cultural citizen-
ship (Rowe 2004a).
- 40 9. *Official Journal of the European Union* L 180/33, 10.07.2007.
- 41 10. Article 43–11 inserted by Act No. 2000–719 of 1 August 2000, Article 3,
42 *Official Journal* of 2 August 2000 companies listed in Articles 44 and 45.
- 43 11. French Senate, ordinary session 2003–2004, Report N° 319 on "Sports,
Money, Media," 25 May 2004.
- 44 12. Source : *Handline*, weekly newsletter of the French Handball Federation,
n°14, 7 February 2006 <http://www.ff-handball.org/liens-permanents/handline.html>.

| | |
|---|----|
| 13. Source : <i>Handline</i> , n°14, 7 February 2006. | 1 |
| 14. We collected the data on the French public television from: http://forums.france2.fr/sport/football/farce-television-sujet_2183_1.htm , http://forums.france3.fr/sport/ and also grained other forums but they were very similar, discussing the same topics and expressing similar complains, e.g. http://alliancefiction.free.fr/phpBB3/viewtopic.php?f=4&t=300&view=next . | 2 |
| 15. Written question n° 21648 de M. Alex Türk published in the Senate Official Journal of the 16/02/2006—page 390. | 3 |
| 16. For example, a special issue that was a collaboration of both <i>Quel Corps</i> and <i>Chrono Enrayé</i> , the first journal 1983 was edited by J.M. Brohm, a critical sociologist close to the Frankfurt school (see Brohm 1976), and the second by a left-wing PE teacher syndicate. | 4 |
| 17. In 2011 the same newspaper published a new sport section in the weekend edition and there were no public complaints and the (see: http://www.lemnonde.fr/idees/reactions/2011/09/30/m-et-vous_1580514_3232.html). | 5 |
| 18. “Beur” are the “Arabs” in French slang, a term that generally means French, but applying to parents or grandparents who migrated from North Africa. | 6 |
| 19. G.Davet, F. Potet, Equipe de France, le Bleu et le Noir, <i>Le Monde</i> , 01.03.2010. | 7 |
| 20. Serge Gainsbourg, a famous and provocative French singer, recorded a reggae version of La Marseillaise in 1979 which was denounced as profane: see Francfort D., <i>La Marseillaise de Serge Gainsbourg, Vingtième Siècle. Revue d’Histoire</i> , 207/1 (no 93), pp.27–35. | 8 |
| 21. N° 86–1087 of 30 September 1986, claiming that “Audio-visual communication is free” as the first phrase and the motto of the law. Of course, there were some limits concerning: “human dignity, freedom and property of other people, the pluralistic nature of the expression of ideas and opinions and, on the other hand, for the safeguarding of law and order, for national defense, public service reasons, for technical reasons inherent to the means of communication.” | 9 |
| 22. <i>Official Journal of the European Union</i> L 180/33, 10.07.2007. | 10 |
| 23. At the head of the popular party, a conservative political party in Spain. | 11 |
| 24. Quoted by M.C. Decamps, <i>Le Monde</i> , 31.05.1997, p. 33. | 12 |
| | 13 |
| | 14 |
| | 15 |
| | 16 |
| | 17 |
| | 18 |
| | 19 |
| | 20 |
| | 21 |
| | 22 |
| | 23 |
| | 24 |
| | 25 |
| | 26 |
| | 27 |
| | 28 |
| | 29 |
| | 30 |
| REFERENCES | 31 |
| Amara, M., 2006. Soccer, Post-Colonial and Post-conflict Discourses in Algeria: Algérie-France, 6 October 2001, “Ce N’était Pas un Simple Match de Foot.” <i>International Review of Modern Sociology</i> , 32(2), pp. 217–238. | 32 |
| Beaud, S., 2011. <i>Traîtres à la Nation? Un Autre Regard sur la Grève des Bleus en Afrique du Sud</i> . Paris: La Découverte. | 33 |
| Bourdieu, P., 1996. <i>Sur la Television</i> . Paris: Liber. | 34 |
| Bourdieu, P. and Wacquant, L., 1999. On the Cunning of Imperialist Reason. <i>Theory. Culture & Society</i> , 16(1), pp. 41–58 | 35 |
| Brohm, J.M., 1989 [1976]. <i>Sport: A Prison of Measured Time</i> . London: Pluto Press. | 36 |
| Bruner, C.M., 2007. <i>Culture, Sovereignty, and Hollywood: UNESCO and the Future of Trade in Cultural Products</i> . The Berkeley Electronic Press Legal Series (bepress), Paper 1972. | 37 |
| Evens, T. and Lefevere, K., 2011. Watching the Football Game: Broadcasting Rights for the European Digital Television Market. <i>Journal of Sport and Social Issues</i> , 35(1), pp. 33–49. | 38 |
| | 39 |
| | 40 |
| | 41 |
| | 42 |
| | 43 |
| | 44 |
| | 45 |
| | 46 |

- Fantasia, R., 1994. Everything and Nothing: The Meaning of Fast-Food and other American Cultural Goods in France. *The Tocqueville Review*, XV(2), pp. 57–88.
- Francfort, D., 2007. La Marseillaise de Serge Gainsbourg, Vingtième Siècle. *Revue d'Histoire*, 1(93), pp. 27–35.
- Gabriel, Y., and Lang, T., 1995. *The Unmanageable Consumer. Contemporary Consumption and its Fragmentations*. London: Sage.
- Habermas, J., 1992. *De l'Éthique de la Discussion: Que Signifie le Terme "Diskurstethik"?* Paris: Le Cerf.
- Maitrot, E., 1995. *Sport et Télé: Les Liaisons Secrètes*. Paris: Flammarion.
- Marchetti, D., 2002. L'Internationale des Images. *Actes de la Recherche en Sciences Sociales*, 5(145), pp. 71–83.
- Marchetti, D., 1998. Le Football Saisi par les Médias. *Sociétés et Représentations*, 7, pp. 309–331.
- Miller, T., 2001. Introducing . . . Cultural Citizenship. *Social Text*, 19(4), pp. 1–5.
- Ohl, F., 2002. La Construction Sociale des Figures du Consommateur et du Client. *Sciences de la Société*, 56, pp. 24–41.
- Rowe, D., 2004a. *Sport, Culture and the Media: The Unruly Trinity*. 2nd ed. New York: Open University Press.
- Rowe, D., 2004b. Fulfilling the Cultural Mission: Popular Genre and Public Remit. *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, 7(3), pp. 381–399.
- Rowe, D. 2004c. Watching Brief: Cultural Citizenship and Viewing Rights. *Sport in Society*, 7(3), pp. 385–402.
- Scherer, J., and Whitson, D., 2009. Public Broadcasting, Sport, and Cultural Citizenship: The Future of Sport on the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation? *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, 44(2–3), pp. 213–229.
- Tomlinson, J., 2003. Globalization and Cultural Identity. In: D. Held and A.G. McGrew, eds., *The Global Transformations Reader*. Cambridge: Polity, pp. 269–277.
- Vedel, T., 2005. *Television across Europe: Regulation, Policy and Independence. France*. Budapest: Open Society Institute, pp. 642–727.

8 Belgium’s “List of Major Events” Mechanism in the Digital Broadcasting Era

Katrien Lefever

INTRODUCTION

Although sport-governing bodies have often argued that the law and sport are distinct entities (Viewig 2000, Chappelet 2010), the Belgian Competition Council (BCC) and various media legislators have regularly influenced the sale, acquisition, and exploitation of sports broadcasting rights. The BCC, for example, granted a regulatory exemption to the practice of joint selling of football broadcasting rights, albeit conditional upon the acceptance of different amendments (BCC 2005). Furthermore, in 2003, the BCC conditionally cleared Telenet's (the Flemish cable operator) acquisition of Canal+: the pay-TV channel that owned the rights to live football matches of the Belgian first division. In order to provide alternative operators with the opportunity to enter the Flemish broadcasting market, Telenet was required to offer Canal+ on a fair, reasonable, and non-discriminatory basis (BCC 2003). The latter is better known as a ‘must-offer obligation.’ In 2010, the BCC decided partly to review this obligation and required Telenet to offer its pay-TV channel to alternative platform operators, but only if Telenet acquired all live broadcasting rights of the Belgian Jupiler Pro League¹ (BCC 2010, Lefever and Kerremans 2011).

Besides the BCC, various media legislators in Belgium have also influenced the ways in which sport broadcasting rights are exploited. In order to safeguard live access to sports coverage, the ‘list of major events’ mechanism was introduced into the different Broadcasting Acts. The aim of this chapter is to outline the most recent debates in Belgium over the ‘list of major events’ mechanism. This chapter begins by providing a brief introduction to the Belgian state structure and the Belgian media landscape. The next section takes a closer look at the origin of the Belgian ‘list of major events’ mechanism. Furthermore, this chapter examines the criteria that have been developed by legislators to classify events as being of major importance for society and subsequently to determine whether those events ought to be broadcast live on free-to-air broadcasters. Finally, I provide an overview of a number of other constituent elements of this provision that are problematic in the new digital media landscape.

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34

1 THE BELGIAN STATE STRUCTURE

2

3 Belgium is characterized by a complicated state structure. After various
4 state reforms, Belgium is a Federal State composed of three Communities
5 (Flemish, French, and German-speaking Community) and three Regions
6 (Flemish, Walloon, and Brussels-Capital Region). The Federal State, the
7 Communities, and the Regions independently exercise their respective pow-
8 ers. Since the first state reform (1970–1), the domain of ‘radio broadcasting
9 and television’ has been classified as a cultural matter, falling within the
10 scope of Community powers. As a result, Belgium does not have a federal
11 Broadcasting Act,² but various ‘Media Decrees’ issued by the respective
12 Community. These include:

13

- 14 • 2003 French Community Broadcasting Act; last amended and renamed
15 by the French Community Act of 5 February 2009 into ‘French Com-
16 munity Audiovisual Media Services Act’; coordinated by the Decree
17 of 26 March 2009 [hereafter: FrMD]
- 18 • 2009 Flemish Community Radio and Television Broadcasting Act
19 [hereafter: FlMD]
- 20 • 2005 German-speaking Community Broadcasting and Cinema Act,
21 amended by Act of 3 December 2009

22 The details of the ‘list of major events’ mechanism are further specified in
23 two orders:

24

- 25 • 2004 Order of the Flemish Government establishing the list of events
26 of major importance to society [hereafter: FlO]
- 27 • 2004 Order of the French Government designating events of major
28 importance and determining the procedures for making them acces-
29 sible [hereafter: FrO]

30 The overview of the ‘list of major events’ mechanisms in Belgium will be lim-
31 ited to the two largest Communities in Belgium, i.e. the Flemish and French
32 Communities. Hence, this chapter will not cover the broadcasting legislations
33 applicable in the German-speaking Community and the Bilingual Region
34 of Brussels-Capital. As a member of the European Union (EU), Belgium’s
35 various Broadcasting Acts are implementations of several EU Directives.
36 The EU has allocated competences, meaning that it can only operate in the
37 domains explicitly permitted by the Treaties. The remaining competences are
38 reserved for the Member States (Lenaerts and Van Nuffel 2005). Although
39 the broadcasting sector in Europe is mainly regulated at the national level,
40 some measures have been adopted at EU level to create a single market for
41 audiovisual services (European Commission 2007b). In the past, the various
42 national broadcasting regulations have impeded the development of such an
43 integrated continental market. To abolish these obstacles, a minimum set of
44

45

common rules was needed and the European legislator subsequently embedded the regulation of the audiovisual sector in the Television Without Frontiers (TWF) Directive of 1989, which was substantially revised in 1997 and once again in 2007, when it was renamed the Audiovisual Media Services (AVMS) Directive. The AVMS Directive was implemented by the Flemish and French Communities in the first half of 2009. In 2010, the different amending Directives were codified in the interests of clarity and consistency.

THE BELGIAN MEDIA LANDSCAPE³

In Belgium, the media landscape is fragmented along Community lines. The three Communities have their own public broadcasters: VRT in Flanders, RTBF in the French-speaking Community and BRF in the German-speaking Community. For decades, the public broadcasters monopolized the media market. However, twenty years ago, commercial television was introduced in Flanders and in the French-speaking Community. Since then, the number of broadcasters has radically expanded to include broadcasters targeting a specific Community, thematic channels, regional channels, and pay-TV channels.

Although broadcasting content is transmitted via a range of distribution platforms, cable remains the predominant network covering 95 percent of the Belgian territory. Telenet is the Flemish cable operator, while VOO is the cable operator in the French-speaking region of Belgium. Both Telenet and VOO have their own sports pay-TV channels: respectively, Sporting Telenet and BeTV. In 2005, the incumbent telecommunications operator, Belgacom, launched its digital television service (via Asymmetric Digital Subscriber Line (ADSL) that enabled faster data transmission through the telephone network). To support this launch, Belgacom acquired the exclusive broadcasting rights of the Jupiler Pro League for the duration of the 2005–8 and 2008–11 seasons, with highlights broadcast on the public broadcasters VRT and RTBF. After the 2008–2009 season, a two-match play-off between RSC Anderlecht and Standard Liège⁴ was played to decide who would win the 2008–9 league title.⁵ However, the broadcast rights of these two matches were not included in the initial rights package that was sold to Belgacom. Although Belgacom had first right of refusal for these matches, its rival BeTV won the battle for these rights. However, the decision to award the national rights to BeTV was widely criticized because the French-language broadcaster was not available in Flanders.⁶ Because Flemish football fans were unable to watch these two high-profile matches on a Flemish television channel, the Flemish Government announced that it would examine the issue of whether sports federations ought to be obliged to sell their broadcasting rights to each community separately (Flemish Government 2009). In 2010 both cable and IPTV operators purchased the broadcasting rights of the Jupiler

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46

1 Pro League. Telenet and VOO acquired the broadcasting rights to air
2 the top three matches of each match day live on their pay-TV channels.
3 The rights to broadcast the five remaining matches were subsequently
4 awarded to Belgacom. In Flanders, the commercial broadcaster VTM
5 would broadcast the highlights, while in the French region of Belgium,
6 the highlights would still be shown on RTBF, the public broadcaster.
7 One should realize that the development of the Belgian media landscape
8 and the sports rights broadcasting market has been greatly affected by a
9 number of decisions of the BCC. However, an analysis of these decisions
10 falls outside the scope of this chapter.⁷ Partly as a result of the enduring
11 market leadership of commercial television (VTM), and to prevent
12 important sports events from migrating to pay-TV, Belgium implemented
13 the 'listed of major events mechanism.' The origin and philosophy of this
14 mechanism will be described in the next section.

17 ORIGIN OF BELGIUM'S 'LIST OF MAJOR EVENTS' MECHANISM

18 Following the expansion of pay-TV, considerable concern existed in Bel-
19 gium about the possibility that important live sports events that were once
20 carried on free-to-air broadcasters would migrate to pay-TV platforms. As
21 a result of these developments, households that were unable or unwilling to
22 pay an extra subscription fee would have been deprived of access to those
23 popular events. Given the important role that sport events play in bring-
24 ing people together and creating social cohesion, live access to coverage
25 of sports events remains widely regarded as a right of cultural citizenship
26 (Rowe 2004, Bodin et al. 2005, Parrish et al. 2010).⁸ However, sport can
27 only create such a shared experience on one condition: that large numbers
28 of people can watch the event live on television (Boardman and Hargreaves-
29 Heap 1999, Gratton and Solberg 2007).

30 Because some sports events are widely understood to be of cultural heri-
31 tage importance, public authorities have intervened to prevent those events
32 from 'disappearing behind a decoder.' Many EU Member States have, for
33 example, adopted laws mandating that events of major importance for soci-
34 ety must be aired live on free-to-air television. As a result of the various
35 regulatory policies of each Member State, the cross-border transmission of
36 major sports events and the development of an integrated market have both
37 been restricted. In order to avoid such 'market distortions,' the European
38 legislator deemed it necessary to harmonize these divergent regulations
39 (European Commission 1997, Recital 19 TWF Directive) and included an
40 Art. 3a in the TWF Directive that was subsequently codified in 2010 and
41 became Art. 14 AVMS Directive:

42 Member States should draw up a list of designated events, national
43 or non-national, which they consider to be of major importance for
44

society, thereby determining whether these events should be available by whole or partial live coverage, or where necessary or appropriate for objective reasons in the public interest, whole or partial deferred coverage. They then have to notify those lists to the Commission who will verify that the measures are compatible with Community law and communicate them to the other Member States. If approved, the lists are published in the Official Journal of the European Union and Member States are obliged to ensure that broadcasters under their jurisdiction respect the lists of other Member States.

In Belgium, these rules require respective governments to draw up a list of events that are regarded as being of major importance for society and must subsequently not be broadcast on an exclusive basis that would deprive a substantial proportion of the public in the Flemish or French Community of the possibility of viewing them. In the French-speaking Community, the ruling required the events to be broadcast on free-to-air television, while in the Flemish Community, the events were required to be included in the 'basic package of the distributor' (*infra*). As indicated in this Article, only events of major importance for society can be included in such a list. In the next section, the criteria to classify an event as of major importance for society will be examined.

EVENTS OF MAJOR IMPORTANCE FOR SOCIETY

Neither the old TWF Directive nor the AVMS Directive, however, contained an objective definition of 'events of major importance for society.' The AVMS Directive, in fact, provided little classificatory guidance. It is, therefore, up to each of the Member States to specify the criteria to determine which events can be included in the list. For example, Art. 153 FIMD and Art. 4, §2 FrMD specify that an event can be considered of major importance if two of the following conditions are met:

1. The event has great topical value and attracts considerable public interest (not just those who usually follow such events).
2. The event is taking place in the context of an important international competition or is a competition in which the national team, a Belgian club team or one or more Belgian athlete(s) is/are taking part.
3. The event belongs to an important sporting discipline and represents an important cultural asset to the Flemish or French Community and is part of that Community's cultural identity.
4. The event is broadcast traditionally by free-access television and has a high viewer rating for its category.

The French-speaking and Flemish Communities have adopted their own list of major events for society. However, instead of two separate lists,

1 Belgium has to provide one consolidated list to the European Commission
2 while, at the same time, allowing the communities to ‘emphasize’ certain
3 events (Van Mechelen 2001, Valcke, Gillis, and Van Damme 2009). On 30
4 August 2002, a Convention that specified a common list of major events
5 was signed by the two Communities. As a result, the Belgian list contains
6 one common section for both Communities and two sections that include
7 events that are only relevant for one Community (Van Mechelen 2002).

8 The following events are recognized as of importance for both
9 Communities:

- 10 • Summer Olympic Games
- 11 • Belgian Football Cup Final (men)
- 12 • All matches involving the Belgian men’s football team
- 13 • Football World Cup Finals (men)
- 14 • European Football Championship, final round (men)
- 15 • Champions League, matches involving Belgian clubs
- 16 • UEFA Cup, matches involving Belgian clubs
- 17 • Tour de France, men, professional
- 18 • Liège-Bastogne-Liège
- 19 • Amstel Gold Race
- 20 • Tour of Flanders
- 21 • Paris-Roubaix
- 22 • Milan-San Remo
- 23 • Belgian Road Cycling Championships, professional (men)
- 24 • World Road Cycling Championships, professional (men)
- 25 • Ivo Van Damme Memorial
- 26 • Belgian Formula 1 Grand Prix
- 27 • The following Grand Slam tennis tournaments: Roland Garros and
28 Wimbledon, quarter finals, semi finals and finals involving a Bel-
29 gian player
- 30 • The Davis Cup and the Fed Cup, quarter finals, semi finals and finals
31 involving the Belgian team
- 32 • Queen Elisabeth Music Competition, the final

33 The events only included in the French list are:

- 34 • La Flèche wallonne
- 35 • Winter Olympic Games
- 36 • World Athletics Championships, where Belgian athletes are taking part

37 The events only included in the Flemish list are:

- 38 • Champions League: finals and semi finals
- 39 • UEFA Cup: finals and semi finals
- 40 • Cycling, Paris-Tours and Tour of Lombardy

- The Belgian and World Cyclo-cross Championships, men, professional 1
- The following Grand Slam tennis tournaments: Australian Open and US 2
- Open, quarter finals, semi finals and finals involving a Belgian player 3
- Queen Elisabeth Music Competition 4

This codified list was officially notified to the European Commission in September 2002 (Van Mechelen 2002, Keulen 2003). After minor amendments to the list, including the removal of the Motocross Grand Prix of Belgium, the Commission declared that the Belgian list was compatible with EU law (Keulen 2003, European Commission 2007a). However, the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) challenged the Commission's ruling and argued that the Belgian list was in conflict with EU law because all of the matches of the FIFA World Cup were considered to be events of major importance for Belgium. Although FIFA accepted that 'prime' matches, such as games involving the national teams, the semi-finals, the final, and the opening game of the tournament, ought to remain on free-to-air television, it argued that 'non-prime' matches should be removed from the list of protected events. Nevertheless, the General Court ruled that the World Cup needed to be understood as a single event, as opposed to a series of individual matches and, as a result, there was no valid reason to protect only 'prime' matches. Hence, it supported the Commission's decision not to distinguish between 'prime' and 'non-prime' matches (General Court 2011). Predictably, FIFA has appealed against this ruling.

LIVE OR DEFERRED COVERAGE?

As indicated in Art. 153, §1 FlMD and Art. 1 FrO, the Community governments determine whether an event needs to be covered (wholly or partially) live, or whether deferred coverage is sufficient and justified. Deferred coverage is only acceptable "where necessary or appropriate for objective reasons in the public interest." The AVMS Directive, however, does not contain any guidance on how 'objective reasons in the public interest' ought to be interpreted by the Community governments. Since the primary objective of this regulation is to ensure the participation of the vast majority of the population, any argument for deferred coverage must be tested against this principle. Therefore, if audience figures demonstrate that a substantial part of the public is not following or cannot follow live coverage, deferred coverage may be the preferable option (Scheuer and Schoenthal 2008). For example, in the cases of the 2002 FIFA World Cup (co-hosted by South Korea and Japan) and the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games, it simply could not be expected of sports fans to get up in the middle of the night to watch the competitions. Additionally, according to Scheuer and Schoenthal (2008), if two events of major importance take place at the same time, officials may have recourse to deferred coverage.

1 In the French-speaking Community, television broadcasters may post-
2 postpone the broadcasting of a listed event in the following cases (Art. 3 FrO):
3

- 4 1. if it takes place between midnight and 8 a.m., Belgian time;
5 2. if the event coincides with a news or current affairs program normally
6 broadcast by the service at that time;
7 3. if the event comprises several elements taking place simultaneously.
8

9 In contrast to the French community, neither the FlMD nor the FlO specify
10 when the broadcasting of listed events could be postponed. The criteria to
11 designate events as being of major importance for society and to decide
12 whether those events should be broadcast live or deferred has caused rela-
13 tively few problems. However, two other constituent elements of this mech-
14 anism ('free-to-air television' and 'substantial proportion of the public')
15 are posing or could pose problems in the new digital media landscape. The
16 next section takes a closer look at these issues.
17
18

19 **THE 'LIST OF MAJOR EVENTS' MECHANISM AND**
20 **ITS PROBLEMATIC NOTIONS IN A DIGITAL MEDIA LANDSCAPE**
21

22 The 'list of major events' mechanism is included in the second tier obliga-
23 tions of the FlMD and FrMD, implying that the scope of this provision is
24 limited to linear audiovisual media services.⁹ However, not all linear ser-
25 vices fall under the scope of this provision. According to Art. 4 FrMD, the
26 linear service should be a "free-to-air television" reaching "a substantial
27 proportion of the public." Art. 153 FlMD speaks of the linear service being
28 included in "the basic package of the different distributor." This section
29 provides an overview of the definition of the concepts 'free-to-air tele-
30 vision,' 'basic package of the different distributors' and 'substantial propor-
31 tion of the public.' Additionally, I put forward an argument about how
32 these notions should be interpreted in a changing media sector.
33
34

35 **FREE-TO-AIR TELEVISION**
36

37 Art. 4, §3 FrMD states that a television broadcasting service is consid-
38 ered to be free if, apart from the technical costs, reception of this service
39 is not subject to payment other than the subscription price for the basic
40 cable package. Given that the public has to make an additional payment to
41 watch pay-TV programs, it is obvious that these services cannot be labeled
42 as free-to-air. Although pay-TV could not be labeled as free-to-air tele-
43 vision, pay-TV operators are not prevented from acquiring the exclusive
44 broadcasting rights of those listed events. More specifically, the aim of
45 the rule is to prohibit exclusive coverage on pay-TV but not its acquisition
46

(Scheuer and Schoenthal 2008, General Court 2011). This means that pay-TV channels may broadcast those events on a non-exclusive basis as long as free-to-air coverage is guaranteed. Moreover, in the Flemish Community, pay-TV operators may broadcast listed events exclusively after they have offered or sublicensed those rights to free-to-air broadcasters at reasonable market rates, but no free-to-air broadcaster has purchased them (Art. 3, §3 FIO). However, neither the FlMD nor the FIO indicates how a fair price should be determined.

Given that the essential condition to watch digital television is the acquisition of special technical equipment in order to encrypt television signals, the question arises whether digital television can be designated as free-to-air. Should this cost be interpreted as an additional payment on top of the basic subscription fee? If so, digital television cannot be designated as freely available. In the Member States, once again, there does not exist a common and accepted understanding of how digital television ought to be categorized. In the French Community, for example, a broadcaster is considered to be free-to-air when viewers do not have to pay (apart from the technical cost) a subscription fee in excess of the price of the basic cable package (Art. 4, §3 FrMD). Whereas in Italy, the regulation about the listed events unequivocally states that the public must have access to listed events on free-to-air television without having to incur additional costs for the acquisition of technical equipment (Art. 2 Decision No 8/1999). Hence, in Italy, digital television is not categorized as freely available. In Flanders, however, the legislator has yet to clarify whether payment for technical equipment is considered an extra payment, nor whether digital television is, in fact, freely available (Lefever and Evens 2009a). In 2010, Mrs. Lieten, the Flemish Minister of Media, stressed that she intended to take this issue into account when the FIO would be revised (Commission for Culture, Youth, Sport and Media 2010). The Explanatory Memorandum of the Draft proposal amending the FlMD states that digital television should be labeled as 'free' (Flemish Government 2011b).¹⁰

The completion of the (terrestrial) analogue switch-off in 2012 (European Commission 2003b and 2005b, Rapid Press Releases 2009), ought to make this question a 'non-issue' for most of the Member States. Given that digital television is only a further development of analogue television, it seems fair to argue that payment for a decoder is simply a logical technological extension and, following the analogue switch-off, would no longer be considered an additional impost on the viewer (Lefever and Evens 2009b, Lefever and Van Rompu 2009). However, a deadline has yet to be established for the analogue switch-off for other platforms, including cable. This delay implies that, in countries with high rates of cable penetration such as Belgium, this issue will remain contested for the foreseeable future. In order to accelerate up the uptake of digital television, the Belgian government could decide to subsidize the sale of digital set-top-boxes, but only in a 'technologically neutral' way.¹¹

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46

BASIC PACKAGES OF THE DIFFERENT DISTRIBUTORS

During the consultation rounds of the second revision of the TWF Directive, the European legislator and the different stakeholders had the opportunity to revise Art. 3a. In the Fourth Report on the application of the TWF Directive, the European Commission stated that “Article 3a of the TWF Directive was working satisfactorily” (European Commission 2003a). Moreover, the majority of contributions received during the consultation rounds also considered this Article to be “useful, necessary, effective and proportionate.” Hence, according to the European Commission, there was no need for a revision of this provision (European Commission 2003c, European Commission 2005a). Although the European Commission decided not to revise the Article, the Flemish legislator recently decided to revise the provision in order to address the policy challenges of the new digitized world. In doing so, the notion of ‘free-to-air television’ was replaced by “the basic package of the different distributors.” The revised Art. 153, §1 FlMD stated that:

the Flemish Government shall draw up a list of events considered to be of major importance for the public and which, for this reason, may not be broadcast on an exclusive basis so that a large part of the public of the Flemish Community cannot watch them live or deferred on television via the basic package of the different distributors.

The old Flemish Media Decree had a two-layered foundation that only contained obligations for broadcasters (the content layer) and network operators (the network layer). Recently, though, a new key player has entered the broadcasting market—the ‘distributor.’ Distributors bundle individual channels into different packages that are sold directly to customers and are distributed via a network. They do not necessarily have their own content or even their own network, but do maintain a crucial relationship with customers in the digital era (Flemish Parliament 2008). Given that distributors were not regulated under the old Media Decree and initially operated in a legal vacuum, their increasingly important intermediary role between broadcaster and network provider is evident. Therefore, the Flemish legislator eventually added a third distribution layer to provide more legal certainty and regulation in the digital era. Distributors are defined in Art. 2, 7° FlMD as “those who aggregate or package channels and services (either their own productions or acquired from third parties) into various bundles and offer these to end-users.” It is important to note that companies can now integrate two or three different functions (as a broadcaster, distributor and/or network operator), while meeting their respective legal obligations.

According to this new Art. 153, a large proportion of citizens must be able to watch major events on television via the basic package of all distributors. But what exactly does the Flemish legislator mean by ‘basic package’ and how should this term be interpreted (Lefever and Evens 2009a,

Lefever, Evens, and Valcke 2009, Lefever, 2012)? The FlMD itself does not contain a clear definition of the term 'basic package.' Although the Explanatory Memorandum defines a basic package as "the general or first package offered by the distributor" (Flemish Parliament 2008), this definition does not provide real clarity and a number of questions remain unaddressed. The main question that arises is whether 'basic package' means a 'free basic package.' The latter would be the equivalent of free-to-air television under former regulation. We also have to consider whether digital supply can be classified as a basic package. Given that the rationale behind the listed events regulation has not changed over time, it can be assumed that the 'free-to-air theory' ought to be applied *mutatis mutandis* to this revised Article. In other words, it implies that the term basic package refers to the supply received by every customer who subscribes to the service of a distributor without any additional payment. Hence, it can be assumed that premium packages offered by distributors that include additional content such as specialty movie or sports channels cannot be designated as a basic package precisely because an additional subscription fee is required. It should also be noted that the FlO provides little guidance on the interpretation of this new notion. In fact, when the FlMD was revised, the FlO was not amended. As a result, this Order still contains references to the notion of free-to-air television instead of 'basic packages' in the digital era. It is up to the Flemish legislator to determine whether the digital package should be regulated according to the same terms as a basic package. If only broadcasters included in the analogue basic packages of distributors are allowed to broadcast the major events, the 'future proof character' of the FlMD would be radically undermined. In the Explanatory Memorandum of the Draft proposal amending the FlMD, it is stated that a digital package could be seen as a basic package (Flemish Government 2011b).

In the analogue past, there was a clear distinction between free-to-air television and pay-TV. However, these distinctions are becoming increasingly blurred in the digital era (European Commission 2003d). In fact, channels are now commonly sold to customers in bundles (rather than individually) by distributors (Ofcom 2009). Moreover, distributors now offer both basic packages including the traditional free-to-air channels as well as premium packages via a mechanism known as a 'buy-through.' This 'buy through,' however, requires consumers to purchase a basic package before they can even buy a premium package for an additional subscription fee (Ofcom 2009). In the past, it was clear that the basic package was the first and general package offered by the distributors, while the premium package was always discretionary. Due to these changing business models, what was once a clearly divided line has become blurred. The basic package, for example, can be a limited one that only includes the 'must-carry' channels¹² at no extra cost beyond the minimum monthly subscription (Frontier Economics 2009). In addition to this package, distributors can offer, for a few extra Euros, another package that contains

many more commercial channels that were, at one time, included in the basic package. Additionally, distributors now allow customers to customize their basic package with a selection of extra channels and content that reflects their personal preferences (e.g. music channels, children programs, etc.) for a fixed amount per month (European Commission 2002). Finally, distributors can, of course, continue to offer the premium sports and movie packages at higher subscription prices (Frontier Economics 2009). Hence, it is not clear which package could be labeled as ‘basic’ and freely available or as ‘premium’ (Lefever 2012).

Moreover, it should be guaranteed that “a substantial proportion of the public” would have the possibility of watching the listed events. However, just as is the case with an ‘event of major importance,’ the AVMS Directive does not contain a definition of the term ‘substantial proportion.’ The Liverpool Audiovisual Conference in 2005¹³ canvassed whether the concept of ‘a substantial proportion of the public’ should be harmonized across the EU. In the subsequent Issue Paper, the European Commission noted that most legislators preferred not to because of the variable audiovisual landscape in each Member State (European Commission 2005a). As a result, every Member State can freely interpret the concept of ‘substantial proportion of the public.’ It is important to note that the term ‘proportion’ does not refer to the specific number of viewers who actually watch the broadcast event, but to the number able to watch the program (ACMA 2007).

In the French and Flemish Communities, a substantial proportion remains understood as the equivalent of 90 percent of all households (Art. 4, §3 FrMD; Art. 2 FLO). However, Mrs. Lieten, the current Flemish Minister of Media, recently recognized that the penetration rate of 90 percent was a more appropriate target in the analogue era, when 95 percent of the population has access to analogue cable television. She did acknowledge, though, that as a result of the development of digital terrestrial, digital satellite and digital cable television, as well as the co-existence of analogue and digital cable television, a target of 90 percent was no longer appropriate (Commission for Culture, Youth, Sport and Media 2010). Yet, despite Lietens’ statement, the Draft proposal amending the Flemish Media Decree still contains the 90 percent requirement (Flemish Government 2011a).

In 2007, FIFA complained that the current Belgian ‘list of major events’ mechanism did not provide a level playing field for all audiovisual media providers, reserving broadcasting rights to traditional media while excluding new media services (FIFA v. European Commission 2007). New media operators have only a limited penetration and thus do not fulfill the ‘substantial proportion’ criterion that is demanded by the Member States exclusively to broadcast those events. However, in Belgium the exclusive rights to the listed events are sold to the highest bidder regardless of whether they are a free-to-air broadcaster, a pay-TV operator, or even a new media provider unable to reach the required penetration rate. The only requisite is that those broadcasters who cannot fulfill two mandated criteria (‘free-

to-air television' and 'reaching a substantial proportion of the public') must offer or sublicense those rights to other free-to-air broadcasters on fair terms (*supra*). The General Court has recognized that the 'list of major events' mechanism clearly impacts upon FIFA's property rights. However, according to the General Court, the listing of events of major importance for society (even including all matches of the FIFA World Cup) remains a justified restriction of FIFA's property rights in order to preserve the viewing rights of citizens (General Court 2011).

The introduction of digital television is often hailed as a revolution in today's media landscape as it provides the possibility of transmitting more than one stream of programming over a single television channel at the same time, i.e., 'multi-channeling' (DBCDE 2009). This capacity offers broadcasters the opportunity to distribute different digital-only channels alongside traditional, 'primary' channels. The question that arises from these developments is whether this practice of broadcasting listed events on digital-only channels impinges on the 'list of major events' mechanism. In Flanders, for example, the qualification sessions of the listed Queen Elisabeth Music Contest were broadcast on Canvas+, a digital-only channel of the Flemish public broadcaster. Meanwhile, Canvas (the primary analogue channel) broadcast the final of this contest. The qualifying rounds of Club Brugge¹⁴ in the UEFA Europe League, which are also listed events (Art. 1, §1, 3° FlO), were broadcast on the digital-only channel EXQI Sport.¹⁵ Although the free-to-air broadcasters argue that the ability to carry listed sporting events on their digital-only channels would increase access to those sports events, in the digital era the rationale for the 'list of major events' has been undermined. In the analogue past, for example, the free-to-air broadcasters provided their services to almost 100 percent of Belgian households. As free-to-air broadcasters become digitized and able to offer digital-only channels, there is a danger that those broadcasters will at least temporarily lose their universal character (Rowe 2009). In Flanders, for example, the total number of digital television households was estimated to be 1.2 million in mid 2009 (De Tijd 2009). This figure implies that only half of all Flemish households had access to digital television content at that time, and that the required target of 90 percent is unrealistic. Although the Flemish broadcasters disregarded the list of major events regulation by airing the Queen Elisabeth Music Competition and the qualifying match of Club Brugge on their digital-only channels, the Flemish Community media regulator decided not to intervene and impose sanctions because no complaints were received from the public. Indeed, it must also be questioned whether the Flemish public would really benefit from having access to coverage of the entire Queen Elisabeth Music Competition on free-to-air analogue channels. While no complaints were received in this instance, many were received in 2009 when the public broadcaster altered its regular programming schedule to air telecasts of sports and other cultural events. Some viewers oppose these disruptions to their regular viewing patterns,

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46

1 while others complain that without them, historic sports moments will dis-
2 appear behind the digital 'red button' for the analogue-based and/or non-
3 pay-TV subscribing viewership (Lefever and Evens 2009a, Lefever, Evens,
4 and Valcke 2009).

5 The previous discussion will probably recur in every transition period
6 involving the consumption of popular media content. At present, citizens
7 can choose between watching analogue and digital television. Because
8 digital television is in its early stage of development, digital-only channels
9 do not yet reach the required percentages that would allow them exclu-
10 sively to broadcast listed events. The completion of digital switchovers
11 in Member States will substantially increase the number of channels that
12 reach this designated proportion (Davies 2009). Hence, after the digital
13 switchover, there is little doubt that digital-only television operators will
14 eventually have the capacity to exclusively broadcast listed events. The
15 next significant development for digital television transmission is high
16 definition television, with its enhanced picture and sound quality, wide-
17 screen display, and so on. A prerequisite for accessing these new features,
18 though, is the acquisition of special equipment, most notably a high defini-
19 tion decoder (EICTA 2008a). Hence, the transition from digital television
20 to high definition television poses similar issues and problems for regula-
21 tors as those concerning analogue to digital. In other words, for as long
22 as high definition television is unavailable to the required percentage of
23 viewers, any exclusive coverage of listed events in this format would be in
24 breach of the listed events regime.

25 CONCLUSION

26

27

28 Throughout this chapter, it has been noted that a crucial effect of digitiza-
29 tion has been an increase in the number of channels offering sports content.
30 In the past, only a limited number of matches were covered live on televi-
31 sion. Now, almost all matches can be broadcast live, and so in an abstract
32 sense there has never been a better time to be a sports fan. However, access
33 to this digital plenitude of content is often reserved for those willing and
34 able to pay for it. Access to channels and information dependent on the
35 payment of an extra subscription fee is now technically possible, but social
36 inequalities concerning the availability of this technology demonstrates that
37 the rationale for the listing of major events (i.e. guaranteeing that access to
38 important sport events will not become the privilege of the relatively afflu-
39 ent) will be as important in the digital media landscape as it was in the
40 analogue media environment. Moreover, it will be important to modify
41 this mechanism in order to provide sufficient protection for citizens' access
42 to live sports coverage in a digital converging media environment.

43 The Flemish Government is reconsidering the 'list of major events' mech-
44 anism after an abortive to create more legal certainty among broadcasters
45

and platform operators. When revising this mechanism, the Australian approach of dealing with digital-only channels may be worth consideration. In November 2010, the Australian Government (Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy 2010) announced that it would divide its listed events into two Tiers in order to allow for greater use of digital only-channels (see Rowe Chapter 9 in this book). Tier A "nationally iconic events" must still be televised on the main free-to-air broadcasters, whereas Tier B "regionally iconic and nationally significant events" can be televised on free-to-air digital only-channels. According to the Federal Government, because more than 70 percent of Australian households have access to digital television, the restriction on the use of digital only-channels to broadcast listed events could be relaxed, especially as the analogue signal will be switched off in 2013 (Minister for Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy 2010a, Minister for Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy 2010b). In Belgium, however, only a minority of households have embraced new media technologies like digital television. If Belgium were to follow the example of the Australian Government and relax the requirements attached to the 'list of major events' mechanism, it would need to consider adopting Australia's policy of purchasing digital decoders for at least some of the socially disadvantaged (such as those in receipt of full age and disability support pensions). Belgium policy makers could, therefore, expedite the uptake of digital television in Belgium without compromising the core principle of the 'list of major events' mechanism by allowing digital free-to-air channels to broadcast listed events. Such considerations, it can be seen, are as relevant to the Belgium context as they are to all other countries confronted with powerful challenges to the relationships between sport, media and cultural citizenship.

NOTES

1. The Jupiler Pro League is the top league competition for association football clubs in Belgium. 31
2. There is a federal act relating to bilingual broadcasting and cable distribution activities in the region of Brussels-Capital (*Act of 30 March 1995 on electronic communication networks and services and broadcasting activities in the bilingual region of Brussels-Capital. Official Gazette* 22 February 1996, *erratum Official Gazette* 30 March 1996; amended by Act of 16 March 2007. *Official Gazette* 5 April 2007). 32
3. For more detailed information about the Belgian media landscape, see Vlacke and Lievens, 2010. 33
4. RSC Anderlecht and Standard Liège are professional football clubs playing in the Belgium Jupiler Pro League. 34
5. This Belgian League title decider needed to be played, because both Standard Liège and RSCA Anderlecht finished the 2008–2009 season on 77 points and with 24 victories. 35
6. Belgium has four linguistic regions: the Flemish-speaking region, the French-speaking region, the German-speaking region, and the bilingual region of 36

- 1 Brussels, where Flemish as well as French is spoken. Flemish, French, and
2 German are the three official languages of Belgium.
- 3 7. For a detailed analysis of the impact of the decisions of the BCC on the devel-
4 opment of the Belgian media landscape and the sports broadcasting rights
5 market, see T. Evens and K. Lefever (2012).
- 6 8. In the EU, this social function of sport has also been recognized in dif-
7 ferent documents, such as the White Paper on Sport (European Commis-
8 sion, 2007c). With the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty on 1 December
9 2009, for the first time in European history, sport was integrated in the
10 primary law of the EU and the specificity of sport is officially recognized in
11 the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU). Article 165
12 TFEU states: “[. . .] the Union shall contribute to the promotion of Euro-
13 pean sporting issues, while taking account of the specific nature of sport,
14 its structures based on voluntary activity and its social and educational
15 function.”
- 16 9. A linear audiovisual service is defined as one offered by a media service pro-
17 vider for simultaneous viewing of programmes on the basis of a programme
18 schedule (Art. 2, 21° FIMD; Art. 1, 37° FrMD).
- 19 10. At the time of writing (June 2012), this draft proposal is pending for further
20 approval by the Flemish Parliament.
- 21 11. The European Commission had opened an inquiry into this subsidy for digi-
22 tal decoders in Italy when the Government decided to subsidize the sale
23 of digital set-top-boxes. The European Commission decided that subsidies
24 for digital decoders do not violate State aid rules as they are offered for all
25 decoders, regardless of the transmission platforms, and proportionate to
26 the objective of promoting the transition to digital television. However, the
27 Italian subsidies provided in 2004 and 2005 to buyers of decoders for digi-
28 tal terrestrial television were found to be incompatible with the State aid
29 rules as they were not technology-neutral and created an undue distortion of
30 competition by excluding satellite broadcasting (Rapid Press Releases, 2005,
31 2007a, 2007b).
- 32 12. Art. 31 (1) Universal Service Directive permits Member States to impose
33 “must carry” obligations on network operators where a significant number
34 of end-users of such networks have them as their principal means to receive
35 radio and television broadcasts.
- 36 13. In the consultation process leading up to the AVMS Directive, the Liverpool
37 Audiovisual Conference was organized.
- 38 14. Club Brugge is a professional football club playing in the Belgium Jupiler Pro
39 League.
- 40 15. Alfacam, a Belgian-based company providing TV facilities and services to
41 broadcasters and production houses throughout the world, entered the Flem-
42 ish television market (via its subsidiary EURO1080) with its high-definition
43 digital-only channel EXQI Sport.

44 REFERENCES

- 45 Act of 30 March 1995 on Electronic Communication Networks and Services
46 and Broadcasting Activities in the Bilingual Region of Brussels-Capital. Official
Gazette 22 February 1996, erratum Official Gazette 30 March 1996;
amended by Act of 16 March 2007. Official Gazette 5 April 2007.
Anon., 2011. Decaluwe wil Play-offs Voetbal Kelder via Evenementenlijst. De Morgen, [online]. Available from <http://www.demorgen.be/dm/nl/5036/Wetstraat/>

| | |
|--|----|
| article/detail/1236309/2011/03/15/Decaluwe-wil-play-offs-voetbal-kelderen-via-evenementenlijst.dhtml [Accessed 15 March 2011]. | 1 |
| Australian Broadcasting Authority (ABA), 2000. Investigation into the Implementation of the Anti-Hoarding Rules. Issues Paper. [online] Sydney: ABA. Available from http://www.acma.gov.au/webwr/aba/newspubs/radio_tv/investigations/documents/general/ahi_ip.pdf [Accessed 21 August 2010]. | 2 |
| Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA). 2007. Anti-Siphoning Monitoring Investigation. Report No. 5. [online] Available from http://www.acma.gov.au/antisiphoningreport/5/start.htm [Accessed 21 August 2010]. | 3 |
| BCC, 2010. Decision no. 2010-C/C-48 of 29 November 2010. [online] Available from http://economie.fgov.be/nl/binaries/48_2010CC48_Telenet_pub_tcm325-113664.pdf [Accessed 20 December 2010]. | 4 |
| BCC, 2005. Decision no. 2005-I/O-40 of 29 July 2005. Tijdschrift van Rechtspraak van de Raad voor de Mededinging, 3, pp. 27–47. | 5 |
| BCC, 2003. Decision no. 2003-C/C-89 of 12 November 2003. Tijdschrift van Rechtspraak van de Raad voor de Mededinging, 4, pp. 72–83. | 6 |
| Boardman, A., and Hargreaves-Heap, S., 1999. Network Externalities and Government Restrictions on Satellite Broadcasting of Key Sporting Events. <i>Journal of Cultural Economics</i> , 23, pp. 167–181. | 7 |
| Bodin, D., Robène, L., and Héas, S., 2005. <i>Sport and Violence in Europe</i> . Strasbourg: Council of Europe. | 8 |
| C-204/11 P pending case, FIFA vs. European Commission, 28 April 2011. | 9 |
| Chappelet, J-L., 2010. <i>Autonomy of Sport in Europe</i> . Strasbourg: Council of Europe. | 10 |
| Commission for Culture, Youth, Sport and Media, 2010. <i>Parliamentary Proceedings</i> . [online] Available from http://docs.vlaamsparlement.be/docs/handelingen-commissies/2009–2010/c0m227cul31–18052010.pdf [Accessed 21 August 2010]. | 11 |
| Commonwealth Consolidated Acts, 1992. Broadcasting Services Act 1992. [online] Available from http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/cth/consol_act/bsa1992214/ [Accessed 21 August 2010]. | 12 |
| Council Directive of 3 October 1989 on the Coordination of Certain Provisions Laid down by Law, Regulation or Administrative Action in Member States Concerning the Pursuit of television Broadcasting Activities, 89/552/EEC, amended by Directive 97/36/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 June 1997. | 13 |
| Davies, D., 2009. <i>Review of Free-to-Air Listed Events, Report by the Independent Advisory Panel to the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport</i> . November. London: DCMS | 14 |
| Decision No 8/1999 of 9 March 1999 [Delibera n. 8/99 modificata dalla delibera n. 172/1999], Official Gazette No 119 of 24 May 1999, as amended by Decision No 172/1999 of 28 July 1999, Official Gazette No 192 of 17 August 1999. | 15 |
| Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy (DBCDE), 2010. Future anti-siphoning list. [online] Available from http://afr.com/rw/2009-2014/AFR/2010/11/25/Photos/3808ab0a-f88f-11df-a2c9-b1a91965d87a_anti-siphoning.pdf [Accessed 29 November 2010]. | 16 |
| _____, 2009. <i>Sport on Television: A Review of the Anti-Siphoning Scheme in the Contemporary Digital Environment. Discussion Paper</i> . [online] Available from http://www.dbcde.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0010/118864/Sport_on_Television_Review_discussion_paper.pdf [Accessed 19 August 2010]. | 17 |
| De Tijd (2009) Helft Vlaamse Gezinnen Kijkt Digitale Televisie, 4 August. [online], No longer available from http://www.tijd.be/nieuws/archief/Helft_Vlaamse_gezinnen_kijkt_digitale_televisie_l_Volgens_hoogleraar_Erik_Dejonghe_kijkt_eind_volgend_jaar_al_twee_derde.8215790–1615.art [Accessed 7 August 2009]. | 18 |

- 1 EICTA, 2008a. HD Television? [online] Available from http://www.eicta.org/fileadmin/user_upload/document/EICTA_-_HD_factsheet_television.pdf [Accessed 21 August 2010].
- 2 _____, 2008b. The Digital Switchover & High Definition TV. [online] Available from http://www.eicta.org/fileadmin/user_upload/document/EICTA_-_HD_factsheet_switchover.pdf [Accessed 18 August 2010].
- 3 European Commission, 2007a. Commission Decision of 25 June 2007 on the Compatibility with Community Law of Measures taken by Belgium Pursuant to Article 3a(1) of Council Directive 89/552/EEC on the Coordination of Certain Provisions Laid down by Law, Regulation or Administrative Action in Member States Concerning the Pursuit of Television Broadcasting Activities.
- 4 _____, 2007b. Information Society and Media & Communications: Linking European Policies. [online] Available from http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/activities/policy_link/brochures/documents/media.pdf [Accessed on 20 August 2010].
- 5 _____, 2007c. White Paper on Sport. [online] Available from http://ec.europa.eu/sport/white-paper/doc/wp_on_sport_en.pdf [Accessed 25 October 2011].
- 6 _____(Information Society and Media), 2005a. *Issues Paper for the Audiovisual Conference in Liverpool. Right to Information and Right to Short Reporting.* [online] Available from http://ec.europa.eu/avpolicy/docs/reg/modernisation/issue_papers/ispa_shortrep_en.pdf [accessed on 20 August 2010].
- 7 _____, 2005b. Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on Accelerating the Transition from Analogue to Digital Broadcasting. [online] Available from http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/com/2005/com2005_0204en01.pdf [Accessed 25 October 2011].
- 8 _____, 2003a. Fourth Report from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on the Application of Directive 89/552/EEC “Television without Frontiers.” [online] Available from <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2002:0778:FIN:EN:PDF> [Accessed 6 June 2012].
- 9 _____, 2003b. Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on the Transition from Analogue to Digital Broadcasting (from Digital ‘Switchover’ to Analogue ‘Switch-off’). [online] Available from http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/com/2003/com2003_0541en01.pdf [Accessed 25 October 2011].
- 10 _____, 2003c. Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, The Future of European Regulatory Audiovisual Policy. [online] Available from <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2003:0784:FIN:EN:PDF> [Accessed 6 June 2012].
- 11 _____, 2003d. Commission decision of 2 April 2003 declaring a concentration to be compatible with the common market and the EEA Agreement (Case COMP/M.2876—Newscorp/Telepiù). OJ (2004) L 110/73.
- 12 _____(Competition DG), 2002. Market Definition in the Media Sector: Economic Issues. [online] Available from http://ec.europa.eu/competition/sectors/media/documents/european_economics.pdf [accessed 25 October 2011].
- 13 _____, 1997. Communication of the European Commission, on the Initiative of Commissioner Marcellino Oreja, on Exclusive Rights for TV Broadcasting of Major (Sports) Events. 5 February 1997, SEC(1997)0174/9.
- 14 European Parliament and Council Directive of 10 March 2010 on the Coordination of Certain Provisions Laid Down by Law, Regulation or Administrative Action in Member States concerning the Provision of Audiovisual Media Services (Audiovisual Media Services Directive).
- 15
- 16
- 17
- 18
- 19
- 20
- 21
- 22
- 23
- 24
- 25
- 26
- 27
- 28
- 29
- 30
- 31
- 32
- 33
- 34
- 35
- 36
- 37
- 38
- 39
- 40
- 41
- 42
- 43
- 44
- 45
- 46

| | |
|--|----|
| European Parliament and Council Directive 2002/22 of 7 March 2002 on Universal Service and Users' Rights relating to Electronic Communications Networks and Services ('Universal Service Directive'), amended by Directive 2009/136 of November 25, 2009 amending Directive 2002/22, Directive 2002/58 and Regulation 2006/2004, ('Citizens' Rights Directive'). | 1 |
| Evens, T., and Lefever, K., (in press). The Struggle for Platform Leadership in the European Sports Broadcasting Market. In: B. Hutchins and D. Rowe, eds., <i>Digital Media Sport: Technology and Power in the Network Society</i> . New York: Routledge. | 2 |
| FIFA v. Commission, 2007, 4 October 2007, Case T-385/07. OJ (2007) C 315/41. | 3 |
| Flemish Community Radio and Television Broadcasting Act. 2009. Official Gazette 30 April. | 4 |
| Flemish Government, 2011a. Draft Proposal Amending Flemish Media Decree of 27 March 2009. 1 July. | 5 |
| Flemish Government, 2011b. Explanatory Memorandum—Draft Proposal Amending Flemish Media Decree of 27 March 2009, 1 July. | 6 |
| Flemish Government, 2009. Government Statement 2009–2014. [online] Available from http://publicaties.vlaanderen.be/docfolder/15043/Regeerakkoord_2009.pdf [Accessed 8 July 2009]. | 7 |
| Flemish Parliament, 2008. Explanatory Memorandum. [online] Available from http://docs.vlaamsparlement.be/docs/stukken/2008–2009/g2014–1.pdf [Accessed 21 August 2010]. | 8 |
| French Community Broadcasting Act. Official Gazette 17 April 2003; last amended and renamed by the French Community Act of 5 February 2009 into 'French Community Audiovisual Media Services Act'; coordinated by the Decree of 26 March 2009. | 9 |
| Frontier Economics, 2009. The Impact of Listed Events on the Viewing and Funding of Sports—A Report Prepared for the Chair and Review Panel. [online] Available from http://www.culture.gov.uk/images/publications/FE-DCMS-Impactoflistedevents.pdf [Accessed 25 October 2011]. | 10 |
| General Court, 2011. FIFA v European Commission, Case T-385/07, 17 February 2011, not yet published in the ECR. | 11 |
| German-speaking Community Broadcasting and Cinema Act. Official Gazette 6 September 2005; amended by Act of 3 December 2009. Official Gazette 15 December 2009. | 12 |
| Gratton, C., and Solber, H.A., 2007. <i>The Economics of Sports Broadcasting</i> . London: Routledge. | 13 |
| Hutchins, B., and Rowe, D., 2009. From Broadcast Scarcity to Digital Plenitude: The Changing Dynamics of the Media Sport Content Economy. <i>Television New Media</i> , 10, pp. 354–370. | 14 |
| Keulen, M., 2003. Policy Document Media 2003–2004. [online] Available from http://www.cjsm.vlaanderen.be/media/downloads/beleidsbrief2003–2004_media.pdf [Accessed 25 August 2010]. | 15 |
| Lefever, K., 2012. <i>New Media and Sport: International Legal Aspects</i> . Den Haag: T.M.C. Asser Press. | 16 |
| Lefever, K., and Cannie, H., and Valcke, P. 2010. Watching Live Sport on Television: A Human Right? The Right to Information and the List of Major Events Regime. <i>European Human Rights Law Review</i> , 4, pp. 396–407. | 17 |
| Lefever, K., and Evens T., 2009a. All Sports for Free! A Difficult Match? Right to Information in the Digital Broadcasting Era. <i>International Sports Law Journal</i> , 3–4, pp. 29–33. | 18 |
| ———, 2009b. Sports Content on the Move. Regulating Access to Sports Events on Mobile Platforms. <i>EuroCPR</i> 2009. Spain, Sevilla, 30 March 2009. | 19 |

- 1 Lefever, K., Evens, T., and Valcke, P., 2009. De Koningin Elisabethwedstrijd voor
2 iedereen! Of toch niet? De evenementenlijst in het digitale televisielandschap.
3 *Auteurs & Media*, 5, pp. 513–520.
- 4 Lefever, K., and Kerremans, R., 2011. Football on (Must-)Offer. *European Compe-*
5 *tition Law Review*, 12, pp. 621–629.
- 6 Lefever, K., and Van Rompu, B., 2009. Ensuring Access to Sports Content: 10
7 Years of EU Intervention. Time to Celebrate? *Journal of Media Law*, 2, pp.
8 243–268.
- 9 Lenaerts, K., and Van Nuffel, P., 2005. *Constitutional Law of the European Union*,
Second Edition. London: Sweet & Maxwell.
- 10 Mansell, R., 1999. New Media Competition and Access: The Scarcity-Abundance
11 Dialectic. *New Media and Society*, 1(2), pp. 155–182.
- 12 Minister for Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy, 2010a. Anti-Siphoning Scheme—Fact Sheet. [online] Available from <http://resources.news.com.au/files/2010/11/25/1225961/029472-anti-siphoning-factsheet.pdf> [Accessed 29 November 2010].
- 13 Minister for Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy, 2010b. Anti-Siphoning Scheme—Frequently Asked Questions. [online] Available from http://www.dbcde.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0019/131464/101123_Anti-siphoning_Reforms_-_FAQs.pdf [Accessed 29 November 2010].
- 14 Ofcom, 2009. Pay TV Phase-Three Document: Proposed Remedies. [online] Available from http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/binaries/consultations/third_paytv/summary/paytv_condoc.pdf [Accessed 18 August 2010].
- 15 Parrish, R. et. al. (2010). The Lisbon Treaty and EU Sports Policy—Study. [online] Available from <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/activities/committees/studies/download.do?language=en&file=32471> [Accessed 14 October 2010].
- 16 Rapid Press Releases, 2009. EU Member States on Course for Analogue Terrestrial
17 TV Switch-Off. 16 February. [online] Available from http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-09-266_en.htm?locale=en [Accessed 5 March 2013].
- 18 Rapid Press Releases, 2007a. State Aid: Commission Endorses Subsidies for
19 Digital Decoders in Italy, but Only Where Technology-Neutral. 24 January.
20 [online] Available from http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-07-73_en.htm?locale=FR [Accessed 5 March 2013].
- 21 Rapid Press Releases, 2007b. State Aid: Commission Endorses Subsidies for Digital
22 Equipment in Italy. 28 June. [online] Available from http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-07-960_en.htm [Accessed 5 March 2013].
- 23 Rapid Press Releases, 2005. State Aid: Commission Opens Inquiry into Subsidy
24 for Digital Decoders for Terrestrial TV in Italy. 21 December. [online] Available
25 from http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-05-1657_en.htm?locale=FR [Accessed 5 March 2013].
- 26 Rowe, D., 2009. Submission to the Sport on Television Review. [online] Available
27 from http://www.dbcde.gov.au/_data/assets/word_doc/0012/121224/Professor_David_Rowe_main_submission.doc [Accessed 21 August 2010].
- 28 Rowe, D., 2004. *Sport, Culture and the Media: The Unruly Trinity*, 2nd edition.
29 Maidenhead: Open University Press.
- 30 Scheuer A., and Schoenthal M., 2008. Article 3a TWFD. In: O. Castendyk et al.,
31 eds., *European Media Law*. Alphen a/d Rijn: Kluwer Law International, pp.
32 407–428.
- 33 Snoeck, D., 2009. Helft Vlaamse Gezinnen Kijkt Digitale Televisie. *De Tijd*, 4
34 August 2009, p. 7.
- 35 Special Act on Institutional Reform of 8 Aug. 1980. Official Gazette 15 Aug. 1980,
36 amended on several occasions.
- 37 Treaty of Lisbon amending the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty establish-
38 ing the European Community. OJ (2007) C 306/01.
- 39
- 40
- 41
- 42
- 43
- 44
- 45
- 46

Belgium's "List of Major Events" 165

| | |
|---|----|
| Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. OJ (2008) C 115/47. | 1 |
| Valcke, P., Gillis, D., and Van Damme, S., 2009. Belgium. In: I. Blackshaw, S. Cornelius, and R. Siekmann, eds., 2009. <i>TV Rights and Sport: Legal Aspects</i> . The Hague: T.M.C. Asser Press, pp. 235–267. | 2 |
| Valcke, P., and Lievens, E., 2010. <i>International Encyclopedia of Media Law: Media Law in Belgium</i> . Alphen a/d Rijn: Kluwer Law International. | 3 |
| Van Mechelen, D., 2002. Policy document Media 2002–2003. [online] Available from http://www.cjsm.vlaanderen.be/media/downloads/beleidsbrief2002-2003_media.pdf [Accessed 25 August 2010]. | 4 |
| Van Mechelen, D., 2001. Policy document Media 2001–2002. [online] Available from http://www.cjsm.vlaanderen.be/media/downloads/beleidsbrief2001-2002_media.pdf [Accessed 25 August 2010]. | 5 |
| Viewig, K., 2000. The Legal Autonomy of Sports Organisations and the Restrictions of European Law. In: A. Caiger and S. Gardiner, eds., <i>Professional sport in the EU: regulation and re-regulation</i> . The Hague: T.M.C. Asser Press, pp. 83–106. | 6 |
| | 7 |
| | 8 |
| | 9 |
| | 10 |
| | 11 |
| | 12 |
| | 13 |
| | 14 |
| | 15 |
| | 16 |
| | 17 |
| | 18 |
| | 19 |
| | 20 |
| | 21 |
| | 22 |
| | 23 |
| | 24 |
| | 25 |
| | 26 |
| | 27 |
| | 28 |
| | 29 |
| | 30 |
| | 31 |
| | 32 |
| | 33 |
| | 34 |
| | 35 |
| | 36 |
| | 37 |
| | 38 |
| | 39 |
| | 40 |
| | 41 |
| | 42 |
| | 43 |
| | 44 |
| | 45 |
| | 46 |

9 “Events of National Importance and Cultural Significance”

Sport, Television, and the Anti-Siphoning Regime in Australia

David Rowe

INTRODUCTION: AN ANTIPODEAN PARADISE OF SPORT?¹

It has often been claimed that Australia is a country that has an especially close and enduring attachment to sport. In Richard Cashman's (2010) eponymous book title, Australia has been perceived as a 'Paradise of Sport,' while Daryl Adair and Wray Vamplew (1997, p. ix) open their book *Sport in Australian History* with the proposition that 'Sport has long been a central feature of Australian popular culture—so much so that enthusiasm for sport has been described widely as characteristic of being Australian.' Whether such typifications of Australia can be sustained by comparative international empirical evidence is not of specific concern here, nor are the causes (variously ascribed, separately and in combination, to convict and colonial history, masculinity, climate, and cultural isolation—see, for example, Stoddart 1986). What can be ascertained, the subject of this chapter and book, is that there is no developed television sport environment in the world that is more heavily protected than Australia. The reason for this arrangement is, primarily, a combination of two forces: the power of the popular demand to maintain premium sport on free-to-air television and the political influence of the commercial terrestrial television sector, especially of the Nine Network (which routinely claims to be the most important sport broadcaster) and, in particular, of its most powerful figure, the late Kerry Packer (who died in December 2005).

Packer achieved international renown in international sport television when, in 1977, frustrated by the hold of the Australian Broadcasting Commission (ABC, the national public broadcaster now named the Australian Broadcasting Corporation) on its major summer sport, cricket, and by the ABC's close relationship with the Australian Cricket Board (ACB), he established and broadcast a rival competition, World Series Cricket (WSC), after recruiting most of the world's best players (Barnett 1990, pp. 144–147; Goldlust 1987, pp. 161–164). Packer soon won the struggle, with the ACB capitulating to his demand to televise cricket, and to several of the sometimes-controversial innovations of WSC, such as night matches,

| | |
|--|----|
| colored clothing and various television viewing enhancements in camera, sound and editing technologies and practices. The ABC did continue to provide some television sport but, like most public service broadcasters around the world, it became a diminishing force as commercial television used its superior capital resources to win premium broadcast sport rights (Rowe 2000). | 1 |
| In other countries, including those with a strong public service broad- casting tradition, though, a second wave of commercialization of sport television occurred with the inception of subscription television (Boyle and Haynes 2009). In national environments with historically weak pub- lic broadcasting sectors, notably the US, subscription (cable and satellite) developed early, but there was some resistance in, for example, the UK, continental Europe, and East Asia to the idea that television should be paid for by viewers. But subscription television broke through, with sport television in particular proving to be the ‘battering ram’ to the new televi- sual and associated services, in the often-quoted words of the major media figure Rupert Murdoch (Rowe 2004, p. 100). The most striking case in the UK is the English Premier League (EPL) which, with the support of a pro-capitalist, free market Conservative Government under Margaret Thatcher that was hostile to the major public broadcaster, the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) (Goodwin 1998), was established on the basis of almost complete domination by a single subscription television provider—BSkyB ² . | 2 |
| As the chapters of this book amply demonstrate, the histories of public, commercial, free-to-air, and subscription television sport (and on other media platforms, including internet and mobile) are highly variable, even in quite similar social and media environments. Australia, despite mod- eling its public service broadcaster on the BBC, is no exception to this rule, with its media sport (and wider media sector) differing from that of Britain in key respects, such as the ABC’s primary reliance on allo- cated budget rather than license revenue, as is the case with the BBC. When subscription television came, belatedly, to Australia in 1995, it was met with the most stringent anti-siphoning regime in the world, thereby ensuring that most major sports events would be prevented from migrat- ing to it from free-to-air television. The power of commercial free-to-air television over sport led Murdoch’s Australian subsidiary, News Limited, into attritional disputation in the mid-1990s with Packer over the broad- cast rights to rugby league (one of its strongest football codes) known as the ‘Super League’ War (Colman 1996). The splitting and subsequent recombination of the code after substantial losses to the rival competi- tions was engendered by a struggle between rival commercial broadcaster ownership blocks and did not involve the Australian public broadcasters, the ABC and the Special Broadcasting Service (SBS, which is funded by a combination of public funding, advertising (since 2006) and some product sales—see Ang <i>et al.</i> 2008), neither of which could afford the broadcast | 3 |
| | 4 |
| | 5 |
| | 6 |
| | 7 |
| | 8 |
| | 9 |
| | 10 |
| | 11 |
| | 12 |
| | 13 |
| | 14 |
| | 15 |
| | 16 |
| | 17 |
| | 18 |
| | 19 |
| | 20 |
| | 21 |
| | 22 |
| | 23 |
| | 24 |
| | 25 |
| | 26 |
| | 27 |
| | 28 |
| | 29 |
| | 30 |
| | 31 |
| | 32 |
| | 33 |
| | 34 |
| | 35 |
| | 36 |
| | 37 |
| | 38 |
| | 39 |
| | 40 |
| | 41 |
| | 42 |
| | 43 |
| | 44 |
| | 45 |
| | 46 |

rights. Instead, it revolved around contestation for control of sport and its mediation through subscription and free-to-air broadcast television, with the state as arbiter regarding which sports events should be 'protected' for the widest possible viewership.

Ever since the anti-siphoning regime was instituted, subscription television companies have lobbied for the removal or reduction of listed events. Despite various inquiries and some amendments to the regulations, major changes to the list of 'events of national importance and cultural significance' (all of which currently are sporting occasions) have been slow to emerge, even after the introduction of digital multi-channeling and on the threshold of universal, mandatory digitization that entailed the progressive discontinuation of all analogue broadcast services across the regions by late 2013. The main reason for so little change, apart from the political lobbying power of the free-to-air networks, has been the clear unpopularity of any reduction in free-to-air televised sport among a substantial proportion of the electorate. For this reason, neither of the major political parties, the Australian Labor Party and the Liberal-National Coalition, has made any serious attempt to dismantle the anti-siphoning list. However, when the federal Government announced a new *Sport on Television Review* in August 2009 and released a discussion paper, 'Sport on Television: A Review of the Anti-Siphoning Scheme in the Contemporary Digital Environment,' it was apparent that the broadcasting environment had changed significantly and that the relevant section of the Broadcasting Services Act (Section 115) was in need of reform. This chapter will, in the light of the regulation of television sport in Australia over the last fifteen years, analyze debates about the broadcast market and the interests of sports audiences, and, in particular, focuses on questions of cultural citizenship in Australia. In particular, it will address, as the age of 'networked digital sport' (Hutchins and Rowe 2012) comes into view, sport's key role as a standard bearer of public service media and their relationships to citizens and wider public culture, at a time of aggressive corporate-commercial emphasis on consumers and marketization.

MUST SPORT BE FREE?

Sport, as has often been observed, is crucial television content. While it is highly flexible and can be adapted to many television uses, from game shows to drama to studio debate, it is in live form that sport is at its most compelling for viewers and so most valuable for those who command its broadcast rights. In many countries sports programming figures prominently among the most-watched content on television (especially in terms of single viewing events), and this is certainly the case in Australia. For example, in the mainland metropolitan free-to-air television markets in

| | |
|--|----|
| 2010, half of the top ten most watched events and 48 out of the top 100 rating shows in the decade to 2010 involved sport (Dale 2010). Sport is even more prominent in subscription television—as Masters (2011), for example, has noted, “of the top 100 programs this year [2011] on Foxtel, the NRL had 68 and the AFL [Australian Football League] had 12.” In its discussion paper on sport on television, it is noted that all ten of the most popular programs on free-to-air television in 2008 were sports events, while this was the case for nine out of ten on pay television (Australian Government 2009, p. 2–3). | 1 |
| Sport programs (alongside, in the main, the other ‘unscripted’ television genre with real-time outcome uncertainty—competitive ‘reality’ shows such as <i>MasterChef Australia</i> , <i>Australia’s Next Top Model</i> and <i>Australian Idol</i>) dominate key viewing event statistics because they combine loyal fandom, ‘liveness’ and suspense within an easily understood narrative framework. This well-established affinity between sport and television is at the confluence of two national cultural systems. This is not, of course, to argue that everyone in Australia is an aficionado of both or either, but that they are key elements of popular culture in which the idea of nation figures prominently—television on the basis that it is a major bearer of Australia’s stories and their associated identities (O’Regan 1993), and sport because it offers a rich vein of the stories that television carries, especially when the nation is explicitly represented/embodied in international sporting competition (Tomlinson and Young, 2006). The ‘television nation,’ especially in the light of transnationalization and globalization, is not fixed or unassailable, but it retains its ideological and symbolic power. As Stuart Cunningham and Elizabeth Jacka (1996, p. 15) argue in their study of Australian television in its international context, an “account of national culture from the optic of a peripheral nation like Australia” takes the process of post-colonial nation-building rather more seriously than in, for example, one that might be offered from that of a ‘post-national’ constellation of states such as those that are involved in the ‘project’ of the European Union: | 10 |
| There is something very persistent about the nation as a point of cultural identification and allegiance, even by those sections of the national community that might be considered marginalised by dominant modes of national self-identification. (p. 16) | 33 |
| Thus, although many nations with diverse socio-economic systems may be structurally unequal, they are commonly celebrated in some circumstances by those who are subject to this inequality. For example, televised sport is dominated in Australia (as in many, if not most, other countries) by men, and systematically celebrates an attendant ‘hegemonic masculinity’ (McKay 1991, McKay, Emmison, and Mikosza 2009), but a large proportion of its viewership is nonetheless female, not least during major national | 39 |
| | 40 |
| | 41 |
| | 42 |
| | 43 |
| | 44 |
| | 45 |
| | 46 |

and international male-team sports events. It is here that the nation, in many everyday respects an abstract concept of legal sovereignty, comes together affectively, taking tangible form through the experience that the nation is collectively engaging in the same activity (or, at least, is able to should enough of its citizens be so disposed) through the media events that, as Daniel Dayan and Elihu Katz (1992) have influentially argued, constitute the 'Live Broadcasting of History.' The concept of nation works with some considerable (though not absolute) effect symbolically either to manage or occlude its own fissures, struggles, and inequities. In the case of national sporting competitions, while competitors are separated into partisan camps, they are nonetheless united in spectatorial practice—a classic instance of the systematic management of difference. When the sporting nation, on the other hand, is competing with others, those same internal divisions are presented as temporarily suspended and submerged by the overdetermining unification of the collective national interest. In both cases, the 'rationing' of access to national sporting spectacle would seem to be a denial of the participatory cultural rights of citizens. Therefore, the state, as the formal custodian of citizenship rights and responsibilities (Miller 2006), is frequently called on to intervene in a media sport marketplace that would otherwise award broadcast rights to the highest bidder—which would certainly be, on current evidence, subscription television (Rowe 2000).

There is considerable tension and occasional irony evident in this involvement of the national state in television sport, especially in nations like Australia with significant public service broadcasting sectors. First, the state has presided over the progressive marginalization of national public service broadcasting in sport, and especially in television. Second, the dominance of conventional sport television broadcasting over which the state presides is under challenge from new media platforms and technologies, including those involving the internet and mobile telephony, and so poses difficult questions for regulatory policy concerning protection of existing copyright and innovative use of new technologies. Third, the ownership of media sport rights, the digital networks in which they are enmeshed and the media technologies themselves are increasingly transnational and global in nature, thereby eroding in various ways the power of nation-states to regulate them (Hutchins and Rowe 2012, Rowe 2011). In the early 21st century, therefore, national governments such as those of Australia are required to assert their place in a media sport landscape that is undergoing rapid change, with commercial corporations seeking advantages over their competitors by deploying the rhetoric of consumer choice, and consumers exercising those choices where possible while also demanding, as citizens, the establishment and maintenance of safeguards where the distribution of such choices disadvantages them. It is this dilemma that confronted the Australian federal government when it

instituted its 2009 *Sport on Television Review* with the then operative list due to expire on 31 December 2010.

WHICH SPORTS, WHAT TELEVISION, WHICH MEDIUM?

In Australia, television sport is, as noted above, regulated through its Broadcast Services Act, with the Minister in the relevant portfolio (Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy) empowered to list and de-list any event from the schedule. This Act was amended in 1994 prior to the introduction of subscription television in 1995 in order to guarantee, in the face of vocal political and popular opinion and vigorous lobbying by the free-to-air television sector, that the broadcast rights to key selected sports events could not be exclusively acquired (that is, ‘siphoned’) by subscription television and viewers required to pay to see them. As the government’s *Sport on Television: Review of the Anti-Siphoning Scheme in the Contemporary Digital Environment Discussion Paper* notes:

The Explanatory Memorandum to the original legislative provisions for the anti-siphoning scheme explains that the purpose of the anti-siphoning provisions was to ensure that:

... events of national importance and cultural significance ... be received by the public free of charge ... This process should ensure, on equity grounds, that Australians continue to have free access to important events. It will, however, also allow subscription television broadcasters to negotiate subsequent rights to complementary, or more detailed, coverage of events.

Over time, the scheme has focused on major sporting events which have traditionally been available on free-to-air television. While the scheme is not limited to sporting events, non-sporting events of national and cultural significance have not been listed. (Australian Government 2009, p. 4)

It is worth reiterating for the purpose of emphasis that the only listed events deemed to be of ‘national and cultural significance’ that require protection are of a sporting nature. This arrangement reflects both the cultural importance of sport and its reliance on the ‘live’ moment as a televisual genre. The list at the time of the review consisted of domestic and international events in twelve categories.³ The first two are major international multi-sport events, the Olympic and Commonwealth Games, while the remainder are single sports events devoted to horse racing, Australian rules football, rugby league, rugby union, cricket, soccer, tennis, netball,

golf, and motor sports. The diverse nature of the list means that the criteria for listing need to be addressed given that, for example, the only possible involvement of Australia in the listed English Football Association (FA) Cup final would be through a player, coach or owner happening to participate in what is an English club competition. Furthermore, while direct Australian involvement is certain, likely or at least possible in the other listed events, the same cannot be said of each single broadcast. For example, Australia could not play in each match of the rugby union and cricket world cups, or be represented through individual players in each listed tennis match at Wimbledon Lawn Tennis Championships in the UK. National importance and cultural significance, then, are clearly contestable in such cases, so requiring an appeal to history—what the discussion paper describes as “major sporting events which have traditionally been available on free-to-air television” (p. 8), while partial event listing provides additional flexibility by applying only to finals series (regarding, for example, the US and French Opens in tennis) or to Davis Cup tennis matches involving an Australian representative team. In the absence of definitional clarity, including what constitutes an ‘event,’ the Report notes Australia’s free-market oriented Productivity Commission’s recommendations in 2000 and 2009 of a more restricted sport event listing based predominantly on Australian involvement, the recent (five-year) history of event broadcasting on free-to-air television, and popularity as reflected in ratings (p. 8). However, definitions and calculations of Australian involvement, tradition, and popularity are also highly contestable, while the Minister’s ultimate discretion effectively means that the only, final rationale for the listing and de-listing of sport (or other) events is political judgment.

Rhonda Jolly’s historical tracking of the political debates, legislative changes and list amendments involving Australia’s anti-siphoning regime found a persistent and predictable cleavage between the positions adopted by free-to-air and pay-television sectors:

Submissions to the *Sport on Television* inquiry were divided in their support for anti siphoning. Some believed it would be unAustralian to deprive people of the simple pleasure of watching sport or the joy of seeing amazing sporting achievements. Others disagreed with how the current list operated, but remained committed to watching sport. The public views in fact mirrored those of the main protagonists, and in a number of cases, appear to have restated the free-to-air/pay television arguments. (2010, p. 45)

I examined these submissions further—340 in total, with 288 (89 percent) from individuals and 36 (11 percent) from organizations.⁴ The issues upon which comment and opinion were sought were as follows:

| | |
|--|----|
| 1. The purpose of the anti-siphoning scheme and its impacts | 1 |
| 2. The appropriateness of the events on the anti-siphoning list and their rationale for inclusion | 2 |
| 3. The duration of the anti-siphoning list | 3 |
| 4. The appropriateness of the current automatic delisting arrangements | 4 |
| 5. Scheduling and coverage of events on the anti-siphoning list | 5 |
| 6. The restriction on free-to-air television broadcasters being able to show an event on the anti-siphoning list exclusively on their digital multi-channels | 6 |
| 7. Coverage of sports on new media platforms. | 7 |
| | 8 |
| | 9 |
| | 10 |
| | 11 |

Although the *Sport on Television: A Review of the Anti-Siphoning Scheme in the Contemporary Digital Environment Report* (Australian Government 2010a, p. 30) provided a brief summary of submissions, I deemed it necessary to conduct additional research on them. It was notable that, of the individual submissions, 117 (41 percent) were 'Fair Go Sport' petitions organized by the Australian Subscription Television and Radio Association (ASTRA). Thus, it is apparent that the distinction between the input of individual citizens and that of organizations is questionable in a significant number of cases. Nonetheless, given the public nature of the policy debate, and appeals to the national interest on various sides, it is useful to appraise both participant types and positions held. The organizational 'stakeholders' who made submissions could be classified as shown in Table 9.1 below:

Table 9.1 Types of Organizations Providing Submissions to the Sport on Television Inquiry

| | TYPES OF ORGANIZATION | Nos. | |
|----|-----------------------------|-----------|----|
| 1 | Commercial free-to-air | 1 | 31 |
| 2 | Government | 3 | 32 |
| 3 | Miscellaneous | 2 | 33 |
| 4 | Non-broadcast media | 1 | 34 |
| 5 | Public service broadcaster | 2 | 35 |
| 6 | Representative organization | 3 | 36 |
| 7 | Research center | 1 | 37 |
| 8 | Sports organization | 15 | 38 |
| 9 | Subscription television | 4 | 39 |
| 10 | Telecommunications | 4 | 40 |
| | Total | 36 | 41 |
| | | | 42 |
| | | | 43 |
| | | | 44 |
| | | | 45 |
| | | | 46 |

It is apparent from the above table that, if ever further evidence were required, television is of paramount importance to sports organizations, which comprise over 40 percent of non-individual submissions. Submissions in my analysis were divided into five principal types. Those that proposed or favored:

1. an extension of the anti-siphoning list;
2. maintenance of the existing list;
3. reduction of the existing list;
4. abolition of the anti-siphoning list;
5. no clear recommendation.

Figures 9.1 and 9.2 below show the distribution of these positions both for organizations and for all submissions.

It is apparent that few organizations or individuals advocated the complete removal of the anti-siphoning list in their submissions to the Inquiry, although this is, indeed, the position strongly implied by them in other contexts. For example, the submission by Foxtel, Australia's largest subscription television provider (50 percent-owned by telecommunications company Telstra, with the remaining half shared by Murdoch Senior- and Packer Junior-controlled companies until, in November

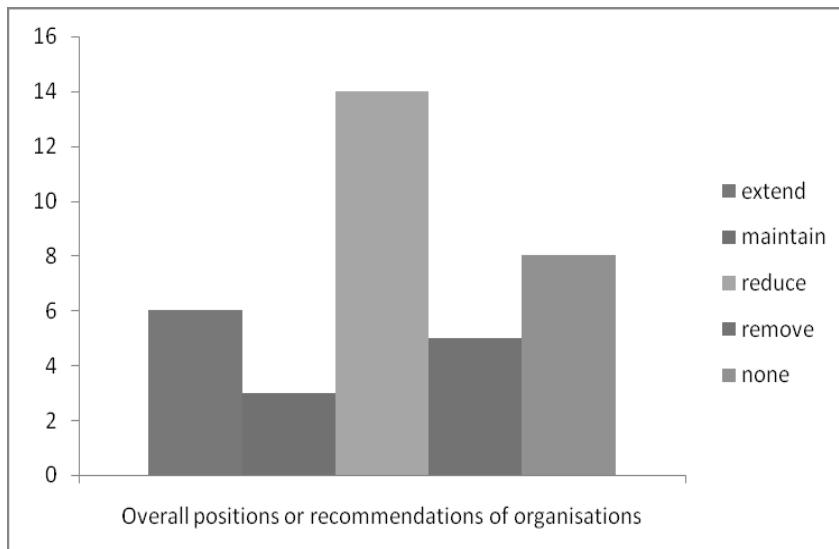


Figure 9.1 Organizational submissions' recommendations concerning the anti-siphoning list.

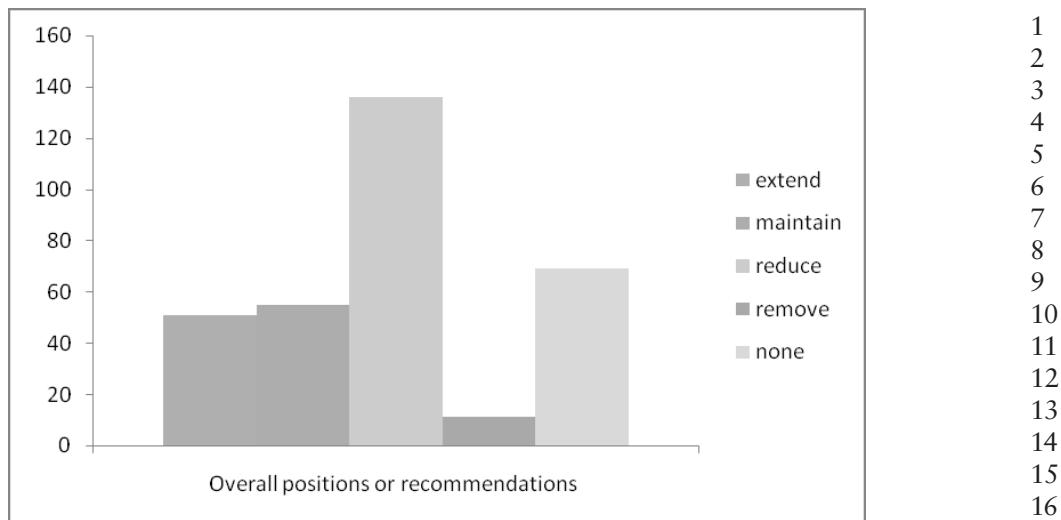


Figure 9.2 All submissions’ recommendations concerning the anti-siphoning list.

2012, News bought out the 25 percent Packer stake) argued unequivocally that:

The anti-siphoning list is a text book example of rules which do not fit current circumstances. The list was built on three key premises that are unsustainable in the digital economy:

1. That audiences will only receive sport if there is a protectionist regime that provides commercial preferment to the old television networks; leading to the second premise,
2. That the old television networks must be protected from competition (key components of this protectionism are a prohibition on a fourth commercial network, gifting of digital spectrum and the anti-siphoning list—the longest of its kind in the world by a large margin); and,
3. The now misplaced idea that Australians’ most important source of in-home entertainment and information is the old television networks and that Australians accept these networks should control what they watch and that they accept delayed broadcasts of sport.

None of these ideas apply to the digital economy . . . (Foxtel 2009, p. 8)

However, Foxtel advocated only retention of a reduced list rather than abolition, constantly using the term ‘old television’ pejoratively to signify

its outmoded reliance on “a mid-twentieth century delivery mechanism.” It cited commissioned research of a representative sample of 1,500 Australians in Sydney, Melbourne and the Gold Coast to demonstrate consumer dissatisfaction with current arrangements: for example, “Keen sports fans (21 percent) are strongly dissatisfied with the amount of live sport on old television and the frequent delays. Seventy percent (75 percent) of keen sports fans said that there was too little live sport on old television” (p. 9). The underlying reason for this gap between the logical consequence of its argument (abolition of anti-siphoning) and Foxtel’s actual recommendation (retention but reduction) is clear—that the former course would be politically unfeasible and popularly opposed, despite the claim of widespread dissatisfaction with sport television arrangements among Australian sport fans.

Many sport organizations took a similar position, although principally on the basis that the anti-siphoning regime prevented them from maximizing revenue from television. For example, several rugby league clubs, including the South Sydney Rabbitohs and the Sydney Roosters, made standard petition-style submissions in support of reducing the list, considering that “the scheme ultimately reduces media rights income for the game” (Sydney Roosters 2009, p. 3).⁵ Tennis Australia (2009, p. 6), however, was more generally supportive of a limited anti-siphoning regime, although expressing concern that “the potential for illegal use of new media to have a negative impact on the ability of the broadcaster to lock down feed, and in turn the ability of the sport to derive appropriate financial return for product, is significant.” The Australian Sports Commission (ASC) (2009) took an even-handed approach in that it “recognised that these two objectives [greatest possible exposure and revenue maximization] will sometimes be in conflict where the broadcasting rights to nationally important and culturally significant sporting events are concerned. Nevertheless, the ASC believes that a balance can be struck between these two objectives with appropriately tailored anti-siphoning policy and regulation.”

While it is not possible in this context to analyze the submissions in greater depth, they broadly followed the familiar contours of the debate over the articulation of sport’s national importance and cultural significance with the economics of the media sport industry in which television is dominant. Although this policy deliberation was shaped by Australian conditions (for example, the oft-mentioned unmatched strength of its anti-siphoning regime), it was not insulated from the rest of the world, with frequent reference to overseas precedents. Indeed, anti-siphoning list submissions from non-Australian bodies such as the England and Wales Cricket Board indicated the value of international sport rights in countries like Australia, and concern over a strong list as an international precedent. Nor did it underemphasize the importance of technological change, with the introduction of multi-channeling (Issue 6) an important development given the anti-siphoning regulations’ insistence on the primacy of ‘main’

channels as the vehicle for listed events on free-to-air television, and the understandable sensitivity of subscription television to the capacity of digital, free-to-air television channels to compete with them in narrowcasting or niche viewing terms. The main areas of dispute were over the size and duration of the list, the necessity of ‘anti-hoarding’ and ‘use it or lose it’ provisions, the notice required for automatic de-listing, and so on. Essentially, these were questions of how the anti-siphoning regime would operate—there was no serious pressure to abolish it, thereby demonstrating the continued dominance of the argument that cultural citizenship in television sport should be safeguarded, irrespective of actual practice by commercial free-to-air broadcasters, whose political influence remains, if somewhat diminished, since the death of Kerry Packer.

However, while television—‘old’ or ‘new’—is by no means an anachronism (Bennett 2008, Hutchins and Rowe 2012, Turner and Tay 2009), it is undergoing profound change, and it is surprising that there was comparatively little interest in new media among the submissions (Issue 7), the Report (Australian Government 2010a, p. 30) finding that “Only a small number of submissions to the review provided any direct comment on the issue of new media,” with 15 percent of them finding that they supplemented or complemented broadcast television rather than acting to replace it, and 7 and 2.7 percent of submissions respectively contending that new media and online platforms should be exempted from, or incorporated within, the anti-siphoning regime. The relatively low profile of new sport media in the Inquiry’s submissions reflects broad agreement with the Discussion Paper that “At this time, the vast majority of online or mobile sports rights continue to be made available to complement traditional television broadcast rights, allowing delayed or concurrent coverage of events,” and that “To date, there is little evidence that sporting events are being exclusively ‘siphoned’ to new technology platforms” (Australian Government 2009, p. 23). However, with the rolling out of the National Broadband Network (NBN), Australia’s biggest ever national infrastructure project which aims “to provide high-speed broadband to 93 percent of homes, schools and business via fibre optic cabling” by 2020 (Australian Government 2011a, p. 1), it is certain that traditional broadcast sport television in Australia is facing a very significant challenge and so, of necessity, is the regime of sports media regulation. Regarding mobile media, the ‘TV Now’ case has emerged since the Inquiry, with the eventual outcome of court proceedings over the legality of showing live sport on mobile phones after a short delay judged to be of great significance for online and broadcast sport rights in Australia (Battersby and Lamont 2012).

As the Discussion Paper noted (Australian Government 2009, p. 22), the “sale of sports rights for new media platforms are not currently covered by the anti-siphoning scheme,” with Internet Protocol Television (IPTV), internet video and mobile phone content “not considered a ‘broadcasting service’ under the *Broadcasting Services Act 1992* and as such are not

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46

regulated by the Act, while the provision of sporting content via internet video hosted on international websites is not regulated by Australian law.” The Act could also permit ‘on-selling’ to third parties provided that they are not subscription broadcasters—for example, sale to internet service providers. Thus, the combination of new media development and media transnationalism pose specific challenges for a national system of regulation based on a national broadcasting model. The NBN offers new possibilities for both the extension and erosion of sport-related cultural citizenship in Australia, with yet another federal government communications public consultation, the Convergence Review (Australian Government 2012), undertaking to “consider the long-term effectiveness of an anti-siphoning mechanism in a converging environment” (Australian Government 2011b, p. 9). At this point, then, it is clearly necessary to shift the terminology from public service *broadcasting* to public service *media* (Flew 2011) when considering the full gamut of communicative and media relations and sites in which access to, and uses of, sport (and of other cultural forms) come to the fore. It is also apparent that the *Sport on Television Review* conducted in Australia could only temporarily manage matters in the context of contending interests and shifting media and sport owners, technologies and audiences. Although final settlement of such contests never occurs in sport media, the early 21st century is clearly a period of deep disturbance of the prevailing national media sport order.

CONCLUSION: A TEMPORARY AUSTRALIAN SETTLEMENT

Following *Sport on Television: A Review of the Anti-Siphoning Scheme in the Contemporary Digital Environment*, adjustments to the anti-siphoning regime were announced in November 2010, with an interim list (following delays to the introduction and passage of the legislation) published prior to the introduction of legislative amendments that would maintain but modify the anti-siphoning regime. The principal changes involved the introduction of a (UK-style) two-tier list, with Tier A events required to be shown on a main (that is, dominant pre-digital) free-to-air channel (with government-negotiated ‘concessions’ to allow coverage of overlapping sport events, or to prevent ‘over time’ sport contests running into scheduled news programs) and Tier B events (which may be ‘regionally iconic’) able to be premiered on a digital multi-channel. Tier A events are required to be shown live and in full, and Tier B events in full and with a maximum delay of four hours. Under ‘use it or lose it’ and ‘must-offer’ provisions, free-to-air broadcasters must exercise their acquired broadcast rights or offer them on reasonable terms to other free-to-air broadcasters first, and thence to subscription broadcasters if these are not taken up, in advance of the event. The list itself is substantially reduced (including with regard to the key football codes of Australian rules and rugby league, subject to guarantees of ‘quality’).⁶ The

| | |
|---|---|
| automatic de-listing period is extended from twelve to twenty-six weeks (to provide pay television providers with a better opportunity to broadcast listed sport events to which free-to-air broadcasters have not acquired the rights despite reasonable opportunity). The list is extended to new media providers, with IPTV or other online service providers prevented from acquiring exclusive access to listed sport events, as opposed to supplementary or non-exclusive rights (Conroy 2010a). | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 |
| It will be apparent from this combination of change and continuity in the Australian context that a judicious compromise has been created to appease competing media, communication and sport organizations and the interests of sport viewers for whom some events are deemed to be of such national and cultural significance as to require legislative protection. The political resonance of this domain is well exemplified by the Ministerial media release that opened as follows: | |
| Minister for Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy Senator Stephen Conroy today announced a series of reforms to the anti-siphoning scheme that will enhance television coverage of key sporting events in Australia. | 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 |
| “The Gillard Government wants Australian sports fans to see major sporting events for free as they have always done and these reforms will ensure that Australia’s anti-siphoning scheme remains the strongest in the world,” Senator Conroy said. | |
| “Our most popular and iconic sports will remain available to all Australians and the changes will allow free-to-air channels to take advantage of digital multi-channels to show more sport and show it live.” | 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 |
| Senator Conroy said sports fans were at the centre of the Government’s reforms. (Conroy 201b) | |
| Although such political rhetoric can and should be interrogated—not only in terms of the powerful role of commercial organizations and political influence in the policy process, but also of the ideological dynamics of the nation and its ‘popular and iconic sports’—it reveals starkly how the concerns of cultural citizenship have been deeply insinuated into political discourse relating to the sport-nation nexus. It is now over three decades since Stuart Hall’s (1981, p. 238) famous formulation of the “people versus the power-bloc” as the discursive pivot around which cultural politics is played out as a “double movement of containment and resistance” (p. 238). From the vantage point of another century and a different hemisphere to those that provided the temporal and spatial contexts of Hall’s analysis, and within a global media sports cultural complex (Rowe 2004, 2011) that has massively grown and mutated since Hall’s early engagement with ‘the | 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 |

1 popular,' his analysis still has crucial relevance. Although the public service
2 broadcasters, the ABC and SBS, are dominated by commercial free-to-air
3 and pay-TV providers in the domain of premium live sport, the Australian
4 state continues to administer this domain and, indeed, to extend its control
5 to new media platforms in the name of public cultural inclusion.

6 When the Broadcasting Services Amendment (Anti-siphoning) Bill 2012
7 was introduced to the Australian Senate in late March 2012, its Explanatory
8 Memorandum outlined the foreshadowed changes, as well as greater
9 detail concerning Ministerial administration of:

10 A quota group of events [that] is intended to cater especially for the
11 Australian Football League (AFL) Premiership competition and the
12 National Rugby League (NRL) Premiership competition, in a way that
13 ensures a fair and comprehensive televised outcome on free-to-air tele-
14 vision, subscription television and content services. There are two cat-
15 egories of quota groups—a Category A quota group (which is simply
16 a numerical quota), and a Category B quota group (which is a combi-
17 nation of a numerical quota and qualitative conditions). (Australian
18 Government ComLaw 2012, n.p.)
19

20 Unsurprisingly, immediate responses from subscription-based media in
21 particular were hostile, with, for example, John Porter, Chief Executive of
22 the regional pay-TV provider Austar (the subject of a full takeover bid by
23 Foxtel) reported as having:

24 strongly criticised the government's plan, arguing the Minister should
25 be more concerned with bigger issues at a time when media companies
26 are facing tremendous business challenges such as fragmentation and
27 their internet strategy in a converged media landscape.
28

29 "I think it's embarrassing I don't know how a country like Australia
30 given the priorities and the challenges in the world today can say
31 'yeah I think it's an effective use of my time' as a minister to decide
32 whether it's Collingwood or Geelong on a Friday night. It just boggles
33 my mind." (Davidson 2012)

34 Complaints of government interference in the sport media industry were
35 subsequently heard from sporting organizations as the Bill was referred,
36 as is conventional, to a Senate Standing Committee on Environment
37 and Communications for its inquiry and report. For example, the IOC
38 in its invited submission to the Committee expresses its opposition to
39 anti-siphoning laws as "inherently and self evidently anti-competitive"
40 that "operate to the commercial detriment of sporting organisations and
41 other stakeholders" (2012, p. 4). This desire for the unfettered sale of
42 its free-to-air television rights (within its Charter's broadcast policy of
43

ostensibly attempting to garner the fullest coverage across media with the widest world audience) is, essentially, a repudiation of the principles underlying the anti-siphoning regime in Australia, which insists on the state’s responsibility to protect and advance cultural citizenship rights in the domain of mediated sport, rather than devolve it to sport and media organizations operating as buyers and sellers of rights conceived principally, if not exclusively, as economic rights. The Australian state’s uniquely rigorous stance in this regard is under constant pressure, not least following the release of, and response to, the Convergence Review (Australian Government, 2012) on the nation’s media and communications regulation alongside detailed consultation and negotiation over the implementation of the Broadcasting Services Amendment (Anti-siphoning) Bill 2012 as it becomes law. Final parliamentary confirmation of the new list was significantly delayed as debate continued about its inclusions, exclusions and conditions. Mediated sport, public service, and cultural citizenship are, then, as deeply intertwined in Australia as ever, and show no sign of obsolescence as the analogue world recedes and the digital universe beckons.

NOTES

1. I would like to thank Dr Michelle Kelly and Dr Vibha Bhattacharai Upadhyay for research assistance on some empirical aspects of this chapter. 22
2. In July 2011, News Corporation, which controls 39 percent of the highly profitable BSkyB, withdrew under intense political pressure its full takeover bid for the remaining 61 percent following the now notorious *News of the World* phone hacking scandal (*Guardian* 2011). The scandal had ramifications in Australia, where News Corporation has substantial media holdings in subscription television, newspapers, and magazines, and a major presence in its sport industry via both sports media and its ownership involvement (from which it has had great difficulty extricating itself) in the NRL. Although the dramatic events surrounding phone hacking in the UK happened in another country and after the 2009 *Sport on Television Review* addressed in this chapter, it is relevant to the questions raised here concerning power, citizenship, and the ethics of sport broadcasting by public organizations and commercial corporations. 23
- 24
- 25
- 26
- 27
- 28
- 29
- 30
- 31
- 32
- 33

News Corporation’s seminal involvement in subscription television sport in Australia, not least through its aforementioned now 50 percent stake in the dominant pay television provider Telstra and its 50 percent share in the Fox Sports Channels, is particularly important given James Murdoch’s role as (now former) Chairman of BSkyB. His criticism that the BBC is “dominant” in the UK’s “broadcasting ecology” (Murdoch 2009, Section III) is consistent with an openly hostile attitude among the Murdoch media toward public service broadcasting in news and current affairs, and in programming areas such as sport that are “well served by the market” (Section IV). James Murdoch’s assertion in 2009 that “Independence is sustained by true accountability—the accountability owed to customers. People who buy the newspapers, open the application, decide to take out the television subscription—people who deliberately and willingly choose a service which they value” (Section V), echoed rather ironically two years

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46

1 later in the light of his company's involvement in both phone hacking and
2 'blagging' (the unethical collection of personal data) on the very question
3 of 'accountability.'

4 3. Australian Anti-Siphoning List, 1 January 2006–31 December 2010

5 1 Olympic Games

6 1.1 Each event held as part of the Olympic Games.

7 2 Commonwealth Games

8 2.1 Each event held as part of the Commonwealth Games.

9 3 Horse Racing

10 3.1 Each running of the Melbourne Cup organized by the Victoria Rac-
11 ing Club.

12 4 Australian Rules Football

13 4.1 Each match in the Australian Football League Premiership competi-
14 tion, including the Finals Series.

15 5 Rugby League Football

16 5.1 Each match in the National Rugby League Premiership competi-
17 tion, including the Finals Series.

18 5.2 Each match in the National Rugby League State of Origin Series.

19 5.3 Each international rugby league "test" match involving the senior
20 Australian representative team selected by the Australian Rugby
21 League, whether played in Australia or overseas.

22 6 Rugby Union Football

23 6.1 Each international "test" match involving the senior Australian rep-
24 resentative team selected by the Australian Rugby Union, whether
25 played in Australia or overseas.

26 6.2 Each match in the Rugby World Cup tournament.

27 7 Cricket

28 7.1 Each "test" match involving the senior Australian representative
29 team selected by Cricket Australia played in either Australia or the
30 United Kingdom.

31 7.2 Each one day cricket match involving the senior Australian repre-
32 sentative team selected by Cricket Australia played in Australia or
33 the United Kingdom.

34 7.3 Each one day cricket match involving the senior Australian repres-
35 entative team selected by Cricket Australia played as part of a series in
36 which at least one match of the series is played in Australia.

37 7.4 Each World Cup one-day cricket match.

38 8 Soccer

39 8.1 The English Football Association Cup final.

40 8.2 Each match in the Fédération Internationale de Football Associa-
41 tion World Cup tournament held in 2006.

42 8.3 Each match in the Fédération Internationale de Football Associa-
43 tion World Cup tournament held in 2010.

44 9 Tennis

45 9.1 Each match in the Australian Open tennis tournament.

46 9.2 Each match in the Wimbledon (the Lawn Tennis Championships)
tournament.

“Events of National Importance and Cultural Significance” 183

| 9.3 | Each match in the men’s and women’s singles quarter-finals, semi-finals and finals of the French Open tennis tournament. | 1 | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------|---|--------------|-----------------------|--|-----|--|----|-----|--|----|----|
| 9.4 | Each match in the men’s and women’s singles quarter-finals, semi-finals and finals of the US Open tennis tournament. | 2 | | | | | | | | | |
| 9.5 | Each match in each tie in the Davis Cup tennis tournament when an Australian representative team is involved. | 3 | | | | | | | | | |
| | 10 Netball | 4 | | | | | | | | | |
| 10.1 | Each international netball match involving the senior Australian representative team selected by the All Australian Netball Association, whether played in Australia or overseas. | 5 | | | | | | | | | |
| | 11 Golf | 6 | | | | | | | | | |
| 11.1 | Each round of the Australian Masters tournament. | 7 | | | | | | | | | |
| 11.2 | Each round of the Australian Open tournament. | 8 | | | | | | | | | |
| 11.3 | Each round of the United States Masters tournament. | 9 | | | | | | | | | |
| 11.4 | Each round of the British Open tournament. | 10 | | | | | | | | | |
| | 12 Motor Sports | 11 | | | | | | | | | |
| 12.1 | Each race in the Fédération Internationale de l’Automobile Formula 1 World Championship (Grand Prix) held in Australia. | 12 | | | | | | | | | |
| 12.2 | Each race in the Moto GP held in Australia. | 13 | | | | | | | | | |
| 12.3 | Each race in the V8 Supercar Championship Series (including the Bathurst 1000). | 14 | | | | | | | | | |
| 12.4 | Each race in the Champ Car World Series (IndyCar) held in Australia. | 15 | | | | | | | | | |
| | <i>Source: Australian Government (2010a) Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy.</i> | 16 | | | | | | | | | |
| | | 22 | | | | | | | | | |
| | | 23 | | | | | | | | | |
| | | 24 | | | | | | | | | |
| 4. | The author, it should be noted in the interests of full disclosure, made a submission (no. 239) favoring retention of an anti-siphoning list on the basis of platform neutrality and a greater role for non-commercial public service broadcasting. The <i>Sport on Television: A Review of the Anti-Siphoning Scheme in the Contemporary Digital Environment Report</i> (Australian Government 2010, p. 30) notes that 337 submissions were received, but only 324 were ‘publishable.’ | 25 | | | | | | | | | |
| 5. | Ownership and commercial relationships, of course, must be taken into account in interpreting such submissions. For example, News Limited was at the time of the submission co-owner of the NRL and of Telstra, and part-owner of the Brisbane Broncos rugby league club, which also submitted a petition-style letter advocating the ‘party line’ of a reduction of the list, restrictions on multi-channeling, and listing exemption for new media platforms. | 26 | | | | | | | | | |
| 6. | Future Anti-Siphoning List for the Rights to Events Acquired between 1 January 2011 and 31 December 2015 | 27 | | | | | | | | | |
| | <hr/> | 28 | | | | | | | | | |
| | Adjustments from Current List | 29 | | | | | | | | | |
| | <hr/> | 30 | | | | | | | | | |
| | <table><thead><tr><th><i>SPORT</i></th><th><i>Events removed</i></th><th></th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>AFL</td><td>4 of 8 matches per premiership round (these 4 matches are currently shown exclusively on Pay TV)</td><td>31</td></tr><tr><td>NRL</td><td>5 of 8 matches per premiership round (these 5 matches are currently shown exclusively on Pay TV)</td><td>32</td></tr></tbody></table> | <i>SPORT</i> | <i>Events removed</i> | | AFL | 4 of 8 matches per premiership round (these 4 matches are currently shown exclusively on Pay TV) | 31 | NRL | 5 of 8 matches per premiership round (these 5 matches are currently shown exclusively on Pay TV) | 32 | 32 |
| <i>SPORT</i> | <i>Events removed</i> | | | | | | | | | | |
| AFL | 4 of 8 matches per premiership round (these 4 matches are currently shown exclusively on Pay TV) | 31 | | | | | | | | | |
| NRL | 5 of 8 matches per premiership round (these 5 matches are currently shown exclusively on Pay TV) | 32 | | | | | | | | | |
| | | 33 | | | | | | | | | |
| | | 34 | | | | | | | | | |
| | | 35 | | | | | | | | | |
| | | 36 | | | | | | | | | |
| | | 37 | | | | | | | | | |
| | | 38 | | | | | | | | | |
| | | 39 | | | | | | | | | |
| | | 40 | | | | | | | | | |
| | | 41 | | | | | | | | | |
| | | 42 | | | | | | | | | |
| | | 43 | | | | | | | | | |
| | | 44 | | | | | | | | | |
| | | 45 | | | | | | | | | |
| | (continued) | 46 | | | | | | | | | |

1 Future Anti-Siphoning List for the Rights to Events Acquired between 1
 2 January 2011 and 31 December 2015 (continued)

3

4 Adjustments from Current List

| 5 | <i>SPORT</i> | <i>Events removed</i> |
|----|--------------------|--|
| 6 | Golf | British Open |
| 7 | Cricket | One day international matches involving Australia, played in the UK |
| 8 | Cricket | ICC 50 Over World Cup: All matches not involving Australia before the semi-finals |
| 9 | Rugby League | Test match involving the Australian team, played in countries other than Australia, New Zealand or the United Kingdom |
| 10 | Rugby Union | Rugby Union World Cup: All matches not involving Australia played before the quarter-finals |
| 11 | Rugby Union | Test matches involving Australia outside Australia, New Zealand, South Africa unless designated in a 'spring tour' |
| 12 | Tennis—Wimbledon | All matches other than the men's and women's singles quarter-finals, semi-finals and finals matches. |
| 13 | Tennis—French Open | Men's and women's quarter-finals, semi-finals and finals matches |
| 14 | Tennis Davis Cup | Non 'world group' Davis Cup ties involving Australia |
| 15 | Netball | All matches played by the Australian team outside Australia, NZ & the Netball World Championships (other than a semi final or final involving the Australian team) |
| 16 | Motor Sports | Each IndyCar race held in Australia |
| 34 | <i>SPORT</i> | <i>Events added</i> |
| 35 | Cricket | Twenty20 matches involving Australia, played in Australia |
| 36 | Cricket | Twenty20 World Cup: matches involving Australia and Final |
| 37 | Football | FIFA World Cup qualifiers involving the senior Australian team (the Socceroos) |

42 * The Government will not de-list any NRL or AFL games until a mechanism that protects the quality of free-to-air games has been settled.

43 *Source:* Australian Government (2010b) Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy.

REFERENCES

- Adair, D., and Vamplew, W., 1997. *Sport in Australian History*. Melbourne: Oxford University Press. 1
Ang, I., Hawkins, G., and Dabbousy, L., 2008. *The SBS Story: The Challenge of Cultural Diversity*. Sydney: UNSW Press. 2
Australian Government Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy, 2009. *Sport on Television: Review of the Anti-Siphoning Scheme in the Contemporary Digital Environment Discussion Paper*. [online] Available from http://www.dbcde.gov.au/television/antisiphoning_and_antihoarding/sport_on_television_review_of_the_anti-siphoning_scheme_discussion_paper [Accessed 31 December 2011]. 3
Australian Government Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy, 2010a. *Sport on Television: A Review of the Anti-Siphoning Scheme in the Contemporary Digital Environment*. [online] Available from http://www.dbcde.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0017/131462/Review_Report_-_Sport_on_Television-the_anti-siphoning_scheme_in_the_contemporary_digital_environment_-25-11-2010.pdf [Accessed 31 December 2011]. 4
Australian Government Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy, 2010b. *Future Anti-Siphoning List*. [online] Available from http://www.dbcde.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0003/131457/The-Future-Anti-siphoning-List-26-11-2010.pdf [Accessed 30 December 2011]. 5
Australian Government Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy, 2011a. *About the NBN*. [online] Available from <http://www.nbn.gov.au/about-the-nbn/> [Accessed 30 December 2011]. 6
Australian Government Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy, 2011b. *Convergence Review Discussion Paper: Media Diversity, Competition and Market Structure*. [online] Available from http://www.dbcde.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/139270/Paper-2_Media-diversity_competition_access.pdf [Accessed 30 December 2011]. 7
Australian Government Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy, 2012. *Convergence Review: Final Report*. [online] Available from http://www.dbcde.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0007/147733/Convergence_Review_Final_Report.pdf [Accessed 24 March 2013]. 8
Australian Government, ComLaw, 2012. *Broadcasting Services Amendment (Anti-siphoning) Bill 2012*. [online] Available from <http://www.comlaw.gov.au/Details/C2012B00058/Explanatory%20Memorandum/Text> [Accessed 7 April 2012]. 9
Australian Sport Commission, 2009. *Submission to Sport on Television: Review of the Anti-Siphoning Scheme in the Contemporary Digital Environment Discussion Paper*. [online] Available from http://www.dbcde.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0020/122681/Australian_Sports_Commission_main_submission.pdf [Accessed 30 December 2011]. 10
Barnett, S., 1990. *Games and Sets: The Changing Face of Sport on Television*. London: British Film Institute. 11
Battersby, L., and Lamont, L., 2012. 'Optus Wins Landmark Web Broadcast Rights Case.' [online] *The Sydney Morning Herald*. Available from <http://www.smh.com.au/business/optus-wins-landmark-web-broadcast-rights-case-20120201-1qsoi.html> [Accessed 6 April 2012]. 12
Bennett, J., 2008. Interfacing the Nation: Remediating Public Service Broadcasting in the Digital Television Age. *Convergence*, 14(3): 271–288. 13
Boyle, R., and Haynes, R., 2009. *Power Play: Sport, the Media & Popular Culture*, second edition. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press. 14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46

- 1 Cashman, R., 2010. *Paradise of Sport: A History of Australian Sport*. Revised Edition. Sydney: Walla Walla.
- 2 Colman, M., 1996. *Super League: The Inside Story*. Sydney: Pan Macmillan Australia.
- 3 Conroy, S., 2010a. Media Release: Anti-Siphoning Scheme—Fact Sheet. [online] Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy, 25 November. Available from http://www.dbcde.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0003/131466/MR_101123_Anti-siphoning_Reforms_-_Fact_Sheet.pdf [Accessed 31 December 2011].
- 4 Conroy, S., 2010b. Reforms to the Anti-Siphoning Scheme Announced. [online] Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy, 25 November. Available from http://www.minister.dbcde.gov.au/media/media_releases/2010/103 [Accessed 31 December 2011].
- 5 Cunningham, S., and Jacka, E., 1996. *Australian Television and International Mediascapes*. Melbourne: Cambridge University Press.
- 6 Dale, D., 2010. The Archive 2010: The TV Shows Australia Loved. [online] The Sydney Morning Herald. Available from <http://www.smh.com.au/opinion/society-and-culture/blogs/the-tribal-mind/the-archive-2010-the-tv-shows-australia-loved-20100618-yl50.html> [Accessed 27 December 2011].
- 7 Davidson, D., 2012. Pay TV Bosses Slam Conroy's 'Quality' Plan. [online] The Australian. Available from <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/media/pay-tv-bosses-slam-conroys-quality-plan/story-e6frg996-1226308012983> [Accessed 7 April 2012].
- 8 Dayan, D., and Katz, E., 1992. *Media Events: The Live Broadcasting of History*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- 9 Flew, T., 2011. Rethinking Public Service Media and Citizenship: Digital Strategies for News and Current Affairs at Australia's Special Broadcasting Service. *International Journal of Communication* 5, 215–232.
- 10 Foxtel, 2009. *Submission to Sport on Television: Review of the Anti-Siphoning Scheme in the Contemporary Digital Environment Discussion Paper*. [online] Available from http://www.dbcde.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0009/121320/Foxtel_main_submission.pdf [Accessed 30 December 2011].
- 11 Goldlust, J., 1987. *Playing for Keeps: Sport, the Media and Society*. Melbourne: Longman Cheshire.
- 12 Goodwin, P., 1998. *Television under the Tories: Broadcasting Policy 1979–1997*. London: British Film Institute.
- 13 Guardian, 2011. *Phone Hacking: How the Guardian Broke the Story*, London: Guardian Shorts.
- 14 Hall, S., 1981. Notes on Deconstructing "The Popular". In: R. Samuel, ed., *People's History and Socialist Theory*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 227–240.
- 15 Hutchins, B., and Rowe, D., 2012. *Sport Beyond Television: The Internet, Digital Media and the Rise of Networked Media Sport*. New York: Routledge.
- 16 International Olympic Committee, 2012. *Submission to Inquiry into the Broadcasting Services Amendment (Anti-siphoning) Bill 2012*. [online] Lausanne, Switzerland. Available from http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate_Committees?url=ec_ctte/anti_siphoning_2012/submissions.htm [Accessed 7 April 2012].
- 17 Jolly, R., 2010. *Sport on Television: To Siphon or Not to Siphon?* [online] Research Paper. Canberra: Parliamentary Library. Available from <http://www.aph.gov.au/library/pubs/rp/2009-10/10rp14.pdf> [Accessed 29 December 2011].
- 18 Masters, R., 2011. Numbers Add Up for NRL Clubs in Pursuit of More Cash from Rights. [online] The Sydney Morning Herald. Available from <http://www.smh.com.au/rugby-league/league-news/numbers-add-up-for-nrl-clubs-in-pursuit-of-more-cash-from-rights-20111013-1ln6r.html#ixzz1bGxapRBo> [Accessed 27 December 2011].

“Events of National Importance and Cultural Significance” 187

| | |
|---|----|
| McKay, J., 1991. <i>No Pain, No Gain? Sport and Australian Culture</i> . Sydney: Prentice Hall. | 1 |
| McKay, J., Emmison, J., and Mikosza, J., 2009. Lads, Larrikins and Mates: Hegemonic Masculinities in Australian Beer Advertisements. In: L. Wenner and S.J. Jackson, eds., <i>Sport, Beer, & Gender: Promotional Culture and Contemporary Social Life</i> . New York: Peter Lang, 163–179. | 2 |
| Miller, T., 2006. <i>Cultural Citizenship: Cosmopolitanism, Consumerism, and Television in a Neoliberal Age</i> . Philadelphia: Temple University Press. | 3 |
| Murdoch, J., 2009. <i>The Absence of Trust: MacTaggart Lecture</i> . [online] Edinburgh International Television Festival. Available from http://www.newsCorp.com/news/news_426.html [Accessed 29 December 2011]. | 4 |
| O'Regan, T., 1993. <i>Australian Television Culture</i> . Sydney: Allen and Unwin. | 5 |
| Rowe, D., 2000. No Gain, No Game? Media and Sport. In: J. Curran and M. Gurevitch, eds., <i>Mass Media and Society</i> , 3rd ed. London: Arnold, 346–361. | 6 |
| Rowe, D., 2004. <i>Sport, Culture and the Media: The Unruly Trinity</i> . 2nd ed. Maidstone, UK: Open University Press. | 7 |
| Rowe, D., 2011. <i>Global Media Sport: Flows, Forms and Futures</i> . London: Bloomsbury Academic. | 8 |
| Stoddart, B., 1986. <i>Saturday Afternoon Fever: Sport in the Australian Culture</i> . North Ryde, NSW: Angus and Robertson. | 9 |
| Sydney Roosters, 2009. <i>Submission to Sport on Television: Review of the Anti-Siphoning Scheme in the Contemporary Digital Environment Discussion Paper</i> . [online] Available from http://www.dbcde.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0012/121323/Sydney_Roosters_main_submission.pdf [Accessed 30 December 2011]. | 10 |
| Tennis Australia, 2009. <i>Submission to Sport on Television: Review of the Anti-Siphoning Scheme in the Contemporary Digital Environment Discussion Paper</i> . [online] Available from http://www.dbcde.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0014/121325/Tennis_Australia_main_submission.pdf [Accessed 30 December 2011]. | 11 |
| Tomlinson, A., and Young, C., eds., 2006. <i>National Identity and Global Sports Events: Culture, Politics, and Spectacle in the Olympics and the Football World Cup</i> . Albany: State University of New York Press. | 12 |
| Turner, G., and Tay, J., eds., 2009. <i>Television Studies after TV: Understanding Television in the Post Broadcast Era</i> . London: Routledge | 13 |
| | 14 |
| | 15 |
| | 16 |
| | 17 |
| | 18 |
| | 19 |
| | 20 |
| | 21 |
| | 22 |
| | 23 |
| | 24 |
| | 25 |
| | 26 |
| | 27 |
| | 28 |
| | 29 |
| | 30 |
| | 31 |
| | 32 |
| | 33 |
| | 34 |
| | 35 |
| | 36 |
| | 37 |
| | 38 |
| | 39 |
| | 40 |
| | 41 |
| | 42 |
| | 43 |
| | 44 |
| | 45 |
| | 46 |

10 Millennium Blues

The Politics of Media Policy, Televised Sport, and Cultural Citizenship in New Zealand

*Jay Scherer, Michael Sam
and Steven J. Jackson*

1

2

3

INTRODUCTION

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

One of the key themes of this collection is that the sports broadcasting landscape is in a state of ‘flux’ due to the expansion of new digital technologies and the convergence of telecommunication, internet, and broadcasting sectors. Against the backdrop of digitization and deregulation, deep-pocketed pay-TV networks are investing enormous resources to secure subscribers by purchasing the exclusive rights to various sporting properties that are now frequently bundled by sports cartels into multi-platform packages (e.g., pay-TV, free-to-air, and digital/online rights). All of these developments have, of course, radically expanded the viewing options of sports fans. The explosive growth of sports broadcasting rights packages in the digital era has, moreover, also provided unprecedented amounts of revenue for various governing bodies, teams, and leagues around the world; this is revenue that has fuelled the remarkable growth of the salaries of professional athletes in recent years.

A corollary of these developments, though, has been the restriction of access to live telecasts of sport to fans and consumers who can afford subscription fees to digital specialty channels and the requisite technologies (e.g., mobile handsets, tablets, etc.). Indeed, as new generations grow up with satellite television and cell phones, paying for ‘infotainment’ products, including access to digital sport, has increasingly come to seem ‘natural.’ However, the ascendancy of discourses of consumer choice and the daily celebration of the market as ‘provider’ of our sources of fun, entertainment, and community (see Hall 1984), have rapidly undermined the longstanding ‘viewing rights’ (Rowe 2004b) of citizens to have live, free-to-air access to telecasts of sporting events of national significance.

Given the significance of sport as a key element of national popular cultures across the world, it is unsurprising that these developments have spurred significant dialogue and political debate. Despite the withdrawal of the state from so many areas of cultural and economic life,

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

26

27

28

29

30

31

32

33

34

some governments have attempted to regulate the new digital broadcasting landscape, including mandating live access to ‘premium sport content’ on free-to-air networks as a right of cultural citizenship. These key cultural policy and media decisions, though, are often pursued by governments as matters of political necessity through protracted deliberative procedures that often include lengthy public consultation processes. For example, within New Zealand and abroad, it is habitual now for governments to commission extensive ‘evidence-based’ taskforces, inquiries, and reviews from multiple Ministries/Departments to outline scientifically the scope of contemporary economic and cultural issues, while identifying relevant international practices and trends even prior to dialoguing with key interest groups and stakeholders.

Indeed, these ‘rational’ political exercises—which may be viewed cynically as ‘obfuscation’—are now more expansive than ever as a result of the explosion of interest groups and stakeholders associated with the multi-platform digital broadcasting landscape and the increasingly lucrative new economy of professional sport (Hutchins and Rowe 2009). In the digital era, governments are now simply expected to be responsive to a host of constituencies and ‘experts’ (e.g., public and private terrestrial broadcasters, satellite and cable providers, local sporting governing bodies, supranational sports governing bodies, and ordinary citizens and advocacy groups) who make competing claims in relation both to economic and cultural policy issues. In this light, it is axiomatic that policy decisions responding to one set of interests inevitably produce trade-offs against others, reflecting Parry’s (2008, p. 82) observation that debates regarding public access to live telecasts of sport are “where issues of sporting autonomy, commerce and public interest collide.” Indeed, as Des Freedman (2008, p. 3) reminds us, the policy making process in general is best understood as a “battleground in which contrasting political positions fight both for material advantage, for example legislation that is favorable to particular economic or political interests, and for ideological legitimization, a situation in which certain ideas are normalized and others problematized.”

In this chapter, then, we turn our attention to New Zealand to examine two highly contested critical junctures in sports broadcasting policy in the new millennium. First, we examine the establishment of a broad review of digital regulation by the then Labour Government in 2006 that included a stated focus on issues surrounding access to ‘premium sport content.’ Unlike Australia and other European countries, New Zealand had not enacted anti-siphoning legislation to prevent the most important sporting events—including All Blacks test matches—from being exclusively shown on pay-TV network, Sky TV. However, despite three years of extensive political work by two Ministries and the initial endorsement of the need to protect access to live telecasts of sport, in April 2009, a newly elected center-right National Government simply announced that the broadcasting market was, in fact, ‘workably competitive’ and that the review would proceed no further.

1 The first opportunity to test National's deregulatory approach to media
2 and cultural policy occurred only weeks later when a substantial contro-
3 versy erupted over the bidding process for the free-to-air broadcasting
4 rights for the 2011 Rugby World Cup (RWC) that New Zealand was, inci-
5 dentally, hosting. Despite its recent affirmation of a free-market agenda
6 and its unwillingness to regulate access to premium sport content, the
7 National Government explicitly curtailed the ambitions of Māori Televi-
8 sion (an emergent Indigenous public broadcaster) to secure the free-to-air
9 rights when it backed a rival bid by the public broadcaster TVNZ. National
10 was concerned about ensuring the widest possible audience for the free-to-
11 air matches but, as we shall see below, its intervention was, in the eyes of
12 some pundits, politically motivated to ensure that Māori Television did not
13 become the exclusive free-to-air distributor to the most nationally-signifi-
14 cant cultural event in the new millennium. Prior to examining these two
15 seemingly contradictory 'political power plays,' though, we provide some
16 context to highlight some of the political-economic developments that have
17 occurred in the New Zealand broadcasting market over the course of the
18 last three decades.

21 **NEW ZEALAND CONTEXT**

23 During the 1980s, there were severe pressures for governmental reform
24 due to a growing national debt, high inflation and a foreign exchange cri-
25 sis. Thus, after 1984, an incoming Labour Government undertook mas-
26 sive reforms in what has since been called a neoliberal 'revolution' (Russell
27 1996, James 1997). Economists have noted that no other country has taken
28 market liberalization measures to such extremes. These measures included
29 the rapid deregulation of financial markets and the privatization of innu-
30 merable public assets. In addition, political reforms aimed at making gov-
31 ernment more 'productive and efficient' were enthusiastically embraced,
32 including the separation of powers (e.g., splitting policy advice from deliv-
33 ery), the introduction of market forces and other business principles (e.g.,
34 creating state-owned enterprises), and a focus on outputs and dividends
35 rather than inputs and public service (Boston *et al.* 1996).

36 It was within this context that New Zealand would become one of the
37 most deregulated broadcast markets in the world (Goode and Littlewood
38 2004). It is, therefore, not surprising that there has been a "troubled and
39 unstable interface between commercial and public service models of broad-
40 casting" ever since (Goode and Littlewood 2004, p. 302). Pivotal to our
41 chapter is the increasing dominance of pay-TV provider Sky TV over the
42 last fifteen years. Sky TV was introduced to New Zealand in 1990 and
43 became an immediate competitor to the public broadcaster TVNZ and to
44 the private network TV3 (launched in 1989). Sky TV remains the only pri-
45 vate cable broadcaster in New Zealand and its penetration of households is
46

nearly 50 percent (Pullar-Strecker 2011). The strategic purchasing of sports broadcasting rights has been the most important catalyst for the growth of pay-TV in New Zealand, and the exclusive rights to the most popular professional sports events have played a critical role in enticing New Zealanders to subscribe to satellite packages.

Sky TV now holds exclusive rights to all major sports in New Zealand (including rugby union and league, cricket, football, netball, as well as the rights to the Commonwealth and Olympic Games). All of these developments have raised questions about whether Sky TV's monopoly rights on sporting events of national significance have diminished aspects of cultural citizenship and the principle of universal access that remains the foundation of public service broadcasting. Horrocks notes that, in New Zealand, these developments are troubling for both cultural and economic reasons:

Sport is such a huge factor in New Zealand culture that the loss of major sport to pay-TV (since the country has no anti siphoning rules) has reshaped our system to the point at which there is concern that Sky TV may end up as the powerbroker of New Zealand television in the digital era. (2004b, p. 57)

Sky TV's recent dominance has been further cemented thanks to its purchase of free-to-air channel *Prime* in 2006. As such, Sky TV can now partner with its own subsidiary to bid for bundled packages of free-to-air and pay-TV rights to the most popular and desirable sports, including the Olympic Games (Norris and Pauling 2008). As a result of the blurred public/commercial nature of the broadcasting industry in New Zealand, the sector has been historically influenced by changes in political party ideology (Lealand 2008). Yet, while the broadcasting environment in New Zealand has recently been marked by 'extreme makeovers' and deregulation (Debrett 2005), we wish to highlight two equally important instances of governmental 'non-decisions' that would foreshadow the continued reticence of successive governments to introduce anti-siphoning legislation—that is, to make popular sport programming available live, on free-to-air networks. Paralleling observations that political support for public service television in New Zealand has always been weak and marked by political ambivalence (Comrie and Fountaine 2005, Dunleavy 2008), it is worth noting some of the key decision junctures over the past decade that set the stage for the remainder of our chapter.

The first is the state's persistent ambivalence toward Sky TV's growth and its hesitation to curb the resultant monopoly conditions either via joint venture with other cable providers or through direct market regulation. The previous Labour Government (1999–2008), for instance, blocked a proposed partnership between TVNZ and digital provider British NTL in 1999. This obstruction was a lost opportunity to counter Sky TV's increasing presence simply because the partnership was deemed to be too

1 expensive at the time (Goode and Littlewood 2004, Comrie and Fountaine
2 2005). In commissioning its Ministerial Inquiry into Telecommunications
3 a year later, Labour also opted not to regulate (via tax charge) digital set
4 top boxes, the key technology in accessing digital signals that is controlled
5 predominantly by Sky TV (Thompson 2004). Notwithstanding the very
6 real economic constraints such as free trade agreements that prevent local
7 content quotas (Horrocks 2004a), remedies aimed at content have been
8 regarded by public officials as more feasible and politically palatable than
9 economic regulation for the purposes of meeting public broadcasting objec-
10 tives. Indeed, one reason for not 'interfering' with Sky TV in recent years
11 has been the proliferation of other channels that are able to carry local con-
12 tent in the digital landscape. Māori Television, for example, was launched
13 in 2004 and three years later the free-to-air digital platform *Freeview* was
14 introduced, resulting in two new channels (TVNZ6 and TVNZ7) thanks
15 to a \$NZ79 million grant from the Labour Government (Debrett 2010).
16 Thus, between 1999 and 2008, the Labour Government primarily sought to
17 pursue public broadcasting objectives through subsidy rather than through
18 the implementation of regulation that would challenge Sky TV's monopoly:
19 a point to which we return in our discussion.
20
21

22 REVIEWING DIGITAL BROADCASTING REGULATIONS 23

24 Despite the ongoing entrenchment of market principles and the pursuit
25 of public broadcasting objectives, Labour did flirt with other policy mea-
26 sures to counter some of the commercial excesses of the 1990s. In 2003,
27 the Labour Government established a Charter to enshrine TVNZ's dual
28 mandates as a commercial and public broadcaster. Earmarked with direct
29 funding from the government, the Charter was, however, immediately
30 problematic precisely because TVNZ was still required to return a substan-
31 tial annual dividend (Thompson 2004), and also because the government
32 remained unwilling to address Sky TV's monopoly. It must be acknowl-
33 edged, though, that during its first term in office, Labour successfully halted
34 the privatization 'inertia' surrounding TVNZ that had been repeatedly sig-
35 naled by the National Party coalition in the run-up to the 1999 election.
36

37 Germane to this chapter, in 2006 the Labour Government also auth-
38 orized a review of current regulatory issues relevant to the new digital
39 broadcasting environment to be conducted by the Ministry for Culture and
40 Heritage (MCH) in coordination with the Ministry of Economic Develop-
41 ment (MED). The decision to involve two Ministries with widely different
42 interests and agendas provided a cursory indication of the complexity of the
43 new digital terrain and its potential cultural and economic divisions. How-
44 ever, it is important to note that the Labour Government granted MCH the
45 principal role in the review process, thus signaling Labour's interpretation
46 of the review as primarily a cultural matter. Notably, the terms of reference

| | |
|---|----|
| that prepared the political terrain for the review included a specific focus on the distribution of digital content and the availability of premium sport content as a key element of national popular culture. | 1 |
| | 2 |
| | 3 |
| The initial phase of the review consisted of the production of a research document (Ministry for Culture and Heritage and Ministry of Economic Development 2008a) and a discussion text (Ministry for Culture and Heritage and Ministry of Economic Development 2008b). The former examined current regulatory settings relevant to the digital broadcasting sector and international trends and regulatory responses, while also identifying emerging issues to be addressed by policy makers. For example, when identifying international trends, the research document specified that, while many governments have focused on supporting generic competition in the new digital landscape, ‘must-carry’ rules that preserved live access to events of national significance were notable exceptions: | 4 |
| | 5 |
| | 6 |
| | 7 |
| | 8 |
| | 9 |
| | 10 |
| | 11 |
| | 12 |
| | 13 |
| | 14 |
| | 15 |
| ‘Must-carry’ rules are used in differing forms across a number of European Union Member states . . . Measures include ‘anti-siphoning’ legislation which mandates against the purchasing of monopoly rights over events of national importance, usually live sporting events. These rules are designed to ensure fair (cheap and widespread) access for consumers to content of national significance. (MCH and MED 2008a, p. 9) | 16 |
| | 17 |
| | 18 |
| | 19 |
| | 20 |
| | 21 |
| | 22 |
| The latter discussion text, meanwhile, outlined the key issues in the free-to-air debate that would guide a public consultation process with key stakeholders: | 23 |
| | 24 |
| | 25 |
| New Zealand currently has a ‘light touch’ approach to the regulation of copyright and content rights with no form of anti-siphoning law . . . Some stakeholders believe anti-siphoning rules would be desirable to protect events of national significance. Others consider rights issues should be left to the market to negotiate and that the introduction of anti-siphoning laws would undeservedly ‘punish’ certain parties, such as Sky TV and the sports sector, who have made considerable investment in New Zealand sports through rights acquisition. (MCH and MED 2008b, p. 34) | 26 |
| | 27 |
| | 28 |
| | 29 |
| | 30 |
| | 31 |
| | 32 |
| | 33 |
| | 34 |
| | 35 |
| The document also underlined the importance of premium content for broadcasters and the recent emergence of anti-competitive behavior in the competition for sports broadcasting rights. While noting that regulation was rarely pursued with respect to the acquisition and sale of most content rights, the document highlighted the fact that policies been enacted in several European countries and in Australia to “guarantee access to events of national importance and cultural significance on free-to-air television by giving priority to free-to-air television broadcasters in acquiring the broadcast rights to those events?” (MCH and MED 2008b, p. 35). Finally, the discussion text proposed a range of regulatory options that were to | 36 |
| | 37 |
| | 38 |
| | 39 |
| | 40 |
| | 41 |
| | 42 |
| | 43 |
| | 44 |
| | 45 |
| | 46 |

1 be considered during the public consultation process—options that appear
2 to indicate a definite mandate for change and political intervention—and
3 posed a specific question regarding access to premium sport content: “If
4 some form of anti-siphoning were introduced, how might this be limited
5 in the New Zealand environment? How might the effect on sport bodies
6 be mitigated?” (MCH and MED 2008b, p. 36). The discussion document,
7 then, reflected the fact that these issues had been part of an ongoing politi-
8 cal debate and that those in government were already well versed in the
9 divergent views of stakeholders.

10 Eighty-five submissions were received from the major terrestrial broad-
11 casters, Sky TV, a host of sport organizations, and a number of citizens
12 who took aim at the lack of anti-siphoning legislation and issues of social
13 exclusion surrounding access to key televised sporting events. In a sum-
14 mary of the submissions, a government document acknowledged that:

16 A slightly higher number of these responses supported some form of
17 anti-siphoning, reiterating that Sky TV’s advantage is unfair and not
18 in the long-term interest of sport, and pointing out the importance of
19 events of national cultural significance being on free-to-air television.
20 (Ministry for Culture and Heritage 2008, p. 21)

22 In its submission, TVNZ predictably critiqued Sky TV’s monopoly of live
23 sports telecasts, while noting that subscription revenues exceeded the adver-
24 tising revenue of any free-to-air broadcaster, thus giving the deep-pocketed
25 pay-TV network a significant advantage in the bidding competitions for
26 premium content (TVNZ, for example, has to spend a greater propor-
27 tion of revenue on programming). TVNZ also suggested that a lack of
28 marketplace regulation had resulted in a range of anti-competitive behav-
29 ior including: bundling (requiring the purchase of sports events as a total
30 package instead of individual competitions and using *Prime* to secure both
31 pay-TV and free-to-air rights), hoarding (only airing free-to-air broadcasts
32 on *Prime* on a delayed basis), cross subsidizing (Sky TV subsidizes the oper-
33 ations of *Prime* which could not, on its own, afford to compete for sports
34 content), and, finally, gate-keeping.

35 With respect to this latter issue, TVNZ raised the changing nature
36 of cultural citizenship in New Zealand and lamented Sky TV’s role as
37 a gatekeeper that charged a ‘sports tax’ of \$NZ64/month in addition
38 to an initial fee of \$NZ600 for a digital box for citizens to participate
39 in national sporting culture (Television New Zealand 2008). The pub-
40 lic broadcaster subsequently argued that regulatory measures similar to
41 those that have been established in other countries needed to be intro-
42 duced in New Zealand, including: anti-siphoning rules to provide fair
43 access to all New Zealanders to key events, free-of-charge, and unbun-
44 dling policies to restrict monopoly rights holders from selling packages of
45 pay-TV/free-to-air rights to a single buyer, and also to prevent bundling
46

by pay-TV providers. The introduction of legislation, TVNZ further suggested, would help preserve the admittedly underfunded business model of public broadcasting, which relies on premium content to attract viewers and, in turn, commercial advertisers.

The private free-to-air broadcaster TV3 emphasized similar arguments but also drew attention to the role of free-to-air networks in providing truly national audiences for sport governing bodies:

Pay-TV cannot create the same sense of “event” and excitement that Free to Air TV, with its virtually 100 percent reach, can. Without . . . Free to Air TV screening of major sporting events, a sport will find it more and more difficult to grow. The cash injection from Sky TV has been good in the short term, but there is a case to be made that the managing bodies of these sports have forsaken the long-term interests of their sport for short-term monetary gain. Only legislation can put a halt to this for the good of the New Zealand public. (TVWorks 2008, p. 7)

The free-to-air commercial network further argued that the major sporting codes—as exclusive providers of sport—were monopolies that needed to be legislated to unbundle sporting packages that are exclusively sold to deep-pocketed pay-TV networks that subsequently restricted access to those properties. In this respect, for example, the NZRU could still sell the rights to Super 15 Rugby to Sky TV, while making available All Black test matches to the free-to-air networks:

Threats that Sky TV will not value Rugby appropriately if it does not have the key All Blacks matches exclusively are rubbish and are a scare tactic to bully the various sporting codes into exclusive agreements . . . Sky TV will not see its subscriber base eroded significantly as anyone who wants a significant amount of sport will still need to have Sky TV to get that sport. The value to the sporting codes and to the people of New Zealand in being able to access these major events for free far outweighs any theoretical slight damage to Sky TV’s subscriber base. The risk the sporting codes continue to take by dealing virtually exclusively with Sky TV is their reliance on a single entity for such a large percentage of their total revenue. (TV Works 2008, p. 7)

Alternatively, TV3 recommended the enactment of anti-siphoning legislation for a limited number of high profile sporting events (Summer Olympic Games, the Commonwealth Games, the Rugby World Cup, Tri-Nations involving the All Blacks, and a select number of International cricket ODIs). Free-to-air channels would then compete for these high profile events, thus providing revenue to governing bodies while ensuring that “all New Zealanders have access to these major events at no cost with little, if any, disruption to the pay-TV business or the sporting codes” (*Ibid*).

Unsurprisingly, Sky TV and the NZRU opposed the introduction of any form of regulation and took issue with the inclusion of anti-siphoning rules in the review. Sky TV argued that its acquisition of various sports properties was simply a commonsense market transaction: “any broadcaster, regardless of its status as either a pay-TV or a FTA broadcaster, can bid for live sports rights” (Sky TV 2008, p. 70). Sky TV also threatened that the introduction of anti-siphoning legislation would radically reduce income for sports bodies, and argued that competitions like the Tri Nations and the Super 15 Rugby would simply not have been created with the presence of anti-siphoning legislation. The network also claimed that anti-siphoning legislation would diminish the amount of sport on television and that free-to-air networks would be unable to dedicate as much airtime to sports content as Sky TV. Finally, Sky TV (2008, p. 7) noted, moreover, that it made a significant amount of sports content available on *Prime* (although this was delayed coverage), and that anti-siphoning legislation would “restrict Sky TV’s ability to compete with other broadcasters, to the detriment of consumers as they would have less choice in the range of channels and programs they are able to watch.”

The NZRU, meanwhile, defended its commercial right “to fully exploit the content it produces, including premium content” and stressed the value of broadcasting revenue in the new economy of professional sport:

Broadcasting revenue currently represents approximately 30 percent of total revenue in an exceedingly challenging global financial environment. While the NZRU has a sound financial base, losses in the past two financial years have exceeded \$5,000,000 with an inevitable impact on funding available for rugby operations right down to the provincial level, where a number of Unions are struggling to cover costs. (New Zealand Rugby Union 2008, p. 6)

Following the arguments put forward by Sky TV, the NZRU suggested that there was neither evidence of hoarding activity in the marketplace nor significant barriers that precluded live access to telecasts of sporting events of national significance. For the NZRU, live telecasts of rugby were not only widely available in homes across the country on Sky TV (whose digital channels now have a significant reach), but could also be accessed in pubs or other licensed commercial premises for those who could not afford subscription fees. However, these new leisure experiences—attending various licensed premises to watch live, satellite sport—require patrons to spend additional monies on alcohol, food and, on occasion, entrance fees. Ironically, these expenditures can cumulatively exceed the cost of a pay-TV subscription or a singular pay-per-view experience (Rowe 2011).

On September 23, Cabinet released the *Report Back on Options Following Public Consultation* (Mallard and Cunliffe 2008, p. 21) that acknowledged a “fairly widespread public sentiment . . . that it is in the national interest for

televised coverage of significant sporting events to be available live and free to air to all New Zealanders." The report recommended that the:

... Ministry for Culture and Heritage officials be directed to consider options for a higher degree of live, free-to-air coverage of sports that may be considered of national significance. Options could include reference to international measures, but would be subject to consideration of the effects on levels of sports participation and the potential impact on the revenue to sports bodies—for example by ensuring revenue is raised from multiple broadcasters and packages, rather than simply mandating free-to-air coverage. In the case of some sports, however, including rugby, the international nature of contracts may limit the scope for unbundling free-to-air and pay rights. (*Ibid*)

In light of this cautious endorsement of the need for greater live access to sporting events of national significance, another competition study was requested to examine issues surrounding access to premium sporting content. It is important to note that Cabinet was now directing MCH solely to pursue this work as opposed to working with MED. For Labour, these continued to be principally matters of culture and heritage rather than economic issues.

This stage of the review process was, however, quickly interrupted by the election of a center-right National Party-led coalition Government in November 2008. In a less-than-subtle maneuver, the incoming government directed MED (now in consultation with MCH) to conduct a separate analysis to discern if regulation was needed and, more generally, whether the broadcasting review ought to continue. It is important to underline the fact that, under the National Party, the review of digital broadcasting had immediately become an economic concern. The subsequent report (*Ministry of Economic Development and Ministry for Culture and Heritage 2009*) was released in February. In contrast to Labour's previous analysis that, only months earlier, had endorsed the need for regulation, this document presented a contrasting account of the digital broadcasting market and issues surrounding access to content. While MCH proposed an amendment to the Telecommunications Act 2001 to allow the Telecommunications Commission to make recommendations regarding the regulation of broadcasting platforms and premium content (i.e., sport), MED argued that, in a deregulated broadcasting market, further regulatory action or state intervention was simply unnecessary and unwarranted.

In April 2009, the National Party's Broadcasting Minister, Dr. Jonathan Coleman, and Communications and Information Technology Minister, Steven Joyce, predictably embraced MED's ideological position and announced that the current market was 'workably competitive' and that the broadcasting review would proceed no further. The surreptitious demise of the review marked the end of years of political work, and with it the hope

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46

1 of government intervention in the digital broadcasting landscape and the
2 restoration of the viewing rights of New Zealanders to watch live telecasts
3 of sporting events of national significance.
4
5

6 **A BROADCASTING TEST: THE 2011 RUGBY WORLD CUP**
7

8 Only two days after the incoming National Government abandoned the
9 digital broadcasting review, Sky TV announced that it had won the host
10 broadcaster rights for the 2011 Rugby World Cup (RWC). Following the
11 announcement, Labour opposition MP Brendon Burns immediately chas-
12 tised the pay-TV deal as denying New Zealanders their ‘birthright’ to
13 watch many of the games live on free-to-air networks (Burns 2009). In
14 turn, Burns lamented that Sky TV’s accumulation of the 2011 RWC host
15 broadcaster rights was “only the latest manifestation of a government that
16 wants all broadcasting to be market-driven” (*Ibid.*)
17

18 As host broadcaster, Sky TV would produce the images, provide com-
19 mentary, and broadcast all forty-eight games live in high definition. How-
20 ever, as part of the original hosting agreement, the International Rugby
21 Board (IRB) and Rugby World Cup Ltd. (RWCL) tendered the rights to
22 broadcast the last sixteen games of the tournament to free-to-air chan-
23 nels. Public broadcaster TVNZ and privately-owned TV3 were expected to
24 bid due to their previous involvement with the respective 2003 and 2007
25 World Cups. Thus, when Māori Television surprisingly entered a bid total-
26 ing \$NZ3 million for the free-to-air rights, an immediate political contro-
27 versy erupted. Echoing media reports, Prime Minister John Key expressed
28 concern that, because Māori Television’s signal reached only 83 percent of
29 New Zealand households (or 90 percent of those without Sky TV), not all
30 citizens would be able to have free-to-air access to the sixteen games. The
31 National Party’s sudden interest in matters of cultural citizenship was no
32 small irony in light of the Government’s abandonment of the digital broad-
33 casting review and its affirmation of Sky TV’s monopoly that restricts live
34 access to telecasts of sporting events of national significance, including All
Blacks test matches, to pay-TV subscribers.
35

36 On this basis, and only after the Māori Television bid became public,
37 TVNZ controversially announced its own Government-backed bid for the
38 free-to-air broadcasting rights. Such was the importance of the free-to-air
39 rights for the RWC that two publicly funded agencies were now effectively
40 competing against each other. In addition to giving the appearance of a
41 fragmented Government coalition, Opposition critics pounced on the con-
42 troversy and suggested that the competition between TVNZ and Māori
43 Television would, to the benefit of the IRB, simply raise the price of the
44 free-to-air broadcast rights.¹ As Labour Party spokesman for the World
Cup, Trevor Mallard, argued, the Māori Television bid was “plain stu-
45 pid” in that “it sets a precedent for an incoherent and almost unbelievable
46

| | |
|--|----|
| broadcasting policy”(NZPA 2009c). | 1 |
| He added that “It would see public | 2 |
| money used to up the bidding war and the coffers of the International | 3 |
| Rugby Board will reap the benefits” (NZPA 2009c). | 4 |
| Indeed, the rising costs of the event had to be considered. From the Gov- | 5 |
| ernment’s perspective, the question of ‘reach’ in relation to Māori Television’s | 6 |
| bid was an obvious concern precisely because the RWC was a publicly funded | 7 |
| event. Moreover, because ticket sales were the only source of revenue for the | 8 |
| host nation (projected losses had, by that point, grown to \$NZ40 million), | 9 |
| crucially, the government needed the broadest possible platform to advertise | 10 |
| widely the event to potential consumers (Gower 2009). As the Prime Minister | 11 |
| candidly suggested, “Obviously promotion of the Rugby World Cup is very | 12 |
| important, and that is one aspect that needs to be taken into consideration” | 13 |
| (Espinier 2009). Māori Affairs Minister Pita Sharples essentially agreed with | 14 |
| this argument, and noted that the Government’s attempts to counter the | 15 |
| Māori Television bid was “ . . . about control, it’s about fear of not selling | 16 |
| their tickets and promoting their tickets” (NZPA 2009b). | 17 |
| Economic risks, however, paled in comparison to the politically charged | 18 |
| issue of Māori Television’s ambition to become the sole broadcaster with | 19 |
| an explicit aim of leveraging opportunities for Māori in a broader promo- | 20 |
| tional culture. For Sharples, the free-to-air rights to the RWC represented | 21 |
| important ‘buying outcomes’ for Māori that would provide scarce language | 22 |
| opportunities and jobs for his constituencies, and the importance of these | 23 |
| issues was clearly reflected in the steep price tag of Māori Television’s bid. | 24 |
| The subsequent cabinet-backed TVNZ bid, in turn, was lambasted by | 25 |
| Sharples as little more than a ‘political power play’ to override matters | 26 |
| that were important to Māori. Undeniably, Cabinet’s decision appeared to | 27 |
| undermine the Māori Party (which was part of the National-led coalition) | 28 |
| but pundits ultimately recognized the politics of the TVNZ rival bid dur- | 29 |
| ing an election year. It was widely known that the Prime Minister regarded | 30 |
| the RWC as an equally important promotional opportunity to boost the | 31 |
| National Party’s image, and, of course, his own political profile. He also, | 32 |
| however, did not want to alienate Pākehā ² constituents by having Māori | 33 |
| Television as the only ‘voice’ during the RWC. In this light, Jim Mather, | 34 |
| Chief Executive of Māori Television, openly argued that the Government’s | 35 |
| financial backing of a new, rival TVNZ bid could only be interpreted along | 36 |
| racial lines, and as an “affront to Māori. What is on the line here is Māori | 37 |
| aspiration and positioning in New Zealand in 2009 and beyond” (Gower | 38 |
| 2009). Paralleling these sentiments in Parliament, Māori MP Te Ururoa | 39 |
| Flavell (2009) stated: | 40 |
| Māori Television is the television of the people. This is the station of | 41 |
| Aotearoa [New Zealand] and we should be proud of it. In that regard, | 42 |
| what better vehicle than this one to ensure that every All Black game, | 43 |
| every element of the Rugby World Cup tournament, is also broadcast | 44 |
| on Māori Television because it is a unique opportunity to showcase | 45 |
| | 46 |

1 Aotearoa in our most positive light, including our culture, our society,
2 and our economy. The Rugby World Cup is the most exciting opportu-
3 nity that this country will have for a long period to present the face of
4 the nation to the world.

5
6 In light of the growing political controversy,³ the Prime Minister announced
7 that the government was withdrawing its support for the TVNZ bid in
8 favor of establishing a new joint-bid between Māori Television, TVNZ and
9 private free-to-air network, TV3. The new joint-bid was notable because
10 the IRB had previously, during the course of Labour's broadcast review,
11 rebuked an earlier joint-bid [for the free-to-air rights to RWC 2011] by rival
12 broadcasters TVNZ, Sky TV and TV3, citing 'collusion' and 'anti-compet-
13 itive behaviour' (Ford 2009). The IRB's change of heart likely came with
14 the Government's larger injection of \$NZ3.2 million for the new consor-
15 tium (to be supplemented by an undisclosed amount from TV3). Indeed the
16 IRB's chief executive noted that the government had made 'a very positive
17 intervention,' and commended its efforts in engineering the tournament's
18 broadcasting rights (Keall 2010). In the end, the joint bid's significance lay
19 in blocking Sky TVs subsidiary channel, *Prime*, from securing the free-to-
20 air coverage rights. As Sky TV's chief executive noted, "we just didn't have
21 a government agency to bid with so we just bid on *Prime* alone and we were
22 just outbid by the consortium."

23 Under the new consortium, Māori Television became the 'lead' broad-
24 caster and held the sole free-to-air (delayed) broadcast rights to the thirty-
25 two pool games and the sole free-to-air rights to air the opening ceremony
26 and the tournament's opening game between Tonga and NZ. The other
27 partners in this arrangement effectively shared the live rights to the two
28 quarterfinals, both semifinals and the final, and it is no exaggeration to say
29 that coverage of the RWC saturated New Zealand television, particularly
30 during the latter stages of the tournament.

31 32 DISCUSSION

33 The combination of the two critical junctures described above points to any
34 number of considerations, interests, and contradictions related to the media
35 sports cultural complex (Rowe 2004a) and the politics of media and cultural
36 policy in New Zealand. There are, however, two interrelated issues that we
37 want to bring into relief in our discussion that directly challenge pluralistic
38 models of policy making as competitive, rational, and accessible arenas.

39 First, it is clear that both junctures—the National Party's termination
40 of the broadcasting review and its subsequent intervention in the sports
41 broadcasting market—represented reactive and highly politicized decisions
42 through which significant power was wielded even in the face of substantive
43 opposition. Despite a lengthy political process that included extensive public
44

consultation with a number of competing interest groups, the newly elected government's unilateral decision to abandon the broadcasting review was as sudden as it was decisive. Moreover, in this instance, the National Party relied on the 'expert' opinion of civil servants in the Ministry of Economic Development (as opposed to the Ministry of Culture and Heritage) to support their ideological position and the hegemony of market-led approaches to the provision of popular digital sporting content in New Zealand. This was, incidentally, an ideological position that would simultaneously maintain Sky TV's monopoly of sports content and the NZRU's revenue streams at the expense of the viewing rights of citizens. The decision also underlines the fact that, despite the explosion of interest groups in an increasingly complex policy making process, "there is no necessary relationship between the number of participants in a decision-making process and the eventual decision that is taken" (Freedman 2008, p. 85).

Yet, despite the National Party's stated intention of avoiding any regulatory measures—that is, continuing to let the local sports broadcasting market self-regulate—the Government paradoxically played a pivotal role only weeks later in supporting two bids and discrediting the initial bid by Māori Television for the free-to-air rights for the 2011 RWC. These latter actions are, of course, tantamount to explicitly regulating the market, albeit in an *ad hoc*, reactive way rather than in the pre-emptive, regulatory manner that was initially recommended in the digital broadcasting review in the form of anti-siphoning legislation. While the government's 'intrusion' in this instance blocked Sky TV's subsidiary *Prime* from winning the exclusive free-to-air rights, the new multi-network bid was only approved by the IRB after the governing body acknowledged that it would accrue greater revenue from such a 'creative' arrangement (recall that a previous bid was spurned by the IRB as 'anti-competitive' and as a form of collusion). What this incursion demonstrates is that even in a deregulated broadcast environment judged to be 'workably competitive,' the Government can still be politically compelled to become a market participant and distort the very market that it refuses to 'regulate,' particularly when its own economic objectives (i.e., potential revenue generation) and political interests (preventing Māori Television from being the exclusive free-to-air broadcaster) are at stake.

Despite appearing to contradict completely its initial deregulatory ideological stance, we want to suggest that the National Party's intervention in the 2011 RWC free-to-air debate was, on a number of levels, remarkably consistent with New Zealand politics since the 1990s. Over the course of the past two decades, there has been a deepening commitment to what some have labeled a 'Third Way' ideology and networked governance in a fragmented, multi-layered society (Rhodes 2000, Thompson 2004). During this time, persistent governmental reforms have, above all else, clearly prioritized markets over hierarchies and contracts over internal delivery (through ministries and departments), and have slowly made

the introduction of substantive regulatory measures politically unappealing but also unthinkable in this ‘new mixed economy.’ Yet, rather than a complete withdrawal from media policy making, there has been a decisive shift in “the pursuit of specific ideological ends: to reshape media markets in order to provide increased opportunities for accumulation and profitability” (Freedman 2008, p. 48). Indeed, for Graham Murdock (1990) the term ‘re-regulation’ is a more appropriate description of the active commitment to the dismantlement of existing regulations while, at the same time, not precluding the ability of the state to broker politically acceptable bargains and compromises on specific issues as long as those decisions do not undermine the broader deregulatory agenda.

Within New Zealand, for example, support for public broadcasting has been severely weakened by successive Labour and National Party Governments, but not eliminated altogether. Indeed, it is worth noting that Labour’s introduction of the TVNZ charter did not constitute regulation in the sense of controlling the agency’s activity, nor did it contain the possibility of sanctions that are a key feature of regulatory accountability (Schillemans 2008). Ironically, Labour later criticized its own Charter funding scheme because TVNZ intended to use those funds to cross-subsidize production costs to air the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing. In response, Broadcasting Minister Trevor Mallard simply removed TVNZ’s discretion to determine what constitutes ‘public broadcasting,’ and subsequently transferred responsibility for funding decisions to a non-governmental organization, *NZ On Air* (NZPA 2008). Labour’s interpretation of international sport as ‘non-local’ content and, by extension, unreflective of New Zealand culture, would further contribute to the erosion of mainstream sport broadcasts on TVNZ (Scherer and Sam 2012). Moreover, the deferring of accountability to NZOA would also remove government discretion in future designations or differentiations between local and premium content.

It is in this sense that the establishment of a Charter and the associated ideals of public-private partnerships arguably helped to maintain the illusion of public service television in the deregulated digital broadcasting era dominated by Sky TV. As Linder notes, such partnerships:

have been viewed as a retreat from the hard-line advocacy of privatization. From this perspective, they serve a strategic purpose, enlisting the support of more moderate elements that are less opposed to state action in principle. Partnerships are accommodationist; they hold back the specter of wholesale divestiture and, in exchange, promise lucrative collaboration with the state. (2000, p. 25)

Indeed, the political skirmish over the free-to-air rights to the 2011 RWC did little to undermine Sky TV’s position as the monopoly provider of sports content in New Zealand. That is, just as there was no significant reason for the National Party to continue a discussion about anti-siphoning

| | |
|---|----|
| legislation in the broadcasting review, there was similarly little motivation | 1 |
| to debate Sky TV's role as host broadcaster for the entire 2011 RWC, even | 2 |
| at the expense of the viewing rights of New Zealanders who were subsi- | 3 |
| dizing the entire tournament. However, there were other clear political, | 4 |
| economic, and cultural pressures that spurred the National Party to adopt | 5 |
| hastily a role as negotiator and broker (between the IRB and public/private | 6 |
| broadcasters) in the 2011 free-to-air debate. The case and context may have | 7 |
| changed, but the National Party's ability to wield power over media and | 8 |
| cultural policy to maintain the 'deregulatory status quo' did not. | 9 |
| Building on this latter point, the second issue that we want to discuss | 10 |
| relates to the sheer lack of transparency in these specific debates and the | 11 |
| <i>ad hoc</i> nature of subsequent policy actions in relation to sport content. | 12 |
| There is certainly some perception among participants and elected offi- | 13 |
| cials that, given the establishment of extensive review processes and public | 14 |
| consultation with an increasing number of stakeholders, the media policy | 15 |
| making process is more open, transparent, and subject to public scrutiny | 16 |
| than ever (Freedman 2008). With respect to the establishment of the digi- | 17 |
| tal broadcasting review, for example, the Labour government clearly initia- | 18 |
| tated a broad process that featured public consultation with a wide range | 19 |
| of interest groups. As noted earlier, many documents (background reports, | 20 |
| research findings, public consultation summaries, Cabinet papers) were | 21 |
| made available online to ensure the widest possible levels of participation | 22 |
| and to legitimate the process as inclusive and evidence-based. Still, these | 23 |
| laudable developments did little to undermine government control of the | 24 |
| policy making process, while transparency, in this context, only flowed | 25 |
| from the decisions about how to 'construct' the issue and its possible solu- | 26 |
| tions. Moreover, even after this expansive process, Labour's solution was | 27 |
| to order another Ministry report (without public consultation) to explore | 28 |
| further the issue. | 29 |
| In the end, of course, the National Party's decision to terminate the broad- | 30 |
| casting review was made with neither significant public debate nor significant | 31 |
| discussion in Parliament. In a similar vein, most of the discussions and delib- | 32 |
| erations over the controversial 2011 RWC free-to-air bidding process were | 33 |
| made behind closed doors by a select group of government officials and rep- | 34 |
| resentatives from TVNZ, TV3, and Māori Television (NZPA 2009a). Thus, | 35 |
| while some aspects of policy making are publicized and open to public discus- | 36 |
| sion, the vast majority of decisions with respect to these two critical junctures | 37 |
| (and, indeed, the details on how the decisions were reached) were far from | 38 |
| transparent. Following Freedman (2008, p. 93), then, we can only conclude | 39 |
| that "there are few opportunities for individual members of the public to come | 40 |
| into direct contact with and actively shape the core policymaking process," | 41 |
| and when members of the public do respond to media and cultural policy | 42 |
| issues, "there is no guarantee that policymakers will listen to them." More- | 43 |
| over, when competing individual/public positions are in conflict, they are, of | 44 |
| course, reconciled by recourse to the ideological position of those in power. | 45 |
| | 46 |

As noted above, all of these developments continue to work in favor of maintaining Sky TV's monopoly of popular sports content and the state's broader commitment to deregulation and the provision of increased opportunities for accumulation and profitability. The Government's recent (July 2011) abandonment of the TVNZ Charter further denies any future debates over existing market failures and distortions. Thus, without TVNZ's charter, discretionary control over NZ On Air funds, or the presence of anti-siphoning legislation, there currently exists little chance that executives at the public broadcaster could even contemplate challenging Sky TV's dominance in the sports broadcasting market. Equally, MediaWorks, the company that owns free-to-air network TV 3, continues to face significant financial uncertainty,⁴ and will not pose a threat to Sky TV in the near future. Finally, while Māori Television still remains linked to government via funding, and will no doubt continue to carry some sport (e.g., coverage of the National Basketball League coverage), it will only be able to do so until such time as Sky TV decides that it is profitable to purchase these rights as well. By then, not only will sport rights have been further 'siphoned' off from free-to-air platforms (Noll 2007), but any remaining democratic institutional leverage may simply be insufficient to restore the viewing rights of New Zealanders that may now have been permanently restructured as discretionary consumer choices instead of common rights of cultural citizenship. Indeed, there is now an entire generation of New Zealanders who, since the mid-1990s, have only watched the All Blacks play live on Sky TV. For many New Zealanders—even those who can remember watching the All Blacks on the public broadcaster, TVNZ—it has become increasingly natural to pay for 'infotainment' products (including sport), and the initial public outrage over the loss of these viewing rights over a decade ago has substantially dissipated. Moreover, given the re-election of the National Party in 2011, it is unlikely that there will be any political motivation to continue these debates in the near future.

CONCLUSION

In New Zealand, the subscription network Sky TV now holds the broadcast rights for all major sports (including rugby, cricket, netball and other events of national significance such as the Olympics and Commonwealth Games), and the availability of live, free-to-air sport is in perilous decline. Throughout this chapter, we have argued that these developments are the result of the influence of two decades of neoliberal ideology and policy, and the power of various media factions and interests, the multitude of Government Ministries, and sports bodies that have rendered state intervention and regulation unappealing. In turn, longstanding viewing rights that have been traditionally understood as important components of cultural citizenship have been

| | |
|--|---|
| effectively “driven out of the centre of popular life, actively marginalized” (Hall 1981, p. 227–228) and superseded by the ideology of consumer choice and the private interests of pay-TV networks like Sky TV. | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 |
| As noted above, moreover, there appears to be little support on the horizon for sport to be included under the aegis of a public broadcasting ethos or within the rubric of ‘local content.’ Proponents of public service broadcasting continue to suggest paternalistically that, despite its historical importance in the national psyche, sport is little more than commercial content that distracts from the provision of other, alternative programming. For example, Thompson suggests that sport is partly responsible for diminishing the value of public service programming: | |
| Even when we acknowledge the value of public service programming, left to our own devices as consumers, we will tend to watch more sport, movies and trivial reality shows than is sufficient to provide commercial broadcasters with an incentive to offer up more content to serve our cultural and democratic needs as citizens. (2004, p. 23) | |
| Such a perspective, however, not only reinforces the simple dichotomy between ‘high’ and ‘low’ culture, but also promotes a logic that affirms public service broadcasting as a site for alternative, minority programming, while other genuinely popular content is simply left to the market, in this case Sky TV. Such a development would, however, radically reduce the role of public service broadcasting in the lives of ordinary New Zealanders and would, ironically, further jeopardize the overall remit of public institutions like TVNZ. Arguably, it would also render the consideration of anti-siphoning legislation (as a viable policy instrument for restoring the viewing rights of New Zealanders) politically impossible. | |
| ACKNOWLEDGMENTS | |
| This research was funded by a grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. | |
| NOTES | |
| 1. New Zealand’s parliament operates under a Mixed Member Proportional (MMP) electoral system. After the 2008 general election, the National Party formed a minority coalition government with three other parties: the Māori Party, the Act Party, and United Future. | |
| 2. New Zealanders of European descent. | |
| 3. There were accusations of Ministerial impropriety since the Minister responsible for Māori Television (Dr. Pita Sharples) was also the Minister of Te Puni Kokiri (Māori Development), the principal source of the Māori Television funds to bid for broadcast rights (Hansard debates). Equally serious were | |

- 1 accusations that details of the MTS bid were leaked to Māori Television in
2 order to scuttle the former's bid to the IRB.
3 4. In April 2011, after tremendous private lobbying, the Government allowed
4 MediaWorks to defer a \$NZ43 million payment for its radio licenses.

5
6 REFERENCES
7

- 8 Boston, J., Martin, J., Pallot, J., and Walsh, P., 1996. *Public Management: The*
9 *New Zealand Model*. Auckland: Oxford University Press.
10 Burns, B., 2009. Sky's Rugby World Cup Win is a Loss for Many Kiwis [online].
11 *New Zealand Labour Website*, Available from: <http://www.labour.org.nz/news/sky%80%99s-rugby-world-cup-win-loss-many-kiwis> [Accessed 19
12 October 2010].
13 Comrie, M., and Fountaine, S., 2005. Retrieving Public Service Broadcasting:
14 Treading a Fine Line at TVNZ. *Media, Culture & Society*, 27, pp. 101–118.
15 Debrett, M., 2010. *Reinventing Public Service Television for the Digital Future*.
16 Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
17 ———, 2005. Extreme Makeover: The Recurring Motif of New Zealand Broad-
18 casting Policy. *Media International Australia, Incorporating Culture and Pol-
19 icy*, 117, pp. 76–85.
20 Dunleavy, T., 2008. New Zealand Television and the Struggle for 'Public Service.'
21 *Media, Culture & Society*, 30, pp. 795–811.
22 Espiner, C., 2009. Government World Cup Broadcasting Backdown [online].
23 *The Press*. Available from: <http://www.stuff.co.nz/the-press/news/2963956/Government-World-Cup-broadcasting-ba> [Accessed 14 October 2010].
24 Flavell, U., 2009. Urgent Debates—Rugby World Cup—Broadcasting. *New Zealand*
25 *Parliamentary Debates*, 658, 7182 [online]. Available from http://www.parliament.nz/enNZ/PB/Debates/Debates/2/c/b/49HansD_20091020_00000883-Urgent-Debates-Rugby-World-Cup-Broadcasting.htm [Accessed 19 December 2009].
26 Ford, G., 2009. IRB Blasts Joint TV Bid by NZ Broadcasters [online]. *The Press*.
27 Available from: <http://www.stuff.co.nz/sport/1762114> [Accessed 19 October
28 2010].
29 Freedman, D., 2008. *The Politics of Media Policy*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.
30 Goode, L., and Littlewood, J., 2004. Digitising the Land of the Long White
31 Cloud. In: R. Horrocks and N. Perry, eds., *Television in New Zealand: Pro-*
32 *gramming the Nation*. Melbourne: Oxford University Press, pp. 302–319.
33 Gower, P., 2009. Māori TV Hits Back over Cup 'Affront' [online]. *The New Zea-*
34 *land Herald*. Available from: http://www.nzherald.co.nz/rugby/news/article.cfm?c_id=80&objectid=10603055&ref=rss [Accessed 9 August 2010].
35 Hall, S., 1984. The Culture Gap. *Marxism Today*, pp. 18–22.
36 ———, 1981. Notes on Deconstructing "the Popular". In: R. Samuel, ed., *Peo-*
37 *ple's History and Socialist Theory*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, pp.
38 227–240.
39 Horrocks, R., 2004a. The History of New Zealand Television: "An Expensive
40 Medium for a Small Country. In: R. Horrocks and N. Perry, eds., *Television in*
41 *New Zealand: Programming the Nation*. Melbourne: Oxford University Press,
pp. 20–43.
42 ———, 2004b. Turbulent Television: The New Zealand Experiment. *Television &*
43 *New Media*, 5, pp. 55–68.
44 Hutchins, B., and Rowe, D., 2009. From Broadcast Scarcity to Digital Plenitude:
45 The Changing Dynamics of the Media Sport Content Economy. *Television and*
46 *New Media*, 10, pp. 354–370.

| | |
|--|----|
| James, C., 1997. The Policy Revolution 1984–1993. In: R. Miller, ed., <i>New Zealand Politics in Transition</i> . Auckland: Oxford University Press, pp. 13–24. | 1 |
| Keall, C., 2010. \$3.2m Taxpayer Injection Sees TV1, TV3 and Māori TV Share World Cup Rights [online]. <i>The National Business Review</i> . Available from: http://www.nbr.co.nz/article/tvnz-mediaworks-and-maori-tv-share-world-cup-rights-119611 [Accessed 15 September 2010]. | 2 |
| Lealand, G., 2008. Broadcasting and Public Policy: Television in New Zealand. In: D. Ward, ed., <i>Television and Public Policy: Change and Continuity in an Era of Global Liberalization</i> . New York: Taylor and Francis, pp. 149–161. | 3 |
| Linder, S.H., 2000. Coming to Terms with the Public-Private Partnership: A Grammar of Multiple Meanings. In: P. Rosenau, ed., <i>Public-Private Policy Partnerships</i> . Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, pp. 19–36. | 4 |
| Mallard, T., and Cunliffe, D., 2008. Digital Broadcasting Review of Regulation: Options paper for public consultation. <i>Paper to Cabinet Policy Committee</i> . Wellington: Office of the Minister of Broadcasting and Office of the Minister of Communications, Information and Technology. | 5 |
| Ministry for Culture and Heritage, 2008. <i>Digital Broadcasting: Review of Regulation: Overall Summary of Responses</i> . Wellington: N.Z. Government. | 6 |
| Ministry for Culture and Heritage and Ministry of Economic Development, 2008a. <i>Digital Broadcasting: Review of Regulation—Volume One: The Implications for Regulatory Policy of the Convergence between Broadcasting, Telecommunications and the Internet</i> . Wellington: N.Z. Government. | 7 |
| _____, 2008b. <i>Digital Broadcasting: Review of Regulation—Volume Two: Discussion Paper</i> . Wellington: N.Z. Government. | 8 |
| Ministry of Economic Development and Ministry for Culture and Heritage, 2009. <i>Report to the Minister of Broadcasting and the Minister for Communications and Information Technology</i> . Wellington: N.Z. Government. | 9 |
| Murdock, G., 1990. Redrawing the Map of the Communications Industries: Concentration Ownership in the Era of Privatisation. In: M. Ferguson, ed., <i>Public Communication: The New Imperative</i> . London: Sage, pp. 1–15. | 10 |
| New Zealand Rugby Union, 2008. <i>Submission to the 'Review of Digital Broadcasting Regulation.'</i> Wellington: NZRU. | 11 |
| Noll, R., 2007. Broadcasting and Team Sports. <i>Scottish Journal of Political Economy</i> , 54, pp. 400–421. | 12 |
| Norris, P., and Pauling, B., 2008. <i>The Digital Future and Public Broadcasting: A Report Prepared for New Zealand On Air</i> . Christchurch. | 13 |
| NZPA, 2009a. Joint Rugby Bid “Shows Prejudice Does Work” [online]. <i>The New Zealand Herald</i> . Available from: http://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=10604165 [Accessed 23 November 2009]. | 14 |
| _____, 2009b. Political Stoush over Rugby World Cup Broadcast [online]. <i>Stuff</i> . Available from: http://www.stuff.co.nz/national/politics/2963625/Political-stoush-over-Rugby-World-Cup-broadcast [Accessed 15 January 2010]. | 15 |
| _____, 2009c. Taxpayer-Funding of Māori TV’s World Cup Bid “Stupid”—Labour [online]. <i>The New Zealand Herald</i> . Available from: http://www.nzherald.co.nz/rugby-world-cup-2011/news/article.cfm?c_id=522&objectid=10601065 [Accessed 24 February 2010]. | 16 |
| _____, 2008. TVNZ Funding to be Drip Fed after Olympics Bid [online]. <i>The New Zealand Herald</i> . Available from: http://www.nzherald.co.nz/politics/news/article.cfm?c_id=280&objectid=10512707 [Accessed 24 September 2008]. | 17 |
| Parrish, R., 2008. Access to Major Events on Television under European Law. <i>Journal of Consumer Policy</i> , 31, pp. 79–98. | 18 |
| Pullar-Strecker, T., 2011. Sky TV Surges for Rugby World Cup [online]. <i>Stuff</i> . Available from: http://www.stuff.co.nz/business/industries/5810134/Sky-TV-surges-for-Rugby-World-Cup [Accessed 22 December 2011]. | 19 |

- 1 Rhodes, M., 2000. Desperately Seeking a Solution: Social Democracy, Thatcher-
2 ism and the 'Third Way' in British Welfare. *West European Politics*, 23, pp.
3 161–186.
- 4 Rowe, D., 2011. Sport and its Audiences. In: V. Nightingale, ed., *The Handbook of*
5 *Media Audiences*. Hoboken: Wiley, pp. 509–526.
- 6 Rowe, D., 2004a *Sport, Culture and the Media: The Unruly Trinity* (second edi-
7 tion). Maidenhead, UK: Open University Press.
- 8 Rowe, D., 2004b. Watching Brief: Cultural Citizenship and Viewing Rights. *Sport*
9 in Society, 7, pp. 385–402.
- 10 Russell, M., 1996. *Revolution: New Zealand from Fortress to Free Market*. Auck-
11 land: Hodder Moa Beckett.
- 12 Scherer, J., and Sam, M.P., 2012. Public Broadcasting, Sport, and Cultural Citi-
13 zenship: SKY's the Limit in New Zealand? *Media, Culture & Society*, 34, pp.
14 101–111.
- 15 Schillemans, T., 2008. Accountability in the Shadow of Hierarchy: The Horizontal
16 Accountability of Agencies. *Public Organization Review*, 8, pp. 175–194.
- 17 Sky TV., 2008. *Submission from SKY Network Television Limited on 'Digital*
18 *Broadcasting Review of Regulation' and on the 'Review of Content Regulation*
19 *for Broadcasting and New Digital Media.* Auckland: SKY Network Television
20 Ltd.
- 21 Television New Zealand, 2008. *Submission to Ministry of Heritage Regulatory*
22 *Review*. Auckland: Television New Zealand.
- 23 Thompson, P., 2004. Unto God or unto Caesar? Television after the TVNZ Char-
24 ter. *Communication Journal of New Zealand*, 5, pp. 66–101.
- 25 TV Works, 2008. *Submission to the Ministry for Culture and Heritage Review on*
26 *Digital Broadcasting*. Auckland: TV Works.
- 27
- 28
- 29
- 30
- 31
- 32
- 33
- 34
- 35
- 36
- 37
- 38
- 39
- 40
- 41
- 42
- 43
- 44
- 45
- 46

11 The Political Economy of Sport Broadcasting in the Arab World

Mahfoud Amara

INTRODUCTION

This chapter examines the most recent political-economic developments associated with the expansive sport broadcasting industry in the Arab region today. Rowe (2004, p. 386) has rightly argued that:

television sport has moved significantly from periodic nation-building communications of major sports events to the staple fare of public and commercial broadcasters (for the latter representing a key means of capturing audiences and so of advertising revenue). It has now become the most prized content for the attraction of subscription revenue.

Similar trends are evident in the Arab world, although rather atypically they are being led by a state-owned Aljazeera Sport Network that now distributes a total of 12 subscription and four free-to-air channels. By June 2012, Aljazeera Sport will have two more subscription channels (under the name of BeIN Sport), broadcasting from France. Despite the radical expansion of sport content on offer in the digital era, this chapter questions whether the ongoing commercialization of sport broadcasting is a positive development, or, instead, has limited the viewing rights of sports fans and citizens in the Arab World who are now obliged to pay to watch their national soccer team compete in continental and international competitions. Such restrictions will continue, at least for the near future, as Aljazeera Sport has purchased the broadcasting rights for the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region of the African Cup of Nations and the International Federation of Association Football (FIFA) World Cup until 2022.

In terms of structure, the first section of this chapter provides some political-economic background on the development of the broadcasting sector in the Arab World. The second section investigates the emergence of the now-dominant Arab satellite (public and commercial) sport channels. Finally, I reflect critically on the increasing commercialization of sport broadcasting in the Arab world, developments that are placing unprecedented limits on the cultural rights of Arab sports fans to have live access to popular

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34

1 televised sports content. As I note, however, these new sets of social rela-
2 tions and the ascension of consumerist values are being actively contested
3 by sports fans and the broader citizenry throughout the Arab world.
4
5

6 **THE DEVELOPMENT OF SATELLITE**
7 **TELEVISION IN THE ARAB WORLD**
8

9 Harmon explains that:

10 Before 1990, when most Arabic television stations were state-controlled
11 monopolies with limited transnational reach, it would not make much
12 sense to consider Arab television in terms of materialism. Programs, deliv-
13 ered by land-based transmitters, generally followed the political line of
14 the state; rarely delivering programming that could be called daring . . .
15 Free to air satellite TV networks, however, soon changed the media land-
16 scape. Dubai-based Middle East Broadcasting Centre (MBC) debuted in
17 1991, Lebanese-based Future TV in 1995, Qatar based Aljazeera and
18 Lebanese LBCI in 1996. The Syrian-owned, London-based ANN started
19 in 1997. Lebanese al-Manar and NBN both came onboard during 2000,
20 as did Tunisian al-Mustaqilla. Zayn-TV and Egypt's Dream TV started
21 one year later. In 2002 al-Mihwar and al-Khalifa joined the crowded
22 satellite offerings, as did al-Arabiya in 2003. (2008)

23
24 According to the Arab advisor Group's recent report on satellite television
25 in the Arab world, by April 2011 the total number of free-to-air satellite
26 channels reached 538 on Arabsat, Nilesat and Noorsat,¹ an increase of 10.5
27 percent over the number of channels in April 2010. Over two thirds of the
28 operational free-to-air satellite channels are now privately owned. In terms
29 of geographical distribution, Egypt hosts 17.6 percent of the fully launched
30 and operational free-to-air channels. Saudi Arabia and the UAE follow
31 with, respectively, 17.0 percent and 14.4 percent. The Middle East Broad-
32 casting Centre (MBC), whose Chairman and Chief Executive is Sheikh
33 Waleed Bin Ibrahim Al Brahim, is the leading free-to-air Arab news and
34 entertainment channel.²

35 International television networks are also present in the region, directly
36 as partners with Arab television networks, such as Fox International
37 Channels with Rotana³ (Fox Movies and Fox Series Arabia), National
38 Geographic with Abu Dhabi Media Company (National Geographic Abu
39 Dhabi) and MTV Networks International with Arab Media Group (MTV
40 Arabia and Nickelodeon Arabia), or indirectly, including France24, BBC
41 World and Chinese Central Television, and Skynews. Indeed, all of these
42 latter networks have launched their own Arabic news channels.

43 The boom in the media industry in the Arab region explains the strategy
44 of the Dubai city-state in building Dubai Media City (DMC). Costing an
45
46

estimated US\$700 million to build, it was designed to be a hub for local and global media agencies and an international center for the converging media production, publishing and broadcasting industries.⁴ According to Walters *et al.* (2006, p. 80), “more than 550 media companies, including global giants such as CNN, Reuters, Sony Broadcast & Professional, McGraw Hill Publishing, Bertelsmann, and MBC, along with regional companies and new start-ups, call DMC home.” Today, the Arabian Gulf countries own a vast media empire and control most of the premier Arabic-language satellite programmes. As such, these countries have moved to become active participants in international satellite broadcasting and competitors to the traditional centers of cultural production in the Arab world (Sakr 1999), as well to other media cities in the region such as Jordan Media City and Egyptian Media Production City.

A further growing niche in the satellite television industry is pay-TV. According to a recent report, the development of pay-TV has gone hand-in-hand with the expansion of the advertising market in the region:

Driven by consolidation through the recently announced merger of the major players Orbit and Showtime, the Pay-TV market is expected to double almost to 4 million households by 2014. Advertising in particular is forecast to grow at a rate of 8 percent between 2009 and 2013, making it one of the fastest growing regions in the world, close to China and India. Even in the first half of 2009, during the difficult economic times that the world has been facing, advertising in the MENA region grew 11 percent from 2008. (Value Partners 2010, p. 24)

It is worth emphasizing that sport has been the main driver of subscriptions for pay-TV in the Arab world. According to a recent study by the Arab Advisor Group (2012):

By February 2012, the four Pay TV providers offered 143 channels. OSN had the highest number with 100 channels (including the 3 pay-per-view channels and On Demand channel),⁵ Abu Dhabi Sports came in second with 18 channels, while Al Jazeera Sports+ provided 16 channels dedicated for all sorts of sports events. Al Majd TV provided 9 encoded channels.

Clearly, sport has played a vital role in the establishment and, indeed, expansion of pay-TV services, mimicking similar patterns in other locales. Andrews, for example, has pointed to the unique qualities that popular sport content offers in the competitive digital era:

It is relatively inexpensive and easy to produce (certainly compared with equivalent programming lasting upwards of two hours); it is

practically the only live television genre involving uncertain outcomes; it has historically and culturally entrenched popular appeal [. . .] So, in purely pecuniary terms (and that is primarily what they are motivated by) live sport coverage is an attractive proposition for the major networks. (2004, p. 6)

As discussed in the subsequent section, all of these developments provide evidence of the heightened competition between commercial and state-owned television channels for the control of exclusive rights to sport content in the Arab World.

THE ‘COMMERCIALIZATION’ OF SPORT CHANNELS IN THE ARAB WORLD

As noted earlier, the number of Arab state-run and private free-to-air and pay-TV sports channels has significantly increased in the last ten years. These channels offer diverse sports programs, debates, documentaries, and national, regional and international sports competitions, ranging from traditional sports such as camel and horse racing to extreme sports such as the Offshore Powerboat Championships. Nearly every Arab country has its own state-run sport network, including Dubai Sport (UAE), Erriadia (Morocco), Iraqiya Sport (Iraq), Bahrain Sport (Bahrain), Saudia Sport (Saudi Arabia), and Nile Sport (Egypt). Interestingly, in contrast to many North American countries where state-owned and commercial free-to-air networks struggle to compete with satellite and subscription channels (such as the BBC, ITV and SKY in Britain; France Télévisions, TF1 and Canal+ in France), the sport broadcasting market in the Middle East and North Africa is dominated by well-financed state networks (like Aljazeera Sport in Qatar, and Abu Dhabi Sport in the United Arab Emirates).

Thanks to a financial donation by the Emir of Qatar, share capital from private investors as well as the Qatar government, Aljazeera was launched in 1996, following the closure of the BBC’s Arabic language station, a joint venture with a Qatar media corporation. Initially an Arabic news and current affairs satellite TV channel, Aljazeera has subsequently expanded into a network with several outlets and, from 2003, many specialized sport channels. In 2009, to cement its dominance and restrict its competition in the sport broadcasting market, Aljazeera Sport took over ART (Arab Radio and TV) Sport network (previously owned by a Saudi Businessman Sheikh Salah Kamal) for an estimated value of more than US\$2 billion. It was the biggest media takeover deal in the history of the Middle East, one that contributed to the inflation of prices for popular sport content since other television networks in the region such as Abu Dhabi Sport and Orbit-Showtime remain active competitors for the broadcasting rights of major sports events. These include the most popular European soccer leagues,

| | |
|---|----|
| especially the Union of European Football Associations (UEFA), Champions and Europa Leagues, Spanish <i>La Liga</i> , Italian <i>Serie A</i> and the English Premier League, as well as other major international sport competitions such as the Olympic Games, the FIFA World Cup, the National Basketball Association (NBA) and Formula One. To distinguish their content, many of these networks are investing in new broadcasting technology such as High Definition (HD) and 3D. Aljazeera Sport used the 2010 FIFA World Cup to launch its 3D broadcasting for the first time in the Arab World. | 1 |
| Abu Dhabi Sport, owned by the Abu Dhabi Media Company (ADMC), which managed to snatch the right to broadcast the English League to the MENA region (from 2010 to 2013), is also broadcasting in High Definition, in partnership with the Netherlands-based media group Endemol (Endemol Sport and Endemol Middle East). The Abu Dhabi sport package encompasses eight HD sport channels, including Premier League TV, the Official 24/7 Premier League TV channel with LIVE English studio for all Premier league game days (380 in total). ADMC offers access to its channels through satellite broadcasting on Nilesat and Athlentic Bird, in partnership with Humax Satellite Box, or through cable and IPTV subscriptions with local providers in the Arab World, particularly in the Arabian Peninsula (Etisalat in the United Arab Emirates, Nue Tel in Bahrain, Qatar Telecom (Qtel) in Qatar, Saudi Telecom Company in Saudi Arabia), or online on admcsport.com. Arab sports television networks are also increasingly employing renowned sport stars to analyze different sport competitions. To enrich its English program in commentary and analysis of major football leagues and competitions, Aljazeera sport has recently employed Gary Lineker, Ruud Gullit, Terry Venables, and Alan Shearer, and contracted ITV (the English commercial free-to-air channel) for the production of its international sport programs in English. The aim obviously is for the network to widen its market share of the growing English-speaking expatriate communities in the Arab World. Similarly, Abu Dhabi Media Company, the owner of Abu Dhabi sport, is working in partnership with IMG Sports Media for the production of the English Premier League, including pitch side reporters, pre-and-post-game interviews, reports, and game analysis from the on-site studio, as well as daily sports news bulletins (AMEinfo.com, 2010). | 2 |
| It is important to note that the involvement of foreign sport channels in the Arab market, as pure competitors rather than partners with Arab state-owned or commercial sport channels, has been minimal to date. The private French network, Canal+, signed a contract with the Algerian Football Federation to cover the Algerian national football team's friendly matches in preparation for the 2010 FIFA World Cup, and with local state-run television stations in Morocco and Algeria to broadcast parts of their domestic soccer league matches. However, Canal+'s strategy of competing with Arab sports channels to attract subscribers, particularly among Francophone viewers in North Africa (Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco), was finally abandoned due to problems with protecting its scrambled channels from piracy, | 3 |
| | 4 |
| | 5 |
| | 6 |
| | 7 |
| | 8 |
| | 9 |
| | 10 |
| | 11 |
| | 12 |
| | 13 |
| | 14 |
| | 15 |
| | 16 |
| | 17 |
| | 18 |
| | 19 |
| | 20 |
| | 21 |
| | 22 |
| | 23 |
| | 24 |
| | 25 |
| | 26 |
| | 27 |
| | 28 |
| | 29 |
| | 30 |
| | 31 |
| | 32 |
| | 33 |
| | 34 |
| | 35 |
| | 36 |
| | 37 |
| | 38 |
| | 39 |
| | 40 |
| | 41 |
| | 42 |
| | 43 |
| | 44 |
| | 45 |
| | 46 |

and low subscription levels. Canal+'s relatively high subscription rates and the absence of other popular sport content controlled by Aljazeera Sport (for example, the Spanish and Italian football leagues, UEFA Champions and Europa Leagues, and the NBA) simply made the venture unprofitable (Amara 2012).

Instead, thanks to the Western economic recession and the network's significant capitalization, Aljazeera Sport is actively seeking to expand into the European market, beginning in France. Following Qatar Sport Investment's takeover of the French football club Paris Saint Germain, Aljazeera Sport acquired the rights to broadcast eight matches per week of the French domestic league between 2012 and 2016. The Qatari group also obtained the rights to the UEFA Champions Europa Leagues from 2012–2015, as well as some of the top games from Spain, Germany and Italy. Canal+ still has the premium rights to French soccer league matches until 2018, the thirteen first choice games from the Champions League through to 2015, as well as the rugby union until 2016. However, "French fans who want to watch the 'El Classico' match-ups between Barcelona and Real Madrid will now have to subscribe to Al Jazeera after it surpassed Canal+ for the Spain rights" (Reuters 2012). Aljazeera Sport is also planning to expand its investment to Spanish, English and German markets.⁶ Aljazeera Sport launched in August 2012 two more subscription-based channels in the US (BeIN Sport 1 US and BeIN Sport 2 US). These two channels are specialized in broadcasting in the US, in English and Spanish, football (soccer) matches of major leagues, including the Spanish *La Liga*, France's premier division, Italy's *Serie A*, the *Copa America* tournament, and South American World Cup qualifiers for the FIFA 2014 tournament in Brazil (Multi-channel news 2012).

While the expansionary ambitions of Aljazeera Sport—and to a lesser extent Abu Dhabi sport—have received mixed reactions among governments and publics in the Arab World, as discussed in the following section, Aljazeera's entry into the European market in general, and the French market in particular, has taken many specialists and football fans by surprise. These developments raise many issues that are central to this collection, and I will return to them in the conclusion.

THE BATTLE OVER ACCESS TO THE 2006 FIFA WORLD CUP

The 2006 FIFA World Cup marked the first time in the history of the Arab region that telecasts of football matches, without doubt the most popular sport events, were not under direct state (Ministries of Culture, Media and Communication) control. The liberalization of the media in the Arab region has resulted in phenomenal increases in the cost of television rights for domestic and international sports events, threatening the viewing rights of Arab fans to have live, free-to-air access to popular sport content.

| | |
|--|----|
| These developments are even threatening the ability of fans to watch their national teams compete, a problem that may soon be extended to domestic football leagues. | 1 |
| | 2 |
| | 3 |
| For example ART Sport (before the takeover by Aljazeera Sport) paid US\$220 million for the exclusive rights to broadcast the 2006, 2010 and 2014 FIFA World Cups. In addition to paying US\$100 million for the rights to the 2006 football FIFA World Cup, the channel also paid US\$27 million for high quality studios to broadcast its daily seventeen hours of live programming. In exchange, public channels in the Middle East and North Africa were offered the possibility of broadcasting highlights of the matches (twenty-thirty minutes) for US\$300,000–400,000. The general public, meanwhile, could purchase individual subscriptions to watch the FIFA World Cup at a cost of US\$200–400. ⁷ The high subscription fees, however, provoked a strong sense of outrage from fans and analysts, thus forcing Arab governments and political leaders, as well as some religious scholars (<i>Ulama</i>), to intervene. In Algeria, the state, under the patronage of President Bouteflika, subsidized 360,000 ART subscription cards, which were made available at post offices around the country at the price of US\$28, the cost of one month's subscription to the ART World Cup channels. The King of Jordan, meanwhile, paid for twenty three giant screens to be installed in different parts of the kingdom to allow less affluent citizens to follow the World Cup. The Moroccan government, under the patronage of the King Mohammed VI, negotiated with ART's representative in North Africa to guarantee telecasts of the opening match, and the semi-final and final games on free-to-air channels. Concerns over ART's monopoly of television rights for North African and Middle East regions were also extended to religious institutions. There were even some Islamic scholars who declared ART's 'monopoly' to be <i>Haram</i> , or unacceptable in Islamic <i>Shari'ah</i> terms. Other scholars declared that both ART's monopoly and the illegal decoding of ART's digital scrambled cards (understood as a form of theft) were <i>Haram</i> . Finally, some scholars stated that the origin of the monopoly came from FIFA and not ART, and thus the principles of an unlawful monopoly in Islamic terms (for instance, monopoly over basic needs such as food) was not applicable to ART and to football matches (which were considered as entertainment) (Amara 2007). | 4 |
| | 5 |
| | 6 |
| | 7 |
| | 8 |
| | 9 |
| | 10 |
| | 11 |
| | 12 |
| | 13 |
| | 14 |
| | 15 |
| | 16 |
| | 17 |
| | 18 |
| | 19 |
| | 20 |
| | 21 |
| | 22 |
| | 23 |
| | 24 |
| | 25 |
| | 26 |
| | 27 |
| | 28 |
| | 29 |
| | 30 |
| | 31 |
| | 32 |
| | 33 |
| | 34 |
| Some Saudi media commentators accused the powerful Arab media empires, including the Qatari-funded news channel Aljazeera and the US-funded channel Al-Hurra TV, of turning Arabs against Saudi Arabia by portraying the ART group, owned by a Saudi businessman, "as an oppressor." The 'Others' in this sense were the Saudis, accused by members of the Arab media of being rich and thus able to access the (digitally scrambled) World Cup channels provided by ART Sport, while less affluent citizens from other regions were excluded (Amara 2007). To resist the scrambling of live sport content, internet radio with Arabic commentary was used to 'double' Eastern European free-to-air television channels, which were accessible through European satellites (e.g., Hotbird, Astra). In North Africa, for | 35 |
| | 36 |
| | 37 |
| | 38 |
| | 39 |
| | 40 |
| | 41 |
| | 42 |
| | 43 |
| | 44 |
| | 45 |
| | 46 |

example, there was no need to access radio broadcasts in Arabic because audiences were able to receive the illegally decrypted signal of TSR, the French-speaking Swiss satellite channel, or by using old analogue receivers to watch the matches on French channels M6 and TF1.⁸

As a reaction to increasing Arab discontent with this new quasi-monopoly over the broadcasts of an important mega-event such as the FIFA World Cup, and inspired by existing legislation in Europe and Australia, Malkawi has suggested that Arab countries could enact laws that restrict pay-TV networks from acquiring the exclusive rights to certain listed soccer events, unless a national free-to-air broadcaster also has the right to televise the event:

The governments of Arab countries could list soccer events, which televising should, in its opinion, be available free to the general public. However, there must be conditions for listing any soccer event. For example, the list should include soccer events of national significance to Arab viewers that have usually been televised by national television broadcasters. The list should not operate retrospectively and should only restrict the future acquisition rights to those soccer events by pay television. Moreover, the governments must take into account complex issues of social equity, broadcasting development, and competition policy. (2007, p. 606)

There were also some attempts by Members of Parliament in Egypt and in Jordan to put pressure on their governments and the Arab States Broadcasting Union (ARBU),⁹ to enforce legislation that protects Arab viewers from forms of monopoly by commercial or state-owned channels, and their rights to live-to-air access of major sports competitions such as the FIFA World Cup and the Olympic Games. However, history can repeat itself and the Arab world faced similar issues with the 2010 FIFA World Cup. In this instance, Aljazeera Sport had taken over the ART sport network and with it the rights to almost all major international sport events, including the 2010 and 2014 FIFA World Cups as well as the African Cup of Nations from 2010 to 2016.

The aggressive marketing campaign to maintain the popularity of its brand among Arab customers did not, however, prevent Aljazeera Sport from experiencing the deliberate jamming of its transmission signal on Nilesat and Arabsat beginning on the first day of the World Cup, thus forcing the Qatar-based channel to seek alternative frequencies for its broadcasts of the competition. Finally, after more than three months of investigation, it appeared that the Aljazeera World Cup broadcasts were jammed from a location near al-Salt in Jordan, north-west of the capital, Amman (Black 2010). The targeting of the Aljazeera Sport channel was extended to its news channel, this time for political reasons, as a reaction to the extensive coverage of recent events in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Yemen, and Syria. Aljazeera (and Qatar) has been accused of encouraging protests in Arab streets by creating a wider perspective of movements which were essentially

local (Amara 2012). Its sport broadcasting, therefore, is caught up in wider political conflicts in the Arab world.

The Qatari-based channel has extended its broadcast rights agreement with FIFA for the 2018 FIFA world cup Russia and the 2022 FIFA World Cup Qatar. The agreement covers cable, satellite, terrestrial, mobile, and broadband internet transmission across twenty-three territories and countries in the Middle East and North Africa. The value of the deal was estimated to be in the region of US\$1B. According to the FIFA webpage, "Al Jazeera Sport has made a commitment to FIFA that the matches of the 2022 FIFA World Cup will be widely accessible for football fans across the Middle East and North Africa." Whether this promise will be kept is uncertain given the issues that surrounded the 2010 World Cup, and FIFA's dubious power to enforce provision of accessible telecasts for all Arab football fans. As the sole owner of the broadcasting rights for the region and despite being state-owned, Aljazeera sport has established supremacy in controlling access to matches and in shaping subscription packages which suit its commercial interests and vision.

CONCLUSION

The liberalization of Arab media space and the region's ongoing integration into global consumerist society has, of course, not resulted in the majority of the Arab population having 'free' access to television, even to most popular entertainment, sport. The on-screen absence of a national team is resented by many as a severe blow to what is still considered an emblematic conception of sovereignty and citizenship (Bedjaoui 2004), as effectively happened for the 2006 and 2010 World Cups, and may, indeed, continue in the future unless sterner political measures are taken. Indeed, Aljazeera Sport has secured the broadcasting rights to the FIFA World Cup to the Middle East and North Africa until 2022, an important year for the region as Qatar will be the first Arab and Muslim Country to host this mega event. In the absence of legislative protection of the rights of Arab viewers, that also preserve the interests of state-run and private sport channels, a virtual battle is taking place over the 'decoding' and 'scrambling' of broadcast signals. These are battles between hackers and internet users, on the one hand, and regional, international sport channels, as well as media security companies, on the other. Furthermore, in today's climate of Arab uprisings, the introduction of subsidies for only minimal live television access to football matches, and the lack of containment of a growing black market for television smart cards and satellite receiver boxes, is becoming, for some Arab governments, a sensitive political matter.

The deficit in coordination between state terrestrial television stations, organized under the Arab States Broadcasting Union (ARBU), and the inefficiency or absence of non-governmental organizations to protect Arab

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46

viewers' rights illuminates, why public discourse has been dominated either by religious morality or political ideology to legitimize, or delegitimize the commercialization of satellite sport broadcasting. However, the recent youth-led (also digital-led) movement that has been defined around broader and more enduring values of social justice can contribute in shaping the debate on cultural citizenship and viewing rights in the Arab World.

The liberalization of the media industry, the increasing financial burden on state-owned terrestrial free-to-air channels to acquire rights for major sports events and the immaturity of the IPTV and cable TV markets in the region (with the exception of the Arabian Peninsula), have all worked to facilitate Aljazeera Sport's (and, to a lesser extent, Abu Dhabi Sport's and OrbitShowtime's) dominance of the sport broadcasting industry in the Arab World. As noted earlier, Aljazeera Sport is now looking to invest internationally. However, the 'rules of the game' are different in Europe and in the US, and Aljazeera Sport will face a number of challenges in its international endeavor. For instance, despite Aljazeera Sport's competitive rates (estimated at 11 Euro a month for subscription to its two French sport channels)¹⁰, Canal+, its main competitor in France, has secured the rights for Top 14 French rugby and the biggest French and European soccer games for the next four years (Reuters 2012). Also, in contrast to the Arab world (so far), a stronger European legislation protects the viewing rights of sports fans and citizens. Last but not least, Qatar's investment strategy in Europe has been greeted with suspicion by European financial and political elites, as is illustrated in the following statement:

These people do not present themselves as wanting a return on their money. It is political—they want their country to be known [...] From an economic point of view, [Al Jazeera] act unreasonably. The fact is that their priority is Qatar's influence in the world. (Randal 2011)

One could argue that this statement illustrates the (Orientalist) fear that permeates some Western media and political circles with respect to the emergence of a serious competitor, at least in the global sport broadcasting industry, from the Arab region. On the other hand, it is legitimate to ask whether the Aljazeera sport business model in the Arab region and beyond is financially sustainable. As for Arab viewers, they are torn between admiring the development and the quality of the new digital era of broadcasting (including sport) in the Arab World and challenging the potential of the replacement of the dominance of 'one-party regimes' by the market.

NOTES

1. Arabsat was founded in 1976 by the twenty-one member-states of the Arab League. It carries over 400 television channels and 160 Radio stations. Nilesat is a state owned Egyptian Satellite Company. Established in 1996, Nilesat

| | |
|--|----|
| broadcasts over 600 television channels and over 100 digital radio channels (76 percent are free-to-air and the remaining are encrypted). Noorsat is a private provider for video broadcasting and Telecom services. Noorsat satellites (five in total) are transmitting over 200 television and radio channels that serve a broad audience of millions of viewers from East Asia, Middle East, North Africa, and parts of Europe. | 1 |
| 2. A Saudi-run company broadcasting, from Dubai, a mix of free-to-air news and entertainment channels (ten in total) via satellite. | 2 |
| 3. Rotana group (a mix of Music, entertainment and cinema channels) is owned by the Saudi Prince Al-Walid Bin Talal, who is a nephew of the Saudi king, 29th in the Forbes list of the world's billionaires with a fortune estimated at US\$18 billion, and is also the third largest shareholder in Murdoch's News Corp., with 5.46 percent of voting shares. | 3 |
| 4. Dubai also has other business parks devoted to media, technology, and knowledge as well as to sport: Dubai Studio City, Dubai Health Care City, Dubailand, Dubai Humanitarian City, Dubai Knowledge Village, Dubio-tech, Dubai Industrial City, Dubai Studio City, and Dubai Sport City. | 4 |
| 5. Orbit has recently joined forces with Showtime to form the OrbitShowtime (owned by Panther Media Group, a company registered in the Dubai International Financial Centre (DIFC) and equally owned by the Orbit Group, which is part of Mawarid Group, and KIPCO, The Kuwait Projects Company), with seventy-five premium channels broadcast in the Middle East and North Africa. | 5 |
| 6. Al Jazeera's opportunity in Spain emerged after the country's major commercial television stations, Antena 3 de Television SA (A3TV) and Mediaset Espana Comunicacion SA (TL5), threatened not to bid in June for the soccer league broadcast rights if rates were not dropped by half (Dorsey 2012). | 6 |
| 7. The prices varied from one country to another. In the Gulf countries, the cost of an individual subscription to ART for the duration of the World Cup was US\$426, while the cost in Egypt was US\$213, in Iraq US\$175–355, and in Palestine US\$400. | 7 |
| 8. The total switch over from analogue to digital signals in France, and in England, was not finalized until the beginning of 2012. | 8 |
| 9. The equivalent of the Directorate General of Competition Policy in the European Commission, the ASBU's role is to maintain contacts and negotiations with rights owners, sponsors and advertisers so as to ensure that ASBU members (i.e. members of the League of Arab States) access rights to cover regional and international sports events. | 9 |
| 10. In November 2012 BeIN Sport announced that the number of subscribers to Al Jazeera's French sports venture has passed one million. | 10 |
| REFERENCES | 36 |
| Amara, M., 2007. When the Arab World was Mobilised around the FIFA 2006 World Cup. <i>The Journal of North African Studies</i> , 12(4), pp. 417–438. | 37 |
| Amara, M., 2012. <i>Sport, Politics and Society in the Arab World</i> . London: Palgrave and Macmillan. | 38 |
| AMEinfo.com, 2010. Abu Dhabi Media Company Partners with IMG to Produce English Premier League Programming for Mena Region [online]. April 26. Available from: http://www.ameinfo.com/230750.html [Accessed 24 June 2011]. | 39 |
| Andrews, D.L., 2004. Sport in the Late Capitalist Moment. In: Slack, T., ed., <i>The Commercialisation of Sport</i> . London: Frank Cass. | 40 |
| | 41 |
| | 42 |
| | 43 |
| | 44 |
| | 45 |
| | 46 |

- 1 Arab Advisor Group, 2012. Satellite Pay TV Operators in the Arab World [online].
2 Available from: <http://www.arabadvisors.com/Pressers/presser-010512.htm>
3 [Accessed 4 April 2012].
- 4 Arab Advisor Group, 2011. Satellite TV Channels in the Arab World [online].
5 Available from: www.arabadvisors.com/reports/item/12857 [Accessed 30 June
2011].
- 6 Bedjaoui, A., 2004. Arab and European Satellites over the Maghreb [online]. *Trans-*
7 *national Broadcasting Studies Journal*, 12(March–May). Available from: <http://www.tbsjournal.com/html12/maghreb.htm> [Accessed 10 October 2006].
8
- 9 Black, I., 2010. Al-Jazeera World Cup Broadcasts Were Jammed from Jordan
10 [online]. *The Guardian*. September 29. Available from: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/media/2010/sep/29/al-jazeera-world-cup-jordan> [Accessed 1 October
11 2010].
- 12 Dorsey, J., 2012. Spain's Economic Crisis Creates Opportunity for Al Jazeera
13 [online]. April 12. Available from: <http://www.beyondthepitch.net/articles/post/index.cfm/2012/04/12/spains-economic-crisis-creates-opportunity-for-al-jazeera> [Accessed 1 May 2012].
14
- 15 Harmon, MD., 2008. Arab Youth, Television and “Affluenza” [online]. *Arab, Media and Society*, September(6). Available from: <http://www.arabmediasociety.com/?article=691> [Accessed 15 October 2009].
16
- 17 Malkawi, B., 2007. Broadcasting the 2006 World Cup: The Right of Arab Fans
18 versus ART Exclusivity. *Fordham Intellectual Property, Media and Entertainment Law Journal*, 1(3), pp. 591–609.
19
- 20 Multichannel news, 2012. Al Jazeera to Kick Off Pair of Soccer Channels in U.S.
21 this August [online]. May 15. Available from: http://www.multichannel.com/article/484698-Al_Jazeera_to_Kick_Off_Pair_of_Soccer_Channels_in_U_S_this_August.php [Accessed 27 July 2012].
22
- 23 Randal, C., 2011. Al Jazeera Sports TV Sets Sights on Europe [online]. *The National*
24 (the UAE) January 26. Available from: <http://www.thenational.ae/news/world/europe/al-jazeera-sports-tv-sets-sights-on-europe> [Accessed 1 May 2012].
25
- 26 Reuters, 2012. Al Jazeera Sees Sporting Chance of Global Media Brand [online].
27 April 2. Available from: <http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/04/02/us-al-jazeera-sports-idUSBRE831O720120402> [Accessed 1 May 2012].
28
- 29 Rowe, D., 2004. Watching Brief: Cultural Citizenship and Viewing Rights. *Sport in Society*, 7(3), pp. 385–402.
30
- 31 Sakr, N., 1999. Satellite Television and Development in the Middle East [online].
32 *Middle East Report*, 210 (Spring). Available from: <http://www.merip.org/mer/mer210/mer210.html> [Accessed 30 June 2010].
33
- 34 Value Partners, 2010. TV Production: The Latest Opportunity in the Region [online].
35 *Value Partners Newsletter*. January. Available from: http://www.valuepartners.com/downloads/PDF_Comunicati/nl_080101_marhaba_to_the_world_mena_january_issue.pdf [Accessed 15 October 2010].
36
- 37 Walters T.N., Alma, K., and Walters, L.M., 2006. Miracle or Mirage: Is Develop-
38 ment Sustainable in the United Arab Emirates? *Middle East Review of Interna-
tional Affairs*, 10(3), pp. 77–91.
39
- 40
- 41
- 42
- 43
- 44
- 45
- 46

12 The Global Popular and the Local Obscure

Televised Sport in Contemporary Singapore

Callum Gilmour

INTRODUCTION

The consumption of professional sport has traditionally been associated in many Western contexts with a very topophilic mode of identification, whereby team allegiance is related to geographic identities and passed on in an intergenerational manner via familial interaction. However, in many of the emerging economies of Asia (such as Singapore), the identification with localized professional sports competitions has been actively marginalized by “the media-enabled aggregation of substantial global (sport) fan bases” (Rowe and Gilmour 2009, p. 171). These Asian fan bases of globally diffused sports commodities like the English Premier League (EPL) and (in English translation) the International Federation of Association Football (FIFA) World Cup have been described by Giulianotti and Robertson as “self-inventing transnational fans” (2007, p. 177), and their fandom is marked by its link to a very visual form of consumption which, in developing nations in Asia, has been related to a desire to embrace ‘modernity’ and display an engagement with global cosmopolitanism (Gerke 2000, Chua 2003). The aspiration to embrace global commodity signs in many parts of Asia has, in turn, seen the region “become a prime target for the most powerful sports leagues, teams and media conglomerates” (Rowe and Gilmour 2010, p. 1530). For television viewers in the relatively small media market of Singapore, the escalating costs of premium sports rights, a market-centric regulatory environment, a historically ambivalent attitude to sport, and a tradition of very minimal free-to-air television coverage of sport, has combined to produce a mediascape where televised sport is largely the province of pay-TV platforms. Televised sport in Singapore, then, is both predominantly foreign in origin, and available via subscription television to which only half the population has access (Jenna *et al.* 2010). Singapore also has little-to-no history of ‘classic’ public broadcasting, and the ‘quasi’-public/free-market broadcasters that dominate viewing in the city-state have traditionally devoted little of their schedules to popular sports content. With no government-endorsed list of protected sports events, sports broadcasting in Singapore has been left to the vagaries of the market, thereby

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34

1 marginalizing discourses that promote access to live telecasts of sport as a
2 right of cultural citizenship.

3 This chapter examines sports broadcasting in the Southeast Asian city-
4 state of Singapore where policy intervention has been limited to cross-car-
5 riage measures designed to protect the financial viability of state-linked
6 telecommunications providers, and where discourses promoting the rela-
7 tionship between televised sport and cultural citizenship are complicated
8 and, as noted above, challenged by the popularity of Western sports com-
9 modities like the EPL. Media regulation influencing sports broadcasting in
10 Singapore has, in fact, been primarily limited to government responses to
11 some unforeseen effects of market liberalization in the Singaporean sub-
12 subscription television industry. In particular, increasing content fragmenta-
13 tion and content rights inflation resulted in a situation whereby competing
14 platforms were locked in an intensive contest to secure premium interna-
15 tional sports rights, a process that escalated content costs for platforms and
16 rapidly increased subscription costs for consumers. These circumstances,
17 as will be discussed below, very nearly resulted in Singapore being refused
18 televised access to the 2010 FIFA World Cup and led to a decisive policy
19 intervention by the Singaporean government's media regulatory body, the
20 Media Development Authority (MDA), in the form of a 'cross carriage mea-
21 sure'. These provisions have, in turn, sparked intensive debate with regard
22 to their legality, overt protectionism and purported tendency to facilitate
23 market collusion and price fixing between Singapore's two major subscrip-
24 tion television platforms. In addition, the rising costs of access to sports
25 content in Singapore has catalyzed a nascent public movement concerned
26 with more equitable access to mediated sport.

27 28 SINGAPORE: NEGOTIATING EAST AND WEST 29

30 The Southeast Asian city-state of Singapore is renowned for its rapid eco-
31 nomic development from a small British colony in the 19th century, through
32 its tumultuous partition from Malaysia in the 1960s, to its present status as
33 a 21st-century global services industry hub. Today, Singapore's population
34 is close to five million, with a distinctly multi-ethnic character consisting
35 of 75 percent Chinese, 14 percent Malay, 8.8 percent Indian and 2.2 per-
36 cent 'others' (Peng 2007, p. 1). Contemporary Singapore is typically envis-
37 aged through two very different competing paradigms; it is either derided
38 for its culture of authoritarianism, censorship, social sterility, and a per-
39 ceived lax regard for human rights, or venerated as a model for harmonious
40 multi-ethnic societies, economic transformation and competitiveness,
41 meritocracy, its highly educated population and a high standard of living.
42 Singapore's economic survival as a small island with few natural resources
43 was the direct result of its integration into the circuits of global capital-
44 ism and its emergence as a world leader in service-based industries such as
45

| | |
|---|----|
| finance and logistics, marking the city-state's distinct transformation from "a swampy fishing village to the world's most technologically modern city" (Neher 1999, p. 39). | 1 |
| | 2 |
| | 3 |
| This rapid progress—itself a key national discourse—saw Singapore embarking on a process of globalizing its economy, its population, and its culture to make the nation relevant to the needs of the rest of the world" (Kluver and Webber 2003, p. 371). Such an economic agenda has largely been engineered by Singapore's ruling political party, the People's Action Party (PAP), which has enjoyed an uninterrupted run of power since 1959, and whose 'success' is based on a "singular motivation to improve the material life of Singaporeans through (the) expansion of material consumption" (Chua 2003, p. 3) and the repression of political opposition. Associated with this agenda has been the unification of the Chinese majority with the Indian and Malay minorities into a singular national identity through a discourse of "survival" or "triumph over adversity" (Kluver and Webber 2003, p. 384) and a "politicized ideology that (views) economic growth and development as the best guarantee of social and political stability" (Lee, T. 2010, p. 4). | 4 |
| | 5 |
| | 6 |
| | 7 |
| | 8 |
| | 9 |
| | 10 |
| | 11 |
| | 12 |
| | 13 |
| | 14 |
| | 15 |
| | 16 |
| | 17 |
| | 18 |
| As a result of the relative prosperity enjoyed by many of its citizens, there has been a considerable embrace of Western-style consumptive practices, often summed up satirically by Singaporeans themselves, as the 'five c's': cash, cars, condominiums, credit cards, and club memberships (Chua 2003). The pursuit of these key signifiers of conspicuous consumption has, incidentally, also troubled the Singaporean government, which has recently sought to promote a form of "non-individualistic capitalism" (Chang 2003, p. 86) tempered by Oriental communitarian control (Chambers <i>et al.</i> 1995). Consequently, within contemporary Singapore there exists an increasingly potent dialogue surrounding a collective forfeit of altruism and social responsibility, and the pursuit of individual wealth. In response, the PAP has promoted an 'Asian values' discourse as a form of 'cultural ballast' (Chua 2003) designed to reaffirm and maintain social practices that serve to sustain government policies that are aligned to a developmentalist authoritarian agenda. These Asian values, sometimes described as 'shared values' in Singapore, include "society before self, family as the basic unit of society, community support for the individual, consensus instead of contention and racial and religious harmony" (Rahim 1998, p. 63). For Chua these are values that reinforce "the community-oriented culture of Singaporeans" while dampening the adoption of global/Western values and practices that are deemed to be 'alien' or incompatible with traditional Asian cultures (2003, p. 24). | 19 |
| | 20 |
| | 21 |
| | 22 |
| | 23 |
| | 24 |
| | 25 |
| | 26 |
| | 27 |
| | 28 |
| | 29 |
| | 30 |
| | 31 |
| | 32 |
| | 33 |
| | 34 |
| | 35 |
| | 36 |
| | 37 |
| | 38 |
| | 39 |
| | 40 |
| However, as Ang and Stratton (1995) have noted, Singapore's identity has always encompassed both a contestation <i>and</i> negotiation of Western and Eastern values. The PAP has, for example, manufactured an identity and national discourse that embraces Western economic principles, while counterbalancing these with Confucian-influenced 'Asian values' and a | 41 |
| | 42 |
| | 43 |
| | 44 |
| | 45 |
| | 46 |

developmentalist discourse that defends authoritarianism as a necessary sacrifice required to secure national advancement. Nonetheless, an integral part of the Singaporean ‘economic miracle’ involves the promotion of an intensive culture of consumption. Clammer also notes that “consumption behavior creates the primary cultural context in which the new middle classes in Asia operate and provides the linkage between globalization and local urban cultures” (2003, p. 403). Related to these global/local modes of consumptive behavior in Singapore (and other developed and developing Asian nations) is an embrace of global cosmopolitanism and engagement with modernity that is manifest in the consumption of globally recognized commodity/cultural symbols. Therefore, US fast-food chains, French cognac, Italian luxury goods, German cars, Japanese electronics, Korean television dramas and English football (Rowe and Gilmour 2009) vie for the attention of Singaporeans who utilize consumption as a highly visible marker of upward social mobility.

THE SINGAPOREAN MEDIASCAPE AND SPORTSCAPE

Lee, T has noted that:

as a nation that is plugged into the global economy, (Singapore) embraces capitalist ideals whilst adhering to a form of state corporatism, where the state is intrinsically linked to most business activities and where civil liberties are curtailed for the sake of economic development. (2010, p. 12)

This state-industry connection is reflected in the ownership structure of all Singaporean media and communications across print, television, subscription television, and online platforms. Singapore’s only free-to-air broadcaster is MediaCorp, which operates seven channels. MediaCorp is owned by Temasek Holdings, a state-owned sovereign wealth fund that is also linked to Singapore’s two telecommunications giants, Starhub and Singtel, which operate the nation’s major subscription television platforms. These ‘quasi’-public/free-market broadcasters and telecommunications companies embody the commercial imperatives that drive conventional private media logic, but they also reflect the economic developmental agenda and the communitarian control and ‘shared values’ discourses that are routinely propagated by the government. This ‘schizophrenic’ approach to media delivery that combines commercial imperatives with state-centric concerns represents a “structural contradiction (that) is manifest in the tension between the open free market economic system under which Singapore thrives and a media system that operates under external (government) and internal (self-imposed constraints)” (Peng 2007, p. 24). Singapore’s monopolistic media environment is widely regarded as a state apparatus whereby “the political

leadership instills discipline and compliance within the broad, influential and expanding Singapore mediascape (in a process) described as media governmentality" (Lee, T. 2010, p. 129). 1
Some of the same qualities that define the Singaporean media and communications environment are also reproduced within the Singaporean sportscape, where tensions exist between governmental policies that promote community access to local sports facilities and the very privatized nature of access to mediated sport (in particular, popular forms of Western sports culture such as the EPL). Until quite recently, sport did not feature prominently in the priorities of the Singaporean state and people. In a culture that assigns great value to financial and academic success, sport—as a career, pastime, or industry—has been traditionally marginalized within Singaporean society. However, in recent years sport has emerged as a new priority for the Singaporean government for a number of reasons. In accordance with state policies designed to improve the general levels of health and fitness among what is a rapidly ageing population, sport has been promoted by the state as a lifestyle choice in conjunction with the construction of a range of new community sporting facilities designed to drive participation among the general citizenry (Singapore Sports Council 2011). In addition, the Singapore government is investing significant capital in elite sports training in order to boost the nation's performance in the international sports arena. This infrastructure development involves the construction of a National Sports School which, in classically pragmatic Singaporean style, is designed to bridge the gap between the pursuit of academic and sporting excellence by providing a venue that simultaneously caters to both. Finally, the potential of sport as a significant revenue generator for the city-state and contributor to the promotion of the nation as a tourist terminus, event destination, and investment hub has resulted in a rapid expansion in the range and stature of sports events hosted in the republic in recent years. Indeed, the ambition to increase the contribution of sports tourism and related activities to the wider service economy of Singapore is manifest in government aspirations for the domestic sports industry to contribute US\$ 3 billion to the nation's Gross Domestic Product by 2015 (AFP 2009). This strategy involves promoting the nation as a regional sports destination via the construction of a new, world-class sports hub that includes a 55,000 seat national stadium and other Olympic-standard facilities. The sports hub is expected to increase Singapore's capacity to host premium sports events such as the 2010 Youth Olympic Games and to complement existing annual sports events such as the Singapore Formula 1 Grand Prix. 2
However, these international events overshadow a domestic sports industry that is largely stagnant and under-represented within the local media. Singapore's semi-professional football competition (the S-League) struggles (Cockerill 2009) without the types of longstanding inter-city rivalries and a sheer lack of marketing, glitz, glamour, star power, and global cachet that drive audience interest in the most popular European 3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46

professional football. Hence, attendances for the S-league are low and television coverage has traditionally been limited. By contrast, however, mediated European professional football, in particular the EPL, attracts vociferous support and its grip on the Asian sporting psyche has been described as a ‘suffocating embrace’ (Cockerill 2009). Such is the centrality of the EPL to the sports economies of many Asian nations, that it has been estimated that the EPL accounts for “61% of all football revenues in Asia” (Gold 2007, p. 2). Therefore, Singapore (and many other Asian nations) experience a sports economy that draws revenue from the domestic staging of global or international sports commodities (Formula 1, Youth Olympic Games, EPL tour matches) and a mediated sports environment that marginalizes local competitions in favor of global commodity ‘signs’ (Gilmour and Rowe 2012).

The Singaporean media-sport environment contributes to a significant imbalance in the sports rights fees trade between Asia and the West. The EPL has drawn increasing rights fees from its non-domestic markets, with Asia in particular identified as the major contributor to the escalation in its international television rights revenues (Rowe and Gilmour 2010). Between seasons 2007–2008 and 2010–2011, the EPL obtained £625 million (sterling) in revenue from its international television rights (Bond 2007), supplying over 27 percent of the league’s television-based income. The following rights deal negotiated for seasons 2010–2011 to 2012–2013 saw international fees contribute £1.4 billion to the EPL’s coffers (Harris 2010) and now account for almost 44 percent of the league’s overall television revenue. With continued rapid economic growth in significant parts of the Asian continent and the current stagnation of the European economy, it is likely that the subsequent rights tender beginning in season 2013–2014 will see international rights revenue exceed domestic income for the first time. As Harris (2010) notes, “the overseas rights bonanza has been fuelled by intense bidding wars mainly between pay-TV rivals in Asia.”

*Table 12.1 English Premier League Television Rights Deals 2007–2013:
Domestic and International Contributions*

| Years | Global Rights | UK Domestic Rights | Total Rights Fee | Global Rights % |
|-----------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| 2007–2010 | £625 million ^a | £1.7 billion ^b | £2.325 billion | 27% |
| 2010–2013 | £1.4 billion ^c | £1.782 billion ^d | £3.182 billion | 44% |

^a(Bond, 2007 January 18)

^b(Bond, 2007 January 18)

^c(Harris, 2010 March 23)

^d(Harris, 2010 March 23)

Source: Derived from author’s PhD dissertation (Gilmour n.d.) in preparation.

The rapidly rising revenues received by the EPL from media rights in this region can be attributed quite extensively to the emergence of subscription television services which have capitalized on (and to a certain extent catalyzed) the popularity of this European sports commodity in South-east Asia and beyond. In this respect, the EPL has played an important role in enticing consumers to subscribe to satellite packages and has contributed significantly to the expansion of pay-TV services in the region, further establishing a regional media environment whereby access to premium sports content is increasingly subject to significant pay-walls which limit citizens' access to socially significant 'foreign' media texts like the EPL.

SUBSCRIPTION TELEVISION AND SPORT IN SINGAPORE

Subscription television was established in Singapore in 1994 when Singapore Cable Vision (SCV) began delivering television services via a national broadband cable network that it was charged with launching by the government. As part of this agreement, SCV was granted sole access to the Singaporean subscription television market until 2002. In 2001, SCV was acquired by one of Singapore's two telecommunications giants, Starhub, and was rebranded as Starhub TV. Since its inception, Starhub had been the principal broadcaster of premium sports content in Singapore, with free-to-air channels in the city-state generally concentrating on a programming mix of local and regional variety, drama, and other light entertainment genre programming (Love 2010). Subsequently, the history of sports broadcasting in Singapore runs counter to that described by Rowe (2004b, p. 386) in many European nations and former British colonies like Australia, New Zealand, and Canada, where "sports television (has been characterized by) pioneering involvement (of) free-to-air (terrestrial) public broadcasters". Instead, there is little experience among Singaporean citizens of extensive sports coverage on FTA television, a history that has only facilitated the dominance of subscription services in providing premium sports content. Indeed, there has been very little address of access to mediated sport in the city-state as a 'right' of cultural citizenship.

Singapore has no 'tangible' government-endorsed series of listed events like those in the United Kingdom (UK) and Australia which attempt to preserve 'nationally significant' sporting events from being siphoned to subscription television (Png 2010). Despite this apparent policy vacuum, some key events such as the semi-finals and final of the FIFA World Cup and the Singaporean Formula 1 Grand Prix do garner some FTA coverage and, in 2009, Acting Minister for the Communications, Information and the Arts in Singapore, Kui Tuck Yew indicated (rather vaguely) that there was some sort of government recognition of events deemed worthy of national exposure:

In the case of television (the state) ensures key sporting events deemed to be of ‘national significance’ such as the Olympic Games are broadcast free-to-air. The EPL, however, is essentially entertainment, he said, adding ‘although I’m sure consumers may disagree on this.’ (Chua 2009, p. M21)

This dismissive rhetoric fails to acknowledge the significant manner in which the EPL has been ‘glocalized’ and incorporated into Singaporean social rituals. These outmoded discourses valorize local cultural forms and discount the interaction between local citizens and globally mediated cultural forms like the EPL precisely because this type of ‘self-inventing trans-national fandom’ does not fit comfortably within either traditional cultural citizenship or cultural nationalist debates.

In the main, then, televised sport in Singapore remains largely the domain of subscription services. Singapore’s mix of market-capitalism and authoritarian control places emphasis on ‘user pay’ models, and there is little political appetite to subsidize sports television. Within such a market-centric media environment, arguments that favor access to free-to-air sport are minimal. While Scherer and Whitson (2009, p. 215) suggest that the (free-to-air) broadcast of domestic sport on the public broadcaster in Canada “is an issue of cultural citizenship,” such discourses are problematized in Singapore where the success of the EPL does not fit comfortably within the traditional cultural nationalist rhetoric that typically promotes such forms of state policy intervention.

In 2011, in the wake of escalating subscription television fees (that were, in part, facilitated by the growing cost of sports broadcasting rights), an article appeared in a national newspaper (*My Paper*) entitled ‘Boost sport with free-to-air channel’ (Kwan 2011). Its author outlined a case for broadcast television sports coverage and emphasized the needs both of those unable to afford subscription television and the imperative to “cultivate interest and foster (a local) sports culture” (*ibid*). However, in response to the article, Clarence Fong, the Head of Corporate Communications and Marketing at MediaCorp, remarked that:

In a free-to-air (terrestrial) TV scenario, the small pool of available local audience and revenue streams, coupled with premium programme-acquisition costs, make such a venture commercially prohibitive. As resources are limited, this will be at the expense of other quality content (dramas, variety shows, films, documentaries) for viewers on our mass-entertainment channels. This being so, MediaCorp has to balance the needs of the viewing majority versus the call for greater sports coverage. (Fong 2011)

As such, there exists little governmental or industry-based inclination or impetus in Singapore to provide broadcast coverage of major sports, apart

from infrequent mega events such as the FIFA World Cup Final and the Olympic Games. Moreover, with minimal interest in local sports, the rapidly escalating costs of globally popular sporting competitions such as the EPL means that live prestige sports events do not complement the economic models and scheduling practices that inform free-to-air television. Increasingly, then, televised sport has become the sole remit of subscription television platforms. However, while the consumption of foreign sporting competitions like the EPL in Singapore does not fit within the traditional definition of ‘national cultural significance,’ its popularity and the manner in which it is incorporated into local socio-cultural rituals means that globalized forms of media consumption need to be reconsidered within contemporary policy discourses in the city-state. In an increasingly globalized media environment where technologies facilitate access to a host of media texts originating outside of national media systems, glocalized modes of consumption that occur within local social contexts challenge traditional policy views that dismiss or categorize such activities within cultural imperialist discourses. All of these developments suggest that the definitions of content considered capable of facilitating forms of cultural citizenship in modern Singapore need to be reassessed.

THE INTRODUCTION OF COMPETITION INTO THE SINGAPOREAN SUBSCRIPTION TELEVISION MARKET

In 2007, the government broke up Singapore’s pay-TV monopoly by allowing the nation’s other major telecommunications provider SingTel a license to provide rival subscription television services operating via an Internet Protocol (IPTV) delivery system. However, the content war that resulted from the introduction of Singtel to the new competitive marketplace proved damaging for the industry and consumers alike. By 2010 Singtel’s fledgling mioTV had acquired a subscriber base of only 200,000 compared to Starhub’s 541,000 (Asian Broadcasting Union 2010). In response, mioTV launched an aggressive sports rights acquisition strategy designed to drive subscriptions to the new service by investing in premium sports content that had previously been the exclusive domain of Starhub. In particular, the EPL, with a weekly audience of one million Singaporeans (Lim 2009) and a lengthy annual season spanning August to May, quickly became a prized commodity in Singapore’s emerging pay-TV battle.

Despite its valued status in the Singaporean television market, the EPL rights themselves are not a significant revenue generator for subscription television platforms. In fact, Starhub insists that it has never made a profit from its long association with the EPL, while the total costs for all popular sports content accounts for 70 percent of the service’s revenue (Ng 2010). The substantial sums paid for these rights need to be understood as a defensive measure designed to maintain a subscriber base in addition

1 to attracting new customers from competing platforms. Still, the exorbitant fees paid for this content negate their revenue generating potential and
2 these costs are, in turn, passed on to customers via subscription fees. The
3 rapid rise in the expense of popular sports content costs is also reflected in
4 figures that reveal that the “cost to consumers of watching sports program-
5 ming (in Singapore) increased from S\$33 per month in 2000 to S\$74 in
6 2010”(Television Sports Markets 2010).

7 It is, however, the value-added benefit that sports rights offer to platforms
8 that maintain the growth in rights paid for such properties as the
9 EPL. By driving subscriptions, reducing churn, instilling brand values, and
10 providing cross-promotional opportunities, the EPL provides platforms
11 with a valuable means of distinction from rival services. Recognizing these
12 benefits, a significant part of mioTV’s strategy for establishing itself in the
13 Singaporean market involved obtaining the exclusive rights to sports events
14 that had previously been offered by SCV and later Starhub TV. These rights
15 included the Union of European Football Associations (UEFA) Champions
16 League, Europa League, English League Cup and, most significantly for
17 the Singaporean market, the EPL. Such was the intensity in the bidding
18 war between Starhub and Singtel that the final price paid by Singtel for the
19 three-year cycle of EPL rights between 2010 and 2013 was a reported S\$
20 350 million (Jenna *et al.* 2010). The significance of the EPL in the Singa-
21 porean market was reflected in the 7 percent share price reduction experi-
22 enced by Starhub in the aftermath of mioTV’s rights acquisition (Reuters
23 2009). And, while the excessive content costs of properties such as the EPL
24 reduce the profitability of subscription television in Singapore (Ng 2010),
25 their value lies in their capacity to attract customers to the bundling pack-
26 ages of their parent telecommunications companies. These bundling pack-
27 ages encompass a single price for a combination of services such as home
28 telephony, internet, mobile, and subscription television services, with the
29 profits from the non-television services ‘subsidizing,’ or making viable, the
30 costs of pay-TV content acquisition.

31 The introduction of competition into the Singaporean marketplace
32 greatly increased the content costs of premium sports programming, which
33 were then passed on to consumers, “with SingTel and Starhub paying hun-
34 dreds of millions of Singapore dollars for exclusive EPL content, making the
35 country one of the costliest markets in terms of dollars per capita” (Siew
36 2010a). The increasingly competitive nature of the Singaporean pay-TV
37 market, in conjunction with rising content costs has, however, not deterred
38 many consumers and there has been a rapid growth in the sale of sports sub-
39 scription packages in recent years (Voon 2007). However, there is also now
40 a growing concern in media discourses in Singapore surrounding citizens
41 who are unable to afford access to subscription television platforms and the
42 rising costs attendant on screening sport in commercial venues. Moreover,
43 as the costs of screening these premium events have risen significantly, the
44 scope for public broadcasters to participate in telecasting premium sports
45

events has also diminished. Still, there remains some opportunity for Singapore's quasi public/private terrestrial broadcasting sector to explore more creative approaches to sports broadcasting, although these will be opportunities that will only serve marginally to improve the visibility of those broadcasters in the market. For instance, an EPL highlights package could be screened in much the same way that the BBC complements subscription coverage in the UK. All of these developments point to a more complex and unequal digital landscape in Singapore. Indeed, the issues of access to the most popular sports broadcasts and increased subscription fees were on full display in the recent bidding process to secure broadcast rights to the 2010 FIFA World Cup.

THE 2010 FIFA WORLD CUP: JOINT BIDDING OR COLLUSION?

After the intensive competition between the two telecommunications giants for the EPL rights resulted in an exorbitant fee paid by SingTel, the two companies attempted to avoid a competitive bidding process by submitting a joint tender for the 2010 FIFA World Cup rights. However, by the end of January 2010 (and with a June kick-off for the event looming), no rights holder had been announced for the Singapore market, and it was widely reported that the joint SingTel/Starhub bid was only a third of FIFA's asking price (Shine 2010). Despite the significant disparity between the Singtel/Starhub bid and FIFA's valuation, it was acknowledged that the Singaporean offer would "sacrifice all World Cup margins for both Singtel and Starhub while keeping the price affordable for consumers" (Davidson 2010). Although the rights for the previous World Cup in 2006 were sold for just \$US5 million in the Singaporean territory, FIFA was reported to be asking for \$US30 million for the 2010 competition (Siew 2010b). Without a resolution in sight, public anxiety and media coverage intensified, and FIFA appeared to be simply unwilling to concede coverage to a joint bid. However, just over a month prior to the commencement of the tournament, FIFA awarded both Singtel and Starhub what it described as 'individual non-exclusive broadcast rights':

Besides having the dubious honor of being among the last nations to clinch the World Cup rights, Singapore also appears to be the only Asian country to have multiple broadcasters for the event. According to a FIFA document published in February, there is only one broadcaster in every country which has been sanctioned to carry the World Cup. Although SingTel and Starhub were planning for a joint bid, FIFA eventually awarded them individual non-exclusive broadcast rights. Joint bids are frowned upon as it could set a precedent for other broadcasters to follow suit and thin the coffers from media licensing. This is widely seen as a key contributor to the year-long impasse. (Chai 2010)

FIFA was hardly poorer for the joint bid. Indeed, the eventual price negotiated between the telecommunications companies and FIFA was \$S21 million (\$US15 million) (Siew 2010b) for the month-long tournament—a threefold increase on the 2006 fee. Starhub's financial results for the following quarter revealed a “26 percent lower net profit compared to the same period (in the preceding year) due to sharply higher content costs—most of it paid to (the) World Cup rights owner” (Chua 2010). This considerable growth in rights fees was replicated across the globe, with FIFA proudly declaring that the 2010 tournament had generated \$US2.15 billion—a 53 percent increase on the 2006 event (Pfanner 2010). Singapore is, then, not alone in its struggle to broadcast the tournament, while there has been a gradual migration of football coverage from free-to-air television to subscription-based platforms:

The soaring price of broadcasting rights means that few will actually make money from the event. Several mainstream free-to-air TV channels have found the math so unfavourable that they have ceded broadcast rights to rivals, including pay-TV channels that have previously found it hard to break into the World Cup. In Europe, the Middle East and parts of Asia, more of the tournament than ever before will be shown on premium cable or satellite channels, instead of broadcast outlets. (Pfanner 2010)

Increasingly, then, sports events like the FIFA World Cup are being removed from media platforms that provide a more equitable viewing experience (public broadcasters and commercial free-to-air television), facilitating a situation whereby there is “an abundance of provision for the relatively affluent while imposing paucity on those of lesser wealth” (Rowe 2004b, p. 386). Deep pocketed, vertically integrated telecommunication giants are primarily able to sustain, afford or justify such excessive, exclusive rights fees. As Scherer and Whitson (2009 p. 218) assert, “unlike public broadcasters, private media conglomerates can choose to over-spend on bids for high profile sports events, with the knowledge that, beyond attracting sizeable audiences, these properties will enhance the prestige and visibility of the network, and generate discussion of its coverage in the print media”. Of course, these developments place further limits on the ‘cultural citizenship’ role that mediated sports events can perform within societies. This trend was evident in Singapore, where the majority of the 2010 FIFA World Cup was broadcast on subscription platforms at a much higher cost to consumers than the 2006 tournament. In addition, the strict controls and excessive costs imposed on commercial venues screening the FIFA World Cup meant that citizens’ access to the 2010 event was excessively constrained.

After the announcement of the weighty subscription costs for the FIFA 2010 tournament and the threat that less affluent citizens would be excluded

altogether from access to live telecasts, public discontent heightened and the issue received significant media coverage. In 2006, for example, the FIFA World Cup was accessed by Singaporean viewers for as little as \$S10.50. However, the 2010 tournament retailed for as high as \$S94.16 (Sudderuddin 2010). Moreover, with only half of Singaporean households able to access subscription television services (Television Asia 2010, p. 34), there was considerable public demand for alternative viewing options. The outdoor eating venues, pubs and clubs which traditionally provided fans with unrestricted access to view matches were charged "between \$2,888 and \$4,888 to show the tournament on one TV screen within their premises" (Chai 2010). The Singaporean rights holders, therefore, imposed a 'per screen' fee on commercial venues, which also limited further the viewing opportunities for Singaporeans as entertainment outlets were forced to reduce their participating screens in order to minimize expenses. These costs were then passed on to consumers who, in turn, had to meet 'minimum spend' requirements in many venues that rose as high as \$S150 for finals matches (Lee, M.K. 2010). In response to some of the increasing dissent among Singaporean citizens unable to afford access to the FIFA World Cup, the government (in conjunction with Starhub and Singtel) provided free public screenings at community centers across the island (Singh 2010). Nearly 100,000 Singaporeans were reported to have watched matches at these venues (Chan 2010), while some churches and mosques screened matches free of cost to the public (Wong 2010).

Beyond the provision of these viewing opportunities, a Facebook page was set up with 28,000 members called 'Mass boycott Starhub/Singtel overpriced World Cup package,' and the organizers were granted rare permission by the Singaporean government to stage a public demonstration to oppose the high subscription fees charged by the two telecommunications conglomerates (Content Asia 2010). The creator of the page, John Chua, expressed disappointment that Singaporeans had to pay so much in comparison to other nations in and beyond the region to watch the world's most popular sporting event: "Looking at the process, why did other countries, which also negotiated with FIFA, end up with free World Cup packages, such as England, Australia and Indonesia? Or charge much cheaper—like India at \$7 or Japan at \$10" (quoted in Sudderuddin 2010). Public discontent was manifest in a number of other illegal and more 'creative' means of accessing World Cup television coverage. For instance, as a result of Singapore's geographical location between Malaysia and Indonesia, foreign television signals, alongside illegal internet streaming sites, provided 'alternative' sources of World Cup television access for many Singaporeans, as in the case of, "Mr. Rick Teh, 35, an inventory officer, bought a \$30 antenna to tap signals from Indonesia or Malaysia from his Boon Lay home" (Sudderuddin 2010). Other creative 'entrepreneurs' circumvented Singapore's expensive World Cup commercial screening fees and, incidentally, the significant tax on alcohol, by screening matches on cruise ships anchored in international

waters, where they were able to receive free-to-air coverage from Indonesia and Malaysia and to serve tariff-free alcohol (De Cotta 2010).

The indignant public response, both to the escalating costs of television access to the 2010 FIFA World Cup and the manner in which the substantive costs charged to commercial ‘night-time economy’ venues were passed on to customers, received considerable traction in Singapore’s state-owned print media. As I outline in the following section, beyond community concerns, the competition between Singtel and Starhub for sports content and the subsequent reduction in profit margins for the two state-linked telecommunications companies, contributed to a policy intervention that enforced multi-platforming in the Singaporean subscription television industry. Crucially, though, such an intervention continued to marginalize discourses that promoted access to sport as a right of cultural citizenship in favor of market principles.

POLICY RESPONSE: THE MDA’S CONTENT SHARING PROVISION

Singapore’s Media Development Authority (MDA) was formed in 2003, when the Singapore Broadcasting Authority (SBA), the Films and Publications Department (FPD) and the Singapore Film Commission (SFC) merged to produce a singular body tasked with “promoting the growth of the media industry and managing media and cultural content” (Lee T. 2010, p. 10). In 2010, the MDA introduced a set of regulations designed to ensure that all subscription television platforms in Singapore provided their content to competing services while being recompensed for any cross-platform consumption. According to the MDA, these were measures that were designed to ensure that “if a pay TV retailer acquires a channel exclusively, it will then be required under the Measure to retail that channel across the other retailer’s platform at the same retail price that it sells the channel or bundle of channels on its own platform” (Media Development Authority of Singapore 2010, p. 17). Notably, such a policy intervention was implemented to reduce the intensive content fragmentation in the Singaporean pay-TV market, where only 5 percent of all pay-TV channels (seven out of over 180) in the nation feature on both the Starhub and Singtel platforms. As a result, 15 percent of consumers subscribe to both platforms (Jenna *et al*, 2010). Beyond consumer welfare, the provisions were also designed to reduce the spiraling content costs that had crippled the industry since the liberalizing of the subscription television business in Singapore with the introduction of mioTV in 2007:

From a consumer perspective, Singaporeans will have the convenience and freedom of gaining access to all content available in the Singaporean pay-TV market, via a single set top box, for which they will

still be billed by the owner of that content. From a pay-TV operator's perspective, the exclusive content owner will continue to be compensated directly at the retail level for consumption of their content. The content is therefore effectively decoupled from the platform. (Jenna *et al.* 2010)

As stated previously, content costs within the Singapore subscription television industry are extremely high and comprise some 70 percent of revenues (Ng 2010). In comparison, content expenditure accounts for only 40 percent of revenue in many other nations, including the US, Hong Kong, and the UK (Lui 2010). Consequently, the provisions offer content owners access to the entire Singaporean subscription television consumer base and, therefore, a potentially larger audience for their content. However, many content owners have expressed reservations about the potential of the cross-carriage measures to deny their revenue-generating potential within the Singaporean market by artificially reducing competition for content. Thus, "Carey Wong, an analyst at OCBC Investment Research sees both SingTel and Starhub competing less aggressively for content in the future because it wouldn't really help either of them gain subscribers at their rival's expense" (Ng 2010). Moreover, the MDA's interventions actually contravene the market principles that they purport to enhance and, instead, work to maintain the interests of the dominant state-linked Singaporean telecommunications companies while continuing to marginalize rights of cultural citizenship and the interests of consumers who cannot afford access to these services.

The content-sharing provisions also attracted widespread criticism from content producers, agencies and even the US government (Png 2010) which traditionally protects the interests of its large audio-visual export industry. The manner in which the content-sharing measures infringe upon or accentuate free market logic has predictably dominated discourse among advocates and opponents of the provision. Supporters of the MDA's policy have argued that the provisions, in fact, increase the effectiveness of the market by allowing new competitors to emerge without the barrier of content exclusivity. The scope for the entry of additional competitors is particularly significant in Singapore as the implementation of a new Next-Generation National Broadband Network (NG-NBN) (Chee and Chan 2010) is expected to provide a delivery infrastructure suitable for new players to utilize in the city-state's subscription television market via IPTV services. The provisions are also seen as enhancing the service of existing players who are forced to compete on other variables such as price, performance, technological innovation and customer service. In addition, the provisions are said to reduce, at least temporarily, the monopolistic tendencies of the telecommunications and broadcasting marketplace.

The MDA's provisions, of course, also work to secure the financial viability of the subscription television industry by reducing the unusually high

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46

1 rates of content expenditure in the Singaporean market. In turn, many of
2 the proponents of the provisions herald the likelihood of the reduction of
3 costs to consumers, although this is an outcome that is yet to arise. It is
4 claimed that, without content exclusivity, consumers will receive a more
5 affordable product as well as access to all content, thus negating the need to
6 subscribe to two or more services. However, within this very market-cen-
7 tric dialogue, the viewing rights of citizens who cannot afford these services
8 are completely ignored. Notably, when asked to provide feedback to the
9 MDA on the provisions, the EPL indicated that it “broadly endorse(d) the
10 measure (which) will have the positive effect of increasing the viewership
11 of the competition (EPL) (and consumer access to the competition) with-
12 out having any detrimental impact upon the value of the Premier League
13 rights” (FA Premier League 2010). Such sentiments are reflective of the
14 wider media sales policy of the EPL, which has tended to award rights to
15 the highest bidder with little or no consideration of issues such as audience
16 development, and certainly no conception of the connection between access
17 to media sport and cultural citizenship entitlement.

18 Some market-oriented critics argue that the provisions are overtly
19 interventionist and anti-competitive in terms of artificially interfering
20 with the market. These arguments suggest that content sharing actually
21 enhances the likelihood of collusion between key players in the mar-
22 ket—not just on the price paid for content, but also the price charged to
23 consumers. Such regulation contravenes, they argue, the ‘logic’ of mar-
24 ket forces because it obstructs content providers’ capacity to secure the
25 highest possible price for their programming. Unsurprisingly, the Cable
26 and Satellite Broadcasting Association of Asia (CASBAA—an industry
27 representative) has decried the content measures as “in breach of World
28 Trade Organization (WTO) and World Intellectual Property Organiza-
29 tion (WIPO) copyright rules by depriving content creators their freedom
30 to negotiate contracts” (Clark 2010). Other critics include News Corpo-
31 ration, widely regarded as the most globally pervasive media conglomer-
32 ate (Flew and Gilmour 2003), a pioneer in sports rights acquisition across
33 its global television properties and a significant content provider in the
34 Singaporean subscription television market. News Corporation simply
35 characterizes the provisions as an attempt by the Singaporean govern-
36 ment to ‘micro-manage the market’:

37
38 The proposed intervention is flawed in its design, with both consumers
39 and the industry likely to suffer significantly. It is the right of copyright
40 holders to authorize who does or does not have access to its product
41 and the MDA’s intervention is a violation of the intellectual property
42 rights recognized by international treaties. To suggest that the content
43 provider fails to understand the enlightened nature of the MDA’s inter-
44 vention (that we should be somehow pleased at a hypothetical potential
45 to gain more viewers under an odd and untested regulatory decree)

entirely misses the point—copyright holders not regulators have the right to make such decisions. (News Corporation 2010)

However, it should be noted that these content-sharing arrangements are not without precedent, even in markets where News Corporation enjoys a significant sports television presence. For example, in the UK, where satellite subscription platform BSkyB has long dominated the industry and, in particular, the coverage of premium sports, the British regulator Ofcom ruled in 2010 that BSkyB must offer its sports channels to other pay-TV retailers (Lim 2010). Similarly, the European Commission ruled that EPL broadcasting rights must be split between at least two platforms to increase competition in the marketplace (Gibson 2008). Also, in the US, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) ruled in 1992 that cable television platforms must offer their content to other providers. It is not surprising to see these objections by content holders to the regulation of their power to restrict platform availability. While the principal justification for this state intervention in the market relates to competition, it also has the potential to enhance cultural citizenship by increasing the range of viewing platforms, including that of free-to-air.

CONCLUSION

Singapore functions as an intriguing example of a national media market where sport is almost completely absent from free-to-air, including public service television. The nexus in Singapore between state ownership and quasi private/commercial media has produced a regulatory environment that is overwhelmingly concerned with market forces and, as a consequence, notions of sport and cultural citizenship have been relegated to the periphery of policy discourses. However, as concerns about economic inequalities in Singaporean society continue to grow, a discussion has emerged about the manner in which televised sport in Singapore has been considered primarily as a tradable commodity, rather than as an important cultural form that ought to be available live, where appropriate, for all citizens. The resulting situation, whereby a significant section of the population has been denied access to the most popular televised sporting events in the nation, demonstrates that “rights pertaining to watching sport on television cannot be left entirely to the market to determine” (Rowe 2004b, p. 397). Therefore, “the analysis of the relationship between sport and civil liberties must encompass, systematically, issues of access and equity in the watching of sport on television, and the state must be vigilant and willing to intervene in the field of broadcasting” (Rowe 2004b, p. 398). Unfortunately, in Singapore, state intervention has been restricted to little more than the reduction of instances of market ‘distortion.’ The ownership links between the state and commercial broadcasters,

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46

subscription television services and telecommunications providers, moreover, has compromised the provision of television services in the city-state and undermined the promotion of cultural citizenship via universal access to televised sport.

The Singaporean context (alongside many other Asian nations) is complicated by the nature of sports consumption in the city-state which is decidedly ‘foreign’ in character. The most popular mediated sports in Singapore, like the EPL, originate from the Western-dominant “media sports cultural complex” (Rowe 2004a), and there remains little political impetus to protect these events for broadcast television via a ‘cultural citizenship’ discourse. However, while these events do not occupy the standard definition of cultural or national significance, it is undeniable that their consumption occupies a significant social function in Singaporean society which has, in any case, always been a ‘glocalized’ entity. For this reason, “globally diffused popular cultural products like (the) EPL can be apprehended, negotiated, interpreted and contextualized within Asian socio-cultural contexts and milieus” (Rowe and Gilmour 2009, p. 171–172) and, therefore, consumption of ‘imported culture’ warrants reconsideration within contemporary policy debates. These popular cultural forms are, of course, much more than merely conduits of cultural imperialism and, instead, need to be recognized as important sites where increasingly hybridized and indigenized modes of identity formation take place. As Arjun Appadurai argues, “at least as rapidly as forces from various metropolises are brought into new societies they tend to become indigenized in one or other way” (1990, 295). Hence, in a Singaporean context, the increasing interaction and negotiation of its population with global cultural texts need to be addressed by policy makers not merely as entertainment or distraction, but as an emergent and hybridized form of social engagement that also contributes to local forms of cultural citizenship.

REFERENCES

- AFP, 2009. Singapore Aims to Be a Big Player in Sports Industry [online]. *AsiaOne*, March 24. Available from <http://www.asiaone.com/print/News/Latest%2BNews/Sports/Story/A1Story20090324-1306> [Accessed 8 April 2009].
- Ang, I., and Stratton, J., 1995. The Singapore Way of Multiculturalism: Western Concepts/Asian Cultures. *Sojourn*, 10(1), pp. 65–89.
- Appadurai, A., 1990. Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy. *Theory, Culture and Society*, 7(2–3), pp. 295–310.
- Asian Broadcasting Union, 2010. SingTel Set to Control TV Football in Singapore [online]. *Asian Broadcasting Union*, August 2. Available from <http://www.abu.org.my/abu/index.cfm/elementid/62628/SingTel-set-to-control-TV-football-in-Singapore> [Accessed 8 November 2010].
- Bond, D., 2007. Premiership Shares 900m TV Windfall [online]. *Daily Telegraph*, January 18. Available from <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/1539819/Premiership-shares-900m-TV-windfall.html> [Accessed 4 February 2012].

| | |
|--|----|
| Chai, W., 2010. Singapore Finally Scores the World Cup [online]. <i>The Business Times</i> , May 8. Available from http://www.asiaone.com/News/The%2BBusiness%2BTimes/Story/A1Story20100508-214962.html [Accessed 22 August 2011]. | 1 |
| Chambers, M., Grew, R., Herlihy, D., Rabb, T.K., and Woloch, I., 1995. <i>The Western Experience</i> . New York: McGraw-Hill. | 2 |
| Chan, U., 2010. Close to 100,000 Have Caught Cup Games at CC's. <i>The Straits Times</i> , June 25, p. D3. | 3 |
| Chang, J.H.Y., 2003. Culture, State and Economic Development in Singapore. <i>Journal of contemporary Asia</i> , 33(1), pp. 85–105. | 4 |
| Chee, K., and Chan, R., 2010. Broadband Price War for Singapore? [online]. <i>My Paper</i> , September 1. Available from http://www.asiaone.com/News/Latest%2BNews/DigitalOne/Story/A1Story20100901-234907.html [Accessed 6 June 2011]. | 5 |
| Chua, B.H., 2003. <i>Life is Not Complete without Shopping: Consumption Culture in Singapore</i> . Singapore: Singapore University Press. | 6 |
| Chua, H.H., 2010. Starhub's Gains Down Due to World Cup Screening. <i>The Straits Times</i> , August 6, p. M21. | 7 |
| ———, 2009. Government Concerned over Rise in Exclusive Pay-TV Deals [online]. <i>The Straits Times</i> , October 22. Available from http://www.asiaone.com/Digital/News/Story/A1Story20091022-175158.html [Accessed 6 June 2011]. | 8 |
| Clammer, J., 2003. Globalization, Class, Consumption and Civil Society in South-east Asian Cities. <i>Urban Studies</i> , 40(2), pp. 403–419. | 9 |
| Clark, R., 2010. Casbaa Assails New Singapore Content Rules [online]. <i>Telecomasia.net</i> , May 14. Available from http://www.telecomasia.net/content/casbaa-assails-new-singapore-content-rules [Accessed 6 June 2011]. | 10 |
| Cockerill, M., 2009. Asia Back on EPL's Radar [online]. <i>The Sydney Morning Herald</i> , July 10. Available from http://www.smh.com.au/news/sport/football/asia-back-on-epls-radar/2009/07/09/1246732428698.html?page=fullpage#contentSwap1 [Accessed 7 June 2011]. | 11 |
| Content Asia, 2010. Sports TV \$\$ Debate Alive and Well in Singapore [online]. <i>Content Asia</i> , June 28. Available from http://contentasia-offtherecord.blogspot.com/ [Accessed 2 April 2011]. | 12 |
| Davidson, J., 2010. Singapore's World Cup Dilemma' [online]. <i>SportsbizAsia</i> , January 7. Available from http://www.sportsbizasia.com/features-opinion/singapores-world-cup-dilemma/ [Accessed 10 May 2010]. | 13 |
| De Cotta, I., 2010. A Kick-About on the High Seas. <i>Weekend Today</i> , June 5, p. W10. | 14 |
| Flew, T., and Gilmour, C., 2003. A Tale of Two Synergies: An Institutional Analysis of the Expansionary Strategies of News Corporation and AOL-Time Warner [online]. <i>Managing Communication for Diversity: Australia and New Zealand Communications Association Conference</i> , July 9–11 2003, Brisbane. Available from http://eprints.qut.edu.au/195/1/Flew_Tale.PDF [Accessed 4 August 2009]. | 15 |
| Fong, C., 2011. Free-to-Air Sports Channel not Feasible [online]. <i>My Paper</i> , August 1. Available from http://www.asiaone.com/News/Mailbox/Story/A1Story20110801-292073.html [Accessed 1 September 2011]. | 16 |
| Football Association Premier League Limited, 2010. <i>Comments of the Football Association Premier League Limited in Response to the Media Development Authority of Singapore's Consultation on Preliminary Policy Positions dated 1 September 2010</i> [online]. London: The Premier League. Available from http://www.mda.gov.sg/Reports/ConsultationReports/Documents/FAPL.pdf [Accessed 6 June 2011]. | 17 |
| Gerke, S., 2000. Global Lifestyles under Local Conditions: The New Indonesian Middle Class. In: B.H. Chua, ed., <i>Consumption in Asia: Lifestyles and Identities</i> . London: Routledge, pp. 135–158. | 18 |

- 1 Gibson, O., 2008. Crunch Time for the Plucky Celtic Warrior [online]. *The Guardian*,
2 February 25. Available from <http://www.guardian.co.uk/media/2008/feb/25/television.sportsrights> [Accessed 15 February 2011].
- 3 Gilmour, C., n.d. The Function of Generic and Industrial Factors in Facilitating
4 and Impeding the Reception of Transnational Media Flows in Asia. Unpub-
5 lished thesis in progress. Queensland University of Technology.
- 6 Gilmour, C., and Rowe, D., 2012. Sport in Malaysia: National Imperatives and
7 Western Seductions. *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 29(4), pp. 485–505.
- 8 Giulianotti, R. and Robertson, R., 2007. Recovering the Social: Globalization,
9 Football and Transnationalism. *Global Networks*, 7(2), pp. 166–186.
- 10 Gold, G., 2007. English Premier League Broadcasting Opens Opportunities
11 [online]. *Asian Football Business Review*, August 24. Available from <http://footballdynamicsasia.blogspot.com/2007/08/epl-changes-asian-football-television.html> [Accessed 4 February 2008].
- 12 Harris, N., 2010. Premier League Nets £1.4bn TV Rights Bonanza [online]. *The Independent*, March 23. Available from <http://www.independent.co.uk/sport/football/premier-league/premier-league-nets-16314bn-tv-rights-bonanza-1925462.html> [Accessed 20 May 2010].
- 13 Jenna, R., Arena, D., and Lim, C., 2010. Exclusive Content Cross-Carriage Obliga-
14 tion in Singapore: An Innovative Intervention that Promises to Create Value for
15 Stakeholders [online]. *Value Partners*. Available from http://www.valuepartners.com/VP_pubbl_pdf/PDF_Comunicati/Media%20e%20Eventi/2010/value-partners-Exclusive-content-cross-carriage-obligation-Singapore-Jenna-Arena-Lim.pdf [Accessed 1 February 2011].
- 16 Kluver, R., and Weber, I., 2003. Patriotism and the Limits of Globalization: Rene-
17 gotiating Citizenship in Singapore. *Journal of Communication Inquiry*, 27, pp.
18 371–388.
- 19 Kwan, J.Y., 2011. Boost Sport with Free-to-Air Channel [online]. *My Paper*, July 21.
20 Available from <http://www.asiaone.com/News/Mailbox/Story/A1Story20110721-290203.html> [Accessed 4 October 2011].
- 21 Lee, M.K., 2010. Many Takers for Pub Seats Costing \$150. *The Straits Times*, July
22 8, p. B10.
- 23 Lee, T., 2010. *The Media, Cultural Control and Government in Singapore*. New
24 York: Routledge.
- 25 Lim, M., 2009. SingTel 2, StarHub 0: How the Mighty Fall [online]. *The Star*, Octo-
26 ber 6. Available from <http://biz.thestar.com.my/news/story.asp?file=/2009/10/6/business/4849153&sec=business> [Accessed 3 April 2010].
- 27 Lim, Y.F., 2010. Free Market a Win-Win for All Operators. *The Straits Times*, June
28 29, p. A18.
- 29 Love, T., 2010. Singaporean Platforms Acquire World Cup Broadcast Rights
30 [online]. *SportsPro*, May 11. Available from http://www.sportspromedia.com/news/singapores_pay-tv_platforms_acquire_world_cup_broadcast_rights/
31 [Accessed 6 June 2010].
- 32 Lui, T.Y., 2010. *Driving Innovation, Productivity and Competition for a Vibrant
33 Economy*. Available from <http://www.egov.gov.sg/media-room/speeches/2010/driving-innovation-productivity-and-competition-for-a-vibrant-economy>
34 [Accessed 28 June 2012].
- 35 Media Development Authority of Singapore, 2010. *Cross Carriage Measure in
36 the Pay TV Market: Consultation on Preliminary Policy Provisions* [online].
37 Singapore. Media Development Authority of Singapore, September 1. Avail-
38 able from <http://www.mda.gov.sg/Reports/ConsultationReports/Documents/PRELIMINARY%20POLICY%20POSITIONS%20FOR%20CROSS%20CARRIAGE%20-%201%20SEPT%202010.pdf> [Accessed 3 February 2011].
- 39
- 40
- 41
- 42
- 43
- 44
- 45
- 46

| | |
|---|----|
| Neher, C.D., 1999. The Case for Singapore, In: M. Haas, ed., <i>The Singapore Puzzle</i> . Westport: Praeger, pp. 39–54. | 1 |
| News Corporation, 2010. <i>Comments of News Corporation in Response to the Media Development Authority of Singapore's Consultation on Preliminary Policy Positions</i> [online]. News Corporation. Available from http://www.mda.gov.sg/Reports/ConsultationReports/Documents/News%20Corp.pdf [Accessed 2 February 2011]. | 2 |
| Ng, J., 2010. Analysts, Consumers Debate Impact of MDA Rule on Pay-TV Players [online]. <i>The Edge</i> , March 20. Available from http://www.theedgesingapore.com/blog-heads/joan-ng/13665-joan-ng-analysts-consumers-debate-impact-of-md规矩rule-on-pay-tv-players.html [Accessed 4 June 2010]. | 3 |
| Peng, H.A., 2007. Singapore Media [online]. <i>Journalism Singapore</i> . Available from http://journalism.sg/wp-content/uploads/2007/09/ang-peng-hwa-2007-singapore-media.pdf [Accessed 6 June 2011]. | 4 |
| Pfanner, E., 2010. The Real World Cup Prize? Broadcast Rights [online]. <i>The New York Times</i> , May 23. Available from http://www.nytimes.com/2010/05/24/business/media/24rights.html [Accessed June 6 2011]. | 5 |
| Png, I., 2010. New TV Rules Will Benefit Singaporeans [online]. <i>The Straits Times</i> , May 27. Available from http://bschool.nus.edu.sg/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=B0haMsnCKIY%3D&ctabid=1445&cmid=5733 [Accessed 2 April 2011]. | 6 |
| Rahim, Z.R., 1998. In Search of the 'Asian Way': Cultural Nationalism in Singapore and Malaysia. <i>Commonwealth & Comparative Politics</i> , 36(3), pp. 54–73. | 7 |
| Reuters, 2009. Singapore Hot Stocks-StarHub Falls on SingTel's Soccer Win [online]. <i>Reuters</i> , September 9. Available from http://www.reuters.com/article/2009/10/01/starhub-singtel-idUSSINS4059420091001 [Accessed 2 April 2011]. | 8 |
| Rowe, D., 2004a. <i>Sport, Culture and the Media: The Unruly Trinity</i> . 2nd ed. Maidenhead: Open University Press. | 9 |
| Rowe, D., 2004b. Watching Brief: Cultural Citizenship and Viewing Rights. <i>Sport in Society</i> , 7(3), pp. 385–402. | 10 |
| Rowe, D., and Gilmour, C., 2009. Global Sport: Where Wembley Way Meets Hollywood Boulevard. <i>Continuum</i> , 23(2), pp. 171–182. | 11 |
| Rowe, D., and Gilmour, C., 2010. Sport, Media and Consumption in Asia: A Merchandized Milieu. <i>American Behavioral Scientist</i> , 53(10), pp. 1530–1548. | 12 |
| Scherer, J., and Whitson, D., 2009. Public Broadcasting, Sport, and Cultural Citizenship: The Future of Sport on the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation? <i>International Review for the Sociology of Sport</i> , 44(2–3), pp. 213–229. | 13 |
| Shine, O., 2010. Deadlock Could Drive World Cup Online in Singapore [online]. <i>Reuters</i> , June 29. Available from http://www.reuters.com/article/2010/01/29/us-soccer-world-rights-singapore-idUSTRE60SIV120100129 [Accessed 2 April 2011]. | 14 |
| Siew, A., 2010a. Commentary: Singapore's Pay-TV Content Sharing [online]. <i>Techgoondu</i> , March 24. Available from http://www.techgoondu.com/2010/03/24/commentary-singapores-pay-tv-content-sharing/ [Accessed 2 April 2011]. | 15 |
| _____, 2010b. Commentary: Singapore Gets World Cup 2010 on TV [online]. <i>Techgoondu</i> , April 29. Available from http://www.techgoondu.com/2010/04/29/singapore-gets-world-cup-2010-on-tv/ [Accessed 2 April 2011]. | 16 |
| Singapore Sports Council, 2011. Singapore Sports Council's Let's Play Movement Gets S\$5 Million Boost from Coca-Cola Singapore [online]. <i>Singapore Sports Council</i> , Press Release, April 29. Available from http://www.singaporesports.sg/News/tabid/60/articleType/ArticleView/articleId/1669/Singapore-Sports-Councils-Lets-Play-Movement-Gets-S5-Million-Boost-From-CocaCola-Singapore.aspx [Accessed 18 May 2011]. | 17 |
| Singh, P., 2010. 16 Community Clubs to Show World Cup Football Matches for Free [online]. <i>Channel News Asia</i> , May 19. Available from http://www.singaporesports.sg/News/tabid/60/articleType/ArticleView/articleId/1669/Singapore-Sports-Councils-Lets-Play-Movement-Gets-S5-Million-Boost-From-CocaCola-Singapore.aspx [Accessed 18 May 2011]. | 18 |
| | 19 |
| | 20 |
| | 21 |
| | 22 |
| | 23 |
| | 24 |
| | 25 |
| | 26 |
| | 27 |
| | 28 |
| | 29 |
| | 30 |
| | 31 |
| | 32 |
| | 33 |
| | 34 |
| | 35 |
| | 36 |
| | 37 |
| | 38 |
| | 39 |
| | 40 |
| | 41 |
| | 42 |
| | 43 |
| | 44 |
| | 45 |
| | 46 |

- 1 channelnewsasia.com/stories/singaporelocalnews/view/1057738/1.html
2 [Accessed 2 August 2010].
3 Sudderuddin, S., 2010. More Boycotting Telco's Cup Deals. *The Straits Times*,
4 May 30, p. 13.
5 Television Asia, 2010. *Annual Guide 2010/11*. Singapore: Ten Alps
6 Communications.
7 Television Sports Markets, 2010. Singapore Forces Pay-TV Content Sharing
8 [online]. Available from <http://www.tvsportsmarkets.com/news/2010/mar/singapore-forces-pay-tv-content-sharing> [Accessed 9 September 2011].
9 Voon, T., 2007. Cable TV Fees Go Up with the Biggest Hike for Sports Channels
10 [online]. *The Straits Times*, June 12. Available from <http://www.international.ucla.edu/article.asp?parentid=71800> [Accessed 6 June 2011].
11 Wong, J., 2010. Places of Worship Open Doors to the Cup. *The Straits Times*, July
12 3, p. C43.
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46

13 Sport, Broadcasting, and Cultural Citizenship in Japan

*Donna Wong, Isamu Kuroda
and John Horne*

INTRODUCTION

Japan is one of the world's formidable economic forces, not least in terms of its sport and media industry, yet English-language sports studies carried out on Japan have yet to match its international sports presence. Despite Gutt-mann and Thompson's (2001) call for attention a decade ago, Japanese sport and its leisure cultures are still under-researched at present. Consistent with the ambition of this anthology as a whole, this chapter will explore debates about sport, broadcasting, and cultural citizenship specifically in Japan. At the end of the 20th century, television, and broadcasting more generally, operated in many Asian societies within a climate of economic growth and neoliberal-influenced economic strategies, while there were some attempts to retain national distinctiveness through state regulation (French and Richards, 2000). Building on and updating Horne (2005), we provide a sketch of recent developments in sport and mass media in Japan, especially through consideration of the dialectic in broadcasting between audiences and other agents and institutional and organizational structures. Additional attention is paid to the impact of new, and competing media, as well as the impact of the 2011 digital switchover on the mediation and cultural consumption of sport in Japan. The chapter first provides an outline of Japan's contemporary sportscape against the backdrop of globalization and sports talent migration. It then illustrates the development of new transmission technologies and identifies the new players in the sport broadcasting industry in Japan. With the recent convergence of broadcasting and communication, this chapter proceeds to outline the major issues in the development of 'mediasport' in Japan and, finally, considers the implications of the emergence of new 'means' of sport television on the viewing rights of citizens.

AN OVERVIEW OF THE JAPANESE SPORT LANDSCAPE

Just as football dominates the UK sporting landscape, baseball dominates the sporting landscape of the Japanese. At the same time, this dominant

| | |
|----|--|
| 1 | |
| 2 | |
| 3 | |
| 4 | |
| 5 | |
| 6 | |
| 7 | |
| 8 | |
| 9 | |
| 10 | |
| 11 | |
| 12 | |
| 13 | |
| 14 | |
| 15 | |
| 16 | |
| 17 | |
| 18 | |
| 19 | |
| 20 | |
| 21 | |
| 22 | |
| 23 | |
| 24 | |
| 25 | |
| 26 | |
| 27 | |
| 28 | |
| 29 | |
| 30 | |
| 31 | |
| 32 | |
| 33 | |
| 34 | |

sport is surrounded most notably by two peripheral ones: sumo and football. Together, these three sports broadly dictate the contemporary sporting landscape of Japan. Guttmann and Thompson (2001) proposed that the two main themes of domestication and sportification generally characterized Japan's modern sport development, which provide a useful framework for understanding sport in Japan. Baseball and association football exemplify the ways in which 'foreign' sports have been assimilated into Japanese culture (i.e., domesticated), while sumo illustrates the way in which an indigenous sport emerged from a pre-modern temple ritual (i.e., the process of sportification). To put this argument into perspective, it is necessary to consider the historical background of sport in Japan, and to provide a sketch of the development of these three sports in that country.

Baseball

Baseball started as an amateur high school sport during the late 19th and early 20th century in Japan (Kelly 2011) and quickly became a favorite national pastime. In 1915, the *Asahi Shimbun* newspaper initiated the annual National High School Baseball Summer Tournament, which remains one of the world's largest amateur sporting events. It was rivaled by the *Mainichi Shimbun* (Mainichi Daily News), which started a spring version of the tournament. It was also during this period that baseball became a commercial target. The amateur form of baseball gradually evolved into urban entertainment following intense competition among rail companies, which were vying for customers and competed by building sports stadia in order to secure a solid base of travelers. The completion of the Koshien Stadium¹ in 1925 (becoming the largest stadium in Asia), co-sponsored by the Mainichi newspaper and the Hanshin Electric Railway, which built and controlled rail connections to the stadium, marked the popularization of the sport. By the late 1920s, then, sport participation and spectatorship were increasingly part of mass consumer culture in Japan (Kelly 2000). It was in this context that baseball initially attracted the attention of the media, and newspapers—in addition to rail companies—began sponsoring teams. The original Japanese Baseball League was formed in 1934 (which was reorganized as the current Nippon Professional Baseball [NPB] in 1950). Tokyo's Yomiuri Giants (sponsored by the *Yomiuri Daily News*) became Japan's first professional baseball team in 1936. This was a development that transformed the prospects of baseball broadcasting in Japan.² The Nippon Television Network went to air in 1953 and immediately began to televise games of the Yomiuri Giants (Akutsu 2011). In 1958, the Yomiuri Giants established its own television network—Yomiuri Telecasting Corporation, which helped to publicize its team via national broadcasts.

In terms of live attendance and television viewership, the NPB has been the most popular and successful sport in Japan (Horne and Takahashi

| | |
|--|----|
| 2011). Although professional baseball is big business and the NPB clubs have always been owned by major companies, they are subsidiaries. The clubs are often not run as profit-making entities but, instead, operate traditionally as advertising vehicles for parent companies and usually bear the name of their corporate owners such as Hanshin Tigers in order to secure maximum exposure. For this reason, heavy investment is often made to keep their clubs in the public eye and to retain a media presence. It is widely believed that most NPB clubs operate in deficit (Kelly 2011). With no centralized system of selling broadcasting or merchandising rights, the NPB's estimated annual revenue is only slightly over US\$1 billion, a sixth of what the US professional game draws (Whiting 2008). In the last two decades, several developments have altered the course of Japanese baseball. | 1 |
| As pointed out by Horne and Takahashi (2011), the growing acceptance of agents representing the interests of professional athletes since the introduction of the free agency system in Japanese baseball in 1993, and the recruitment of Japanese athletes by the US Major League Baseball (MLB) looking to expand their global markets, has led to the increased migration of top-level players to the US. Along with declining spectator interest in the NPB, these developments have together threatened baseball in Japan, while MLB broadcasts are proving to be more popular among the Japanese audience than their local NPB counterparts. The impact of more recent media developments on the sport is elaborated later. | 2 |
| | 3 |
| | 4 |
| | 5 |
| | 6 |
| | 7 |
| | 8 |
| | 9 |
| | 10 |
| | 11 |
| | 12 |
| | 13 |
| | 14 |
| | 15 |
| | 16 |
| | 17 |
| | 18 |
| | 19 |
| | 20 |
| | 21 |
| | 22 |
| | 23 |
| | 24 |
| | 25 |
| | 26 |
| | 27 |
| | 28 |
| | 29 |
| | 30 |
| | 31 |
| | 32 |
| | 33 |
| | 34 |
| | 35 |
| | 36 |
| | 37 |
| | 38 |
| | 39 |
| | 40 |
| | 41 |
| | 42 |
| | 43 |
| | 44 |
| | 45 |
| | 46 |

Football

Football (known popularly as soccer in Japan) emerged in Japan roughly around the same time as baseball, yet it did not acquire a strong following until the formation of the professional J League (Horne and Bleakley 2002). The semi-professional Japan Soccer League, the precursor to the J League, was established in 1965 (Watts 1998). Yet, when the prospect of a professional football league in Japan transpired in the late 1980s as part of an attempt to rebuild the football infrastructure, it received only a lukewarm response. Until 1993, football in Japan was widely considered to be an inferior product by a range of interest groups (Watts 1998). For example, Japan's largest advertising agency, Dentsu—which helped to devise strategy for clients such as the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and the Federation of International Football Associations (FIFA) in Japan—predicted that the sport would not takeoff. Dentsu subsequently declined the contract to devise the original marketing conception of the J League. The formation of the J League in 1991 and its initial success proved Dentsu wrong. However, by the late 1990s, the rapid over-expansion of teams and Japan's weakening economy saw the deflation of the football 'bubble,' and average attendance and viewing figures declined (Manzenreiter 2004). However, as a result of Japan's co-hosting of the 2002 FIFA World Cup (with South Korea), and the success of the men's national team in the 2006 and 2010

World Cups, attendance numbers increased and peaked at an all-time high of 11 million in 2010 (see Figure 13.1 and Table 13.1).

Despite these recent gains, though, football still falls far behind the popularity and media coverage of baseball (Kelly 2011). However, while ratings for J League matches are regularly below those of the NPB, World Cup Football matches featuring the national team are much more competitive, pointing to the continued appeal of televised international matches (Watanabe 2011). As demonstrated in Table 13.2, it was mainly during a period of rapid economic growth in Japan in the 1960s that televised sport began to attract huge audience numbers, rating 50 percent or more. However, with the exception of the 1972 Summer Olympics, only football matches featuring the national team after the 1998 FIFA World Cup have achieved higher ratings. This viewing pattern arguably implies that purely 'local' sports programs are no longer 'killer content' for television in Japan, but also that football is breaking into the mediascape in Japan. It has been observed that football is becoming the sport of choice among Japanese youth for both playing and watching while baseball audiences are 'graying' every year (Kelly 2011). Yet, it has also been suggested that viewer interest in football broadcasts has considerably declined in recent years (Kelly 2011). Since the J League signed an exclusive five-year contract with Sky PerfecTV (one of Japan's largest pay-TV satellite broadcaster) in 2007, very few matches have been available to watch on free-to-air television. Not unlike baseball, J League observers have also noted the ageing of spectators at live matches. While the cause is not clear, the following inference may be plausible: on free-to-air television anyone beyond football fans had the opportunity to

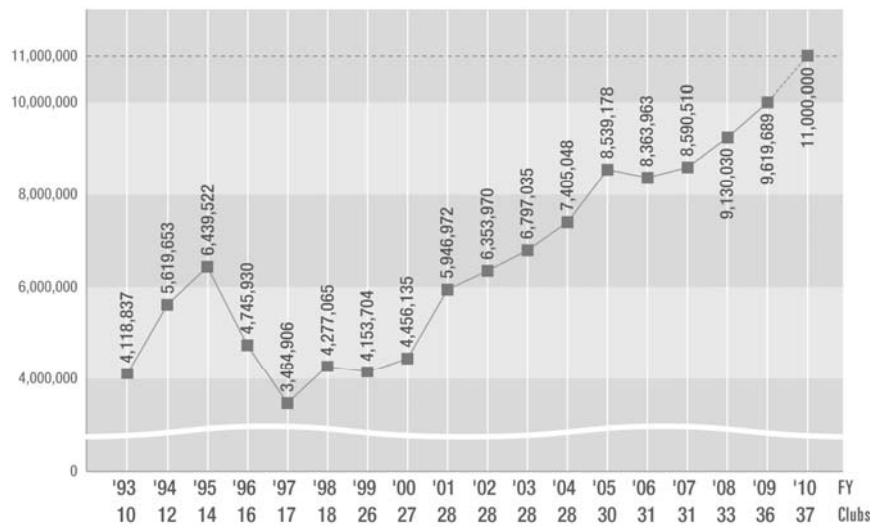


Figure 13.1 Aggregate attendances at J. League official matches.
Source: J League (2011).

Table 13.1 Popular Professional Sports in Japan

| SPORT | YEAR/RATING (%) | | | |
|---|-----------------|------|------|------|
| | 2005 | 2007 | 2009 | 2011 |
| Baseball (Nippon Professional Baseball) | 51.7 | 51.1 | 50.8 | 45.1 |
| Football (J League) | 22.8 | 22.8 | 21.6 | 28.9 |
| Golf | 16.9 | 14.4 | 15.5 | 19.9 |
| Sumo | 17.1 | 18.3 | 19.4 | 15.1 |
| Boxing | 7.8 | 9.3 | 9.1 | 7.7 |
| Motor Racing (e.g., F1) | 6.2 | 8.1 | 6.8 | 7.7 |
| Professional Wrestling | 4.2 | 6.0 | 3.5 | 3.1 |
| Others | 8.0 | 4.5 | 6.8 | 5.7 |

Source: *Survey of Favourite Professional Sports in Japan*, Central Research Services, Inc. (2005–2011).

be exposed to football, while pay-TV simply cannot stimulate the interest of latent football fans. Consequently, only those fans who originally like football subscribe to pay-TV. Thus, as a relatively new sport in the Japanese sportscape, football cannot increase the number of fans by exclusively broadcasting on pay-TV. Citizens' rights to football broadcasts and televised sport in general are discussed in more detail in a later section.

Sumo

Considered a ritual entertainment put on display for the gods during shrine festivals, sumo, a form of wrestling, had been linked to the national religion of Shinto in Japan since medieval times. Professional sumo tournaments have been held in the Ryogoku Kokugikan (also known as the Sumo Hall) in Tokyo since 1909.³ Distinctly Japanese, with the shrine roof over the sumo ring, samurai style topknot, the rituals, and design of the ring, modern sumo serves not only as a sporting competition but as a prestigious display of traditional culture. As a tournament sport, six Grand Sumo Basho (tournaments) running for fifteen days each, and held in odd-numbered months, are organized annually by the governing body of the sport, the Japan Sumo Association (JSA). Public broadcaster Nippon Hoso Kyokai (NHK) started live broadcasts of all of sumo's six annual tournaments in 1953 when it began regular television broadcasting. The NHK has broadcast every tournament since, a tradition that helped to maintain the sport's profile. However, television ratings for sumo often suffer as the tournaments are traditionally shown live between 4 p.m. and 6 p.m., a time when many people are at work or commuting home. This could possibly be one of the contributing factors to the sport's decline, with baseball gradually surpassing sumo as Japan's most popular sport (see Table 13.2).

Table 13.2 Top Fifteen Television Sports Ratings 1962–2010 (Tokyo Area)

| | Program | Date | Station | Rating% |
|----|--|---------------|----------|---------|
| 1 | Tokyo Olympics (Women's Volleyball) JAPAN v Soviet Union | Oct 23, 1964 | NHK | 66.8 |
| 2 | FIFA World Cup 2002 JAPAN v Russia | June 9, 2002 | Fuji | 66.1 |
| 3 | Professional Wrestling (Destroyer v Rikidozan) | May, 24, 1963 | NTV | 64.0 |
| 4 | Boxing WCM* (Harada v Jeophre) | May, 31, 1966 | Fuji | 63.7 |
| 5 | FIFA World Cup 1998 JAPAN v Croatia | June 20, 1998 | NHK | 60.9 |
| 6 | FIFA World Cup 1998 JAPAN v Argentina | June 14, 1998 | NHK | 60.5 |
| 7 | Boxing WCM (Harada v Radkin) | Nov 30, 1965 | Fuji | 60.4 |
| 8 | Munich Olympics Opening Ceremony | Sept 8, 1972 | NHK | 58.7 |
| 9 | Boxing WCM (Harada v Caraballo) | July 4, 1967 | Fuji | 57.0 |
| 10 | FIFA World Cup 2010 JAPAN v Paraguay | June 9, 2010 | TBS | 55.4* |
| 11 | Boxing WCM (Harada v Jeophre) | May 18, 1965 | Fuji | 54.9 |
| 12 | Boxing WCM (Harada v Medel) | Jan 3, 1967 | Fuji | 53.9 |
| 13 | Boxing WCM (Harada v Rodes) | Feb 27, 1968 | Fuji | 53.4 |
| 14 | Sapporo Winter Olympics 70m Jump | Feb 11, 1972 | NHK | 53.1 |
| 15 | FIFA World Cup 2006 JAPAN v Croatia | June 18, 2006 | TV Asahi | 52.7 |

*World championship match Bantam class

Source: *Popular Sports on Television Among Households (Tokyo Area)*, Video-Research Ltd. (2011).

No doubt, television ratings would be boosted if the tournaments were shown in prime time, yet sumo is still in decline and there is further evidence that the sport is losing its appeal to young Japanese viewers (Talmadge 2010). It has also been observed by the JSA that fewer people are attending sumo tournaments at the Ryogoku Kokugikan in Tokyo, whereas

most sumo matches have traditionally sold out (Maijrox News 2011). The
decline in sumo's popularity has also been attributed to the steady stream of
gaijin (foreign recruits). Like baseball, wrestlers were initially recruited from
Japan in order to protect the distinctive Japanese nature of the sport (Kelly
2011). However, with the sport's rigorous training and the 'unhealthy' and
'unsightly' image of the endomorphic sumo wrestler, young people began to
spurn the sumo lifestyle. Faced with a shortage of Japanese recruits willing
to endure the required harsh training regime, the JSA had no alternative but
to accept an influx of foreign wrestlers. Since then, there has been a steady
stream of sumo migrants, especially from Hawaii and Mongolia. By January
2011, there were twelve Mongolian, three Georgian, one Estonian, one
Russian and one Chinese within the top division of sumo wrestling. Yet,
the JSA maintained some restrictions on foreign wrestlers and, in 2002,
implemented a rule that there should be no more than one non-Japanese
citizen in each stable.⁴ Although foreign athletes, for instance in baseball
and football, are generally treated better than their Japanese counterparts,
foreign and Japanese wrestlers have the same training conditions and levels
of payment.

While the flood of *gaijin* into the sport has raised the quality of competition,
it appears to be eroding sumo's popularity as well (Beech 2010). Sumo fans and reporters started scrutinizing foreign wrestlers, ready to
criticize any signs of unruly behavior. For instance, the Mongolian *yokozuna* (a term referring to the highest rank in professional sumo wrestling), Asashoryu, was criticized by the local press for not showing a sufficiently respectful attitude, and was forced to retire in 2010 after an assault outside a Tokyo nightclub. Other wrestlers have been accused of being involved in underground betting rings and related scandals of match-fixing and illegal gambling (Beech 2010). The sport of sumo faced more match-fixing accusations in early 2011 after a similar incident in 2010, when evidence was found on several wrestlers' mobile phones by the police. For the first time since 1946, the JSA cancelled its grand tournament in March 2011 over allegations of match fixing. Although this was not the first time that sport officials had to deal with match-fixing claims, they had never before been investigated in the face of denials of any impropriety by the JSA (McCurry 2011). NHK registered its disapproval by refusing live television coverage of the summer tournament in 2010 and again in spring 2011. This latest crisis highlighted the need for reform to revive the much tarnished reputation and viewership of sumo in Japan.

We have so far provided a sketch of the development of three key sports in Japan and how they came to be favored as both content and marketing tools by the Japanese television industries and various businesses. The next section further considers the sport-television relationship and, especially, the ways in which the popularity of these sports has been tied in to the emergence and development of new media technology.

SPORT, BROADCASTING, AND TELEVISION IN JAPAN

A dual structure of public and commercial television broadcasting has been maintained since television broadcasting began in Japan in 1953. The television industry in Japan consists of the public NHK and the main commercial stations of Nippon TV (NTV), TBS, Fuji TV, TV Asahi, and TV Tokyo. The five major commercial broadcasters are owned by media conglomerates that also own and operate newspaper companies—NTV by Yomiuri Shinbun, TBS by Mainichi Shinbun, Fuji TV by Sankei Shinbun, TV Asahi by Asahi Shinbun and TV Tokyo by Nihon Keizai. The NHK has been the backbone of Japan's broadcasting system since it started transmission in the pre-war period. As viewers tended to be attracted by 'spectacles' in the early period of television broadcasts, live telecasts of sports were popular (Shimizu 1983, p. 24). Popular Japanese sports like baseball and sumo tournaments have been broadcast by the NHK since it resumed broadcasting in 1953. With the hosting of the Tokyo Olympic Games in 1964, sport was confirmed as a form of television content that could attract high ratings (Horne 2005). First as content filler, then as the underlying commercial logic that steers the growth and spread of media, sport and mass media in Japan are inseparably related.

Sports broadcasting in Japan was rapidly transformed with the development of new transmission technologies and convergence of broadcasting and communication. It has created opportunities for new entrants and allowed existing broadcasters to develop their businesses in the evolving industry. On one hand, the emergence of new global media, including the internet and satellite broadcasting, has provided the necessary channel capacity for more sport content. On the other hand, with broadcasters on the constant lookout for new products and strategies to expand their customer base, sports that are popular can provide 'killer content' to attract new customers. Since the 1980s, the development of new transmission technologies meant that new means of television service delivery via satellite and cable were introduced, together with governmental measures to deregulate the broadcasting market similar to those that have been implemented in other advanced capitalist countries (Horne 2005). Broadcast satellite (BS) and communication satellite (CS)⁵ channels, as well as cable television, were introduced by both the NHK and commercial broadcasters. These reforms aimed to liberalize the Japanese telecommunications market for foreign investors and to increase competition in the domestic market (Cave and Nakamura 2006). The removal of restrictions on foreign ownership in 1997 further deregulated the market (Kostic 2009) with JSkyB, a pay service CS broadcaster owned by the Rupert Murdoch-controlled News Corporation in cooperation with two local companies (Soft bank and Sony) going to air in that year. JSkyB was renamed Sky PerfecTV in 2000 after its merger with the failing Direct TV. The strength of Sky PerfecTV lies with its sport programs, as evidenced by its exclusive (subscription service) broadcasting

| | |
|---|----|
| rights to the 2002, 2006, and 2010 FIFA Men's Football World Cup Finals. | 1 |
| Yet since its establishment, Sky PerfecTV had been losing money due to | 2 |
| the high costs associated with expanding its customer base, in addition to | 3 |
| the costs of securing exclusive coverage of the sixty-four matches in the | 4 |
| 2002 FIFA World Cup Finals (Horne 2005). The 2002 FIFA World Cup | 5 |
| co-hosted by Japan and South Korea was an important turning point for | 6 |
| the development of CS channels and, with the slogan "You can watch all | 7 |
| matches," subscriptions exceeded three million that year (NHK, 2003). Sky | 8 |
| PerfecTV was thus able to announce its first profit in 2004 (Kyodo News | 9 |
| International, 2004). Ironically, this was a year after News Corporation | 10 |
| sold off its entire stake. ⁶ | 11 |
| The deregulation of the media industry occurred in conjunction with | 12 |
| broader changes in corporate and sport culture in Japan. Together, these | 13 |
| developments have simultaneously created a supportive environment to | 14 |
| advance and diversify its sport broadcasting. The evolution of attitudes | 15 |
| toward labor relations from the management tradition of lifelong employ- | 16 |
| ment to a performance-based reward system has led to the growth of player | 17 |
| agents who represent the interests of professional athletes in contract nego- | 18 |
| tiations with the enactment of the free agency rules (Horne and Takahashi | 19 |
| 2011). Until Hideo Nomo's migration to the MLB in 1995, no Japanese | 20 |
| baseball player had left the country to join a foreign team (Watts 1998). As | 21 |
| the national sport in Japan, the act of leaving the Japanese baseball league | 22 |
| was once perceived as treachery (Whiting 2008). Nomo, hence, paved the | 23 |
| way for other Japanese athletes to pursue sizeable MLB salaries, develop- | 24 |
| ments that also sparked a surge of interest in MLB among Japanese fans. | 25 |
| These trends coincided with the US dual strategy in sports both to expand | 26 |
| its international market and recruit relatively 'cheap talent' from abroad | 27 |
| (Miller et al., 2003, Horne and Takahashi 2011). The commencement of | 28 |
| live broadcasting of MLB by the NHK in 1989, and the acceptance of base- | 29 |
| ball as a full Olympic sport in 1992, further accelerated the internationa- | 30 |
| lization of baseball in Japan. | 31 |
| With the pull of greater US salaries, the prestige of the major leagues, and | 32 |
| the push to be free from the excessive practice and stringent discipline of the | 33 |
| Japanese system (Whiting 2008), MLB started attracting some of the most | 34 |
| talented and popular Japanese players (e.g., Hideki Matsui, Daisuke Mat- | 35 |
| suzaka, and Ichiro Suzuki). Due to the increasing recruitment of Japanese | 36 |
| baseball players into MLB, Japan became America's 'farm team' (Walsh | 37 |
| 2006). As a result, television ratings for Japanese baseball declined and, | 38 |
| as MLB broadcasts became regular affairs, Japanese viewers took greater | 39 |
| interest in following Japanese players in the MLB than many of the local | 40 |
| league games (Kelly 2011). The NTV also began reducing its broadcasts | 41 |
| of Yomiuri Giants baseball games which had aired on the network since | 42 |
| 1953. The role played by advertising agencies in Japan is also worthy of | 43 |
| mention here. Dentsu, one of the dominant marketing and consulting agen- | 44 |
| cies in world sports, is the MLB's longest-standing international partner for | 45 |
| | 46 |

broadcasting rights. MLB's broadcasting agreement in 2009 saw the airing of MLB games until 2015 by NHK, TBS, Fuji TV, TV Asahi, TV Tokyo, and J SPORTS through their sub-licensing agreements with Dentsu. It was also the first time (in 2009) that TV Asahi, TV Tokyo, and J Sports began to broadcast MLB games in Japan (MLB 2009).

While baseball has comprised about a quarter of all media sport in Japan over the last three decades, media coverage in all formats for football, the second most popular sport in Japan, still falls behind that of baseball because of the historical development of close relations between the media and baseball (Manzenreiter 2004). While there is no 'blackout rule' for baseball and all games are broadcast in every city in Japan (McDonald *et al.* 2001), a 'scarcity value' is applied by the J League, limiting the live broadcasting of football matches (Manzenreiter 2004). Despite the lag in media coverage, there are signs that football is breaking into the Japanese media landscape. Football has gradually become the sport of choice among young people, both as a game for playing and spectating, especially as baseball audiences have aged (Kelly 2009). However, like baseball, football also faces the double-edged sword of a 'foreign invasion.' In the same manner as baseball, the launch of digital television and satellite broadcasting in the 1990s helped to bring the wider world of football to Japan. Developments in mass communication technologies also promised a wider selection of channels offering live matches and delayed telecasts from major European football leagues such as the Italian Serie A and English Premier League (EPL). The proliferation of coverage of the best European leagues has, it should be noted, enticed young talents and star players to the top leagues in Europe. For instance, Hidetoshi Nakata's migration to play for A.S. Roma in the 1990s resulted in the introduction of the Italian Serie A to the Japanese, going on to become one of the most popular foreign football leagues in Japan. Given the numbers involved, the threat to football is less severe when compared with baseball (Kelly 2011). Although interest in foreign football leagues has generally grown since the 1998 World Cup (Horne and Manzenreiter 2002), there have been several dips in ratings following the lack of success of the men's national team in past FIFA World Cups and other regional tournaments. Japan's first World Cup victory on foreign soil at the 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa, however, sparked a resurgence of interest in football (Guardian 2010), which improved the place of the sport in Japan. Symptomatic of this fervent interest was the steep growth in attendance numbers for the J League which, as noted earlier, reached an all-time annual high of 11 million in 2010.

As with baseball, spectator interest in sumo has declined, albeit for different reasons. The sport, as mentioned, has faced a number of recent allegations over match fixing, 'hazing,' and troubles with foreign wrestlers, all of which have sapped fans' interest over the years. Prior to these scandals, there were also allegations of the sport's connections to the underworld (BBC 2011), with NHK (as noted) twice refusing to broadcast live

| | |
|---|---|
| the 2010 and 2011 tournaments. NHK hoped that the sport would move quickly to reform itself and indicated their interest in the maintenance of close links with sumo. The live coverage of the fifteen-day tournaments generates respectable viewing figures, with an average of 13 percent of households tuning in to the July Basho in 2009, for example (Dickie 2010). However, the scandals have made it difficult to attract and retain sponsors (BBC 2011). | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 |
| THE IMPACT OF NEW MEDIA TECHNOLOGY ON SPORT IN JAPAN | |
| Broadcasting in Japan was developed in line with the government's policy of pursuing economic growth through technological advancement (Hayashi 2008). As summarized in the Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications (MPT) White Paper: | |
| In order to maintain Japan's international competitiveness in the broadcasting field and to bring the benefits of digital broadcasting to viewers, broadcasters and program producers [. . .] digital technology would not only raise the number of channels but also encourage new entrants into the broadcasting business, giving viewers a wider choice of programs and services. (1999, p. 43) | |
| The subsequent digitization of all types of television in Japan took place in July 2011 ⁷ when analogue terrestrial broadcasting services were decommissioned. With the implementation of full digitization, the interaction between multiple digital platforms has been enhanced. The switchover of various digital platforms, including terrestrial broadcasting, further accelerated the creation of a multichannel media environment. The development of new and competing media platforms—mobile television, cable, satellite, digital, internet—has transformed various sports, as commercial pressures on broadcasters are responsible for the search for a relatively low cost means of attracting or maintaining audiences (Horne and Manzenreiter 2002). The heightened interest in sports programming as a result of the expansion of distribution channels has catalyzed the introduction of international and foreign sports and, in the process, hastened their proliferation and placement on other platforms. For instance, in 2011, J Sports launched a new partnership with MP & Silva for access rights to the EPL and the French Ligue 1 in order to consolidate their position as the top sports broadcaster in Japan (Fraser 2011). Sky PerfecTV also signed a deal with the Union of European Football Associations (UEFA) in 2009 for the television, internet, and mobile rights to the Champions League, Super Cup and Europa League between 2009 and 2012 (Fry 2009). Besides the subscription services, broadcasts of some of these international sports have also been made | |

available on free-to-air broadcasters such as Fuji TV, NTV, and TBS. In 2007, MP & Silva (a leading international sports media and marketing company that owns and distributes rights to international sports contents) concluded deals for Serie A coverage with these three top-tier national terrestrial broadcasters, which collectively reach over 144 million households. The move was calculated to strengthen Serie A's reach and popularity in Japan beyond Sky PerfecTV's 150,000 subscribers to its football offerings, and to develop public interest in the league (Sport Business 2007). At the same time, Serie A has also been made available to Japanese consumers on the recently developed internet television service, livesports.jp, which streams live coverage of Serie A matches online. With the Japanese government's push for a high penetration of broadband under the national information technology strategy (Kwak 2008), the rapid growth of internet users in Japan in recent years will compel broadcasters and pay services to provide sports content via broadband internet services.

New technologies play a pivotal role in the packaging of sport events, where they not only compete with each other, but also with other media products (Horne and Manzenreiter 2002). With hundreds of hours of programming time to fill with the expanded channel capacity, broadcasting corporations are constantly searching for new products and strategies to enhance their customer base. For instance, in 2008, MP & Silva launched a Japanese mobile site for AC Milan, and the football club has subsequently developed a strong following, especially among young fans since Hidetoshi Nakata's appearance in Serie A. The mobile site, which acts as an important tool to reach the growing Japanese fan base, offers news, photos, downloads and multimedia content from the Serie A and UEFA Champions League (Fry 2009).

It has already been mentioned that the average age of spectators at J league games has gradually risen and that football fans in their teens and twenties are likely to have an interest in overseas football. As noted, Nakata's transfer to Serie A in 1998 was a major boost to the diffusion of European league football on television in Japan. While the movement of J league players to European leagues raised the recognition of the J league in Japanese society for a short period, young football fans in Japan, as well as fans in other Asian countries, remain more interested in the European leagues. In recent years, Liga Espanol and the EPL have become very popular among Japanese football fans. After the FIFA World Cup in South Africa in 2010, several Japanese players moved to Europe, and the transfer of Nagatomo to the Italian club Internazionale Milano encouraged fans again to pay more attention to Serie A. With the maturation of the market for CS sports channels, however, a rapid increase in subscriptions for the CS is not expected. While it is becoming increasingly common for some young football fans in big cities such as Tokyo or Osaka to watch football at a sports bar, European football is broadcast at midnight or in the early hours of the morning in Japan. Hence, many young football fans prefer to collect information

about football from the internet, to communicate by twitter and blog, or
1
to play football as a computer game, rather than live telecasts on pay-TV.
2
Furthermore, while some fans enjoy telecasts of football on free illegal sites,
3
older generations with larger incomes tend to subscribe to CS sports chan-
4
nels in order to watch baseball as opposed to football. Thus, while crucial,
5
European football is not the most important factor in the spread of pay-TV
in Japan. Rather, it is the deliberate attempt by the government to control
6
the broadcasting networks that is the most significant factor behind their
7
spread, as explored in the following section.
8
9
10
11
12
13

THREATS TO CULTURAL CITIZENSHIP?

While the digitization of broadcast services brought about the prolifera-
14
tion of multimedia commercial platforms, it has also impacted on NHK's
15
historic role in providing free-to-air broadcasts of major sports events.
16
Commercial pay-TV networks are aggressively competing for, and luring
17
traditional audiences away from, public service broadcasting. It has
18
also become a challenge for traditional domestic events to hold their audi-
19
ence in the past decade given the increasing popularity of international
20
sports transmissions. Both developments bring into question two related
21
debates over access to television sports. A concentration of large consoli-
22
dated broadcasting networks linked to national newspaper holdings best
23
describes the mediascape in Japan. This current condition is the result of
24
deliberate government policy (Hayashi 2008). However, these trends raise
25
important questions about restricted access to culturally significant sport-
26
ing events, which inevitably raises issues of citizenship and civil liberties
27
(Rowe 2004).
28

NHK has historically been the axis of Japan's sport broadcasting. Yet,
29
in the current system, there is no independent supervisory body guarantee-
30
ing the democratic nature of broadcasting and safeguarding the viewing
31
rights of citizens. The granting of broadcast licenses and the assignment
32
of broadcasting frequencies are overseen by the Ministry of Internal
33
Affairs and Communications. So far, the development of broadcasting
34
has largely been determined by the interests of the government, with little
35
national debate on the type of broadcasting model that is most suitable
36
in reflecting public welfare (Hayashi 2008). Through media deregulation
37
and reregulation, the principle of market domination prevention suppos-
38
edly acts as a means of establishing greater diversity in broadcasting and
39
counteracting NHK's monopoly in Japan. However, this principle has
40
been no more than 'window dressing.' In order to survive in a NHK-dom-
41
inated broadcast environment, commercial broadcasters have clustered
42
into five large main networks in association with the five major national
43
newspaper companies in Japan. This arrangement effectively consolidates
44
media ownership.
45
46

The ideal of preventing the concentration of media ownership has been eroded further by the recent digitalization of television. The development of a digital broadcast technology industry presents a potential source of revenue for the Ministry to claim a larger share of the government's overall revenue in addition to the lucrative tie-ups with digital equipment manufacturers (Hayashi 2008). For NHK, the digital switchover provides an opportunity to reinforce its position as the technological leader in the media industry. Together with the commercial broadcasters, NHK has spent ¥1.5 trillion (US\$18.5 billion) on digitization, in addition to the state's contribution of ¥200 billion (US\$2.4 billion) to the project (Brasor and Tsubuku 2010). NHK, as a publicly-owned broadcasting station, is funded through license fee collection, whereas the commercial broadcasters have to rely on television advertising for their revenues. With shrinking advertising revenues for traditional media in the digital age, especially television, the switchover poses a serious challenge to commercial broadcasters unless they undergo merger and consolidate their finances. Digitization is, therefore, likely to bring about further concentration of Japan's media industry.

As with most other public service broadcasters in the developed world, NHK now faces the issue of how to maintain the license fee system as competition in the digital multichannel environment. Terrestrial commercial networks do not charge fees, but by branching out early into digital platforms to retain existing audiences and attract new viewers, they have retained overwhelming strength in the production of programs. The plethora of networks and platforms, however, has not only ended NHK's supremacy in broadcasting, it has also made its public broadcaster status comparatively weak and exacerbated antagonistic public attitudes toward paying license fees⁸ (Kwak 2008). These appear to be the precise reasons for the adoption of a protectionist policy by the Japanese government toward NHK. With the development of the CS service in the 1990s, which started to provide popular premium channels such as sports, the Japanese government might have worried about giving Sky PerfecTV a monopoly in the satellite business where foreign ownership is allowed. To dilute their influence, there is a longstanding imbalance in the level of control exercised over commercial broadcasters and service providers when compared to NHK. Proponents of commercial broadcasting have argued that there is obvious favoritism of the state toward NHK (Kwak 2008). The commercial broadcasters' objections to the close relationship between NHK and the government became glaringly apparent with the development of the full digitization of broadcasting.

With their long-ignored viewing rights, Japanese viewers have recently expressed their dissatisfaction by refusing to pay the license fee (Kwak 2008). The increasing refusal by viewers to pay the fee has also occurred against the background of the introduction of pay-TV, a product of media deregulation. With younger generations growing up with subscription-based media, Rowe (2004) cautioned that paying for media services may

| | |
|--|--|
| seem increasingly natural for them. Besides, the provision of greater program diversity has led to the popular belief that commercial networks can now fulfill most, if not all, of the legislative requirements imposed on NHK for the provision of universal access to broadcasting services as a public corporation (Nakamura 2009). Although this could be interpreted as an 'awakening' of consumer consciousness, it also indicates a decline in the awareness of the cultural rights of citizens. | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 |
| As Rowe (2004) argues, the notions of access to, and equity in, television sport are significant constituents of citizenship and civil liberty. Television is deemed an essential element of any current conception of sport, and live telecasts of sport are a key component of any consideration of the rights pertaining to contemporary cultural citizenship. Hence the cultural rights of all citizens include having access | 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 |
| . . . to the most important sports presented in the best possible way—'live-to-air' shown where possible in prime time and presented in a critically informative and incisive manner, and not reserved only for those watching on a subscription or per-view basis. (Rowe 2004, p. 387) | 15 16 17 18 19 |
| The current trend toward commercial broadcasting and pay-TV in Japan raises the concern of whether these rights have been respected. It must, however, be mentioned that, despite the lack of anti-siphoning legislation in Japan to ensure that major sports events remain on free-to-air public television, the relationship between NHK and commercial broadcasters remains cordial. The importance of group/team harmony, or <i>wa</i> , a principle underpinning Japanese society, together with a combination of social, political and economic factors, have created the complex nature of the Japanese media landscape. Although increased consumer demand seems to imply that rights holders of sports events will secure higher television rights fees, this is not usually the case in Japan. The collaborative nature of broadcasters inevitably implies that the price of rights is suppressed due to a lack of competition ⁹ (Fry 2009). Global media sports events like the Olympic Games, then, can remain widely available to viewers without the threat of inflated sports rights causing the dilemma of fund starvation for other programs of national significance. Yet, with the shift to digital broadcasting, the expansion of broadcast platforms has resulted in an increase in direct programming (i.e. narrowcasting) via other platforms like the internet and mobile phones. | 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 |
| The plethora of choices has further fragmented audiences, which not only diminishes the influence of commercial broadcasters, but also places greater strain on NHK with regard to its declining viewership in a finite market. Narrowcasting allows specialization in sport content distribution, thereby increasing the opportunity and necessary platform for the purchase of more sport broadcasting rights. These developments will likely intensify the introduction of more international and foreign sport events with the | 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 |

1 rapid expansion of channels and platforms, thereby impacting upon and
2 possibly transforming Japan's mediascape.

3

4 CONCLUSION

5

6 As the illustrative examples in this chapter suggest, "the relationship
7 between sport and the media has [...] to be understood as conjunctural,
8 reflecting specific social (political, economic, and ideological) circum-
9 stances" (Horne 2005, p. 416). It has provided a review of recent develop-
10 ments in Japan's sports and media markets, and has examined how new
11 entrants and existing players have participated in these developments. We
12 have also assessed how new technology is changing the ways in which the
13 Japanese consume sport.

14 To sum up, when one thinks about media sports in Japan, both baseball
15 and sumo cannot be ignored. Even though both sports existed prior to
16 the emergence of television, the new medium played a fundamental role
17 in cementing their status as truly national sports. The peak of both sports
18 occurred at almost the same time; when free-to-air television was in its
19 golden age. As the 21st century began, however, the popularity of sumo and
20 baseball declined on free-to-air television. Due to the ageing of the fans
21 and repeated scandals, the prospects for sumo appear to be dire. Baseball
22 is still the most popular spectator sport in Japan. However, the sport now
23 only airs on CS channels; hence, baseball is being watched primarily by
24 the sport's most dedicated fans. The J League was confronted with what
25 amounted to a 'red card' by free-to-air television in its early stages, and has
26 subsequently become the content of CS sport channels. However, Japan's
27 national football matches have been treated well by FIFA, and Japan has
28 been recognized as an affluent market under the global strategy of FIFA
29 since the 1990s. Japan has continued to qualify for the World Cup Finals,
30 and national matches have continued to be televised on free-to-air television
31 since the World Cup in 1998. These matches have made a significant contribu-
32 tion to the television industry; even more, they remained effective stimu-
33 lants for the business of the J League every four years. The J League has
34 transformed sports culture in Japan. It hammered a stake into the close
35 connection between television and baseball, and moreover provided profes-
36 sional baseball with several new methods for developing its audience.

37 Sports patterns in Japan are not unlike those of other developed soci-
38 eties, although the country has distinctive sporting forms, like sumo. In
39 Japan, as in most societies, sports are closely related to the mass media. As
40 briefly surveyed in this chapter, baseball, football and sumo are games that
41 are played and watched, and all have been drawn into ongoing transna-
42 tional flows in global sports. Japan's involvement in the international nexus
43 of sport, synchronized with the advance of global media, creates an envi-
44 ronment likely to expand and diversify sport broadcasting. Yet, in the wake
45

of the switchover to digital broadcasting, the unsettling media environment
ushers in a transitional phase of the sports media market in Japan. While
opportunities are created with new distribution networks and platforms for
sport content, the changes are creating enormous conflict and uncertainty.
A source of this consternation is the progressive increase of international
and foreign sports brought in by commercial broadcasters, which raises the
question, will “indigenous sports in Japan survive the onslaught of global-
ised sports?” (Horne 2005, p. 427). Concerns have been expressed about
the government’s protectionism over their own interests “that threaten[s]
to expropriate public investment for privately profitable purposes, and pro-
gressively to introduce an abundance of provision for the relatively affluent
while imposing paucity on those of lesser wealth” (Rowe 2004, p. 386).

As can be seen, a decision has been taken by NHK to reduce its license
fee as part of its three-year corporate plan, with effect from October 2012
(Japan Today 2011). This is the first time that the public broadcaster has
reduced its fee since 1968. Arguably, this can be either interpreted as a tran-
sitional measure in anticipation of competition, or simply as an attempt to
reverse the increasing refusal of some households to pay the license fee. Yet,
with digitization, the trend toward the domination of commercial broad-
casters increases apace, and weakens the prospects for the defense of public
viewing rights. These developments raise important questions about NHK’s
public service remit in the provision of television and Japanese citizens’ cul-
tural rights of access to quality, live, free-to-air sport.

NOTES

1. It currently hosts the Hanshin Tigers, one of Japan’s most popular profes-
sional baseball teams, which in Japan are officially known by the name of
their corporate owner, instead of the place where the teams are geographi-
cally located. 27
2. The league continued into the wartime years before ceasing at the end of
1943. The league was subsequently revived with the US’s ‘reverse course’
policy toward Japan during the post-World War II reconstruction. The
two-league system—the Central and Pacific Leagues, as in US Baseball—
was inaugurated in 1950 and has been in place ever since, with six teams in
each league. 28
3. The Kuramae Kokugikan was used for the tournaments in the post world-
war years until 1984. 29
4. Every sumo wrestler belongs to a ‘stable,’ a training house managed by a
stable master where the wrestler lives and trains. 30
5. BS channels broadcast similar programs to the terrestrial channels although
there are more channels and variety. While BS is reserved for companies that
are majority-owned by Japanese, CS is open to foreign-owned companies. 31
6. It has been suggested that News Corporation’s exit from the Japanese market
is a result of a series of counter-manoeuvres by Japan’s broadcasting industry
to restore its ‘national purity’ in ownership and management (Choi 2010). 32
7. Except for three prefectures destroyed or heavily damaged by the earthquake
and tsunami in 2011, which stopped analogue broadcasting in 2012. 33

- 1 8. Viewers in Japan have expressed their dissatisfaction over the necessity of
 2 paying the license fee after several cases of funds abuse by NHK came to
 3 light in 2004 (Nakamura, 2009).
- 4 9. For instance, the IOC sold all media rights for the 2010–2012 Olympic
 5 Games to a Japanese consortium comprising NHK and the National Asso-
 6 ciation of Commercial Broadcasters. Although it guarantees widespread cov-
 7 erage, the rights fee was not as high comparatively as those achieved in the
 US and most parts of Europe (Fry 2009).
- 8
- 9

10 REFERENCES

11

- 12 Akutsu, A., 2011. Japan Sports Century: Producer Keeps Finger on Pulse of TV's
 13 Evolving Role in Sports [online]. Asahi Shimbun. Available from: <http://ajw.asahi.com/article/sports/AJ201108167609> [Accessed 6 November 2011].
- 13 BBC, 2011. Sumo Tournament Cancelled amid Match-Fixing Scandal [online].
 14 BBC. Available from: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-pacific-12375649>
 15 [Accessed 6 March 2011].
- 16 Beech, H., 2010. Cleaning up Sumo. *Time International* 176, 20–23.
- 17 Brasor, P., and Tsubuku, M., 2010. The Road to Digital TV is not Paved with
 18 Enough Antennas [online]. *Japan Times*. Available from: <http://blog.japantimes.co.jp/yen-for-living/the-road-to-digital-tv-is-not-paved-with-enough-antennas/>
 19 [Accessed 28 March 2010].
- 20 Cave, M., and Nakamura, K., 2006. *Digital Broadcasting: Policy and Practice in
 21 the Americas, Europe and Japan*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing Ltd.
- 22 Central Research Services, 2005–2011. Popular Professional Sports Survey in
 23 Japan [online]. *Central Research Services*. Available from: <http://www.crs.or.jp/data/> [Accessed 10 November 2011]. [in Japanese].
- 24 Choi, J.B., 2010. Banishment of Murdoch's Sky in Japan: A Tale of David and Goliath?
 25 In: M. Yoshimoto, E. Tsai and J.B. Choi, eds., *Television, Japan and Globalization*. Ann Arbor: Centre for Japanese Studies, The University of Michigan, 7–26.
- 26 Dickie, M., 2010. Broadcaster Drops Scandal-Hit Sumo [online]. *Financial
 27 Times Online*. Available from: http://cachef.ft.com/cms/s/cffd9b6-8912-11df-8925-00144feab49a,dwp_uuid=7f5f6b12-2f66-11da-8b51-00000e2511c8,print=yes.html [Accessed 18 March 2011].
- 28 Fraser, A., 2011. J Sports and MP & Silva Launch Partnership with Two Deals
 29 [online]. *Sports Pro*. Available from: http://www.sportspromedia.com/news/j_sports_and_mp_silva_launch_partnership_with_soccer_deals/ [Accessed 3
 30 March 2011].
- 31 French, D. and Richards, M., eds., 2000. *Television in Contemporary Asia*. Lon-
 32 don: Sage.
- 33 Fry, A., 2009. Crouching Tiger: Japan [online]. *SportBusiness International*. Avail-
 34 able from: <http://baseballbusinessmarketplace.com/publication.asp?function=formsearch&magNameDrop=ALL&searchwords=baseball+marketing+mlb+professional&searchchoice>AllWords&year=2009> [Accessed 4 March 2011].
- 35 Guardian, 2010. World Cup 2010: Samurai Blues Hope for Another Miracle
 36 [online]. *Guardian*. Available from: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/football/blog/2010/jun/23/world-cup-2010-letter-japan> [Accessed 11 March 2011].
- 37 Guttmann, A., and Thompson, L., 2001. *Japanese Sports: A History*. Honolulu:
 38 University of Hawai'i Press.
- 39 Hayashi, K., 2008. The Dilemmas of Reforming Japan's Broadcasting System:
 40 Ambivalent Implications of its Liberalization. In: D. Ward, ed., *Television and
 41 Public Policy*. Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 131–148.
- 42
- 43
- 44
- 45
- 46

| | |
|--|----|
| Horne, J., 2005. Sport and the Mass Media in Japan. <i>Sociology of Sport Journal</i> , 22(4), 415–432. | 1 |
| Horne, J., and Bleakley, D., 2002. The Development of Football in Japan. In: J. Horne and W. Manzenreiter, eds., <i>Japan, Korea and the 2002 World Cup</i> . London: Routledge, 89–105. | 2 |
| Horne, J., and Manzenreiter, W., 2002. The World Cup and Television Football. In: J. Horne and W. Manzenreiter, eds., <i>Japan, Korea and the 2002 World Cup</i> . London: Routledge, 195–212. | 3 |
| Horne, J., and Takahashi, Y., 2011. Moving with the Bat and the Ball. In: J. Maguire and M. Falcous, eds., <i>Sport and Migration</i> . London: Routledge, 46–55. | 4 |
| J League, 2011. Changes in Aggregate Attendances at J League Official Matches [online]. <i>J League</i> . Available from: http://www.j-league.or.jp/eng/data/2010/01-01.pdf [Accessed 15 March 2011]. | 5 |
| Japan Today, 2011. NHK to reduce monthly subscription fees [online]. <i>Japan Today</i> . Available from: http://www.japantoday.com/category/national/view/nhk-to-reduce-reduce-monthly-subscription-fees [Accessed 6 November 2011]. | 6 |
| Kelly, W.W., 2009. Samurai Baseball: The Vicissitudes of a National Sporting Style. <i>The International Journal of the History of Sport</i> , 26(3), 429–441. | 7 |
| _____, 2000. The Spirit and Spectacle of School Baseball: Mass Media, Statemaking, and “Edu-tainment” in Japan, 1905–1935. In: U. Tadao, W.W. Kelly and K. Masatoshi, eds., <i>Japanese Civilization in the Modern World XIV</i> . Osaka: National Museum of Ethnology, 105–115. | 8 |
| Kelly, W.W., 2011. The Sportscape of Contemporary Japan. In: T.C. Bestor, ed., <i>Handbook of Japanese Culture and Society</i> . London: Routledge, 251–262. | 9 |
| Kostic, Z., 2009. <i>The Challenge of Digital Broadcast Media: NHK (the Japanese Broadcasting Corporation), Satellite, Internet, Mobile Technologies and the Future Role of Public Broadcasting</i> . Paper presented at the Australia and New Zealand Communication Association Brisbane, Australia. | 10 |
| Kwak, K. S., 2008. Restructuring the Satellite Television Industry in Japan. <i>Television & New Media</i> , 9(62), 62–84. | 11 |
| Majirox News, 2011. Sumo Popularity Slumps to New Low [online]. <i>Tokyo Majirox News</i> . Available from: http://www.majiroxnews.com/2011/09/11/sumo-popularity-slumps-to-new-low/ [Accessed 9 November 2011]. | 12 |
| Manzenreiter, W., 2004. Japanese Football and World Sports: Raising the Global Game in a Local Setting. <i>Japan Forum</i> , 16(2), 289–313. | 13 |
| McCurry, J., 2011. Sumo Wrestling Hit by Match-Fixing Scandal [online]. <i>Guardian Online</i> . Available from: http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/feb/02/japan-sumo-wrestling-match-fixing/print [Accessed 15 March 2011]. | 14 |
| McDonald, M., Mihara, T., and Hong, J., 2001. Japanese Spectator Sport Industry: Cultural Changes Creating New Opportunities. <i>European Sport Management Quarterly</i> (1), 1, 39–60. | 15 |
| Miller, T., Rowe, D., McKay, J., and Lawrence, G., 2003. The Over-Production of US Sports and the New International Division of Cultural Labor. <i>International Review for the Sociology of Sport</i> , 38(4), 427–440. | 16 |
| Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications, 1999. <i>White Paper Communications in Japan 1999</i> . Tokyo, Japan. | 17 |
| MLB, 2009. Major League Baseball International Renews Four Broadcast Agreements and Signs One New Television Deal [online]. <i>MLB</i> . Available from: http://mlb.mlb.com/news/press_releases/press_release.jsp?ymd=20090601&content_id=5085474&cvkey=pr_mlb&fext=.jsp&c_id=mlb [Accessed 10 March 2011]. | 18 |
| Nakamura, Y., 2009. Accountability in Public Service Broadcasting: The Evolution of Promises and Assessments. <i>NHK Broadcasting Studies</i> , 7, 1–19. | 19 |
| Nihon Hoso Kyokai, ed., 2003. <i>Nijuseiki Housoushi (History of Broadcasting in the 20th Century)</i> . Tokyo: NHK. | 20 |

- 1 Rowe, D., 2004. Watching Brief: Cultural Citizenship and Viewing Rights. *Sport
2 in Society*, 7(3), 385–402.
- 3 Shimizu, M., 1983. 30 Years of Japanese TV in Figures and Tables. In: N.H.
4 Kyokai, ed., *Studies of Broadcasting*. Tokyo: NHK, 120–129.
- 5 Sport Business, 2007. MP & Silva Agree Serie A Deals in Japan [online]. *Sport
6 Business*. Available from: [http://www.sportbusiness.com/news/162996/mp-
silva-agree-serie-a-deals-in-japan](http://www.sportbusiness.com/news/162996/mp-
silva-agree-serie-a-deals-in-japan) [Accessed 20 March 2011].
- 7 Talmadge, E., 2010. Scandals Send Sumo's Popularity into Decline in Japan
8 [online]. *St. Louis Today*. Available from [http://www.stltoday.com/sports/other/
article_40b49737-d98d-55e3-bcf3-1fad91fa9bb8.html](http://www.stltoday.com/sports/other/
article_40b49737-d98d-55e3-bcf3-1fad91fa9bb8.html) [Accessed 10 April 2012].
- 9 Video-Research Ltd. (2011). *Popular Sports on Television among Households
(Tokyo Area)* [online]. Available from [http://www.videor.co.jp/data/ratedata/r_
index.htm](http://www.videor.co.jp/data/ratedata/r_
index.htm) [Accessed 19 May 2011] [in Japanese].
- 10 Walsh, B., 2006. Has Japan Become America's Farm Team? (In Baseball, That
11 Is) [online]. *Time Online*. Available from: [http://www.time.com/time/world/
article/0,8599,1569776,00.html](http://www.time.com/time/world/
article/0,8599,1569776,00.html) [Accessed 11 March 2011].
- 12 Watanabe, H., 2011. 'Popular Sports Covered by TV', *Monthly Mimpou (Monthly
13 Commercial Broadcasters)*, April, 16–18.
- 14 Watts, J., 1998. Soccer Shinhatsubai: What Are Japanese Consumers Making of
15 the J.League? In: D.Martinez, ed., *The Worlds of Popular Japanese Culture:
16 Gender, Shifting Boundaries and Global Cultures*. Cambridge: Cambridge Uni-
17 versity Press, 181–201.
- 18 Whiting, R., 2008. Baseball in Japan: Not All Cheers [online]. *Time Online*. Avail-
19 able from: <http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,1725911,00.html>
20 [Accessed 16 March 2011].
- 21
- 22
- 23
- 24
- 25
- 26
- 27
- 28
- 29
- 30
- 31
- 32
- 33
- 34
- 35
- 36
- 37
- 38
- 39
- 40
- 41
- 42
- 43
- 44
- 45
- 46

14 The Political Economy of Football Viewership in Africa

Muhammed Musa

INTRODUCTION

The journey that brought football to Africa took several routes, but largely occurred through colonialism. Returning African soldiers who fought in World War II were, at times, associated with ‘importing’ the game that they had learned from European soldiers at the war front. European explorers and missionaries who opened up the continent of Africa for the colonial project of territorial acquisition were also associated with introducing the game as a new recreational and modernizing activity through schools or churches. Today, though, association football has risen to occupy the top position as the leading sport in Africa. While its early development and history as a recreation has both political and cultural dimensions, the game is now so deeply integrated into African society that it is hugely affected by developments within the overall social structure, while football has, of course, also served as an important site and contested terrain for broader social transformation.

The development and growth of football has been accompanied by an expansion in both the number of players and general followers of the game who are its enthusiasts or spectators. The spectatorship of football in Africa provides a useful indication of the trend in the growth of football and its development in the continent. In the early days of football, spectators could only follow the sport through a physical presence in politicized match venues. The birth of the mass media from radio, the press, television, and what in today’s digital era is called new media has, however, provided additional forms of football spectatorship. Such broader developments in mass media marked the emergence of the mass audience and, thus, the transformation of football followership from spectators to audiences and/or viewers. Yet, the mass mediation of the game of football is also directly linked both to its professionalization and commercialization that has commodified the game, and made its viewership a central conduit for the expansion and consolidation of a global capitalist cultural economy.

The increasing commercialization of football is evidenced by both its global branding and the centrality of capital in the globalization of the

| | |
|----|--|
| 1 | |
| 2 | |
| 3 | |
| 4 | |
| 5 | |
| 6 | |
| 7 | |
| 8 | |
| 9 | |
| 10 | |
| 11 | |
| 12 | |
| 13 | |
| 14 | |
| 15 | |
| 16 | |
| 17 | |
| 18 | |
| 19 | |
| 20 | |
| 21 | |
| 22 | |
| 23 | |
| 24 | |
| 25 | |
| 26 | |
| 27 | |
| 28 | |
| 29 | |
| 30 | |
| 31 | |
| 32 | |
| 33 | |
| 34 | |

sport (especially European football) that has fuelled an increase in interest and followers and supporters of the modern game (Crabbe and Brown 2002, Crolley and Hand 2002, Giulianotti 2005, Kennedy and Kennedy 2010, Moor 2007, Robinson 2008). What is missing from such studies, however, is the analysis of the impact of neoliberal market policies on football supporters in Africa. Indeed, studies on African football have generally tended to focus on the broad historical development of the sport or its role in political developments and processes within specific nation states (Alegi 2004, Bloomfield 2010, Bonna 2009, Darby 2002, Hawkey 2010, Poli 2006). Conspicuously absent from such studies is an appreciation of the dialectic between market-driven processes and capitalist production relations that informs current football spectatorship in most African countries. This chapter draws on an empirical study conducted in Nigeria to provide insight into the relationship between football viewership, mass media and the market system into which football and its viewership are now fully integrated. It argues that the political economy of football viewership in Africa must be concerned with material inequalities predicated on structural economic differentials in wider African society. In this ethnographic study, the researcher visited eight football viewing centers called football 'show houses' or 'shades' in most English speaking West African countries. The study was conducted between the months of February and June 2008. The show houses varied in size, with the smallest accommodating 100 spectators and the largest 500. The cost of setting up a show house was roughly US\$6,000 to US\$10,000 in 2008 (depending on location and number of television sets), while admission charges on match days ranged between sixty US cents to one dollar. This site for watching televised football will now be discussed in detail.

FOOTBALL, FANS, AND NATION

In Nigeria, the media (especially radio and television) have historically contributed to the production and cultivation of the national imaginary in football in two main ways. First, both the Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria (FRCN) and Nigerian Television Authority (NTA) provided live, free-to-air commentary or telecasts of football matches involving the Nigerian national team or clubs that bear the suffix or prefix of 'Nigeria,' thus reminding citizens and reinforcing their commitment to nationhood. Thus, football matches involving the national team became important national cultural events that were recorded in the sensibilities of national audiences and formed important reservoirs of 'episodes of national history' (Hope 2002, Rowe 2004a Scherer, Falcous and Jackson 2008). Second, whether listening to live commentary on radio or watching the football match on television, Nigerian audiences across the length and breadth of the country shared in the national imaginary, in the passion and desire for victory by

| | |
|--|---|
| the national team over its rivals. Moreover, the language and nationalistic discourses employed by both radio and television commentators provided frames that shaped people's perceptions of the nation. Post-match interviews often featuring players and coaches, as well as government officials, echoed the passion to do the 'nation proud.' A similar trend was recorded by Sullivan, who commented on the role of German television in using specific narratives that conjure a sense of nationhood among viewers in relation to the German football team in the 2006 World Cup: | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 |
| From a psychological perspective, during times of particularly emotional and negative experiences such as close games which lead to defeat, television commentators can provide narratives that shape people's perceptions (e.g., by criticizing the national characteristics of the winning team). In addition, televised interviews of politicians and other prominent local or national representatives can exploit people's feelings (e.g., appealing to popular feelings of being "robbed" of victory. (Sullivan 2009, p. 246) | |
| Victorious Nigerian football teams, such as the senior national team that won a gold medal in the 1978 African Games, the 1980, 1992 African Cup of Nations and 1996 Olympic Gold, and the 1986, 1996, and 2007 triumphs by the Nigeria under seventeen teams in the world championship, attracted wild scenes of jubilation across the length and breadth of the country. On some of those occasions, a day of national holiday was declared to celebrate the victories. These celebrations in different parts of the country were shown on national free-to-air television (NTA), and aired on national radio, thus, again bringing the nation together, while football players were decorated with national awards. These patterns are similar, again, to Sullivan's observation of German fans after the country's bronze medal success in the 2006 World Cup, where investment in national pride was exhibited through new possibilities and practices like 'public viewing' and 'fan miles': | |
| Masses who came together to watch football and to create a party atmosphere around games themselves became part of a feedback loop in which televised reports of those fan miles culminated in a "thank you" party for the German team which was televised live from the Brandenburg Gate in Berlin. (Sullivan 2009, p. 248) | |
| The wild street celebrations in different parts of Nigeria shown on national television were pointing to a pride in being Nigerian, a desire for national identity, as well as an affirmation of it. Marivoet also observed in relation to the Portuguese: | |
| The collective experience of celebrating the achievement of the national team, with the strong emotional charge that this involves seems to be | |

1 based on the religious desire for union and sharing (“*re-ligare*”), which,
2 in promoting social cohesion, effectively reinforces its affirmation.
3 (2006, p. 140)

4
5 To this day, these types of celebration and attachment remind us that
6 football is the national sport in countries such as Nigeria, victory for the
7 national team is victory for ‘all,’ and, more importantly, that these cultural
8 events of national significance are televised for all citizens by the free-to-air
9 public broadcaster, the NTA. It reconfirms sport on the public broadcaster
10 as a unifying cultural asset and as a responsibility of the state.

12 TELEVISION AND CULTURAL CITIZENSHIP IN NIGERIA

13
14 In Nigeria and Africa generally, a number of recent structural adjustments
15 have resulted in the marketization of ‘social existence.’ A prominent feature
16 of these developments has been the deregulation of the economy and of hitherto
17 public institutions, including the media. The 1990s, therefore, marked
18 a period in which the media landscape was radically transformed in many
19 African countries, and heralded the emergence of private broadcasting in
20 two key forms. First, local entrepreneurs were given licenses to own and
21 operate broadcasting outlets for profit. Secondly, foreign broadcasting—
22 what was once considered a violation of both political and cultural sovereignty—has now been largely legitimated. Consequently, direct television
23 broadcasting by foreign, largely Western media corporations has become a
24 reality to the extent that affluent African families can now be consumers,
25 simultaneously, of multiple television transmissions. It was at this time,
26 moreover, that the monopoly enjoyed by public television was broken, and
27 viewers could watch national public television and local private commercial
28 television, as well as foreign television at the same time. While national
29 television was predicated on the public service ethos of promoting national
30 culture and identity via free-to-air services, local and foreign private tele-
31 vision was only available to paying audiences. Thus, what emerged was a
32 stratified television viewing structure.

33
34 The centrality of television as a socio-cultural institution in an era of
35 restrictive access has had serious implications for cultural citizenship rights
36 in two ways. First, the previous space (i.e., public television) where national
37 culture was expressed is now facing competition with significant implica-
38 tions for the NTA’s capacity to offer free-to-air telecasts of the most sig-
39 nificant cultural events. Second, the entrance of private pay-TV channels,
40 both domestic and foreign, has consolidated global popular programming
41 as the main or leading television staple. Indeed, as private broadcasting has
42 become the main player in the broadcasting landscape, it has also increas-
43 ingly set the national programming agenda. In Nigeria, the NTA was estab-
44 lished as a national network with a public service remit of nation building
45

| | |
|--|----|
| through the promotion of national culture and identity. With football | 1 |
| enjoying the status of the national sport, therefore, the involvement of a | 2 |
| Nigerian team in an international competition falls into the context of tele- | 3 |
| vision content that would aid and promote national identity and culture. | 4 |
| While all regions in Nigeria have television stations in addition to the NTA, | 5 |
| there are designated national programs that require all public broadcasters | 6 |
| to air the NTA's feed of the 9 p.m. national news and any international | 7 |
| football match involving a Nigerian team. | 8 |
| Both the Nigerian constitution and the Nigerian communications pol- | 9 |
| icy have, thus, directly provided for the right of citizens to receive (and | 10 |
| impart) information and 'entertainment' without hindrance. The provision | 11 |
| of such rights in these important documents speaks to cultural citizenship | 12 |
| and access to key elements of national popular culture as a fundamental | 13 |
| right. The media and, especially, public service television are the central | 14 |
| institutions in guaranteeing such cultural citizenship (Rowe 2004b). The | 15 |
| stipulated objectives of Nigerian television and, even radio before it, were | 16 |
| unequivocal in emphasizing the purpose of broadcasting to include nation | 17 |
| building through promotion of national culture and identity. Thus, sport, | 18 |
| (especially football) has tremendous significance in African popular culture | 19 |
| because it is expected to entertain as well as unite citizens of a nation state, | 20 |
| while showcasing Africa on the world stage (Bourgault 1995). For example, | 21 |
| if Nigeria is mentioned to 'ordinary' people abroad, one is likely to be asked | 22 |
| about footballers J.J. Okocha, Nwankwo Kanu or John Obi Mikel. | 23 |
| Yet, the centrality of public service television in guaranteeing cultural | 24 |
| citizenship requires two significant antecedents. First, all citizens in a | 25 |
| nation must have equal and unhindered access to free-to-air television pro- | 26 |
| grams, and, second, national popular culture and key elements of national | 27 |
| significance must be adequately represented in television programming. | 28 |
| In Nigeria and in Africa generally, the era of neoliberal globalization has | 29 |
| transformed not only society but also the televisual landscape of owner- | 30 |
| ship, purpose, and content. For not only is the nation state itself under | 31 |
| threat from the unfolding dynamics and influence of a homogenizing glo- | 32 |
| balization, but the ownership of television is now open to entrepreneurs | 33 |
| from home and abroad whose commitment is not to the public as citizens | 34 |
| but as consumers. The popularity of football as an important aspect of | 35 |
| national popular culture first made possible by the public broadcaster NTA | 36 |
| is now attractive to investors in the private commercial media who are, | 37 |
| from the outset, preoccupied with ratings, subscriptions and the delivery of | 38 |
| audiences to advertisers. An earlier observation on sport and public broad- | 39 |
| casting in Europe captures the contemporary development of the television/ | 40 |
| sports nexus in Africa. Rowe, for example, notes that: | 41 |
| National broadcasters in most European countries have pioneered the | 42 |
| 'live' affectively potent representation of nations to themselves and to | 43 |
| others through great national and international sporting occasions. | 44 |
| | 45 |
| | 46 |

1 But their influence in sport has waned in recent decades as broadcast
2 rights have been seized by capital-rich, commercial free-to-air and pay
3 TV. (2004a, p. 384)

4
5 Rowe rightly argued that public broadcasters in Europe took the initial 'risk'
6 of televising sporting events that built enviable national audiences whose
7 commodification is now a source of material benefit to commercial free-
8 to-air and pay-TV providers. In Africa, though, the stakes are even higher.
9 First, the shifting of popular sports like football to pay-TV has increasingly
10 created a stratified television viewing structure where the sport loved by all
11 can no longer be commonly accessed. Second, although the emergence of
12 multiple niche pay-TV channels has provided an unprecedented amount of
13 sports content on Nigerian television, there is noticeably less 'local' content
14 and coverage of Nigerian national teams or club sides. Instead, there is now
15 greater coverage of the most popular European leagues and, especially, the
16 English Premier League (EPL) and the Union of European Football Asso-
17 ciations (UEFA) Champions League. What is left on free-to-air public tele-
18 vision like the NTA—a public service broadcaster that is now faced with
19 dwindling government subsidy—is the local Nigerian league and, crucially,
20 matches featuring the national team. However, as noted below, the sheer
21 lack of financial and political support for the NTA has also meant that
22 the quality of the coverage of televised football matches on the free-to-
23 air network has declined tremendously. Moreover, the emergence of show
24 houses has resulted in football audiences now shifting to such locations
25 to watch the game on better quality satellite networks, even though the
26 teams are almost exclusively the biggest European corporate clubs. Thus,
27 football, as the key conveyor of the 'national estate,' has been compromised
28 by restricted access. In the early days of Nigerian television, the state inter-
29 vened on behalf of citizens and protected their cultural rights to have access
30 to information and culture. Today, however, the state in Africa, through its
31 wholesale subscription to neoliberal policies of deregulation prescribed by
32 international financial institutions, has intervened on the side of capital,
33 thus compromising once-protected rights of cultural citizenship.

34
35
36 **GLOBALIZATION, AFRICAN FOOTBALLERS, AND THE**
37 **NEW INTERNATIONAL DIVISION OF CULTURAL LABOR**

38
39 The historical development of football in Nigeria suggests that the game
40 was linked to colonialism when it first arrived in the country. During its
41 second phase of development, football was linked with the struggle for
42 independence given the involvement of liberation leaders such as Zik,
43 Awolowo, and Sardauna, and consequently the politicization of the
44 terraces was used in mobilization against colonial policies and rule. The most
45 rapid transformation happened in the post-independence era, which also
46

| | |
|--|----|
| marked the neo-colonial phase of Nigeria's political history. This period | 1 |
| saw football linked to the new nation state as part of a political discourse | 2 |
| of cultural nationalism and an imagined notion of a Nigerian nation that | 3 |
| was being cultivated and consolidated. Such a deeply politicized version of | 4 |
| football emanated from the activists' early involvement with anti-colonial | 5 |
| struggles informed by an affiliation with workers, as club or team forma- | 6 |
| tion and ownership were working class-based, as indicated by the existence | 7 |
| of football teams among Health, Railway, Electricity, or Water Corpora- | 8 |
| tions workers, the Police and Army, etc. | 9 |
| Yet another phase in the historical development of football in Nigeria | 10 |
| was its regionalization along the lines of the emerging party politics of the | 11 |
| early 1960s. Alongside this development was the increasing association of | 12 |
| football teams with particular cities such as Ibadan, Lagos, Enugu, Kano, | 13 |
| Port Harcourt, Benin, and Jos. The city factor in Nigerian football is, of | 14 |
| course, linked to the economic development of the cities through capital- | 15 |
| ism, industrialization, and urbanization. Thus, the presence of strong foot- | 16 |
| ball teams in those cities indicated their status. In his observation of cities' | 17 |
| association with football clubs in 'New Europe,' which can also be applied | 18 |
| to some degree in Africa, King opines that: | 19 |
| Football clubs will not only be important economic actors in their own | 20 |
| right but will increasingly denote which cities are politically and eco- | 21 |
| nomically important because they can afford to support a good team | 22 |
| and, therefore, are worthy of investment by international capital. (King | 23 |
| 1998, p. 207) | 24 |
| Even at this stage, though, the city did not replace the nation as the crucial | 25 |
| rallying point of allegiance among football fans in Nigeria, but only added | 26 |
| another layer to football fandom. Nigerian football fans are strong sup- | 27 |
| porters of the national team as well as supporters of, say, Enugu Rangers | 28 |
| or Mighty Jets of Jos. | 29 |
| Deregulation and the ascendancy of the market system introduced mar- | 30 |
| ket philosophies into football ownership in two interrelated ways. First, | 31 |
| the notion was 'sold,' as in many other sectors of social existence, that | 32 |
| government ownership or subsidy in education, health, and sports cannot, | 33 |
| in the final analysis, be beneficial or as efficient as competition and private | 34 |
| sector involvement. Thus, the Nigerian Football Association (NFA) fully | 35 |
| advocated the professionalization of football and the involvement of the | 36 |
| private sector as being in the best interest of the sport and its fans. Second, | 37 |
| the subsequent involvement of businesses such as banks, supermarkets and | 38 |
| insurance companies brought advertising into football in Nigeria, and soon | 39 |
| businesses began to advertise on team shirts as well as on stadium stands. | 40 |
| Thus, the professionalization of football took place with the introduction | 41 |
| of market principles and led to the formation and ownership of clubs by | 42 |
| businesses and entrepreneurs. In the early 1990s, though, the newly formed | 43 |
| | 44 |
| | 45 |
| | 46 |

1 Nigerian Premier League matches were still shown on the free-to-air public
2 broadcaster, the NTA.

3 However, over the course of the last few decades, the movement of goods,
4 people, culture(s), and capital around the world has intensified as a result of
5 globalization. My contention in this regard is that professional footballers
6 are mobile capital resources, especially for the main soccer markets of the
7 world. These main soccer markets were initially largely European, but now
8 also include the US and Japan. While data on the number of African players
9 in the Japanese or North American Leagues is difficult to attain, in the lead-
10 ing European leagues (England, Scotland, Italy, Spain, Germany, France,
11 Netherlands, Austria, Portugal, Belgium, and Switzerland) the number of
12 foreign players almost doubled from 882 in the 1995–96 seasons to 1803
13 in the 2004–05 season (Poli 2006). The three major supply chains for these
14 leagues are Europe itself, Latin America and West Africa. The number of
15 Africans rose from 160 in the 1995/96 season to 316 in the 2004/05 sea-
16 son (Poli 2006). Indeed, this number could be much higher given that a
17 number of African players hold dual citizenship and, therefore, were not
18 counted among non-Europeans. A further indication of African footballing
19 exportation can be gleaned from the African teams in the World Cup. In
20 the 2006 tournament hosted by Germany, for instance, 75 percent of the
21 African squads played for European clubs, roughly the same percentage
22 as in 2002. The percentage in Germany in 2006 could perhaps have been
23 even higher as big soccer export nations like Nigeria, Cameroon, and Sen-
24 gal did not take part in the tournament. The exodus of African players
25 is largely to Europe and also to Japan and the US, with very little football
26 labor flow in the other direction.

27 To provide a context for understanding the movement of African foot-
28 ball players to Europe, North America, and Japan, we must acknowledge
29 and address the new international division of cultural labor (NICL). In an
30 earlier era, dependency theory conceptualized the world as space of interac-
31 tion by two unequal actors where the underdeveloped and unindustrialized
32 Third World countries were dependent on the advanced (mainly Western)
33 countries for finished products. The role of the former was simply under-
34 stood as that of consumer of finished products and the supplier of cheap
35 raw materials. However, the economic crises of the 1970s characterized by
36 high costs of labor and saturated markets in those developed economies
37 resulted in an ‘industrial shift’ whereby production relocated to regions
38 where cheap labor (and lax labor laws) and low taxes were a major attrac-
39 tion for increasingly mobile transnational corporations.

40 While the acquisition of colonies as sources of raw materials and markets
41 for finished goods summed up the old division of labor that dependency
42 theory encapsulated, Frobé *et al.* have proposed the NICL to explain the
43 rise and movement of capital as a result of saturation of Western markets/
44 economies. This movement, though, would not have happened without the
45 deregulatory policies formulated by the World Trade Organization (WTO)

and the other international finance institutions such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. The policies of deregulation were also, of course, prescribed to nations around the world and, consequently, provided sustenance for the NICL. As Miller, Rowe, McKay, and Lawrence explain:

The NICL derives from a reconceptualization of the economic dependency theory that followed the inflationary chaos of the 1970s. Since that time, First World Growth has been premised upon the penetration of peasants, and more recently former state-socialist, nations in a manner that reconstitutes economic, social and cultural arrangements to favor transnational capital. (2003, p. 42)

Accompanying de-industrialization in Western countries, then, has been a shift in cultural production that has now moved to Third World locations where there are cheap talent and compliant governments, as well as a conducive/exotic landscape regarding media production (Miller, 2011). Such capital and labor mobility is also evident among football players, as national teams and clubs in Europe and elsewhere parade players from Africa, Latin America, and Asia. It also disciplines 'native' Western football players, who are invited to understand that there are now multiple cheap sources of labor capital in the global economy. Miller *et al.* observed a similar trend in US sport:

It is clear that the classic capitalist problem of over-production has forced US professional sports to transcend the provincialism of US TV and arenas. Having exhausted the domestic supply of good, cheap, obedient athletes and wealthy consumers, the National Basketball Association (NBA) went overseas during the 1990s in search of cheap talent and likely customers, opening offices in Switzerland, Spain, Australia and Mexico. (2003, p. 432)

As I will outline below, the evidence emerging from the ethnographic study of the show houses in Nigeria indicates that the NICL has stimulated an initial interest in the EPL, where Nigerian players have been employed. Today, however, followership and support for EPL clubs go beyond teams that simply parade Nigerian players. The most supported clubs in Nigeria and Africa are Arsenal and Manchester United. Yet, the latter currently has neither a single Nigerian nor African player on its regular playing roster and, moreover, there are clubs with greater numbers of African players on their rosters. Therefore, while the country/club destination of Nigerian players stimulated an interest in the EPL, the mere presence of these players is no longer the most significant determinant of audience support and allegiance. In the early days of football migration to Europe (the mid 1980s), the airwaves were still regulated and there was fewer English or European

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46

league matches on free-to-air public television. Newspapers, though, did report occasional stories about footballer migration and provided hints about player performance in their new European destination. In addition, foreign football magazines such as the weekly *Shoot* were additional sources of news and information about such players. But these print media were largely consumed at the time by elites precisely because of their cost and use of the English language, which limited the followership of European clubs in the mid 1980s.

The deregulatory environment of the late 1980s, however, spurred the rise of television coverage of the EPL and European football in Nigeria and Africa. Such coverage on pay-TV intertwined with other market-driven promotions of European leagues to reinforce the NICL while opening up new domestic fronts in a struggle over loyalty and identification among fans in Nigeria. To that extent, the significance of the media in the formation of the NICL is evident in the target destination of Nigerian players. In the early 1980s, a period before the advent of both pay-TV and regular European football in Nigeria, Nigerian players joined other African leagues (such as Cote D'Ivoire and Egypt) that paid them higher wages. That the set of early Nigerian football professionals (such as Stephen Keshi and Rashidi Yekini) played in Belgium and France rather than England could be explained by imperial history, as Cote D'Ivoire was a French colony and, therefore, the acquisition of French language made them convenient recruits for scouts from European leagues where French is the dominant language. Beginning in the 1990s, the period of the advent of pay-TV and the emergence of the show houses, England and multiple European countries, whose leagues are watched on pay-TV, became the preferred destination of Nigerian footballers. Thus, the growth of spectators of the EPL and European leagues in Nigeria, and the rise of migrant football labor to Europe, combined to make both the fans and players very important to European football. One of the outcomes of these developments has been the annual tours of clubs like Arsenal, Manchester United, Portsmouth, and Spurs to Nigeria and South Africa. Clubs such as Chelsea, moreover, are setting up academies to scout and train emerging talents in Nigeria to serve as a feeder program and reservoir of labor. Others regions are entering into formal agreements with European clubs that give them right of first access to African players with high talent and potential. Thus, the NICL has displaced a previous regime of labor protectionism of European football, a development that has significant implications for national identity and television viewing in relation to support for national teams in Africa.

THE NIGERIAN FOOTBALL AUDIENCE

Having become the national sport, football followership in Nigeria is huge. There is no school in the country without at least a football pitch, even if

there are no adequate classrooms for the pupils. Fans attend the national stadium or any other home venue where the national team is playing in the thousands, with large numbers traveling by road and by air for away international matches. In the late 1970s through to the early 1980s, the ownership of television sets was still limited to middle-and-upper-class families. It was, in fact, radio transmitters that first carried football matches into the most homes across the country. Football fans also often carried small radio sets into the football venues that they held close to their ears while their eyes were fixed and focused on the match in the stadium. Up until the 1980s, in homes with television sets as well as in community viewing centers, it was also common to see a radio receiver placed on top of television sets. As people watched live football matches on public service television, they would also listen to radio commentators like Ernest Okonkwo and Ishola Folurunsho, who had become household names in Nigeria.

By the early 1980s, though, three significant developments marked the beginning of new emergent viewing practices. First, Nigeria hosted the Festival of Black and African Culture (FESTAC) in 1977, the first major international event of its type and magnitude to be hosted by the country. Second, because of that event, the Nigerian government established television stations in each of the twelve states in the country, thus increasing the spread and reach of the medium. Third, the government increased the salaries of workers throughout the country and backdated such increases, to the extent that workers received large salary sums of in arrears. All three of these developments were the result of the radical expansion of Nigeria's economy due to massive revenues generated from petroleum exports, a period generally referred to in the country as the 'oil boom era.' It was during this era, then, that television acquired a wider reach, while the purchasing power of ordinary Nigerians significantly expanded. Workers began to use their salary arrears to buy the latest home gadgets (like television sets) that had quickly become status symbols in the country. Even less affluent families without television sets installed external television antennae on their roofs so that they could appear to possess the most popular indicator of cultural and economic capital, highlighting just how symbolically important the television set had become in Nigeria.

The size of Nigeria (768,763 square kilometers) means that most people wanting to watch the national team in the stadium must travel a huge distance to watch a match. Estimated at around 60 million at independence in 1960, the country's population stood at 140 million by 2007, creating a very large football television audience. That football matches involving the national team or Nigerian clubs sides against those from other African countries were shown on the NTA (as well as heard on the radio), means that the 'entire' nation is united in one singular activity, namely, that of support for 'Nigerian team' in a match preceded by a rendition of the national anthem. As noted earlier, these free-to-air practices reaffirmed the notion of a Nigerian national identity from 1970s up to early 1990s. All of these

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46

1 developments, most notably the consumption of sporting events of national
2 significance on the NTA, however, were soon to be challenged by media
3 deregulation and the emergence of new football show houses.
4
5

6 TELEVISION, FOOTBALL SHOW HOUSES, 7 AND NEW AUDIENCE ALLEGIANCES 8

9 The export of a Western television structure to Nigeria resulted in an expansion
10 of both programming content and advertising. Indeed, the privatization
11 and commercialization of broadcasting in 1992 through the National
12 Broadcasting Commission (NBC) decree marked the entrance of many pri-
13 vate television stations. De-regulation also meant that previous restrictions
14 on foreign broadcast content on Nigerian television were rescinded, even
15 though the NBC monitored the new standards of the deregulated environ-
16 ment. It was within this context that football as a national sport found
17 more airtime. Besides the NTA, there were other state as well as private
18 stations prepared to 'exploit' the sport audience and a greater number of
19 companies willing to sponsor football on television to sell their products
20 or services. As a result, a small number of EPL and Football League games
21 began to be shown on a regular weekly basis. The enhanced representation
22 of English clubs on television spurred a massive growth in the familiar-
23 ity of Nigerian football fans with English teams. These developments, it
24 must be noted, also encouraged some entrepreneurial Nigerians to establish
25 'Football Show Houses' or 'football shades' to capitalize on the popular-
26 ity of the EPL and the other European leagues. While the NTA and other
27 local operators were only able to air a small number of matches, the grow-
28 ing Nigerian football audience for the English games created a ready-made
29 market for potential show house operators. Indeed, while some of these
30 facilities were initially founded as movie show houses that aired Nigerian
31 and Hollywood films, many quickly converted their niche to football given
32 the increasing popularity of the EPL. The cost of setting up these football
33 show house ranged between US\$6000 and US\$10,000, depending on the
34 location as well as number of television sets installed.

35 Today, the football show house needs to be understood as a huge emer-
36 gent phenomenon in the history of football viewership and development of
37 popular culture in the whole of sub-Saharan Africa. In his paper on 'Arse-
38 nal in Buganda,' Vokes, (2010, 10) has stressed the popularity of these new
39 leisure practices among both urban and rural Ugandans. Yet, the expan-
40 sion of show houses and new viewing habits must be firmly located in the
41 context of a neoliberal deregulatory policy environment that was 'handed'
42 to African countries through various structural adjustment programs,
43 resulting in a 'liberalized' media landscape and enabling an unhindered
44 flow of cultural goods from Western countries. Cable and satellite televi-
45 sion that beam signals into Nigeria and the rest of Africa are only able to
46

| | |
|--|---|
| do so because of this new policy environment and a host of technological advances. For the majority of citizens in Nigeria and Africa, however, the economic reforms introduced through structural adjustments have only worsened their already deprived conditions. These policies introduced currency devaluation in most African countries, a situation that was accompanied by inflation and unemployment as evidenced by huge redundancies at a time when the Nigerian government began to withdraw subsidies in important sectors such as health and education. The resultant increase in social inequality among citizens now means that the majority of Nigerians cannot afford their newly acquired leisure habit of football viewership. Subscribing to cable or satellite television at a cost of about US\$500 is well beyond the means of the majority of citizens. On the other hand, dwindling government subsidies for the NTA means that few EPL matches are available for all citizens, while other free-to-air public television stations owned by state governments do not have the resources to be able to purchase EPL rights. | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 |
| The Nigerian situation is similar or worse to that of most other sub-Saharan African countries. There is very clearly a football hungry and loyal audience for such televised matches, however, only affluent homes and households can afford costly subscriptions. As a result, some enterprising Nigerians have raised enough capital to rent a space, as well as to pay for subscription to satellite television stations, thus marking the emergence of private football viewing centers that charge a fee between US\$.60-US\$1 to hundreds or even thousands of football fans who come to watch games. One of the owners and operators of such football 'show houses' or 'football shades' explained to me during my ethnographic research that he borrowed capital and added a little to his severance package after he was laid off by his employer to set up 'this new business.' Another football show house owner at Tudunwada suburb of Gombe indicated in an interview: | |
| So far business is good. Customers are coming here every week to watch football. The introduction of the mid-week games is also bringing additional revenue because viewers come here twice. So, it is very good. (Interview in Tudunwada, Gombe, Nigeria, April 2008) | |
| In a survey of eight football show houses in the Nigerian city of Gombe between February and July 2008, it was discovered that each had between two and three large television screens. These houses all subscribed to two or three different satellite services so that they could be guaranteed a minimum of two, but often more, EPL games played at the same time. They also guaranteed matches from La Liga, in Spain, and Serie A, in Italy. The extent of support for, and affiliation to, European clubs among the Nigerian football audience, as revealed in the survey of audiences in the eight show houses, appears to challenge earlier held notions about 'sport and the repudiation of the global' as posited by Rowe (2003). | |

1 For instance, all of the eight show house owners revealed that they had
2 bigger audiences and, therefore, accrued greater revenue when EPL matches
3 were televised. These owners indicated, for example, that the Africa Nations
4 Cup played in Ghana in February 2007 was a financial failure because the
5 'audience was very small,' despite the fact that the Nigerian national team
6 was also participating in the tournament. Similarly, a show house owner at
7 Dawaki Quarters in Gombe remarked that:

8 All the regular viewers are aware of the African Cup of Nations. I
9 advertised on the same board that I advertise EPL matches. I have also
10 made announcements during EPL matches. Still, they are not inter-
11 ested. (Interview in Dawaki Quarters Show House, Gombe, Nigeria,
12 February, 2008)

13 It could be argued that the lower attendance numbers for matches involv-
14 ing the Nigerian national team may be due to the simple fact that many of
15 these matches are widely available on the public broadcaster (NTA). Still,
16 in qualifying rounds for the African Cup of Nations or the World Cup for
17 that matter, there are no guarantees that the public broadcaster will televise
18 matches if they are played away in another country because of technical
19 reasons. On the other hand, all of these matches—no matter where they are
20 played—will always be found on a satellite channel and will subsequently
21 air in a show house. Given the size and terrain of Nigeria, many of the
22 NTA telecasts are often of poor technical quality (especially compared to
23 the satellite broadcasts) and, for this reason, some spectators may be mak-
24 ing decisions along the lines of a cost versus image quality trade. Still, as I
25 note below, the show houses are also nearly exclusive masculine preserves
26 and have the added 'attraction' of providing male fans with the company
27 and passion of fellow soccer enthusiasts who want to revel in a shared cul-
28 tural and social experience in a largely woman-free space. Even with these
29 caveats, though, the show house audience is one that remains decisively to
30 EPL matches.

31 Six of the show house operators also revealed another interesting trend:
32 Arsenal and Chelsea fans tended to come in numbers to watch and cheer the
33 Ghanaian and Ivorian teams because of the presence of players like Michael
34 Essien, Didier Drogba, Solomon Kalou, Kolo Touré and Emmanuel Eboué.
35 That there were no Manchester United players in any of the African teams
36 at the tournament meant that fewer Manchester United fans showed interest
37 in the tournament. Manchester United is among the most supported clubs
38 in Nigeria and, therefore, the absence of their fans in the show houses is of
39 financial detriment to show house owners. Other clubs with a very strong
40 following according to show house owners are Arsenal, Chelsea, Real
41 Madrid, and Barcelona. Other European clubs could have fans in Nigeria,
42 but such fan bases are smaller than for these clubs. Indeed, Euro sport com-
43 mentators went a step further to disclose that, across sub-Saharan Africa,
44

Arsenal remains the most supported football club. This claim, though, cannot be verified as a continent-wide survey would be required to confirm these comments.

When asked to indicate the three most supported football teams among audiences in their show houses from a list that featured European clubs as well as the Nigerian national team and the local city team Gombe United, all eight owners indicated three of the teams mentioned earlier. It is significant that no one mentioned the Nigerian national or local teams. So far, then, the evidence emerging stands contrary to the assertion by Rowe that:

This structural importance of the nation persists despite the increasing circulation of sports people around the globe as part of the new international division of cultural labor . . . Yet the clubs still retain a “national” brand irrespective of the composition of their playing and coaching staff and of their shareholder register . . . (2003, pp. 285–286)

The nation is important only to the extent that FIFA rules provide nation states with power over corporate football clubs to recall their citizens to wear the national colors and fly the national flag in continental or international sporting events such as the Africa Nations Cup, European Cup, and the World Cup. But, evidently, the significance of the nation as an identity signifier in the contemporary era is fading as football audiences in Nigeria give their allegiance to European clubs that are now truly global brands. The ‘nation’ is relevant only to the extent that it reinforces a global brand. There is huge support for the Ivorian national team among Nigerian football spectators because it features five players from Arsenal and Chelsea who command followership among the Nigerian television audience. Once again, therefore, European football clubs encountered through television are taking precedence over the national team as identity markers and as definers of the direction of expression of popular sentiments. This is contrary to Rowe’s argument that:

International sport can, then, be a key marker of national fantasy or aspiration, but above all it is generative of a symbolic entity that comes into being by affixing a notion of identity that is likely to be an impediment to the free-floating cosmopolitanism so crucial to the ethos of globalization. (2003, p. 287)

Thus, the direct representation of the ‘Super Eagles,’ as the Nigerian national team is called, did not provide a source of viewing space for Nigerian spectators who, for all practical purposes, the nation *per se*, has ceased to be crucial to the experience of the African Nations Cup tournament. For this reason, television that was once so central in bringing together the nation to unite behind the national flag is now fragmenting along the lines of global

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46

1 corporate sports colors or brands. The emergence and consolidation of a
2 global cultural economy has also become evident in greater amounts of
3 merchandizing and the purchase of replica shirts of favorite European clubs
4 by Nigerian fans who go to the show houses to watch the European leagues
5 or the African Cup of Nations.

6 Similarly, Poli observes a preponderant loyalty and support for an Eng-
7 lish club over the Ivorian national team among citizens of the Ivory Coast:
8

9 ... during the final of the 2006 Champions League, Abidjan came to
10 a standstill for two solid hours so as fans could watch Arsenal, who
11 [have] Ivorian players in its squad. The *woro woro* taxi drivers had
12 great difficulty in earning enough money that day. This was impossible
13 to do during the first two matches of the Ivorian national team in the
14 2006 World Cup. (Poli 2006, p. 408) (Emphasis as in original)

15 Even though Poli's observation could suggest that support for Arsenal is
16 based on the presence of Ivorians in the team, the point is important in
17 that far larger crowds watched Arsenal than watched the Ivorian national
18 team playing in the World Cup in 2006 (Poli 2006). There are no Nigerian
19 players currently at Arsenal or Manchester United, yet a ritual of national
20 significance like the 9pm national television news is shifted whenever the
21 two sides are playing against each other around the same time. As well as
22 promoting the EPL and other European league matches, the show house
23 phenomenon is also, as we will see, an important conduit for other West-
24 ern cultural products that have become part of cultural representation on
25 pay-TV.
26

27 28 FOOTBALL SHOW HOUSES, AUDIENCES, AND 29 THE GLOBAL CULTURAL ECONOMY

30 What emerges from this account of mediated football in Nigeria is that
31 deregulation and general market reforms and their accompanying crises
32 have not only led to the rise of the 'show houses,' but also to the transfor-
33 mation of the culture of television viewership from the privacy of the living
34 room sofa to a new quasi-public space. It is different from the transforma-
35 tion in the Western world and other more affluent economies, where the
36 shift has been from the living room and pubs to multiple environments such
37 as the computer screen at the workplace or the mobile phone. The low band-
38 width in many African countries, where dial-up access is still much in use,
39 as well as the prohibitive cost of broadband connections into homes, have
40 combined to make the possibility of a multiple viewing environment still
41 a distant reality. The changing ecology of television viewership in Africa,
42 on the other hand, is introducing viewers to new consumption patterns
43 and styles that consolidate the global cultural economy in two main ways.
44

| | |
|---|----|
| First, while watching European league matches between elite football multi-national corporations, the regalia adorning the players promotes not only the brands of the clubs, but also the merchandise produced by corporate sponsors like Nike and Adidas. | 1 |
| Second, during match intervals, goods are advertised even though this is the time when viewers in the show houses engage in fierce debates about teams or the performance of match officials, and many viewers simply ignore the adverts. | 2 |
| At times, these arguments can become so heated that, according to two show house operators interviewed in Gombe, the police are called to disperse fighting viewers with tear gas. | 3 |
| One of the operators disclosed that, on one occasion, he called the police as he feared that, given the size of the crowd and the fierce nature of the arguments, it would not be long before harmful objects would be thrown, resulting in serious injuries, destruction of television screens and damage to the show house. | 4 |
| | 5 |
| | 6 |
| | 7 |
| | 8 |
| | 9 |
| | 10 |
| | 11 |
| | 12 |
| | 13 |
| | 14 |
| As well as promoting goods and new consumption patterns through advertisements, however, the show house experience also introduces a new ‘para-social’ interaction between viewers and football stars. | 15 |
| In their description of the relationship between television viewers and celebrities, Philip Drake and Richard Haynes, for instance, have borrowed from Horton and Wohl (1956) to explain that: | 16 |
| | 17 |
| | 18 |
| | 19 |
| | 20 |
| | 21 |
| The intimacy that accompanies television viewing allows a particular, seemingly familiar relationship with celebrities. This has been termed a ‘para-social’ interaction (Horton and Wohl, 1956) in that it reproduces the effect of a relationship between celebrity and audience, despite being predominantly a one-way flow of communication (audiences, of course, rarely get to meet celebrities). (2011, p. 72) | 22 |
| | 23 |
| | 24 |
| | 25 |
| | 26 |
| | 27 |
| | 28 |
| Among football viewers in the show houses surveyed, this ‘para-social’ relationship manifested in two ways. First, viewers wore replica football club shirts of a European club that featured the names of their favorite player. | 29 |
| Second, one viewer followed the cultural practice in parts of Nigeria where the name given to a newborn was that of the most respected member of the family, or of someone adored by the parents because of their standing or reputation in society, by naming a child after a famous Real Madrid player. | 30 |
| | 31 |
| | 32 |
| | 33 |
| | 34 |
| | 35 |
| The show house phenomenon, even though a product of market liberalization, has partially opened up the space of televised football viewership that was hitherto restricted to the homes of middle-class enthusiasts. | 36 |
| That restriction is akin to what Crabbe and Brown (2002) referred to as the ‘bourgeoisification’ of the sport, as is evidenced by the convergence of football coverage on restricted non-free-to-air outlets. | 37 |
| The widening of the spectatorship of football through the show houses can, therefore, be described as a new process of inclusion and of incorporation at the same time. For, on the one hand, it has eliminated previous exclusions from televised football imposed by differential distribution of finance capital. On | 38 |
| | 39 |
| | 40 |
| | 41 |
| | 42 |
| | 43 |
| | 44 |
| | 45 |
| | 46 |

the other hand, these processes have incorporated fans through the quasi-public but also commercial spaces of the show house into global capitalist consumption. Moor, citing Crabbe and Brown (2002), emphasizes the effects of the commodification of televised access to football as follows:

Rather than necessarily undermining the “traditional” spirit of football support, [it] has in fact led to the creation of new communal forms of consumption (in pubs, for example) and new sites for potential fans to be introduced to the game and learn about the various codes and forms of cultural capital associated with football fandom. (2007, p. 134)

While not ‘denouncing’ the new communal spheres provided by the show houses, what came to light in Nigeria is the de-politicization of football viewership in comparison to the politics of the football terraces that were previously used to articulate anti-colonial discourses. Throughout the period of ethnographic study, for example, I did not observe a single occasion when issues of national interest (such as escalating food prices, non-availability of petrol at petrol stations, corruption among state officials etc.) were the subject of discussion among viewers. Also glaring in the eight show houses visited during the study was a clear gender division. Female attendance of was only between 0–1 percent, and the very few who attended were eighteen—twenty-five years of age. Even if the show houses have raised the popularity and followership of the EPL and of European football in Nigeria and Africa, they are often not considered to be ‘safe’ and ‘conducive’ environments for women. The aforementioned disagreements, debates, and, sometimes, fights among rival fans that take place in these men’s cultural centers are clearly not inviting to women.

CONCLUSION: SPORT TV VIEWING AND STRUCTURAL INEQUALITIES

In this chapter I have contended that the game of football is as much a cultural ideological form as it is a commercial and business enterprise. I have argued that the new emerging form of football television viewership and followership in Africa cannot be understood without a grasp of the underlying economic structures which have shaped and impacted on the contemporary media landscape in the continent and, indeed, around the world. For instance, the ascendancy of the market system as a global social order, as well as digitization, have removed restrictions on the transmission of European football league matches for audiences beyond what used to be the national borders of those European clubs. But the lopsided distribution of economic resources in Africa, as we saw in Nigeria, has resulted in the majority of citizens being unable to afford subscriptions to cable and satellite channels that could carry football matches into their living

| | |
|---|----|
| rooms. Thus, the emergence of football show houses or shades in Nigeria and across Africa is a manifestation of the global consumption of European league football and also of the transformation of its viewership form and space in Africa. | 1 |
| | 2 |
| | 3 |
| | 4 |
| | 5 |
| | 6 |
| | 7 |
| | 8 |
| | 9 |
| | 10 |
| | 11 |
| | 12 |
| | 13 |
| | 14 |
| | 15 |
| | 16 |
| | 17 |
| | 18 |
| | 19 |
| | 20 |
| | 21 |
| | 22 |
| | 23 |
| | 24 |
| | 25 |
| | 26 |
| | 27 |
| | 28 |
| | 29 |
| | 30 |
| | 31 |
| | 32 |
| | 33 |
| | 34 |
| | 35 |
| | 36 |
| | 37 |
| | 38 |
| | 39 |
| | 40 |
| | 41 |
| | 42 |
| | 43 |
| | 44 |
| | 45 |
| | 46 |

This chapter has considered the threat to the promotion of cultural citizenship alongside the demise of free-to-air public service television in the continent in the deregulated media landscape created by market reforms. That participation in popular culture is dependent on financial resources speaks to the stratified television-viewing regime introduced by the new deregulatory policy environment. While the emergence of football show houses in Africa has raised followership of European football and, especially of the EPL, it has also consolidated rather than challenged the marginalization of women in public spaces in Africa. For these reasons I have argued that the political economy of football viewership in Africa must be concerned with national inequalities predicated on structural economic differentials in the wider society. Here I have also explored the implications of these developments for national identity as well as for the consolidation of a global cultural economy through the widespread distribution of European football merchandise in Africa.

REFERENCES

- Alegi, P., 2004. *Laduma: Soccer, Politics and Society in South Africa*. Durban: University of Kwazulu Natal Press.
- Bloomfield, S., 2010. *Africa United: How Football Explains Africa*. London: Canongate Books.
- Bonna, O., 2009. *Africa's Football Legends: Soccer YTT*. Bloomington: Xlibris Corp.
- Bourgault, L. M., 1995. *Mass Media in Sub-Saharan Africa*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Crabbe, T., and Brown, A., 2002. "You're Not Welcome Any More": The Football Crowd, Class and Social Exclusion. In: S. Wagg, ed., *British Football and Social Exclusion*. London: Routledge.
- Crolley, L., and Hand, D., 2002. *Football, Europe and the Press*. London: Routledge.
- Darby, P., 2002. *Africa, Football and FIFA: Politics, Colonialism and Resistance*. London: Frank Cass Publishers.
- Giulianotti, R., 2005. Sport Spectators and the Social Consequences of Commodification: Critical Perspectives from Scottish Football. *Journal of Sports and Social Issues*, 29(4), 386–410.
- Hawkey, I., 2010. *Feet of the Chameleon: The Story of African Football*. London: Anova Book.
- Hope, W., 2002. Whose All Blacks? *Media, Culture and Society*, 24, pp. 235–253.
- Kennedy, D., and Kennedy, P., 2010. Towards a Marxist political Economy of Football Supporters. *Capital and Class*, 34(2), pp. 181–198.
- King, A., 1998. *The End of the Terraces: The Transformation of English Football in the 1990s*. Leicester: Leicester University Press.

- 1 Marivoet, 2006. UEFA Euro 2004 Portugal: The Social Construction of a Mega-
2 Event and Spectacle. *Sociological Review*, 54(2), pp. 127–143.
- 3 Miller, T., 2011. The New International Division of Cultural Labour. In: M. Deuze,
4 ed., *Managing Media Work*. London: Sage.
- 5 Miller, T., Rowe, D., McKay, J., and Lawrence, G., 2003. The Over Production
6 of US Sports and the New International Division of Cultural Labour. *International
7 Review for the Sociology of Sport*, 38(4), pp. 427–440.
- 8 Moor, L., 2007. Sport and Commodification: A Reflection on Key Concepts. *Journal
9 of Sport and Social Issues*, 31, pp. 128–141.
- 10 Poli, J., 2006. Migrations and Trade of African Football Players: Historic, Geo-
11 graphical and Cultural Aspects. *Afrika Spectrum*, 41(3), pp. 393–414.
- 12 Robinson, L., 2008. The Business of Sports. In: B. Houlihan, ed., *Sport and Soci-
13 ety*. London: Sage.
- 14 Rowe, D., 2004a. Watching Brief: Cultural Citizenship and Viewing Rights. *Sports
15 in Society*, 7(3), pp. 385–402.
- 16 Rowe, D., 2004b. Fulfilling the ‘Cultural Mission’: Popular Genre and Public
17 Remit. *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, 7(3), pp. 381–400.
- 18 Rowe, D., 2003. Sport and the Repudiation of the Global. *International Review
19 for the Sociology of Sport*, 38(3), pp. 281–294.
- 20 Scherer, J., Falcous, M., and Jackson, S. 2008. The Media Sports Cultural Com-
21 plex: Local-Global Disjuncture in New Zealand/Aotearoa. *Journal of Sports &
22 Social Issues*, 32(1), pp. 48–71.
- 23 Sullivan, G., 2009. Germany, Television and the 2006 World Cup: National Narra-
24 tive of Pride and Party Patriotism. In: E. Castelló, A. Dhoest, and H. O’Donnell,
25 eds., *The Nation on Screen, Discourses of the National in Global Television*.
26 Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Press.
- 27 Vokes, R., 2010. Arsenal in Bugamba: The Rise of English Premiership Football in
28 Uganda. *Anthropology Today*, 26(3/June).
- 29
- 30
- 31
- 32
- 33
- 34
- 35
- 36
- 37
- 38
- 39
- 40
- 41
- 42
- 43
- 44
- 45
- 46

15 Watching the Football with Raymond Williams

A Reconsideration of the Global Game as a “Wonderful Game”

John Hughson

INTRODUCTION

The ownership and control of the ‘means of communication’ (Williams 2005) within which contemporary mega sport is organizationally entangled and delivered as a product for global consumption has increasingly become a matter of private monopoly interest. The symbiotic relationship between monopoly ownership and advertising has meant that live transmission of certain key sporting events and tournaments has been kept available to either free-to-air television or minimal pay-TV access. The precariousness of such arrangements, understandably, is of concern to critical media academics. To those academics dedicated to the social, political and cultural study of sport, the impact of media control on sporting cultures and their relationships with citizenries, in various national settings, is an attendant point of concern. This chapter will consider the cultural significance of media/sport via an engagement with the spirit of Britain’s first outstanding theorist of media, Raymond Williams (1921–1988). Writing in the magazine *The Listener* in 1968, Williams remarked, “Sport, is of course one of the very best things about television; I would keep my set for it alone” (Williams 1989, p. 34). Would Williams repeat this view today? In attempting to answer this question, this chapter addresses sport not only in relation to television and ‘social shaping’ (Jones 2006, p. 168), but also considers how the sporting event is actually watched by enthusiasts (like Williams himself) and, in relation to this consideration, assesses the cultural status afforded to sport by its audience. The chapter focuses on a sport of special appeal to Raymond Williams, namely association football/soccer.¹

FOOTBALL, TELEVISION, AND ‘CULTURAL FORM’

The historical development of the media in Britain is marked by the post-Edwardian notion of public service broadcasting. As conceived, this notion reflected the late Victorian middle-class ideal of *service*. Despite the purely reforming ambition of this ideal—the betterment of the ‘lower classes’—the

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34

emergent Marxist, Raymond Williams, believed ‘service’ to be one of the great legacies of the late Victorian age (Williams 1961, pp. 313–317). Public *service* broadcasting became institutionalized in the 1920s with the establishment of the British Broadcasting Commission (later Corporation), most commonly known as the BBC, under the influential leadership of Sir John Reith (Scannell 1990, p. 13). Reith, an adherent of Matthew Arnold’s dictum of culture involving ‘the best which has been thought and said in the world’ (Arnold 1932, p. 6), saw the emergent broadcasting technologies of the twentieth century as a means of bringing ‘sweetness and light’ to the general public. As such, he regarded broadcasting as a serious moral concern, not to be handed over to simple light entertainment, but to the conduct of programming for the cultural good. The development of the BBC as a vehicle for the dissemination of fine drama, the arts and educational programmes owes much to the legacy of Reith. Where sport fits into this purview is debatable, and is a key point taken up as the chapter develops. Reith did not so much see sport as a form of culture similar to the arts, but nevertheless as important to the national way of life. Accordingly, he called for major sporting events such as The Football Association Challenge Cup (FA Cup) Final to be a broadcasting priority (Scannell 1990, p. 14). Broadcast of the Final eventually occurred on radio in 1930 and then initially on television in 1938, although televising of FA Cup matches did not occur with regularity until after WWII (Huggins and Williams 2006, p. 41, Williams 2004, p. 205).

The notion of public service broadcasting took a decidedly leftward turn in the early academic writing of Raymond Williams. In *The Long Revolution*, originally published in 1961, and *Communications* (1962), Williams (1965, pp. 372–373, 1962, pp. 118–119), commencing a theme he elaborated upon in subsequent work on television (Williams 1974a), declared the necessity, in a culturally democratic country, for the existence of a public authority in broadcasting supported by, but operating with relative freedom from, the state. According to Williams, the BBC fulfilled this responsibility rather well, given the political constraints that it operated under. However, Williams remained vigilant, aware of the possibilities provided within the Television Act of 1954 for the emergence of a non-publicly controlled media, which would be dependent on funding from commercial advertising. He clearly saw this as a danger, even predicting that once commercial forces took a foothold in the ‘technical means of distribution,’ a ‘central monopoly’ in such hands was likely to follow (Williams, 1965, p. 373). The Peacock Committee Report of 1985 into the BBC bore out this concern. Whereas previous parliamentary committees had focused on the social purpose of the BBC, the Peacock Committee specifically addressed the economic arrangements required to move toward a full market model. In doing so, the Peacock Report, according to Scannell (1990, p. 26), “redefined broadcasting as a private commodity rather than a public good,” and thus eroded the notion of public service broadcasting in Britain.

Into the enquiry about the mediation of sport, in terms of delivery and provision, the more fundamental question about the cultural status of sport needs to be inserted. Williams's early analysis of culture is insightful in this regard. As discussed in some detail by the author in previous works (Hughson 2009, Hughson *et al.* 2005), Williams (1988, p. 87) regarded culture as one of the most difficult words to define in the English language. He clearly wanted to step beyond Arnold's definition—as lingered in the notion of public service broadcasting—of culture being handed down from above. But rather than jettisoning an elitist understanding of culture, he brought in another layer of definition by which culture was understood in a social sense as:

a description of a particular way of life, which expresses certain meanings and values not only in art and learning but also in institutions and ordinary behaviour. The analysis of culture, from such a definition, is the clarification of the meanings and values implicit and explicit in a particular way of life, a particular culture. (Williams 1965, pp. 57–58)

In this passage we see Williams making the case for the significance of the cultural life of the working class, so that it may be valued according to its own terms, both in the broader society and within intellectual analysis. The advent of cultural studies within the academy provides the key indication of his success in the latter endeavor. The subsequent institutional intermixing of cultural and media studies also bears the influence, however unintended, of Williams. Although he did not propose a facile conflation of working-class and popular culture, given that his early writings coincided with the representation of the working class within literature and then film (Laing 1986), inevitably the two soon came together in academic cultural studies. A prominent key text was Stuart Hall and Paddy Whannel's *The Popular Arts*, published in 1964. In this book the authors use the term 'popular art' to describe forms and items of popular culture that arise from folk art and tradition in a way that retains an intensity of collective feeling and 'genuine contact' with the audience (Hall and Whannel 1964, p. 66). Popular art differed from what Hall and Whannel referred to as 'mass culture,' which they regard as contrived offerings designed within a cultural marketplace with an imperative placed on their sale attraction to an audience or customer. Williams had previously registered concern about the use of the term 'mass' in relation to culture because it tends almost invariably to carry negative connotations about the inferiority of the cultural activities of non-elite social classes.

According to Williams (1961, p. 289), "There are in fact no masses; there are only ways of seeing people as masses." More specifically, Williams came to believe that the term 'the masses' is an objectification of working-class people and a metonymic reduction of that class to the contemporary media—hence the similarity to the term 'mass media.' Hall and Whannel,

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46

in a sense, invert and re-appropriate the term in their usage to turn it squarely on those responsible for churning out the kitsch-like items that Adorno and Horkheimer (1986) referred to as comprising ‘The Culture Industry,’ but, in doing so, reinstate the possibility of subjective distinction-making being introduced into the analysis and/or criticism of popular culture. Accordingly, they have been accused of retaining the Arnoldian elitism brought into the academic study of culture by F.R. Leavis (Turner 2003, p. 60)—the much-caricatured bogeyman of cultural studies. Williams proceeded in much the same way as Hall and Whannel, assertively questioning in *The Long Revolution*:

Can we agree . . . that football is indeed a wonderful game, that jazz is a real musical form and that gardening and homemaking are indeed important? Can we also agree, though, that the horror-film, the rape-novel, the Sunday strip-paper and the latest Tin-Pan drool are not in the same world, and that the . . . pretty, clever television advertisement [is] not in it either. (Williams 1965, p. 364)

In contrast to these latter tawdry cultural forms, Williams regarded football as part of a ‘good living culture.’ His inclusion of it alongside participative domestic leisure such as gardening and homemaking suggests that he may have had the playing of local park football in mind, and such fits with Williams’s community-mindedness in regard to leisure. Indeed, his claim for football echoes Leavis’s appeal to the ‘social arts’ that are nurtured within an ‘organic community’ (Leavis and Thompson 1933, p. 68). However, Williams’s (1965, p. 364) further statement “that the need for sport and entertainment is as real as the need for art,” makes a case for the significance of sport that is unlikely to have been countenanced by the culturally elitist Leavis (Hughson *et al.* 2005, pp. 16–20).

This quote from *The Long Revolution* is interestingly viewed alongside Williams’s discussion of sport in the book *Television: Technology and Cultural Form*. Here Williams (1974a, pp. 66–68) identifies sport’s distinctiveness as a ‘cultural form’ on television from areas associated with the high arts, in particular drama. Whereas drama undergoes a type of democratization by being converted into soap opera on television and is thus taken to a broader audience, sport, having long been enjoyed by many as a popular art, becomes exposed to a deleterious popularization through commercialism and sponsorship. This commercial packaging resulted, Williams argues, in a pejorative reference by critics to ‘spectator sport,’ a term used in disregard of the traditions of a sport like football prior to its arrival on television. Despite being himself a critic of the impact of commercial advertising on television sport, Williams was no doomsayer, believing that, when used appropriately, a technology such as television held much promise for the wide societal dissemination of sporting events, including football matches.

The academic contribution in *Television: Technology and Cultural Form* is interestingly matched to Williams's more popular writing on the medium. Between 1968 and 1972 he wrote a monthly review of television for the BBC weekly journal *The Listener*, and his most direct opinions on sport were expressed in some of these essays (Williams 1989). In one essay from 1970, 'There's Always the Sport,' with an eye on the technical presentation of sport on television, Williams (1989, p. 96) declared, "I have nothing but admiration for the presentation of sport on the screen." However, he was critical of the "compulsive talk before and after the event," a 'studio ritual' that emulates and exasperates the supporter and fan tradition of sport discussion. In a prior essay, Williams (1989, p. 59) makes the related point that sport on television would be 'simpler and purer'—and presumably preferable—if the presentation of the spectacle was spared the 'persistence of commentary.' Football was explicitly named by Williams as one of the sports for which he would keep his television and further reflection upon his early writings may provide 'bearings useful' (Williams 1965, p. 15) toward comprehending the possible ways in which football might be *seen* (if not heard) by its contemporary media watchers. This approach goes against the critical tendency in cultural and media studies that rather caricatures Williams's notion of 'flow' in regard to television content, whereby "everything becomes like everything else" (Ellis 1982, p. 117). Contrarily, Williams recognised "that there is no unitary object "Television" which can be isolated for a single homogenizing analysis" (Laing 1991, p. 168). In various ways, sport, including football, has always gone against the 'flow' of television, providing a most 'particular' example of a 'television use or form' (Williams 1974a, p.7).

FOOTBALL ON TELEVISION: A 'NEW VISUAL EXPERIENCE'

At the risk of stating the very obvious, football is well known as the 'beautiful game.' Irrespective of disputed origins, the term clearly suggests that those people referring to football as beautiful believe the sport to possess aesthetic qualities. At further risk of a semantic debate, we may take it that Williams's reference to football as a 'wonderful game' in 1961 was making a similar suggestion. There is enough said about football (and athletics and tennis) in his *The Listener* essays to believe that Williams had an eye for the beauty of the game. Of interest in this chapter is how Williams would reconcile an aesthetic appreciation for football with watching it on the television. A most insightful academic statement on the aesthetics of football is provided by the historian Richard Holt in his now classic *Sport and the British*:

Bound together with the sense of community there was the sheer excitement and beauty of the thing—the perfect pass that suddenly switches the play from end to end, the shuffle and swerve that turns a defence

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46

1 and sends a winger away with the time to cross to a centre-forward
2 tearing past the marker . . . In the end these movements are instinctive
3 and aesthetic, beyond social and historical analysis. (1989, p. 165)

4
5 Thus, for Holt, although particular segments of play may be beautiful in
6 their own right and in that sense stand outside social and historical analy-
7 sis, they nevertheless transpire within relevant cultural contexts, hence his
8 reference to the ‘sense of community’ in attachment to the aesthetic appre-
9 ciation of football. Williams’s explanation of what he considered to be a
10 false distinction between ‘high’ and ‘popular’ culture suggests potential
11 agreement with this position. Williams (1974b) especially disputed the elit-
12 ist presupposition that high culture is ‘universal,’ and that popular culture,
13 when worthwhile, remains somehow locally rooted. For Williams all cul-
14 tural forms are subject to processes of localization and selection, therefore
15 making nonsense of a clear universal/local distinction. Furthermore, he
16 believed that the perpetuation of the idea of universal high culture obscured
17 more important considerations of the ‘crucial distinction between different
18 senses of “popular” culture’ (Williams 1974b) in terms of cultural forms
19 developed *by* people in association with genuine meanings and values, as
20 opposed to cultural forms developed *for* people and imposed by artificial
21 processes, including ‘commercial saturation.’ Indeed, Williams argued that
22 the term universalism had become more relevant to the description of sport
23 and other forms of popular culture, rather than high culture, given the
24 impact of the ‘new media’ of the time. Yet, the implication here is for a
25 universalism driven from ‘powerful centers’ at the discretion of monopoly
26 media owners uninterested in the preservation of cultural authenticity. In
27 light of this view, we may ponder why Williams remained so ready to praise
28 television as a medium for the presentation of a sport such as football with
29 genuine working-class traditions.

30 The answer is to be found within the mixed enterprise of Williams’s
31 writing on television as a medium. As Laing (1991, p. 156) notes, Williams
32 wanted to shift the emphasis of media studies from the Leavisite *Scrutiny*
33 tradition of cultural criticism, focused on content, to the New Left’s con-
34 cern with the ‘problem of institutions.’ This declaration was delivered by
35 Williams (1966, p. 10) in the Preface to the second edition of *Communi-*
36 *cations*, and was pursued in the abovementioned *Television: Technology*
37 *and Cultural Form* which, as indicated, is his only book dedicated to the
38 analysis of television. A steadfast anti-technological determinist, Williams
39 did not accept that the medium of television imposed the ways in which
40 cultural forms were transmitted, but that the decisions taken by those in
41 control of television would inevitably impact on the formats and modes
42 of delivery through which cultural forms reached an audience. Yet, while
43 Williams suspected that monopoly private ownership would lead to for-
44 mat uniformity and a resultant degree of programmatic ‘flow,’ his writ-
45 ing on discrete cultural forms does indicate, as per Laing’s aforementioned
46

suggestion, that he did not portend a generic flattening. The main evidence for this judgment can be found in his essays for *The Listener*. Williams may have taken television reviewing onto an intellectual plane that we may not see the likes of again, but his offerings were reviews nonetheless, and within them we get a rather good glimpse of his personal likes and dislikes regarding cultural forms on the small screen.

In his introduction to *Raymond Williams on Television*, Alan O'Connor (1989, p. xvii) alludes to the variety in Williams's review essays, but notes, "if there is one common theme running through the treatments of these diverse cultural forms of television it is the critique of professional commentary." As seen in the previous section, Williams's criticism of sport-related commentary was especially sharp. As well as objecting to the ideological bent of sport commentary, Williams quite simply seemed to find it an irritating distraction from the spectacle. Of the various cultural forms presented on television, sport is one that could be sustained rather well without much or any commentary and we can, for example, imagine Williams watching the football with the sound turned down. His enthusiasm for the sheer spectacle of sport on television was captured in his account of sport as a cultural form in *Television: Technology and Cultural Form*: "... some of the best television coverage of sport, with its detailed close-ups and its variety of perspectives, has given us a new excitement and immediacy in watching physical action, and even a new visual experience of a distinct kind" (Williams 1974a, p. 69).

Just who he is referring to as 'us' is a pertinent matter to consider. Williams (1974a, p. 67) was aware of the historical development of football and that the spectating custom of this sport predated his writing on television by approximately one hundred years. His aforementioned problematizing of the term 'spectator sport' indicated his repudiation of culturally snobbish suggestions that 'sport' is reduced to 'entertainment' on television, and so totally disconnected from the tradition of watching an event in person in places such as football grounds. Nevertheless, it would have been useful had he written more explicitly on, for example, the notion of communalism emphasized in Holt's understanding of the aesthetic appreciation of football. What happens to this notion when people watch games at home alone on the television? Williams's own watching seems to have been done in this context, and it is not entirely unfair to regard his function in writing for *The Listener* as that of a bourgeois critic reviewing the sporting spectacle in its own right divorced from its social context. Williams may have been right about the ideological nature of the sport commentary on offer, but to be rid of it altogether (perhaps by turning the sound down) does not make a chair in the living room more akin to one in the stadium. Yet, for the 'new visual experience' of football on the television to be something more than mere 'entertainment,' its ongoing appeal must surely stand in some relation to its pre-television means of appreciation? This point demands an inquiry into the origins of football as 'common culture.'

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46

FOOTBALL AND THE ‘COMMON CULTURE’

To locate the enquiry within Williams’s own terms of intellectual reference, we would do well to pose a related question: how does televised football fit within a contemporary understanding of the ‘common culture’? For Williams (1961, p. 323), the “distinction of a common culture” is its collective making by members, its forms and elements constantly “made and remade.” This theme was pursued by E.P. Thompson (1963) in *The Making of the English Working Class*, and applied to football explicitly by Richard Holt (1989, p. 165):

Football crowds were no blank sheet upon which “the ruling class” could write . . . football matches [were not] foisted upon a passive proletariat . . . Workers were not dumb credulous creatures . . . Culturally [emphasis added] spectators were just as much “members” as “customers” of League football clubs.

Holt’s reference to ‘cultural’ membership is both an endorsement of the sport’s cultural significance and a warning against exaggerating the extent to which it was ever owned economically or administratively by the working class. The well-known term ‘the people’s game’ may suggest an overall common ownership, but this was not the intention of James Walvin (1975) in using the term for the title of his book on the historical development of association football in Britain. Walvin would accept Jeffrey Hill’s subsequent cautioning against proclamations of football as the ‘people’s game’ in terms of economic ownership. At the time of the Football League’s formation in the late 1880s, working-class supporters could hold shares in their local clubs, but even at this early stage of professional development their dividend holdings were minimal, the great proportion of shares being held by businessman, who also had the far greater say in club management issues (Hill 2002, p. 27). Contemporary campaigns toward increased supporter control of football clubs best not, therefore, look back with rose-colored glasses to historical exemplars.

The ‘common culture’ was a term borrowed by Williams from T.S. Eliot’s 1948 work of social criticism, *Notes Towards the Definition of Culture*. However, unlike Williams, Eliot did not see society as class divided, but as ordered by a natural hierarchy that was reflected in the leisure pursuits making up an overall harmonious ‘common culture’ (Eliot 2011, p. 136). Among items listed by Eliot (2011, p. 104) within the common culture is a ‘cup final,’ thus indicating the recognition by this well-known conservative of the cultural significance of football to many English people, and of that sport’s importance as a social bond. Eliot did not comment on the relationship between sport and television, but his disregard for the latter throws up an interesting challenge to the pro sport on television position of Williams. Eliot believed television to have an atomizing impact on

| | |
|---|----|
| its audience, drawing them away from communal cultural activities. He was quoted, in 1963, as saying, “[television] is a medium of entertainment which permits millions of people to listen to the same joke at the same time, and yet remain lonesome” (Lyons 1963, p.7). Although football is now watched on television in communal situations, Eliot’s fifty-year-old comment about the medium still provides a direct challenge to the idea of watching a football match on television within the privacy of a home being connected to the ‘common culture.’ | 1 |
| | 2 |
| | 3 |
| | 4 |
| | 5 |
| | 6 |
| | 7 |
| | 8 |
| | 9 |
| A relevant rejoinder, then as now, resides in the live-to-air mediated nature of the football match. Eliot observed key events as forming a national cultural calendar, and he appears to have regarded the ‘cup final’ (presumably meaning the FA Cup final) as being on the agenda. Aware that only approximately 100,000 people would be able to watch the final live at Wembley Stadium, Eliot would have known that they are simultaneously joined by many more at home watching the game via the medium of television. This social arrangement continues today, and contemporary scholars tend to regard the duality of live viewing (at the stadium and on television) as a collective engagement. For example, Andrew Fisher (2005, pp. 189–190) refers to the ‘shared time’ experience between people at the ground and those watching the match at home. Williams’s own ‘admiration’ for sport on television seemed to pertain mainly to watching live-to-air events, as his declared lack of interest in seeing replayed highlights of the Wimbledon tennis tournament in 1969 largely attests (Williams 1989, pp. 66–67). Apart from his own interest, he would certainly have been ready to regard watching live broadcasts of the FA Cup as a form of ‘lived experience’ occurring within the common culture, yet he differs from Eliot in his explicit acceptance of ‘common cultural’ activities, such as football watching, as being of equal worth to the activities of a presumed high culture. Furthermore, Williams believed that we cannot prejudge how technologies impact on cultural life in and of themselves and, as flagged earlier in the chapter, such was his view of television. In <i>Television: Technology and Cultural Form</i> , Williams (1974a, p. 130) identifies two ‘untenable’ variants of technologically determinist presupposition: an optimistic variant—which he associates with Marshall McLuhan’s notion of the ‘global village’—whereby the possibilities of the technology itself drive television transmission and broadcasting in a way that necessarily unites people; and a pessimistic one—as promulgated by Eliot—that regards television as an isolating device and as anathema to genuine human interests. In their different ways, both these positions fail adequately to recognize the steering hand of owners and controllers, both state and private, who make decisions on the uses of television—uses that may ultimately, but not in advance, be deemed as socially beneficial or disadvantageous. Relatedly, Williams warns against ‘determined technology,’ a tendency, particularly within ‘some Marxist versions’ of criticism, to overstate the controlling power of media owners and decision makers. According to Williams, ‘cultural forms’ | 10 |
| | 11 |
| | 12 |
| | 13 |
| | 14 |
| | 15 |
| | 16 |
| | 17 |
| | 18 |
| | 19 |
| | 20 |
| | 21 |
| | 22 |
| | 23 |
| | 24 |
| | 25 |
| | 26 |
| | 27 |
| | 28 |
| | 29 |
| | 30 |
| | 31 |
| | 32 |
| | 33 |
| | 34 |
| | 35 |
| | 36 |
| | 37 |
| | 38 |
| | 39 |
| | 40 |
| | 41 |
| | 42 |
| | 43 |
| | 44 |
| | 45 |
| | 46 |

1 are never “wholly control[led],” and the outcomes of television transmission
2 cannot be “wholly predict[ed].” With this qualification in mind, it is
3 instructive to recall Williams highlighting, in the 1960s, the cultural form
4 of sport as one of the ‘very best things about television’ and to reconsider
5 the pertinence of this claim today.
6
7

8 WOULD RAYMOND WILLIAMS STILL KEEP HIS TELEVISION? 9

10 If a nonagenarian Raymond Williams were with us today would he still
11 keep his television for the sport and would he still regard televised football
12 as a ‘wonderful game?’ If we can assume that Williams owned his television,
13 the cost of keeping it, to which he alludes in his 1968 comment about
14 sport on television, means the compulsory BBC license fee. To watch sport
15 on television in the UK today is a much more complex matter than it was
16 in the late 1960s, with much of it, as Williams (1974a, p. 140) predicted,
17 now only accessible through subscription to satellite providing networks
18 such as BSkyB. An English summer once dotted by cricket test matches
19 for the enthusiast of that sport, watched on free-to-air (if not commercial
20 free) television, is no longer what it was unless they are able to watch via
21 pay-TV. Football has been a sport considerably affected by the privatization
22 of television, although in Britain there is still significant free-to-air provision.
23 English Premier League football, in terms of full match live-to-air provision,
24 is only available on pay-TV. However, highlights programmes are shown on the BBC,
25 the best-known provision of this kind being the long-standing (since 1964) *Match of the Day*, aired currently at some time
26 after 10pm on a Saturday evening. Regarding the FA Cup competition,
27 some of the round matches and the final stages, including the final, are
28 shown live on free-to-air television.
29

30 Free access live-to-air provision of the FA Cup final is ensured by the
31 Conservative Major Government’s 1996 Broadcasting Act, and an update
32 to that legislation under the Blair Labour Government in 1998, whereby
33 certain ‘listed events’ are deemed to be of ‘national significance’ and, therefore,
34 to be made available as a right of ‘cultural citizenship.’ Roche (2000,
35 p. 176) regards this arrangement as an extension of the principle of ‘sport
36 for all’ into a media policy of ‘television sport for all.’ But such protection
37 over the media provision of the FA Cup has not helped to guard against a
38 decline in the status of that competition. The last final of the FA Cup to
39 be contested in Raymond Williams’s lifetime was between a well-fancied
40 Tottenham Hotspur and Coventry City in May 1987. Coventry produced
41 a rare underdog victory, defeating Spurs by 3–2 in a reportedly excellent
42 match. In the next year an even greater upset occurred when Wimbledon
43 defeated Liverpool 1–0 in the final of 1988. However, since then, the FA
44 Cup final has been won on all but two occasions by one of the leading English
45 clubs. The monopoly of success by the leading and best-financed clubs
46

seems to have coincided with the advent of the English Premier League in the 1992/93 season and a resultant gap in standards not only between the Premier League clubs and those in lower divisions, but between the top four or five Premier League clubs and those further down the ladder in that competition (Conn 2005). The advantage to an elite group of EPL clubs (e.g., Manchester United, Chelsea) was enhanced by the initial deal struck with BSkyB for pay-TV broadcasting rights. The subsequent renewal of the arrangement with BSkyB from 1997 was estimated to have increased the direct income of these clubs at that time by 8–10 percent (Russell 1997, p. 214).

At the present time, the victory of a Coventry or Wimbledon, let alone a team from a lower division, against one of the leading Premier League clubs in the FA Cup final seems a rather remote prospect. The most deflating aspect of this circumstance is that the leading clubs arguably no longer prioritize the FA Cup as a major trophy ambition. During the round stages of the competition it is not unusual for the leading clubs to rest some of their best players from their playing team, and yet, come the Final, one of these clubs still lifts the trophy. It is hardly fanciful to suggest that the disregard shown toward the FA Cup by leading English clubs, in favor of focusing their ambitions on the Premier League and the Union of European Football Associations (UEFA) Champions League, has been a key factor in the decline of public regard for the Cup. If the leading football clubs treat the FA Cup as a matter of secondary prestige, then it is difficult for football supporters in the present day to revere that competition in the way that previous generations did when the FA Cup may have been more convincingly regarded as an indication of a lived common culture.

The aforementioned UEFA Champions League appears now to be the most valued prize of all in football, seemingly both for the economic return and prestige afforded to qualifying clubs². There is, to an extent, a parallel between the development of European political and economic integration and the emphasis on football at the European level. Indeed, football could be said to provide something of a lead in European cultural integration that is yet to be established in cultural policy in connection to the arts (Vidmar-Horvat 2012). The related legal overlap is also most relevant to the present state of play in television broadcasting rights of football and will continue to be so for the foreseeable future. Although jurisdictional conflict potentially exists, European Union legislation currently reinforces and extends the ‘national significance’ principle by making it relevant to the European Champions League, hence the present free-to-air availability of matches in this competition on both the BBC and ITV (Szymanski 2006, p. 149). In the case of the Champions League, European media legislation has prevailed over competition law, or at least an attempted exercise of the latter by UEFA via an appeal to ‘commercial rights’ pertinent to its organizational responsibility for the league and the immediate financial stakeholders, including sponsors and clubs (Parrish 2003, p. 123). That the

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46

1 'national significance' principle prevailed against contrary legal challenge
2 indicates the robustness of cultural citizenship rights over football when
3 reinforced by sufficient legislative power.

4 The 'listed events' under UK broadcasting law also include the UEFA
5 Euro Championship Final and the FIFA World Cup Final tournaments,
6 both held every four years. The 1986 World Cup Finals tournament, held
7 in Mexico, was the last to be played during Raymond Williams's lifetime,
8 and most of it was broadcast live on free-to-air television on either the BBC
9 or ITV. The tournament featured one of the most memorable performances
10 in the history of football by one of the sport's most famous players, Diego
11 Maradona, who captained Argentina to success in the final against West
12 Germany. But it is the quarter-final match between Argentina and England,
13 and Maradona's role within that game, which has dominated subsequent
14 discussion. During that match, played on 22 June 1986, Maradona scored
15 two goals that have become known respectively as the 'hand of God' and
16 the 'goal of the century' (Hughson and Moore 2012, p. 224). The first of
17 these goals involved Maradona punching the ball over the head of England
18 goalkeeper Peter Shilton to score. His subsequent explanation that the goal
19 was scored "a little with the head of Maradona and a little with the hand
20 of God" provided the name to which it is still referred. Shortly after that
21 goal Maradona scored another, a goal of such stupendous virtuosity that
22 it is still recalled as the 'goal of the century' and can be readily found and
23 seen by this name today on internet sites.

24 A respondent in the research of the late Eduardo Archetti (2001, p. 157)
25 provides an interesting Argentinean perspective on that goal. He claims,
26 "Maradona was able to produce the most important performance in the
27 history of Argentine football." This is so, the interviewee believes, because
28 the virtuosity of the goal was achieved against the "English machine . . .
29 the most rugged defenders in the world." He goes on to say that the goal
30 was "a victory of the *criollo* style," a culturally distinct way of playing foot-
31 ball in Argentina, in which the ball is kept on the ground with the player
32 relying on 'dribbling' (running with the ball) ability to beat an opponent.
33 This 'individual creativity' of the player in Argentina is valued over col-
34 lective physical force and discipline, which the respondent associates with
35 English football culture. Interestingly, he does not refer to Maradona's first
36 goal, which has come, via Maradona's own prompting, to symbolize an act
37 of Argentinian retribution against the English for the Falkland's War. In
38 1986 Maradona toed the official line set by football authorities, declaring
39 in press statements that the match was purely about football and not poli-
40 tics. But more recently, in his autobiography, Maradona has claimed the
41 victory as revenge for the Argentinian lives lost in the Falkland's conflict
42 (Maradona 2005, p. 130).

43 Raymond Williams, as a self-confessed admirer of football, would surely
44 have marveled at Maradona's second goal, assuming he watched the Argen-
45 tina versus England quarter-final match, which was broadcast by the BBC
46

and ITV live on Sunday 22 June 1986 at 7pm GMT. Aware of the political background to the match, he may also have had some sympathy for Maradona's first goal, despite the illegality duly missed by the referee and his match officials. In a short, prescient piece on television coverage of the Falkland's War, Williams (1982) referred to the 'culture of distance' to describe television's problem in adequately reporting on the 'actualities' of a distantly fought war *in situ*. In the same piece he remarks, 'everyday television,' by contrast, successfully closes the gap of distance and gives the audience a sense of familiarity with the event that it is watching. Given his general viewpoint on the medium it is fair to presume that sport would have fallen into the category of 'everyday television' for Williams. The World Cup does not occur every day, but it is a much anticipated event on the rolling calendar for football watchers in various parts of the world and, therefore, has a sense of regularity, if not ordinariness. The World Cup inevitably bears the tension of its national representations, yet it provides a rare form of 'public culture' on a global scale (Mihelj 2011, p. 167). An outgrowth of 'common culture' perhaps, via Williams (1965, pp. 58–61), we may well regard global football as a dimension of a 'general human culture' that is 'shaped' within 'local' systems. Maradona's 'goal of the century' was a masterstroke in the spontaneous creativity of football as common culture, born in the *potrero* (small, unmarked spaces where football is played) but played out on a world stage and, as such, reflective of the ultimate irony of artistic achievement: created according to the conditions of a particular cultural mode of production, but bearing a 'general *human* interest' (Williams 1988, p. 42) linked to a wide conception of cultural citizenship.³

CONCLUSION

The contemporary global mediascape within which the national broadcasting of sport occurs is a far cry from the early days of television in the UK and the notion of public service broadcasting on which the BBC was initially based. Nevertheless, despite the shift to a 'post-Fordist regime' (Rowe 1996, p. 574) dominated by confusing pay-TV multi-channel package offerings, often with further user-pay add-ons for access to sporting events, I am inclined to believe that Raymond Williams, if with us today, would still keep his television set perhaps only for the reason of watching sport, including the football. Whether he would take up a pay-TV option I will not hazard a guess but, given the amount of football available on free-to-air television, Williams would perhaps be able to see enough live football, including the World Cup when it comes around, to satisfy his interests. The internet has now opened another range of 'free' viewing possibilities, albeit in connection to commercial enterprise. For example, the FA Cup qualifying round match between the non-Football League clubs Ascot United and Wembley was shown on Budweiser's Facebook page (Andrews 2012, p. 18).

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46

On a grander scale, the internet represents a challenge to the satellite television monopolization of English Premier League Football. The intrusion of Google TV into US sport has implications for football in the UK that go beyond the current offering of statistical and other match updating applications. Showing live matches in full on alternative media platforms into the future is feasible pending deals being struck between an outlet like the Google-owned YouTube and the most popular EPL clubs (Andrews 2012, p. 19). Arrangements of this kind would certainly continue forms of advertising, disliked by Williams, but also carry the prospect of a more affordable viewing option to the public⁴. Another increasingly likely direction is toward the 'consumer piracy' noted by Julianotti and Robertson (2009, p. 170) in their book *Globalization and Football*, whereby individuals find ways to view matches through 'foreign internet platforms,' thus avoiding the cost of satellite television subscription. More recently, Birmingham and David (2011) have examined how the possibility of 'live-streaming' of football matches, via the internet, represents for pay-TV a comparable threat to that of 'file-sharing' in relation to music, which has all but completely transformed the recording industry over the last decade. It may be hard to imagine Raymond Williams being involved in a practice that, in colloquial parlance, could be described as 'a bit dodgy,' but if he could be convinced of live-streaming as a new means of public service broadcasting in a post-modern media age, his presumed reluctance might be assuaged. Finally, then, we consider Williams watching the football on an electronic device rather dissimilar to the one known to him as a television set. Be this a laptop, an LCD widescreen monitor hooked up to a system unit, or an iPhone, Williams would no doubt be more interested in the social uses of the apparatus than in its technological gadgetry. He would also welcome, while not uncritically, the arrival of media arrangements that afford to a wider audience, in ways as unhindered as possible by viewing cost, advertising and related distraction, the opportunity to appreciate visually the sport he regarded as a 'wonderful game.'

NOTES

1. In his 'Notes to the second edition' of Raymond Williams's *Television: Technology and Cultural Form*, a key work discussed in this chapter, Williams's son Ederyn Williams (1990, p. 154) remarks that the globally popular sport of soccer 'never had a chance in the US because halves of forty-five minutes were just too long a gap between commercials.'
2. Clubs competing in the 2011–12 UEFA Champions League shared a total of EUR754.1 (US\$980) million. The winners of the tournament, Chelsea FC, received EUR59.935 (US\$78) million in total and the runners-up, FC Bayern München, received EUR41.730 million in total. The additional amount received by Chelsea for winning the final was EUR9 (US\$12) million. The amount earned by Chelsea from the 'television market pool' was EUR30.35 (US\$39) million; a total of EUR341.1 (US\$443) million was distributed among the thirty-two group stage participant clubs from the 'television market pool' (UEFA 2012).

3. Williams's inexplicit understanding of 'cultural citizenship', in terms of the state needing to facilitate the required arrangements for a 'shared minimum culture' is briefly discussed by Nick Stevenson (1997, p. 50). 1
2
3
4. While the emergent giants of internet communication may play a key role in radically changing the future of football broadcasting, a rather older corporate player has stepped into the immediate fray. In June 2012 the world's oldest communications company, BT, signed a deal with the Premier League that contributed to boosting the broadcasting rights income of that organization by 3 billion pounds (US\$4.6b) over three years. This represents a 71 percent increase to the Premier League's income and will result in a substantial windfall to the competing clubs. It is estimated that the lowest placed club in the EPL at the conclusion of the 2013/14 season will receive more from television rights than did the winning team in 2011–12, Manchester City. BSkyB retains the majority broadcasting privilege (116 matches per season, compared to thirty-eight matches for BT), for a payment of 2.3 billion pounds (US\$3.5b) over three years. The attendant interest of BT in buying into this arrangement with the Premier League is to use football broadcasting as a vehicle for the extension of its high speed internet service. The types of transmission modes for football to be pursued by BT are uncertain at this point, but it is reported that a 'variety of platforms' will carry a 'new sports channel.' The direct impact on consumers is also presently unclear, but given the considerable financial investment by BT it may be that the cost of watching live-to-air EPL football will increase rather than fall, at least over the next three years (Gibson 2012). 4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46

REFERENCES

- Adorno, T., and Horkheimer, M., 1986. *The Dialectic of Enlightenment*. London: Verso. First published 1944. 25
26
- Andrews, G., 2012. 'TV Times.' *When Saturday Comes*, 302(April), pp. 18–19. 27
- Archetti, E.P., 2001. The Spectacle of a Heroic Life: The Case of Diego Maradona. In: D.L. Andrews and S.J. Jackson, eds., *Sport Stars: The Cultural Politics of Sporting Celebrity*. London: Routledge, pp. 151–163. 28
29
- Arnold, M., 1932. *Culture and Anarchy*, ed. J. Dover Wilson, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. First published 1869. 30
31
- Birmingham, J. and David, M., 2011. Live-Streaming: Will Football Fans Continue to Be More Law Abiding than Music Fans? *Sport in Society*, 14(1), pp. 69–80. 32
- Conn, D., 2005. *The Beautiful Game: Searching for the Soul of Football*. London: Yellow Jersey Press. 33
34
- Ellis, J., 1982. *Visible Fictions*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul. 35
- Eliot, T.S., 2011. Notes Towards the Definition of Culture in *Christianity and Culture*, San Diego: Harcourt, pp. 79–202. First published 1948. 36
37
- Fisher, A., 2005. Watching Sport—But Who is Watching? *Journal of the Philosophy of Sport*, 32, pp. 184–194. 38
- Gibson, O., 2012. Premier League Lands £3bn TV Rights Bonanza from Sky and BT [online]. *Guardian* yo. *The Guardian*. Available from: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/media/2012/jun/13/premier-league-tv-rights-3-billion-sky-bt> [Accessed 14 July 2012]. 39
40
41
42
- Giulianotti, R., and Robertson, R., 2009. *Globalization and Football*. London: Sage. 43
- Hall, S., and Whannel, P., 1964. *The Popular Arts*. London: Hutchinson. 44
- Hill, J., 2002. *Sport, Leisure and Culture in Twentieth Century Britain*. Basingstoke: Palgrave. 45
46

- Holt, R., 1989. *Sport and the British: A Modern History*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Huggins, M., and Williams, J., 2006. *Sport and the English: 1918–1939*. London: Routledge.
- Hughson, J., 2009. *The Making of Sporting Cultures*. London: Routledge.
- Hughson, J., Inglis, D., and Free, M., 2005. *The Uses of Sport: A Critical Study*. London: Routledge.
- Hughson, J., and Moore, K., 2012. Hand of God, Shirt of the Man: the Materiality of Diego Maradona. *Costume*, 46(2), pp. 212–225.
- Jones, P., 2006. *Raymond Williams's Sociology of Culture: A Critical Reconstruction*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Laing, S., 1991. Raymond Williams and the Cultural Analysis of Television. *Media, Culture and Society*, 13(2), pp. 153–169.
- , 1986. *Representations of Working Class Life 1954–64*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Leavis, F.R. and Thompson, D., 1933. *Culture and Environment: The Training of Critical Awareness*. London: Chatto and Windus.
- Lyons, L., 1963. The Lyons Den. *New York Post Magazine*, 22 September.
- Maradona, D., 2005. *El Diego*. London: Yellow Jersey Press.
- Mihelj, S., 2011. *Media Nations: Communicating Belonging and Exclusion in the Modern World*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- O'Connor, A., 1989. Introduction. In: A. O'Connor, ed., *Raymond Williams on Television: Selected Writings*. London: Routledge, pp. xiii–xvii.
- Parrish, R., 2003. *Sports Law and Policy in the European Union*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Roche, M., 2000. *Mega-Events and Modernity: Olympics and Expos in the Growth of Global Culture*. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge.
- Rowe, D., 1996. The Global Love-Match: Sport and Television. *Media, Culture & Society*, 18(4), pp. 565–582.
- Russell, D., 1997. *Football and the English: A Social History of Association Football in England, 1863–1995*. Preston: Carnegie Publishing.
- Scannell, P., 1990. Public Service Broadcasting: The History of a Concept. In: A. Goodwin and G. Whannel, eds., *Understanding Television*. London: Routledge, pp. 11–29.
- Stevenson, N., 1997. Globalization, National Cultures and Cultural Citizenship. *The Sociological Quarterly*, 38(1), pp. 41–66.
- Szymanski, S., 2006. Why Have Premium Sports Rights Migrated to Pay TV in Europe, but not in the US. In: C. Jeanrenaud and S. Késenne, eds., *The Economics of Sport and the Media*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, pp. 148–159.
- Thompson, E.P., 1963. *The Making of the English Working Class*. London: Victor Gollancz.
- Turner, G., 2003. *British Cultural Studies: An Introduction*. 3rd ed. London: Routledge.
- UEFA, 2012. Clubs Benefit from Champions League Revenue [online]. UEFA. Available from: <http://www.uefa.com/uefa/management/finance/news/newsid=1840934.html> [Accessed 14 July 2012].
- Vidmar-Horvat, K., 2012. The Predicament of Intercultural Dialogue: Reconsidering the Politics of Culture and Identity in the EU. *Cultural Sociology*, 6(1), pp. 27–44.
- Walvin, J., 1975. *The People's Game: A Social History of British Football*. London: Allen Lane.
- Williams, E., 1990. Notes to the Second Edition of Television: Technology and Cultural Form. In: R. Williams, *Television: Technology and Cultural Form*. London: Routledge, pp. 153–156.

Watching the Football with Raymond Williams 299

| | |
|---|----|
| Williams, J., 2004. <i>Entertaining the Nation: A Social History of British Television</i> . Stroud, Gloucestershire: Sutton. | 1 |
| Williams, R., 2005. 'Means of Communications Means of Production' in <i>Culture and Materialism</i> , London: Verso, pp. 50–66. First published 1980. | 2 |
| _____, 1989. <i>Raymond Williams on Television: Selected Writings</i> , ed. by A. O'Connor, London: Routledge. | 3 |
| _____, 1988. <i>Keywords</i> . Revised edition. London: Fontana. | 4 |
| _____, 1982. Distance. <i>London Review of Books</i> , 4(11), 17 June, pp. 19–20. | 5 |
| _____, 1974a. <i>Television: Technology and Cultural Form</i> . Glasgow: Collins. | 6 |
| _____, 1974b. On High and Popular Culture. <i>New Republic</i> , 171(23), 23 November, pp. 13–16. | 7 |
| _____, 1966. <i>Communications</i> . Revised edition. Harmondsworth: Penguin. | 8 |
| _____, 1965. <i>The Long Revolution</i> . Harmondsworth: Penguin. First published 1961. | 9 |
| _____, 1962. <i>Communications</i> (Britain in the Sixties). Harmondsworth: Penguin. | 10 |
| Williams, R., 1961. <i>Culture and Society: 1780–1950</i> . Harmondsworth: Penguin. First published 1958. | 11 |
| | 12 |
| | 13 |
| | 14 |
| | 15 |
| | 16 |
| | 17 |
| | 18 |
| | 19 |
| | 20 |
| | 21 |
| | 22 |
| | 23 |
| | 24 |
| | 25 |
| | 26 |
| | 27 |
| | 28 |
| | 29 |
| | 30 |
| | 31 |
| | 32 |
| | 33 |
| | 34 |
| | 35 |
| | 36 |
| | 37 |
| | 38 |
| | 39 |
| | 40 |
| | 41 |
| | 42 |
| | 43 |
| | 44 |
| | 45 |
| | 46 |

16 Afterword

Sport, Public Service Media and a “Red Button” Future

David Rowe and Jay Scherer

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34

In covering a range of national contexts in Africa, Asia, Australia, Europe, and North and South America, this book has demonstrated that, while there are divergent histories and trajectories regarding the mediation of sport, there are also important common concerns that transcend such differences. In short, these commonalities revolve around sport’s place within national cultures and the processes of determining the respective roles of the state and the market in mediating sport for the citizenry. In several countries we have seen that the history of sport television has been characterized by a pioneering monopoly role of non-commercial free-to-air public service broadcasters being replaced, in the first instance, by a mixed economy involving commercial free-to-air broadcasters. A significant exception to this pattern is the US, where commercial free-to-air network television was formative in sport provision in the absence of major publicly funded broadcasters. In all countries, though, sport has subsequently become a crucial offering of subscription television platforms now primarily owned by deep-pocketed, vertically-integrated media/telecommunications conglomerates that have used their vast economic resources to squeeze free-to-air television out of much premium sport. In order to prevent a subscription sport television monopoly that would require all citizens to pay to watch sports events of national significance, and with the inevitable consequence that many would be excluded on material grounds, the state has intervened in many nations by instituting ‘anti-siphoning’ regimes of varying strength, or by regulating the growth of subscription platforms in order to guarantee some free-to-air sport in the interests of cultural citizenship and media market balance. However, the hegemony of broadcasting models in sport has since been challenged by technological developments, especially by online-and-telecommunication based services that have ushered in many non-broadcast delivery modes for media sport (Hutchins and Rowe 2012).

In this transition to ‘sport beyond television’—by which it is meant that broadcast television is changing and being supplemented by, and combined with, other media technologies and uses rather than rendered obsolete—the concept of public service media comes into sharp focus. Mediated sport

forms and texts are unquestionably proliferating, but so are the economic barriers to receiving them, including the costs of new devices, service plans, data allowances, and subscriptions. The ‘digital divide’ (Norris 2001; Servon and Pinkett 2004) that has opened up both within and between countries is a threat to socio-cultural equality, not only in the sense of reception of major mediated sport events, but also regarding the capacity of citizen-fans to contribute to discourses and to participate in debates that have arisen under the emergent regime of networked public and commercial media. Here the sport fan may be able to adopt an active ‘executive’ role rather than merely that of recipient of media sport industry products (Rowe 2011). It can be legitimately expected that public service media, with their traditional commitment to inform and educate as well as to entertain, can take a prominent role in advancing the development of media sport culture rather than merely defending some traditional aspects of it. The capacity for innovation that was once the signature of public service broadcasters that could be unafraid of commercial risk in sport and other fields can be renewed, although precisely what constitutes ‘public service’ and the distinctiveness of public service media organizations can be difficult to determine (Bolin 2004). In the current dynamic environment, with legacy, new and social media competing and combining in the search for new audience relations and user applications, it is instructive to consider the sport-related activities of one of the oldest public broadcasters currently heralded as signposting the future media landscape.

Garry Whannel (1992) has documented, though not uncritically, the pivotal role of the public license-funded BBC in both the development of sport television and in coupling it to a powerful version of British national identity. While the BBC has remained a force in sport television, its monopoly power was broken in 1955 by the advertising-funded free-to-air broadcaster ITV and, more significantly (and noted elsewhere in this book), in 1992 by the subscription broadcaster BSkyB, especially by its capture of the live broadcasting of the UK’s best league-based association football. The BBC’s role as sole or joint broadcaster of major sport events such as the FIFA World Cup, Wimbledon, and the Olympics is in part an outcome of tradition and of current listed events regulations that mandate free-to-air (though not BBC) coverage. But, it was the BBC’s 2012 London Olympics coverage that marked it out for some, according to one newspaper, as “the digital equivalent of the 1953 Coronation, a watershed moment when TV viewing took off for the first time in Britain” (Spanier 2012).

Research by Starcom MediaVest Group’s Emerging Spaces surveying British people’s media behavior during the Games found that:

The BBC’s broad coverage of the Games has clearly introduced new media technologies and behaviours to new audiences. The huge volume of coverage posed a new challenge for many consumers—how to navigate dozens of channels and thousands of hours of TV footage to find

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46

1 the events they wanted to watch. For many, TV's red button provided
2 the solution and—even though it has been around for over a decade—
3 gave 6.6 million viewers their first real reason to experiment with it. (S.
4 Thompson 2012)

5
6 The Report found that 41 million people watched televised Olympic events
7 (including 38.8 million live), and that 21.9 million viewers accessed some of
8 the 2,500 hours of live coverage from twenty-four dedicated video channels
9 using interactive television and the internet. Media convergence, which has
10 been much proclaimed but often not evident in actual audience practice,
11 came to the fore at the London 2012 Olympics, with 8.8 million people
12 in the UK watching on-demand footage across television, computer and
13 mobile platforms, and 7.2 million using a mobile phone or tablet device
14 to follow the Games. Desktop and laptop computers, tablets, and mobile
15 phones were used not only to read about the Games, but also to watch them
16 live or on-demand, while:

17
18 We also saw other new behaviours emerging—such as the crossover
19 between TV and social media. Our research showed that 2.7m were
20 experiencing this for the first time during the Olympics, reading or
21 posting about the Games on social media sites at the same time as
22 watching them on television. (S. Thompson 2012)

23
24 While not all this Games-related activity was stimulated by the BBC, it
25 took a leading role through what its (then) Director General Mark Thomp-
26 son (2012) described as, “the biggest broadcasting event in our 90 year
27 history” that “set a new benchmark for audiences about how we cover big
28 events in the future” as “the first truly digital Olympics” which delivered
29 to its audiences “more choice and more control than they have ever expe-
30 rienced before.” The BBC’s Olympic provision also included a dedicated
31 ‘app’ (attracting 1.9 million downloads), while in the first week of the Lon-
32 don Games BBC Sport Online had a total of 34.7 million browsers (M.
33 Thompson 2012). This so-called ‘red button Olympics’ allowed, for the
34 first time, live and on-demand coverage of every contest of a multi-sport
35 event with simultaneous action in high definition and, in some cases, in 3D,
36 while extensive analogue, digital, and web radio coverage provided even
37 more Olympic information, commentary and live ‘actuality.’ Of course,
38 British television license payers were, appropriately given the impost, the
39 principal beneficiaries of the BBC’s Games coverage. The payment required
40 is not exorbitant—£145.50 (US\$233) per year for a color and £49 (US\$78)
41 for a black-and-white television (although the fee also covers radio, online
42 and ‘other costs’), is free for those aged seventy-five years or over, and there
43 is a 50 percent reduction for those who are blind or severely sight-impaired.
44 In contrast, a Sky TV Entertainment and Sky Sports bundled package (the
45 former must be purchased in order to be able to buy the latter) alone cost
46

| | |
|---|----|
| £510 (US\$828) per year in 2012. Yet, much of the BBC's media content was available to other citizens of the world, either legitimately or via online tools like VPN and DNS that circumvent the BBC's attempts at 'geo-blocking.' | 1 |
| Thus, while national public service broadcasters have a primary responsibility to their 'home' publics, they can be important media resources (as well as 'soft power' operatives) contributing to broader cultural citizenship across a transnational civil society in which sport and its mega media events can be conspicuous features. | 2 |
| | 3 |
| | 4 |
| | 5 |
| | 6 |
| | 7 |
| | 8 |
| | 9 |
| It is important, though, not to exaggerate the quality of the BBC's London 2012 Olympics coverage or to underestimate its particularity. There were, unsurprisingly, some technical failings, such as occurred during the much-anticipated men's road cycling event, when system overload meant that insufficient live race information and images were provided to viewers and commentators (footage and data that were contracted to be supplied to the BBC by the organizing committee's Olympic Broadcasting Service—BBC 2012). There were also excessive displays of pro-Team GB commentary and over-concentration on British athletes that, it was reported (though denied), led Director General Mark Thompson to complain to the BBC News Director, Helen Boaden, who issued a staff memo that he was "increasingly unhappy that we are focusing far too much on Team GB's performance to the exclusion of all else" (Halliday 2012). That the 2012 Olympics were held in London no doubt led the BBC to devote unprecedented resources to them (estimated at over £40m [US\$64m], including broadcast rights). The BBC is also atypical in global terms regarding its overall wealth (although reduced by its aforementioned license settlement, which will produce a 16 percent budget cut over a six-year period to 2016) without resort to advertising in its main television offerings. Its strength with regard to commercial media companies (much resented, as noted in the Introduction to the book, by the Murdoch media organization, among other commercial media enterprises) is also unusual among contemporary public service media corporations. It is also notable that, while the BBC has secured television, digital and radio rights to the Olympics until 2020, the European Broadcasting Union (EBU) of public service broadcasters (of which the BBC is a member), which had carried the Olympics since 1956 via a collective agreement, could not persuade the International Olympic Committee to allocate the 2014–16 Games media rights to it (European Broadcasting Union 2008). The success of one leading public service sport media organization, then, is not necessarily replicated in other nations, and it is uncertain whether the EBU will be able to repeat its 2012 initiative of using its Eurovision Sports website to provide free and legal television access to coverage of the Olympics by forty European broadcasters (including the BBC) for twelve sports a day without commentary (O'Carroll 2012). | 10 |
| | 11 |
| | 12 |
| | 13 |
| | 14 |
| | 15 |
| | 16 |
| | 17 |
| | 18 |
| | 19 |
| | 20 |
| | 21 |
| | 22 |
| | 23 |
| | 24 |
| | 25 |
| | 26 |
| | 27 |
| | 28 |
| | 29 |
| | 30 |
| | 31 |
| | 32 |
| | 33 |
| | 34 |
| | 35 |
| | 36 |
| | 37 |
| | 38 |
| | 39 |
| | 40 |
| | 41 |
| | 42 |
| Nonetheless, the case of the BBC's 2012 Olympics coverage is cited as a demonstration that public service media in the 21 st century can combine extraordinary innovation without sacrificing rights of cultural citizenship | 43 |
| | 44 |
| | 45 |
| | 46 |

in the sphere of sport (and, by extension, in other domains of public culture). The international case studies in this book have presented a complex political-economic picture in which commercial interests, technological (especially digital) advancements, supra/trans/national governmental agendas, identity projections/formations, physical displays, and popular cultural pleasures have come together under the rubric of 'the public.' There can be no easy settlement of these questions pertaining to the citizen and the consumer, the state and civil society, participant and spectator, and media and audiences. But they must be posed, repeatedly and forcefully, if the sport-media-nation nexus is to retain its place as a compelling, if flawed component of common culture.

REFERENCES

- BBC, 2012. BBC Defends Olympics Cycling Coverage [online]. *BBC*. July 29. Available from: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-19038519> [Accessed 9 September 2012].
- Bolin, G., 2004. The Value of Being Public Service: The Shifting of Power Relations in Swedish Television Production. *Media, Culture & Society*, 26(2), pp. 277–87.
- European Broadcasting Union, 2008. EBU Regrets IOC Decision on Tights for Olympic Games 2014 and 2016 [online]. December 2. Available from: http://www.ebu.ch/en/union/news/2008/tcm_6-63901.php [Accessed 22 August 2012].
- Halliday, J., 2012. Olympics 2012: BBC Denies Thompson Criticised News Coverage of Team GB [online]. *The Guardian*. August 10. Available from: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/media/2012/aug/10/olympics-2012-bbc-mark-thompson> [Accessed 9 September 2012].
- Hutchins, B., and Rowe, D., 2012. *Sport Beyond Television: The Internet, Digital Media and the Rise of Networked Media Sport*. New York: Routledge.
- Norris, P., 2001. *Digital Divide: Civic Engagement, Information Poverty, and the Internet Worldwide*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- O'Carroll, L., 2012. Free Olympic Video Feeds from 40 European Broadcasters Draw Millions [online]. *The Guardian*. August 1. Available from: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/media/2012/aug/01/free-olympic-video-feeds-europe> [Accessed 9 September 2012].
- Rowe, D., 2011. *Global Media Sport: Flows, Forms and Futures*. London: Bloomsbury Academic.
- Servon, L.J., and Pinkett, R.D., 2004. Narrowing the Digital Divide: The Potential and Limits of the US Community and Technology Movement. In: M. Castells, ed., *The Network Society: A Cross-Cultural Perspective*. Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar, pp. 319–338.
- Spanier, G., 2012. Red Button Olympics—The Event that Got Us All Switching on in our Millions [online]. *Evening Standard*. August 13. Available from: <http://www.standard.co.uk/olympics/olympic-news/red-button-olympics—the-event-that-got-us-all-switching-on-in-our-millions-8038349.html> [Accessed 9 September 2012].
- Thompson, M., 2012. A Thank-you to Our Staff and Audiences [online]. *About the BBC Blog*. August 12. Available from: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/blogs/aboutthebbc/2012/08/as-a-once-in-a-lifetime-broadc.shtml> [Accessed 9 September 2012].

Afterword 305

| | |
|--|---|
| Thompson, S., 2012. London Olympics Ushers in New TV Behaviours [online]. <i>Mediaweek Blog</i> . August 24. Available from: http://mediablogged.mediaweek.co.uk/2012/08/24/london-olympics-ushers-in-new-tv-behaviours/ [Accessed 9 September 2012]. | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 |
| Whannel, G., 1992. <i>Fields in Vision: Television Sport and Cultural Transformation</i> . London: Routledge. | 4 |

Contributors

Pablo Alabarces received his Ph.D. from the University of Brighton, UK.

He is a Researcher of the National Council for Scientific Research (CONICET) at the Institute Gino Germani and Senior Professor of Popular Cultures in the Faculty of Social Sciences of the University of Buenos Aires, Argentina. Pablo is recognized as one of the founders of the sociology of sport in Latin America and for his wider research and writing on popular culture.

Mahfoud Amara is Lecturer in sport policy and management at the School of Sport, Exercise and Health Sciences, Loughborough University, UK. His principal research area is comparative sports policy, and he has a specific interest in sport in Arab and Muslim contexts (society, history, culture, religion, economy, political, and philosophical thought), having published material on the politics of the Pan-Arab Games, sport in colonial and post-colonial Algeria, sport and media in the Arab world, sport and modernization in the Gulf region, sport development and development through sport in the Arab World. His other research interests are in sport, multiculturalism, and intercultural dialogue.

Robert V. Bellamy is Professor in the Department of Journalism and Multimedia Arts at Duquesne University in Pittsburgh, USA. His work on sports and media institutions and other media industry has appeared in many journals and edited volumes. His books include *Centerfield Shot: A History of Baseball on Television* (with James Walker, University of Nebraska Press, 2008) and *Television and the Remote Control: Grazing on a Vast Wasteland* (with James Walker, Guildford Press, 1996). Robert is presently working on a book about the impact of the internet and digitalization on MLB.

Raymond Boyle is Professor of Communications at the Centre for Cultural Policy Research at the University of Glasgow, Scotland, UK. He has published widely on media and sport and written a number of books in this area, including a revised version of *Power Play: Sport, the Media and*

1 *Popular Culture* (University of Edinburgh Press, 2009) with Richard
2 Haynes. Raymond is on the editorial board of *Media, Culture & Society*,
3 and his most recent book is *The Television Entrepreneurs* (with Lisa
4 Kelly) (Ashgate, 2012).

5
6 **Carolina Duek** received her Ph.D. from the University of Buenos Aires,
7 Argentina. She is a Researcher of the CONICET at the Institute Gino
8 Germani, and Assistant Professor of Theories of Communication and
9 Mass Culture at the Faculty of Social Sciences of the University of Bue-
10 nos Aires, where she works on television and play as cultural practices.

11
12 **Callum Gilmour** is a Lecturer in Communications at Monash University, Sun-
13 way Campus, Malaysia. His research interests include media sport, global
14 media conglomerates, and international television flows. His publications
15 include articles in academic journals including *American Behavioral Sci-
16 entist*, *International Journal of the History of Sport*, *Soccer & Society*,
17 *Continuum* and *International Journal of Sport Communication*.

18
19 **Jean Harvey** is the Director of Research Centre for Sport in Canadian
20 Society, School of Human Kinetics, University of Ottawa, Canada. His
21 research focuses on sport policy and sport in the context of globaliza-
22 tion, especially sport and global social movements.

23
24 **John Horne** is Professor of Sport and Sociology and Director of the Inter-
25 national Research Institute for Sport Studies (IRISS) with the School
26 of Sport, Tourism and The Outdoors at the University of Central Lan-
27 cashire in Preston, U.K.

28
29 **John Hughson** is Professor of Sport and Cultural Studies at the University
30 of Central Lancashire, UK and, as Director of the International Foot-
31 ball Institute, works in research partnership with the National Football
32 Museum of England. He has written widely on the cultural, social, and
33 historical aspects of sport. His books include *The Making of Sporting
34 Cultures* (Routledge, 2009) and *The Uses of Sport* (with David Inglis
35 and Marcus Free) (Routledge, 2005). John's current research spans the
36 area of sport and visual culture.

37
38 **Steve Jackson** is a Professor at the University of Otago, New Zealand and
39 past-President of the International Sociology of Sport Association. In
40 addition to his post at Otago, Steve has served as a Visiting Professor
41 at Charles University (Prague, Czech Republic), the University of Jyvas-
42 kyla (Finland), the University of British Columbia (Canada) and the
43 National Taiwan Normal University. He has served as a grant reviewer
44 for the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada
45 and WADA (World Anti-Doping Association), and is currently on the
46

| | |
|--|--|
| following editorial boards: <i>International Review for the Sociology of Sport</i> , <i>Qualitative Research in Sport & Exercise</i> , <i>International Journal of Sport Marketing and Management</i> , and <i>Revista (Journal of the Latin American Association for the Sociocultural Study of Sport)</i> , and the <i>Asia Pacific Journal of Sport and Social Science</i> . Steve's research interests include globalization, national identity, and the media. | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 |
| Isamu Kuroda is Vice-President (General Affairs and Public Relations) and Professor of Sociology at Kansai University in Osaka, Japan. | 8 9 10 |
| Katrien Lefever joined the Communications Law Department of the Interdisciplinary Centre of Law and ICT (ICRI) at the KU Leuven, Belgium in October 2006. Her research focuses on the regulatory consequences of liberalization and convergence of the telecommunications and broadcasting sectors, and she has contributed to policy making and the drafting of Belgian and Flemish legislation. Currently, she is working as an affiliated researcher at ICRI and as a lawyer at VMMA, the parent company of the first Flemish commercial television station, vtm. | 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 |
| Toby Miller is Professor of Cultural Industries at the City University of London, UK. His adventures can be followed at tobymiller.org . | 20 21 22 |
| Muhammed Musa is a Senior Lecturer at the School of Social and Political Sciences at the University of Canterbury in Christchurch, New Zealand. His research interests include: news flow, media and globalization, media and health issues, political economy of the media, media and development, and new communication technologies and social change | 23 24 25 26 27 28 |
| Fabien Ohl is Professor at the University of Lausanne, Switzerland and Dean of its Faculty of Social and Political Sciences. He has published a range of papers and books on the sociology and marketing of sport, including (with Margaret Groeneveld and Barrie Houlihan) <i>Social Capital and Sport Governance in Europe</i> (Routledge, 2010) and <i>L'Épreuve du Dopage</i> (Puf, 2008) (with Christophe Brissonneau and Olivier Aubel). | 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 |
| David Rowe is Professor of Cultural Research, Institute for Culture and Society, University of Western Sydney, Australia, where he was previously Director of the Centre for Cultural Research (2006–09). His previous appointment was Professor of Media and Cultural Studies and Director of the Cultural Institutions and Practices Research Centre at The University of Newcastle (Australia). David's principal research interests are in contemporary media and popular culture, including tabloidization, practices of journalism, media political economy, cultural policy, academic public communication, urban culture and leisure, and, especially, media sport. His latest books are <i>Global Media Sport: Flows</i> , | 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 |

1 Forms and Futures (Bloomsbury Academic, 2011) and Sport Beyond
2 Television: The Internet, Digital Media and the Rise of Networked
3 Media Sport (authored with Brett Hutchins, Routledge, 2012).

4
5 **Michael Sam** is a Senior Lecturer with the School of Physical Education at
6 the University of Otago, New Zealand. His research encompasses areas
7 of policy, politics, and governance as they relate to the public adminis-
8 tration of sport.

9
10 **Jay Scherer** is an Associate Professor in the Faculty of Physical Educa-
11 tion and Recreation at the University of Alberta, Canada. His pri-
12 mary research interests include: cultural studies of sport and leisure;
13 globalization, sport, and public policy; and, qualitative research meth-
14 odologies. Jay's research has been published in a number of scholarly
15 journals, including: *Sociology, Media, Culture & Society*; *Sociology of*
16 *Sport Journal*; *Policy Sciences*; *New Media & Society*; *Sport in Society*;
17 *Cultural Studies/Critical Methodologies*; *Journal of Sport and Social*
18 *Issues*; and, *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*. He is also
19 the author (with Steve Jackson) of *Globalization, Sport and Corporate*
20 *Nationalism: The New Cultural Economy of the New Zealand All*
21 *Blacks* (Peter Lang, 2010).

22
23 **Lucie Schoch** received her Ph.D. in Sport Sciences from the University of
24 Lausanne, Switzerland and the University of Strasbourg, France. Her
25 research focuses on professional values and practices in mediated sport,
26 most notably on the experiences and career paths of women in sports
27 journalism. She has published her research in several peer-reviewed jour-
28 nals, including the *Sociology of Sport Journal* and *Journalism Practice*.

29
30 **James R. Walker** is a Professor in the Department of Communication at
31 Saint Xavier University in Chicago, USA. His research has focused on
32 televised sports, the effectiveness of television program promotion, and
33 the impact of remote control devices on television viewing behaviors
34 and the television industry. His most recent book is *Centerfield Shot:*
35 *A History of Baseball on Television* (with Rob Bellamy, University of
36 Nebraska Press, 2008). James has co-authored three other books and
37 published more than thirty articles in national and regional journals,
38 including *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, *Journalism*
39 *Quarterly*, *Nine: A Journal of Baseball History and Culture*, and the
40 *Journal of Popular Culture*. He can be reached at walker@sxu.edu.

41
42 **Lawrence A. Wenner** is Von der Ahe Professor of Communication and Eth-
43 ics at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles, USA. He is editor of
44 the journals *International Review for the Sociology of Sport* and *Com-*
45 *munication and Sport*, and was formerly editor of the *Journal of Sport*

| | |
|---|----|
| and Social Issues. | 1 |
| His books on sport include <i>MediaSport</i> (Routledge, 1998), <i>Sport, Beer, and Gender</i> (with Steven J. Jackson) (Peter Lang, 2009) and <i>Fallen Sports Heroes, Media, and Celebrity Culture</i> (Peter Lang, 2013). Lawrence's current work critically engages with the moral contours of narrative constructions of gender, race, and ethnicity in promotional culture. | 2 |
| Donna Wong is Lecturer in Event Management with the Department of Events, Tourism, and Hospitality at Leeds Metropolitan University in Leeds, U.K. | 3 |
| | 4 |
| | 5 |
| | 6 |
| | 7 |
| | 8 |
| | 9 |
| | 10 |
| | 11 |
| | 12 |
| | 13 |
| | 14 |
| | 15 |
| | 16 |
| | 17 |
| | 18 |
| | 19 |
| | 20 |
| | 21 |
| | 22 |
| | 23 |
| | 24 |
| | 25 |
| | 26 |
| | 27 |
| | 28 |
| | 29 |
| | 30 |
| | 31 |
| | 32 |
| | 33 |
| | 34 |
| | 35 |
| | 36 |
| | 37 |
| | 38 |
| | 39 |
| | 40 |
| | 41 |
| | 42 |
| | 43 |
| | 44 |
| | 45 |
| | 46 |

Index

Note: Page numbers ending in “f” refer to figures. Page numbers ending in “t” refer to tables.

A

- Abu Dhabi Media Company (ADMC), 210, 213
Abu Dhabi Sport, 211–213, 218
Adair, Daryl, 166
Adams, John Truslow, 36
Adorno, Theodor, 36–37, 286
Advertising Age, 41
Africa: cultural citizenship in, 266–272; football viewership in, 263–282; national identity and, 264–267, 272–273, 281; ‘show houses’ in, 26, 264–265, 268–281; sport in, 26, 263–282; television in, 26, 263–282. *See also* Nigeria
Alabarces, Pablo, 21, 96, 307
alienation and sport, 97, 107n2, 137–138. *See also* sport
Aljazeera Sport Network, 24, 209, 211–218
Amara, Mahfoud, 24, 209, 307
‘American Dream,’ 36, 74, 77
Amiel, André, 136
anti-siphoning scheme, 23, 42, 166–185, 174f, 175f
antitrust exemptions, 21, 87–89
Aotearoa, 200
Appadurai, Arjun, 238
Arab world: broadcasting in, 24, 209–220; FIFA World Cup and, 24, 214–217; political-economic developments in, 209–219; sport in, 24, 209–219; television in, 24, 209–219
Araujo, Marcelo, 100, 104
Archetti, Eduardo, 294
Argentina: crown jewels of, 105–107; football in, 96–109; mediation

of sports in, 96–97; Peronism in, 98–100; politics in, 96–109; power relations in, 96–98; sport in, 96–109; television in, 96–109

- Arnold, Matthew, 38, 284–285
ART Sport, 212–213, 215–216
Asahi Shimbun, 244
Audiovisual Media Services (AVMS) Directive, 147–149, 151, 156
Australia: anti-siphoning list for, 23, 166–185, 174f, 175f; cultural events in, 166–187; history of sport in, 166; media technology in, 23; sport in, 23, 166–187, 174f, 175f; television in, 23, 166–187
Australian Broadcasting Commission (ABC), 166–167
Australian Cricket Board (ACB), 166–167
Australian Football League (AFL), 169, 180
Avila, Carlos, 100
Aznar, José María, 140

B

- baseball: in Japan, 243–245, 258–259; in United States, 20–21, 78–83. *See also* Major League Baseball
Bassett, John, 53
Bauman, Zygmunt, 76, 82, 84, 90
Belgian Competition Council (BCC), 145–148
Belgium: AVMS Directive and, 147–149, 151, 156; cultural identity in, 149; digital broadcasting in, 22–23, 145–165; ‘listed events’ in, 152–159;

- ‘major events’ in, 145–159; media landscape of, 22–23, 147–152; media technology in, 159; must-carry rules in, 155, 160n12; ‘red button’ and, 158; sporting events in, 145–165; state structure of, 146–147; television in, 146–149, 151–159; TWF Directive and, 147–149, 154
- Bélieau, Jean, 51
- Bellamy, Robert V., 20, 43, 74, 307
- Big Match, The*, 9
- Bilalian, Daniel, 135
- Bin Ibrahim Al Brahim, Waleed, 210
- biopower, 38–39
- Bioy Casares, Adolfo, 96
- Blade Runner*, 101
- Blair, Tony, 292
- Boaden, Helen, 303
- Board of Broadcast Governors (BBG), 52–55, 70n4
- Bompard, Alexandre, 135
- Borges, Jorge Luis, 96
- Bourdieu, Pierre, 38
- Boyle, Raymond, 14, 21–22, 110, 307–308
- Brecht, Bertolt, 36
- British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), 7–8, 114–123, 167, 210–212, 284, 293–294, 301–303
- Broadcast*, 119
- broadcasting: in Arab world, 24, 209–220; in Belgium, 145–165; competing broadcast systems, 6–10; development of, 1–12; digital broadcasting, 22–23, 145–165, 192–198; in Japan, 243–262; national networks, 6, 21–23, 40–43, 53, 59, 78–82; political economy of, 209–220; public service broadcasting, 1–6, 10–17; rights of, 135–137, 141, 145. *See also* television
- Broadcasting Act, 6, 14–15, 52, 56, 115, 146, 292
- Broadcasting Services Act, 168, 171, 177–178
- BSkyB, 8–14, 18–22, 111, 115, 119, 123, 181n2, 237, 292–293, 301
- ‘bundling’ packages, 13, 194–197, 230
- Burke, Edmund, 36
- Burns, Brendon, 198
- C
- cable companies, 11, 43, 49, 59–63, 68, 103
- cable networks, 8–15, 20–21, 40, 49, 78–91, 100–104. *See also* television
- cable services, 56–62, 88, 101
- Caldwell, Spencer, 53
- Campbell, Clarence, 50
- Canada: broadcasting in, 48–69; competition in, 52–59; cultural changes in, 63–69; cultural citizenship in, 48–69; cultural identity in, 64–65; new era in, 52–63; sport in, 48–69; television in, 48–69
- Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC), 4, 12, 20, 48–69, 70n4, 120
- Canadian Radio-Television Commission (CRTC), 56–58
- capitalism, 30–38, 75, 107, 222–223, 228, 269
- Cashman, Richard, 166
- ‘citizen rights,’ 3, 75, 247
- citizenship: consumer citizenality, 79t; cultural identity and, 74–76; definition of, 33–35; economic citizenship, 34–35; in Japan, 243–262; law and, 128, 138–142; neoliberalism and, 30–47; in New Zealand, 188–208; public service media and, 1–29; sport and, 1–29, 35–42; televised sport and, 48–69. *See also* cultural citizenship
- ‘civic culture,’ 78
- Clarín*, 102
- Clarín Group, 101–103
- Coleman, Jonathan, 197
- colonialism, 34, 263, 268
- ‘common culture’: defining, 36, 77; football and, 289–292; representation of, 1–3; sport and, 1, 15, 26–27, 289–293, 295, 304; television and, 1–3, 15, 26–27, 289–292
- communication, means of, 283–284
- Communications*, 284
- Communications Act, 115, 139
- Conroy, Stephen, 179
- consumer citizenality, 76–79, 79t, 90–92
- consumer culture, 25, 74–77, 137, 244

- consumer sovereignty, 15, 19, 32
 ‘consumer’s republic,’ 90, 92
Convergence Review, 23
 Copps, Sheila, 63
 cricket, 14, 40–42, 117–118, 166–172
 cross-marketing, 12–13, 59, 62
 cross-ownership, 13, 59
 crown jewels: of Argentina, 105–107; of sports, 110–126
 CTV (Canada), 7, 52–66, 69, 70n4, 71n9
 cultural citizenship: in Africa, 266–272; in Canada, 48–69; consumption and, 74–76; cultural form and, 228, 237–238; in France, 129–131, 137–141; in Japan, 243–262; in New Zealand, 188–208; rights of, 4, 14, 17–27, 55, 102–106, 140–142, 148, 189, 204, 222, 227, 234–235, 268, 303–304; sport and, 1–29, 300–303; sports fans and, 74–82, 86, 89–91; televised sport and, 48–69; threats to, 255–258; in United States, 74–76. *See also* citizenship
 cultural diversity, 128, 133–134, 138
 cultural economy, 238, 263, 278–281
 ‘cultural exceptionalism,’ 137–138
 cultural form: cultural citizenship and, 228, 237–238; of sport, 9, 17, 123, 131, 178, 283–292; television and, 9, 17, 123, 283–292
 cultural identity: in Belgium, 149; in Canada, 64–65; citizenship and, 74–76; in France, 128–142; in United States, 75, 78–79, 91
 cultural labor, 268–270, 277
 cultural responses, 20, 42–44
 ‘culturalization’ of society, 135, 137
 Cunningham, Stuart, 169
- D**
- Daily Record, The*, 114
 Davies, David, 114
 Dayan, Daniel, 170
 Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), 110–115, 117–118
 Dewey, John, 78
 Diefenbaker, John, 52
 digital broadcasting: in Belgium, 22–23, 145–165; era of, 13–24, 49, 154–157, 188–198, 218; in New Zealand, 23, 192–198. *See also* broadcasting
 digital decoders, 159, 160n11
 ‘digital divide,’ 301
 digital era: of broadcasting, 13–24, 49, 154–157, 188–198, 218; competition in, 15–17, 25, 188–191, 209, 211–212; of football, 88–91, 263; of MLB, 83–84; of NFL, 88–91
 digital media, 120, 145–146, 152, 158
 ‘disciplined body,’ 37–38
 Domecq, H. Bustos, 96
 ‘dominating body,’ 38
 Drake, Philip, 279
 Drogba, Didier, 276
 Duek, Carolina, 21, 96, 308
- E**
- Ebue, Emmanuel, 276
 Elias, Norbert, 37, 38
 Eliot, T. S., 290–291
 ‘embourgeoisement,’ 19, 40, 44
 English Premier League (EPL): contracts with, 10–14, 18; matches with, 25–26, 40; rights for, 120, 213, 226t, 227–231, 236; television and, 167, 268–281, 292–293, 296
 ESPN, 11, 20–21, 40, 62, 78, 82, 87–89
 Essien, Michael, 276
 European Court of Justice (ECJ), 120–122
 European Handball Championship, 135–137, 141
 events: in Australia, 166–187; in Belgium, 145–165; in France, 128–144, 132t; ‘listed events,’ 115–117, 152–159; ‘major events,’ 22, 131–135, 132t, 137–141; in United Kingdom, 110–127
 ‘Extra Innings,’ 21, 83–84, 92
- F**
- Falkland’s War, 294–295
 Federal Authority of Audiovisual Communication Services (AFSCA), 105
 Federal Communications Commission (FCC), 6, 64, 82, 87, 237
 Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA), 34, 40–41,

- 78, 112, 151–156, 214–217, 231–234
 ‘fee and common’ access, 79t, 88–91
 female athletes, 4, 15–16
 Ferenczi, Thomas, 138
 Fernández, Aníbal, 104
 ‘figuration,’ 37
 Fisher, Andrew, 291
 Flavell, Ururoa, 199
 Fong, Clarence, 228
 football: in Africa, 263–282; in Argentina, 96–109; common culture and, 289–292; in Japan, 245–247; visual experience of, 287–289. *See also* National Football League
 football viewership: in Africa, 263–282; on global scale, 283–297. *See also* football
 Foucault, Michel, 38
 France: broadcasting controversies in, 135–137; cultural citizenship in, 129–131, 137–141; cultural diversity in, 128, 133–134, 138; ‘cultural exceptionalism’ and, 137–138; cultural identity in, 128–142; ‘culturalization’ and, 135, 137; European Directive and, 129–131; globalization and, 134–135; Handball Championship and, 135–137, 141; ‘major events’ in, 22, 131–135, 132t, 137–141; media market in, 129, 133–134; national identity in, 131, 134, 137–140; sporting events in, 128–144, 132t; television in, 128–144
 Frêche, Georges, 139
 Freedman, Des, 17, 189
 Freedom of Communication Act, 139
Freeview, 192
 French Handball Federation, 135
 French Revolution, 36
 Frow, John, 43
Fútbol de Primera, 100–101
Fútbol Para Todos, 102–107
- G**
 Gallivan, Danny, 50
 game rules, 38, 218
 Garfinkel, Harold, 36
General Motors Hockey Broadcast, 50
 Gilmour, Callum, 24–25, 221, 308
 global economy, 238, 263, 278–281
- Globalization and Football*, 296
Globe and Mail, The, 60, 61
 golf, 41–42, 100
 Grey Cup match, 52–55
 Grondona, Julio, 103
 Gruneau, Richard, 9, 12
 Guattari, Félix, 33
 Guevara, Che, 97
 Guibal, Jean-Claude, 139
 Gullit, Ruud, 213
- H**
 Hall, Stuart, 67, 179–180, 285–286
 Handball Championship, 135–137, 141
 Harvey, David, 14
 Harvey, Jean, 20, 48, 308
 Haynes, Richard, 279
 Hewitt, Foster, 50
 Hill, Jeffrey, 290
 hockey, 4, 12, 20, 41, 48–69
Hockey Night in Canada (HNIC), 20, 48–55, 62–69, 70n1
 Hoggart, Richard, 37
 Holt, Richard, 287, 289, 290
 hooliganism, 19, 35, 39–40
 Horkheimer, Max, 286
 Horne, John, 25, 243, 244, 245, 251, 308
 Hughson, John, 26, 283, 308
 Human Rights Watch, 43
 Hunt, Jeremy, 118
- I**
 Industrial Revolution, 36, 38
 ‘infotainment’ industries, 12, 62, 188, 204
 Internet Protocol Television (IPTV), 18, 147, 177–179, 213, 218, 229, 235
 Internet-based technologies, 13, 17, 25–26, 32–33, 63, 83–84, 177, 229, 296
- J**
 J League, 245–247, 246f, 247t, 252–254, 258
 Jacka, Elizabeth, 169
 Jackson, Steven J., 23, 188, 308–309
 Japan: baseball in, 243–245, 258–259; cultural citizenship in, 243–262; football in, 245–247; media technology in, 249, 253–256; soccer in, 245–247; sport broadcasting in, 243–259; sports in,

- 25, 243–262, 246f, 247t, 248t; sumo wrestling in, 247–249, 258–259; television in, 25, 248t, 250–253
- Jolly, Rhonda, 172
- Jones, Alun Fred, 114
- Joyce, Steven, 197
- K**
- Kalou, Solomon, 276
- Kanu, Nwankwo, 267
- Katz, Elihu, 170
- Kerry, John, 83
- Keshi, Stephen, 272
- Key, John, 198
- Kidd, Bruce, 4, 74, 90
- King, Anthony, 11
- Kirchner, Cristina Fernández de, 102, 103, 106
- Kirchner, Nestor, 105
- Kuroda, Isamu, 25, 243, 309
- L**
- law: citizenship and, 128, 138–142; media law, 107, 115, 138–142, 145, 149; policy and, 115, 141–142, 145, 149; sporting events and, 128–130
- Le Bon, Gustave, 36
- Le Monde*, 138–139
- Le Pen, Jean-Marie, 139
- League of Fans, 42–43
- Leavis, F. R., 286
- Lecavalier, René, 50
- Lefever, Katrien, 22–23, 145, 309
- Leveson, Justice, 123
- Lieten, Mrs., 153, 156
- Lineker, Gary, 213
- ‘listed events’ in Belgium, 152–159; in United Kingdom, 115–117. *See also* events
- Listener, The*, 9, 283, 287, 288, 289
- live sport spectatorship, 2–7, 39, 158, 176–180, 193–196
- live sporting events, 6–7, 12–13, 22–24, 58, 148, 212–215
- Long Revolution, The*, 284, 286
- M**
- Maguire, Joseph, 37
- Mainichi Shimbun*, 244
- ‘major events’ in Belgium, 145–159; in France, 22, 131–135, 132t, 137–141. *See also* events
- Major League Baseball (MLB): athletes in, 245, 251–252; cable television and, 82–83; contract with, 21; coverage of, 20–21, 78–85; digital era of, 83–84; marketing, 83–92; radio and, 80–81; recruitment by, 245; television and, 81–83, 89–92; in United States, 20–21, 78–83; World Series, 78, 81–83
- Making of the English Working Class, The*, 290
- Mallard, Trevor, 198, 202
- Manera, Tony, 64
- Maori Television, 24, 190–192, 198–204
- Maradona, Diego, 294–295
- Márquez, Enrique Macaya, 100
- Martinez de Peron, Isabel, 99
- Marx, Karl, 39
- Match of the Day*, 9, 14, 292
- Mather, Jim, 199
- Matsui, Hideki, 251
- Matsuzaka, Daisuke, 251
- Mazrui, Ali, 38
- McLuhan, Marshall, 291
- ‘means of communication,’ 283–284
- media: cultural citizenship and, 1–29; definition of, 32–33; neoliberalism and, 30–47; public service media, 1–29, 300–305; sport and, 1–29, 35–42, 117–124; state participation in, 32–33
- Media Development Authority (MDA), 222, 234–237
- media law, 107, 115, 138–142, 145, 149. *See also* law
- media policy: law and, 115, 141–142, 145, 149; in New Zealand, 188–208; on Olympics, 31; politics of, 188–208; sport broadcasting and, 6, 129–133
- media sport, 117–124. *See also* sport
- media technology: in Australia, 23; in Belgium, 159; changes in, 300–305; globalization of, 170; in Japan, 249, 253–256
- Menem, Carlos, 100
- Messier, Francois, 63
- Michels, Robert, 36
- Mikel, John Obi, 267
- Mill, John Stuart, 36
- Miller, Toby, 19, 30, 309

- Ministry for Culture and Heritage (MCH), 192–194, 197
 Ministry of Economic Development (MED), 192–194, 197
 Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications (MPT), 253
 ‘mob mentality,’ 36
 Mohammed VI, King, 215
Monday Night Football, 40, 88
 Morales, Victor Hugo, 102
 Mosca, Gaetano, 36
 Mulroney, Brian, 60
 multi-channeling, 157, 173, 176–179, 295
 Murdoch, James, 18
 Murdoch, Rupert, 10–11, 18, 118, 167, 181, 250, 303
 Murdock, Graham, 202
 Murphy, Karen, 120–121
Murphy v. Football Association Premier League (FAPL), 120–122
 Musa, Muhammed, 26, 263, 309
 must-carry rules, 155, 160n12, 193
- N**
 Nader, Ralph, 42
 Nakata, Hidetoshi, 252, 254
 National Basketball Association (NBA), 9, 82
 National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), 43
 national events: in Australia, 166–187; in United Kingdom, 110–127. *See also* events
 National Football League (NFL), 83–84; cable television and, 87–88; coverage of, 20–21, 40, 53; digital era of, 88–89; early years of, 85–86; fan access to, 89–90; marketing, 9, 87–92; popularity of, 84–90; pre-television era of, 85–86; satellite services and, 83–84; television and, 85–92; in United States, 20–21, 78
 National Hockey League (NHL), 4, 12, 20, 48–50, 56–69
 national identity: in Africa, 264–267, 272–273, 281; elements of, 3, 91; football fans and, 264–266; in France, 131, 134, 137–140; in Singapore, 223–224; in United Kingdom, 110–114, 301
- national networks, 6–8, 21–23, 40–43, 53, 59, 78–82. *See also* television
 National Rugby League (NRL), 169, 180
 nationalism, 31–34, 42, 56, 110, 269
 neoliberalism, 30, 34–42, 52, 75, 90
 ‘New Medievalism,’ 32
 New Zealand: cultural citizenship in, 188–208; digital broadcasting in, 23–24, 189–198; governmental reform in, 189–192, 201–202; media policy in, 192–198; must-carry rules in, 193; regulation in, 189–190; Rugby World Cup in, 24, 190, 195, 198–203; sport in, 188–208; television in, 188–208
 NFL Network, 88–89
 Nigeria: football viewership in, 26, 263–282; ‘show houses’ in, 26, 264–265, 268–281; sport in, 26, 263–282; television in, 263–282. *See also* Africa
 Nigerian Football Association (NFA), 269–270
 Nigerian Television Authority (NTA), 264–268, 270, 273–276
 Nippon Hosō Kyōkai (NHK), 247–250, 252–257
 Nippon Professional Baseball (NPB), 244–246
 Nomo, Hideo, 251
Notes Towards the Definition of Culture, 290
- O**
 O’Connor, Alan, 289
 Ohl, Fabien, 22, 128, 309
 Okocha, J. J., 267
 Olympics: coverage of, 41, 55, 64, 69, 116, 191, 204, 301–304; human-rights issues and, 43; policy on, 31
- P**
 Packer, Kerry, 166–167
 Pareto, Vilfredo, 36
 Perón, Eva, 98
 phone hacking scandal, 18–19, 123, 181n2
 policy: definition of, 30–32; law and, 115, 141–142, 145, 149; media policy, 111–112, 188–208; sporting policy, 30–32

politics: in Argentina, 96–109; of football viewership, 263–282; of media policy, 188–208; of media sport, 117–124; sport and, 96–98, 117–124; of sport broadcasting, 209–220
Popular Arts, The, 285
 Porter, John, 180
 ‘premiumization’ strategies, 21, 79, 92
Prime, 191, 194, 200–201
 public service broadcasting, 1–6, 10–17
 public service media: cultural citizenship and, 1–29; sport and, 1–29, 300–305. *See also* media

R

Radio-Canada, 20, 48–69, 71n12
Raymond Williams on Television, 289
 ‘reality’ shows, 169, 205
 ‘red button,’ 158, 300, 302
 ‘reflecting body,’ 38
 Reith, John, 284
 religion, 34, 247
 Réseau des sports (RDS), 20, 49, 59–68, 71n12
 Richard, Maurice, 51
 Robertson, Hugh, 118
 Roche, Maurice, 8
 Rowe, David, 1, 16, 23, 26, 166, 300, 309–310
 Rozelle, Pete, 86
 rugby, 14, 23–24, 106–114, 171–172, 176–180, 190–203
 Rugby World Cup (RWC), 24, 190, 195, 198–203
 ‘rules of game,’ 38, 218
 Rutherford, Paul, 48

S

Said, Edward, 31
 Salmond, Alex, 113, 123
 Sam, Michael, 23, 188, 310
 satellite broadcasting, 59, 211–213, 236–237, 246–252, 256, 275–276
 satellite channels, 40, 83–84, 88, 133, 210, 216, 232, 280–281
 satellite services, 8–10, 14–15, 20, 26, 59, 91, 268. *See also* television
 Scherer, Jay, 1, 11, 20, 23, 26, 48, 188, 232, 300, 310
 Schiller, Herb, 31
 Schoch, Lucie, 22, 128, 310

Scrutiny, 288
 Selig, Bud, 84
 Sharples, Pita, 199
 Shearer, Alan, 213
 Shilton, Peter, 294
 ‘show houses,’ 26, 264–265, 268–281
 Singapore: content sharing in, 234–237; economic development in, 222–224; FIFA World Cup and, 231–234; mediascape in, 24–25, 224–227; national identity and, 223–224; population of, 222; sportscape in, 24–25, 224–227; subscription television market in, 227–230, 235–236; televised sport in, 24–25, 221–242, 226t
 Singtel, 224, 229–234
 Sky PerfecTV, 246, 250–254, 256
 Sky Sports, 111–112, 115–116, 302
 Sky TV, 14, 23, 189–204, 302
 Smythe, Conn, 50
 soccer: in Argentina, 96–109; cable television and, 100; ‘embourgeoisement’ of, 19; events in, 105–107; in Japan, 245–247; marketing, 104, 107; television and, 96–107
 ‘social game,’ 43–44
 socialism, 30–36
 Société Radio-Canada, 20, 48
 ‘sociological figuration,’ 37
Soirée du Hockey, 20, 48–52, 55, 62–67
 sovereignty: citizenship and, 217; consumer sovereignty, 15, 19, 32; cultural sovereignty, 266; legal sovereignty, 32, 170; national sovereignty, 34, 39; political sovereignty, 266
 specialty sport channels, 11, 49, 59, 62, 68
 Spicer, Keith, 60
 sport: in Africa, 26, 263–282; alienation and, 97, 107n2, 137–138; in Arab world, 24, 209–220; in Argentina, 96–109; in Australia, 23, 166–187, 174f, 175f; beyond television, 300–301; in Canada, 48–69; citizenship and, 35–42; common culture and, 1, 15, 26–27, 289–293, 295, 304; competing broadcast systems and, 6–10; cultural citizenship and, 1–29; cultural form of, 9,

- 17, 123, 131, 178, 283–292; definition of, 33; in France, 128–144, 132t; free markets and, 168–171; future of, 300–305; in Japan, 25, 243–262, 247t, 248t; live sport spectatorship, 2–7, 39, 158, 176–180, 193–196; live sporting events, 6–7, 12–13, 22–24, 58, 148, 212–215; media and, 1–29, 35–42, 117–124; neoliberalism and, 30–47; in New Zealand, 188–208; origins of, 33; patrimonialization of, 105–107; politics and, 96–98; public service broadcasting and, 1–6, 10–17; public service media and, 1–29, 300–305; specialty sport channels, 11, 49, 59, 62, 68; televised sport, 48–69, 221–242; television and, 81–92, 96–107, 110–111, 168–181, 283–297, 300–305; TV ratings in Japan, 248t; in United Kingdom, 21–22, 110–127; in United States, 20–21, 74–95; women's sport, 4, 15–16
- Sport and the British*, 287
- sport broadcasting: in Arab world, 24, 209–220; in Japan, 243–259; media policy and, 6, 129–133; rights of, 135–137, 141, 145
- sport channels: commercialization of, 209, 212–214; digital sport channels, 16, 65, 213; specialty sport channels, 11, 59–62, 68, 212, 216–218
- sport identity: reframing, 76–79, 91; in United Kingdom, 110–114
- Sport in Australian History*, 166
- Sport on Television Review*, 23, 168, 171–173, 173t, 178
- 'sporting body,' 37–38
- sporting events: in Australia, 166–187; in Belgium, 145–165; in France, 128–144, 132t; 'listed events,' 115–117, 152–159; 'major events,' 131–135, 132t, 137–141. *See also* events
- sporting policy, 30–32. *See also* policy
- Sports Broadcasting Act (SBA), 6, 87
- sports fans, 74–95. *See also* sport
- Sports Manifesto*, 42
- sports media companies, 21, 213
- sports media ecology, 111–112, 122
- sports media marketing, 111–112, 254–259
- sports media regulation, 177
- sports media rights, 112, 177
- sports rights: bundling, 13; costs of, 12–14, 20–25, 221–222, 226; debates about, 111–112, 116; importance of, 11–13; loss of, 119; mobile strategies, 177; politics of, 111–112; sale of, 177; strategies on, 119–123, 148, 177, 196, 229–230, 236
- sports stakeholders, 12, 43–44, 154, 173, 180, 189–194, 203, 293–294
- sports TV ratings, 248t
- Sportsnet, 49, 62–63, 68, 71n10
- stadiums, selling out, 74–92
- stakeholders, 12, 43–44, 154, 173, 180, 189–194, 203, 293–294
- Stanley Cup, 52, 61
- Starhub, 224, 227–235
- Stursberg, Richard, 66
- Suarez, Valentín, 96–98
- Suarez syndrome, 96–98
- subscription television market, 227–230, 235–236. *See also* television
- sumo wrestling, 247–249, 258–259
- 'Sunday Ticket,' 21, 88–89, 92
- Super Bowl, 78
- Suzuki, Ichiro, 251
- T**
- TBS, 78, 82
- Teh, Rick, 233
- Telecommunications Act, 197
- Telecommunications Commission, 197
- Telegram, 53
- Télémondiale, 56, 70n7
- televised sport: in Canada, 48–69; cultural citizenship and, 48–69; matrix for, 79t; sell outs and, 74–75; in Singapore, 24–25, 221–242, 226t; in United States, 74–95, 79t. *See also* broadcasting; television
- television: in Africa, 263–282; anti-trust exemptions, 21, 87–89; in Arab world, 24, 209–219; in Argentina, 96–109; in Australia, 23, 166–187; in Belgium, 146–149, 151–159; 'bundling' packages, 13, 194–197, 230; in

- Canada, 48–69; common culture and, 1–3, 15, 26–27, 289–292; cultural form and, 9, 17, 123, 283–292; development of, 6–12; ‘fee and common’ access, 79t, 88–91; in France, 128–144; ‘infotainment’ industries, 12, 62, 188, 204; inquiry on, 173t; in Japan, 25, 250–253; media technology and, 23, 159, 170, 249, 253–256, 300–305; in New Zealand, 188–208; rights deals for, 225–228, 226t; specialty sport channels, 11, 49, 59, 62, 68; sport and, 81–92, 96–107, 110–111, 168–181, 283–297, 300–305; sports ratings on, 248t; subscription television market, 227–230, 235–236; in United Kingdom, 110–127; in United States, 74–95, 79t; visual experience of, 287–289. *See also* broadcasting; televised sport
Television Act, 284
Television: Technology and Cultural Form, 286–289, 291
 Television Without Frontiers (TWF) Directive, 147–149, 154
Tellement Sport, 66
 tennis, 119, 172, 291–293
 Thatcher, Margaret, 10, 30, 34, 35, 167
 The Sports Network (TSN), 49, 59–64, 68
 Thompson, E. P., 37, 290
 Thompson, Mark, 302, 303
 Torneos y Competencias (TyC), 21, 100–103, 106
 Ture, Kolo, 276
 Türk, Alex, 137
 Turner, Ted, 82, 90
 TVNZ, 190–205
- U**
 Union of European Football Associations (UEFA), 112, 121, 140, 157, 213–214, 230, 253–254, 268, 293–294
 United Kingdom: ‘listed events’ in, 115–117; media sport in, 117–124; national identity and, 110–114, 301; sport identity and, 110–114; sporting events in, 21–22, 110–127; television in, 110–127
- United States: cultural citizenship in, 74–76; cultural identity in, 75, 78–79, 91; sport in, 20–21, 74–95; sports fans in, 74–95; televised sports in, 20–21, 74–95, 79t
- V**
 Valentín Suárez syndrome, 96–98
 Vamplew, Wray, 166
 Venables, Terry, 213
 Viale, Mauro, 100
 Videla, Jorge Rafael, 99
- W**
 Walker, James R., 20, 43, 74, 310
 Walvin, James, 290
 Weber, Max, 35, 38
 Wells, H. G., 31
 Wenner, Lawrence A., 20, 43, 74, 310–311
 Whannel, Garry, 301
 Whannel, Paddy, 285–286
 Whitson, David, 9, 11, 12, 232
Wide World of Sports, 55
 Williams, Raymond, 2, 5–7, 9–10, 15, 19, 26, 77, 283–297
 women’s sport, 4, 15–16
 Wong, Carey, 235
 Wong, Donna, 25, 243, 311
 World Cup: Arab world and, 24, 214–217; Argentina and, 97–99, 102, 106–110; France and, 138–141; Rugby World Cup, 24, 190, 195, 198–203; Singapore and, 231–234; United States and, 78, 91
 World Series, 78, 81–83
 World Series Cricket (WSC), 166–167
 World War II, 2–3, 263
- Y**
 Yanquelevich, Samuel, 98
 Yekini, Rashidi, 272
Yomiuri Daily News, 244

