

Introduction

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Sport, crime and deviance

Sport, it hardly now seems necessary to say, is an important global social phenomenon for at least three reasons. First, it constitutes a huge industry, recently estimated to reach a turnover of \$73.5 billion by the year 2019, 12 months from the time of writing (Heitner, 2015). Second, for a growing number of people across the world, sport represents a key part of their identity, whether they see themselves as participants (joggers, cyclists, golfers, etc.) or as fans (of Manchester United, of the New York Mets, of Roger Federer, etc.) or, perhaps, sport represents a key part of their identity in terms of their body image, maybe, or hardness/toughness or related behaviours, such as gambling.

Third, and most significantly for this volume, sport carries with it our taken-for-granted notions of fair play. It is an inherently rule-bound activity which risks losing all credibility if, for example, a competitor is known to have taken some kind of proscribed performance enhancement. One is reminded here of the American academic John Hoberman's (1998) famous denunciation of the Tour de France of 1998 as a "pharmacy on wheels". Likewise, it is intrinsic to sport as a social activity that – unlike, say, drama – the outcome should not be predetermined: any notion of contrivance and sport loses its defining characteristic. Yet, largely due both to the globalisation and the televisualisation of sport, the possibilities and indeed attraction of such contrivance has escalated as the consumption of sport extends into the darkly seductive domains of sex, corruption, scandal and celebrity deviance.

Sport, then, though still an important voluntary and pleasurable activity for many (runners, golfers, anglers, cyclists, etc.) is now hugely commercialised in the widest possible sense. Even the Olympics, historic bastion of the amateur sporting ethos, have long since succumbed to market forces. Few cities can today afford to stage the Olympic Games and none can do so without the substantial patronage of a range of corporate partners: indeed Helen Lenskyj (2000), one of the contributors to this special issue, coined the term "Olympic industry" in her book on the Sydney Summer Games of 2000. We can say with reasonable certainty that the greater the possibilities for profit from a social activity, the greater the likelihood of, and scope for, breaches of criminal law and of the regulations governing individual sports as well as public interest in those transgressions.

It was to be expected then that literature on the relationship between sport, crime and deviance would begin to grow. A substantial body of work on sport and deviance has dwelt on the possibilities of using sport for the purposes of crime prevention. The principle embodied in the old tradition of getting young ghetto males out of the street and into the boxing ring still has strong echoes in the contemporary worlds of academic enquiry and policy-making. Recent examples include the work of Cameron and MacDougall (2000) as part of a collaborative project between the Australian Sports Commission and the Australian Institute of Criminology and Hartmann and Brooks (2006) in the USA.

At the level of policy, much political/social work has been done under the rubric of "social inclusion", a concept closely correlated to the neoliberal ethos, wherein governments undertake to promote "equal opportunities" for socially marginalised groups in an increasingly market-based society. In 2000 in the UK, this thinking saw the institution by the first Labour Administration of Tony Blair of Sport Action Zones (Wheatley, 2007) and subsequently a movement of charities and social enterprises under the banner of sport for development or sport for social change. Critiques of the basis for some of these responses have been offered by, among others, Crabbe (2007) and Smith and Waddington (2004).

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Another dimension to this debate has been the extensive work on disruptive and/or exclusionary behaviour among sport practitioners or spectators, the clearest examples being the extensive research studies of racism in sport[1] and of hooliganism among football supporters[2].

In an influential work Blackshaw and Crabbe (2004) reasserted the importance of studying sport and deviance – at a time when, as they pointed out, sociologists, citing the increased pluralism in modern societies, were beginning to abandon the concept of deviance altogether. In particular, Blackshaw and Crabbe drew attention to the importance of “consumptive deviance”, whereby, as a society, we normalise and even celebrate violent and/or exploitative and/or antisocial behaviour when we consume it via the twin lenses of media and celebrity: they use the examples of newspaper reports of the “roasting” (sex with multiple partners) by professional footballers of young women, whose consent is open to question and of the trial in 2001 of several Leeds United players for a brutal assault on a young Asian student[3]. Rather than centring “deviant” behaviour or “deviants” *per se*, they help to focus our lens on the everyday consumption of performative constructions of deviance, thus implicating a far wider constituency in efforts to manage and control.

The following collection of essays has been put together with a specific purpose, which is to introduce readers of a journal perhaps not *au fait* with academic work on, and current debates about, sport to current work on crime and deviance in the sporting world. The articles should be read in that light. They cover issues that seemed to be among the most pressing; they are not, generally speaking, intended to be pristinely original contributions to knowledge. Although written by social scientists and drawing on the sociological imagination, the essays offer a largely critical legalistic perspective on the issues addressed. They present sport as a social milieu in which “bad” things happen – not because of sport itself or even those that participate in it – but because it matters economically, politically and culturally.

We would argue that the discussions of deviance and criminality in sport have tended to be isolated and focussed on specific issues and topics without a coherent set of underlying principles or ways of thinking about these topics in the round. As this remains an emergent field, it could be argued that this trend is further reflected in this collection with one consequence being that individual contributions might appear fractured and even at times contradictory. We hope that by presenting these issues and different strands of thought to a wider audience we might stimulate further debate, critical engagement and maturity.

The articles are as follows.

Helen Lenskyj, veteran and leading campaigner against the corporatisation of the Olympic movement, considers critically the work of the Court of Arbitration for Sport, established in 1984 and based in Lausanne, and its governing concepts of *lex sportiva* and sport exceptionalism. Reading of this article might point the way to a more critical approach to understanding the politics of international sport governance more generally – especially in regard to the Olympic movement and FIFA[4].

Ian Ritchie and Kathryn Henne analyse the conduct of the World Anti-Doping Agency (founded in 1999) and the changing discourses through which “doping” (an umbrella term used to describe the taking of proscribed performance-enhancing measures in sport). Applying the concept of “consumptive deviance”, the reader might further question here whether the sports viewer might actually enjoy consuming the “spectacle” of doping, whether in the form of the “over achievement” of the pumped up athlete/sports(wo)man or indeed the castigation of the offender placed in the stocks.

Next, Theresa Walton-Fisette looks at the disturbing phenomenon of sexual violence on college campuses, much of which seems to have been committed by male sportspeople and to have stemmed from a predatory and unreflective male sport culture. This, again, should raise questions. To what extent does the importance to American colleges of the revenue generated by their male sports teams confer unacknowledged sexual licence on their “jocks”? Equally, we might consider the role of mainstream media coverage – well away from the sports campus – in titillating its audience and “selling” rape through the lens of the deviant “other”. How do this and the wider socio-economic order it derives from play into the self-construction of athlete sexual

identities? After all, the current President of the USA has bragged openly of grabbing women “by the pussy”, an experience, he insisted, that they seemed to enjoy (Jacobs *et al.*, 2016).

In the fourth essay, Karen Corteen outlines the illegal harms inflicted on professional wrestlers by their employers. Once again we might argue that it is possible to raise the extent to which the audience is implicated in and colludes in this harm through a desire for the spectacle of “real” violence and the “big” hit.

The fifth essay, by James Esson and Eleanor Drywood is once again essentially about language – in this case the typical and often misleading language used to describe the “trafficking” of young African footballers. This too raises questions – principally about the way in which a persistent western narrative about “traffickers” deflects attention from the reasons people, young and old, might seek to be “trafficked”. Furthermore, we might reflect on the role of western consumers, or “football fans”, in driving this phenomenon of footballer “trafficking” as a rational response to a globalised football industry that demands cheaper supply chains in the poor global south to feed the demand of European football with all the racist legacies of empire this implies.

In the final essay, Minhyeok Tak, Michael P. Sam and Steven J. Jackson discuss how the institutional convergence of the sports and gambling industries has multiplied the possibilities of match-fixing, opening the possibility to reflect on the role of the commercialisation of sport as a driver of crime and deviance.

Notes

1. A considerable academic literature on this theme has accumulated since the late 1990s. A key text is Back *et al.* (2001). Important more recent works include Amir Saeed *et al.* (2014) and Reeves *et al.* (2017).
2. Football hooligan research and literature now has a long history, dating back to the early 1970s. It began in earnest in the UK in 1985, when English football clubs were banned from European competition. Among the most recent contributions is Hopkins and Treadwell (2014).
3. See Blackshaw and Crabbe (2004, pp. 76-7 and 176-83). For details of the case of the Leeds United footballers see Campbell and Ridley (2001).
4. There is now a rich literature in either case. For the Olympic industry see Lenskyj and Wagg (2012); for the politics of FIFA, see Sugden and Tomlinson (2016).

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