

Sport and Community/*Communitas*

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INTRODUCTION

Sport, for the most part, finds its location in ordinary culture—it is either recreational or, for want of a better term, representational. Given the variable nature of recreational, that is, primarily participatory sports, we shall say little about them in this chapter.¹ By representational, we refer to organized competitive sports (amateur or professional) that in various ways act as what Emile Durkheim (1965) called *representations collectives*, signifiers of we-ness, ways in which the group conceives of itself in its relations with objects that affect it, and sources of social solidarity. As an object with which we identify, an athlete or a sports team defines as a “community” all those who relate to the object cathectically or in a possessive manner—our athlete, our team—and who introject the “representation” into their self-definitions (I am a *** fan; I wanna be like Mike [Jordan]).

In today’s media-saturated, virtual society, members of representational sport “communities” do not necessarily inhabit a shared geophysical space. Fans can form symbolic “communities” in distantiated relational space. One way that this is accomplished is through communications technologies. For example, enthusiasts of the Atlanta baseball franchise can identify with their team even if they do not live in the city of Atlanta, Georgia. This identification is most notably enabled by the “sport/media complex” (see Jhally, 1989) and, in the case of the Atlanta team, by the Turner broadcasting conglomerate. The identification with a team in distantiated relational space might seem a rather privatized emotional activity. Lest we forget, Internet technologies now allow some privileged members of the collectivity to share their passions via cyberspace and to discuss all aspects of the Atlanta team. In Europe, the fanzine also assists in this endeavor. In turn, media and Internet technologies may influence the composition of the audience at the event. For example, Manchester United, the English soccer champions, have been represented in virtual reality (by SkyTel,

Some portions of this chapter are modified extractions from the work of Ingham, Howell, and Schilperoort (1987).

which not only televises their games but also has infused money into the premier league) across Europe and Scandinavia. Moreover, the "club" has foreign stars on its roster. As a result of these tendencies, as well as the relatively recent requirement for all-seater stadia, the traditional spectators of the 1950s, working-class "caps" who stood in the terraces and petit bourgeois "trilbies" who sat in the stands, have been replaced by a more multicultural, affluent formation. If one does not possess a season ticket, it is almost impossible to obtain entrance to the events at Old Trafford (paying the "scalper" being the obvious exception). In short, new media technologies and changes in league rules concerning the acquisition of foreign players have their political-economic consequences. Regardless of whether we are talking about the European premier leagues or the North American major leagues, many fans are being priced out of the primary consumer role, yet the opportunities for secondary and tertiary consumption (see Loy, 1968) are expanding.

Thus while representational sport allows for the creation of particular forms of "community" anchored in the popular, cross-class alliances are formed around the collective representation in terms of support and fandoms, but not necessarily in terms of how this support is organized, celebrated, and understood (see Hornby, 1992; Lewis, 1992). The process of identification is not only mediated by biography, social differentiation, and stratification but also has significant consequences for the geophysical and affectual space of the city. For this reason, we place in double quotation marks the concept of "community." It is a matter of debate as to how solidaristic the coalition or community really is vis-à-vis its sporting icons.

In this chapter we attempt to theorize the relationship between representational sports and their proximal and distantiated consumer "communities" rather than to provide numerous empirical examples. Our analysis begins with a brief discussion of the various political and social histories which, in their critiques of capitalist relations, have anticipated the tendency for nostalgia within rationalized capitalist societies.

ON COMMUNITY

The concept of community has a long history, but we begin our definitions in the work of Ferdinand Tönnies (1957). His concepts of *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft* (community and society) stand at the heart of sociological commentaries concerning the social costs of modernization. As ideal types, they contrast the relationships that are characterized by a high degree of emotional intimacy and social cohesion with those that are more contractual and find their basis in the functionally differentiated division of labor characteristic of contemporary societies.² In Tönnies (1957), we can see a value-laden concern about the deformation of community, which results from the spread of the

industrial order throughout the modern world. This concern about community deformation, now as then, is not merely intellectual: at the heart of this concern, there is a politics of nostalgia in which visions of the past stand as a critique of present forms of social association. By “visions,” we imply that we recapture a past that we have not experienced in the form of a desire for what should be. This recapturing is selective. We bracket off knowledge about the political-economic organization of societies in which these solidaristic communities were located, and we forget the affectual violence that oftentimes accompanied rather intense and continuous face-to-face social interactions and the popular cultural productions that resided in such. Nevertheless, when we now use the concept of community, we do so as a symbol of the “good society” that the various processes linked to modernization have extirpated. This normative critique of present-day social arrangements also shows up in the work of Max Weber and Charles Horton Cooley.

Weber (1978) viewed modernity as the thoroughgoing rationalization of social life. Pessimistically, he envisioned abstract, functional/formal rationality to be superseding tradition, affect, and custom as the basis for social organization. Capitalism and technobureaucratic organizations would individuate in ways that threatened the substantive rationality of the individual, leading to estrangement. Rationalization, emotional detachment, and impersonality would transform communality—imperatively organized groups would replace kinships and fraternal bondings. Cooley (1967) primarily focused his critique of modernity in terms of the impact it was having on the primary group, or what George Herbert Mead might have called a “circle of significant others” (Mead, 1934). For Cooley, modernity would extenuate rather than extend moral standards derived from love, freedom, and justice. Along with Tonnies and Weber, Cooley viewed modernity as an impoverishment of human relationships: the pecuniary/instrumental nexus turned the subtle and grateful “being-for-one-another” into a highly schematized, specialized, precise, and exact mode of existence.

We must take note of the life spans of the theorists acknowledged above. They were born circa 1860 and died circa 1925. Writing some 50 years later, Louis Wirth, one of the founding members of the Chicago School of urban sociology, cast a different light on the consequences of modernity. Wirth (1938) viewed modernity not as a collapse of communal and segmental bonding but as a determinant in the reformation of the segmental community under a changed set of social relations. Wirth’s argument was anchored in the concept of xenophobia, or the general aversion to the strange/different. This general aversion to heterogeneity, anchored in categorical status, was seen by Wirth as replacing the enforced homogeneity anchored in kith and kin. Echoes of Wirth can be found in the more recent work of Richard Sennett (1974). The latter also argues that the overall tendencies of mature capitalism may have deformed the organic communities of the premodern period, but that, paradoxically, they have

reformed communality in highly segmented and purified forms—forms that represent all classes, not just those of the urban industrial classes, such as Wirth analyzed. While work has become increasingly differentiated, our home bases are firmly rooted in our material, social,³ and cultural capital, and our heterophobias.

These insights about community raise a continuity/discontinuity problem. On the one hand, there are those who see continuity between the structured, segmental, communal forms of solidarity of the past and the structured, coerced, or preferred segmental bonding of the present. Presumably, since there is continuity in the forms of social bonding, there will be continuity in the cultures that segmental bonding creates (see Dunning, 1983). On the other hand, there are those who view capitalism, particularly industrial capitalism, as a force for discontinuity and disintegration. Socialized commodity production, rationalized relations of production, the increasing distantiation between spheres of production and spheres of consumption, the schematization of social administration and planning, and the functional division of labor all combine to form a distinctively new social order and new relations of social relations. This period of history is referred to as “modernity” or “Fordism” and is now, some would argue, being replaced by postmodernity, which is linked to a new form of capitalism, namely, nomad capitalism (see Williams, 1989, p. 124) and flexible capital accumulation (see Harvey, 1989, and note 1) which, in contemporary capitalist societies, extenuate the ties between capital and community and, through outsourcing, destroy the basis of traditional working-class communities and even national working-class cultures and solidarities.

The extent of these transformations (and, importantly, their capacity to form a distinctive era of postmodernity) is still open to debate. Suffice it to say that the changes wrought by industrial capitalism do not extinguish the quest for community (symbolic or real), nor does the postmodern focus on images, heterogeneity of meaning, and the multiplicity of identity eliminate the quest (symbolic or real) for homogeneity. What they do—to reverse Durkheim’s (1933) evolutionary concepts of mechanical and organic solidarity—is eliminate the organic, “can live your whole life in it” forms of community and produce new forms of social solidarities of coerced (for the politically and materially powerless) or preferential homogeneities.

Additionally, according to Young:

Within the context of capitalism, . . . racism, ethnic chauvinism, and class devaluation . . . grow partly from a desire for community, that is, from the desire to understand themselves and from the desire to be understood as I understand myself. Practically speaking, such mutual understanding can be approximated only within a homogeneous group that defines itself by common attributes. Such common identification, however, entails references also to those excluded. (1990, p. 311)

From this perspective, “community” suggests both an appeal to the included and an often unspoken understanding of just who is *not* a part of our “community.”

The inclusion/exclusion aspects of community have considerable value for this discussion of representational sport. Historically, sport has existed among a vast array of cultural and political practices designed to construct boundaries around particular groups of people—to differentiate between and separate certain “communities” from others. Today’s highly competitive Western sport, for example, can trace its roots to an English athletic system developed over a century ago. Exclusive clubs and romantic notions of the amateur gentleman were the class-based and ideological means by which wealthy men prohibited the working class from competing on the same athletic fields (see Ingham, 1978, chap. 2; Morford & McIntosh, 1993). This elitist creed was adopted by Pierre de Coubertin and codified in practice upon the reintroduction of the Olympic Games in 1896.

The United States witnessed a similar history of class-based exclusionary practices in its adoption of the sporting forms developed in the English Athletic Revival (see Ingham, 1978, chap. 2; Ingham & Beamish, 1993). In addition, sporting practices in the United States have reproduced and reinforced status differentiations and subcommunity categorical boundaries existing within the wider culture. One has only to think of the long and sordid history of racial segregation and ethnic discrimination in American sports (see Brooks & Althouse, 1993; Edwards, 1969; Olsen, 1968; Ribalow, 1948, for general overviews). Professional baseball provides the notable example here. African Americans were once members of the major league baseball teams in the 1890s, yet prevailing white supremacist ideology forged an unspoken agreement to ban them from the so-called “national” pastime. From this exclusion, the Negro leagues took on particular significance within the segregated black “community” until Jackie Robinson “broke the color barrier” in 1947. From the perspective of the African-American “communities,” it might be argued that the “breaking of the color barrier” was a mixed blessing. On the one hand, it allowed outstanding African-American athletes the social mobility that they richly deserved. On the other hand, the reintegration of African Americans into professional sport allowed whites to claim that sport was a beacon of meritocracy. Despite the presence of African Americans in elite competitive sports and the increasingly large Latino presence in major league baseball today, structural racism continues to segregate communities of people of color from whites both in and out of sport. Recent changes in the microeconomics of professional team sports, for example, have led to the situation where fewer members of minority groups are able to attend major league sporting events—reintegration on the field recently has been accompanied by segregation in the “bleachers.”

Just as noteworthy is the recognition that even within status-homogeneous sub-“communities” (and in the special experiences of *communitas*, which we discuss later in this chapter), there is and has been one major source of differentiated

inequality within patriarchal societies: gender. Typically when we talk about the representational sport and the community problematic, we do so through a privileged male perspective. Indeed, much of what we have to say in this chapter focuses on commercialized elite male sport, which still exists as the dominant model of representational sport. Feminist scholarship over the last 20 years, however, has not only pointed to the idea that men's pleasure is women's work but also to the idea that sport is only one social institution among others that requires radical gender restructuring both in the production and consumption sides of social relations and in the meaning of participation in the civic ritual.

Shifting gender relations and the logics of twentieth-century capitalism have combined to create new and niche markets for professional team sports for women. The fall of 1996, for example, saw the launching of the American Basketball League, and in the summer of 1997, the Women's National Basketball Association (WNBA) games premiered. Yet despite these and other challenges, representational sport is largely overdetermined by its masculinist history. That representational sport is largely a male preserve is suggested by overwhelming cultural, political, media, and economic support. Indeed, Canadian sport sociologist and political activist Bruce Kidd (1990, p. 32) refers to the Toronto Skydome as the "men's cultural center." Because of the efforts of male politicians (although some women mayors have been complicitous, e.g., Roxanne Qualls of Cincinnati) infamous for their hostility to feminist causes, public funds and tax abatements have been used to create a stage for male team games. Thus male power is legitimated and maintained as public and private investments in stadia construction (especially single-purpose facilities that give sport team owners more political and economic leverage over city officials than do their domed counterparts) prevent alternative uses of these resources that might redress the culturally created disadvantages that women endure. Recognition of this masculinist agenda exposes even seemingly homogeneous, representational sporting "communities" as being internally stratified.

These examples reveal that the forces of later twentieth-century capitalism enable and intertwine with historically forged and increasingly complex social relations. What also has happened is that internally stratified, traditional caste, and class-based communities exist alongside of and in most cases have been substantially marginalized by prestige-based communities in which consumption relations rather than production relations form the basis of social appropriation. Nowhere is this more evident than in U.S. urban/metropolitan spaces, given the dramatic shifts in the economy since the 1970s.

Declining markets, unemployment, the growth of part-time positions with few benefits, deindustrialization, and globalization have all exerted enormous burdens on the financial viability of cities and their inhabitants. Since 1972, the feminization of poverty, plant closings, and neoconservative political agendas have contributed to the growing number of urban poor and to a shifting composition of the urban poor population. Indeed, female heads of house-

holds, racial minorities, and children now form a substantial proportion of those living in urban poverty.

Especially in the 1980s and 1990s, attempts to economically revitalize urban "communities" have produced new forms of construction and strategies of legitimation. In the (post) Fordist American city, those with capital have assisted in creating fresh consumer "communities" by encouraging the consumption of events, spectacles, history, and festivals (Harvey, 1989).

As a component of what can be identified as relationally abstract consumption "communities," representational sport exists as one of a series of lifestyle practices and amusement choices designed to distinguish between groups of people. As media technologies expand and as the forces of globalization escalate, status and a sense of belongingness are increasingly gained by partaking in the good life as proffered and encouraged by producers of the preferred products and entertainment. Here, consumption-based prestige is not the prerogative of just the elites, but rather it is sought in all strata and social groupings (Goode, 1978). Those with wealth can literally embody the fashionable and engage in fancy milling: they are "Where the action is" (see Goffman, 1967, p. 197). Those with less money are only able to participate in these consumer "communities" in varying degrees. Many are left to participate vicariously—in their wish-fulfilling dreams or as actors in the sideshows occurring in the bleachers or stands and accompanying the main events. Regardless, prestige communities require punctilious conformity (see Goode, 1978) in lifestyle and thus reinforce the xenophobic impulse.

Surveillance of and sensitivity to boundary lead to the defense of boundary in a way that encourages internal purification, as is evidenced in status-differentiated enclaves of lifestyle. Also, this differentiated and status-based cultural power is reinforced by state and substate policies in the allocation of the amenity infrastructures of collective consumption. This transformation in the relations of social relations facilitates the demarcation between the irreplaceable and the expendable—the wanted and the unwanted, respectively. This demarcation is especially visible in the built environments of amenity infrastructures—both in where and what is built, in the internal, social ecology of the structures themselves, and in the pricing of access to such amenities. As noted previously, many stadia have been built under the guise of urban renewal, yet those living in closest proximity to them cannot afford the price of admission. Ironically, in the case of the imposition of regressive taxes (e.g., the use of sales taxes) to fund such stadium construction, it is also the poor who bear a disproportionate burden of paying for such facilities. Moreover, tax abatements and the creation of what are tantamount to tax-free zones to entice corporate investments create shortfalls in funding for services that the poor desperately need—education, urban renewal, sewer and water provision, and public safety.

Xenophobia causes the concept of the popular to have mixed meanings—popular as in everyone likes it; popular as in, because everyone likes it, it must

be inferior. Status xenophobia also has contradictions in cultural politics. Often, from an elitist perspective, “we” and “them” can articulate in the popular in various ways: we should educate them; we need them or their taxes to get what we want (a new center for the fine arts or a new stadium in which to locate our luxury boxes and our hopes for more capitalist investment in a big league city), and we need them to buy into our “community” creations and our imagined “community” to preserve harmony in status relations which, in reality, are both culturally patronizing and economically exploitative. This is the unexplored or dark side of the concept of “community”—its cultural and political abuse. In contemporary society, the economically and politically powerful with access to important signifying systems such as the media are able to mobilize the politics of nostalgia, drawing upon romanticized versions of community, just as they recreate enticing images of community in order to attract private and public investments. Yet it is doubtful that the poorest in a given urban space will benefit significantly, if at all, from these expenditures. Indeed, this shift in economic content and form has, in many cases, exacerbated poverty and status differentials.

There is more to this dark side of a concept that is unusual among the terms of political vocabulary in being the one term that has never been used in a negative sense: it is the linkage of a habit of mutual obligation to the possibility of exploitation. As Raymond Williams expressed the case:

If you have the sense that you have this kind of native duty to others, it can expose you very cruelly within a system of the conscious exploitation of labor. And it is for a long time a very powerful appeal, one that it is still repeatedly used in politics, that you have this kind of almost absolute obligation to the “community,” that the assertion of interest against it is merely selfish. (1989, p. 114)

Thus the use of the concept of “community” becomes perverse when the interests of domination are concealed in the concept, and when opposition to these interests is designated as selfish, that is, when city managers, in their role of entrepreneurs of the public interest and speaking on behalf of the community as a whole, repress and exploit communities of locality in the interests of the dominant corporate groups.

The capacity for concerted action among the rich and powerful is nowhere better exemplified than in their attempts to persuade ordinary citizens to give up some of their hard-earned dollars (in the form of taxes) to subsidize their projects. These projects are wide ranging, including the building of such temples of consumption such as aquariums, museums of history, convention sites, banks, and shopping areas. Notably, with regard to sport, the *Christian Science Monitor* reports:

More than a third of the 113 teams in the four [U.S.] major-league sports (baseball, football, basketball, and hockey) are seeking to change their facilities, according to a report from Fitch Investors Service. In almost all other cases, the team owners are trying to force local and state governments to come up with all or much of the funding for a new facility. (February 2, 1996, p. 3:3)

From the perspective of the exploited soccer fan, Hornby (1992, p. 150) sums up the case nicely: "In the end I learned, from this period more than any other in my footballing history, that it simply doesn't matter to me how bad things get, that results have nothing to do with anything. . . . For us, the consumption is all; the quality of the product is immaterial." The chains of loyalty are precisely what predatory capitalism has in mind when its representatives appeal to the bonds of "community" to make their decisive interventions into the culture of the "community as a whole." Yet is there a mighty contradiction here? Under conditions of monopoly provision (conditions that prevail for most league sports and other professional tournaments), providers raise ticket prices and demand public subsidies (in the United States, cities may even subsidize franchises for low attendance at the gate), even after losing seasons. Thus they are beginning to price out the very fandoms or subcommunities that provide them with continuous support and leave themselves prey to the new consumerist, identity-fickle audience. They may be, in this regard, just "riding a wave." After all, in a culture committed to differentiation and distinction, tastes and lifestyle choices are not static: today's private seat license or box seats or luxury box at the stadium may give way to tomorrow's hot new consumer option.

While we have noted the period during which the critiques of industrial society arose and have offered brief discussions of the problematic of community in contemporary urban spaces, we have not considered the concept of time *per se*. After all, "communities" are not only spatial, they are temporal. In a sense, "community" represents a temporal commitment—without the commitment to making and reproducing "community," it is doubtful that community, in the modern sense, could exist. This caveat once again moves us away from the idealized and normative definitions of community that have served to totalize and detemporalize social relations by positing a dichotomy between the seemingly authentic communities of yesteryear and the inauthentic communities of late-twentieth-century capitalism. With Young (1990), we challenge this ahistoricity and suggest that such a conceptualization obscures the contradictions and negates the possibilities of challenging existing social relations within existing consumer "communities." There is too much traditional populism at the heart of this argument and insufficient consideration for new and "media-ated" forms of populism (e.g., communication webs on the Internet).

ON *COMMUNITAS*

In his *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure*, Victor Turner (1969, chap. 4) introduced the concept of *communitas*—a special experience during which individuals are able to rise above those structures that materially and normatively regulate their daily lives and that unite people across the boundaries of structure, rank, and socioeconomic status (see also Turner, 1974; Harding, 1983). Turner (1969, p. 132) distinguishes three forms of *communitas*: (a) the spontaneous and short lived; (b) the ideological affirmation of spontaneous *communitas*; and (c) the normative, subcultural attempt to maintain the relationships of spontaneous *communitas* on a more permanent basis. For Turner (1974, pp. 84–86), the forces of modernity have eroded *communitas* except at the subcommunity or the fragmented, segmental, categoric levels of sociality. This assertion requires some distinction between the permanent and the ideological. While we might agree with Turner that the conditions giving rise to permanent *communitas* have long since passed, we note that contemporary social relations present opportunities for the concept of “community,” in the form of *communitas*, to be the object of much ideological work. Attention must focus on the concept of *civic ritual*.

The symbolism (*representations*) associated with rituals (in the form of festivals, public spectacles, and other cultural performances) has been of interest to anthropologists, sociologists, folklorists, and historians. Building on the work of Emile Durkheim, Franz Boas and Durkheim’s student, Marcel Mauss, developed common themes such as the relation between ritual and identity, between ritual and the establishment of links between individuals and their subcommunities, and between ritual and the submersion of the subcommunities into a community as a whole. That the symbolism of ritual can induce communal bonding has been promoted by Turner (1974); that symbols per se can promote the imagination of community has been argued by Anthony Cohen (1985). Previously we distinguished between permanent and ideological *communitas*. A second distinction that can be inferred is that of structural versus symbolic *communitas*. We make no distinction between these distinctions, for much of representation concerning *communitas* takes symbolically ideological forms that are made in reference to position in social structures. We note that ideological work is being used increasingly (in television and advertising) to symbolically camouflage the lack of genuine structural reform.

Camouflage (opacity in inequality) is inherent in civic ritual, and the persistent use of civic rituals casts doubt on Turner’s assertion that *communitas* is present only at the subcommunity level of social relations. If *communitas* were to be present only at subcommunity levels, then the commitments by civic leaders to use civic rituals as vehicles for its regeneration would have no meaning or function—a civic ritual would be a waste of time, money, and energy. Thus we assert that while structural *communitas* has eroded in its meaningful value,

there is plenty of evidence to suggest that there is a tremendous amount of ideological effort to promote and regenerate *communitas* under a changed (structural and cultural) set of circumstances. Here it is important to understand the civic in the civic ritual. Ingham, Howell, and Schilperoort (1987) needed a term that reflected changes in the relationship between the state and civil society as reproduced in the contemporary use of ritual, especially those serial civic rituals associated with league sporting events. The tremendous articulation between the state and civil society achieved under Fordist political economy meant that classical distinction between the public and private sectors had become hard to sustain. Given the interpenetration of the state and civil society, especially in the production of rituals, the concept of *civic* ritual had to be invented. Civic ritual thus was seen by Ingham et al. as requiring the combined resources (social and economic capitals) of both the state (or substate) and private capital, and as a combination of the hegemonic interests of public officials and the capitalist business class with the view to making these hegemonic interests and the situated interests of subordinate groups and communities into a conjoint articulation or an unequal complementarity (see Hall, Critcher, Jefferson, Clarke, & Roberts, 1978, p. 156; Sumner, 1979, p. 295).

SPORT AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF *COMMUNITAS*

One of the key arguments made in the Ingham et al. (1987) publication was that representational sport has moved historically from social to abstract economic space, thus making it difficult for sport to be instrumental in the creation of an empowering local "community." The abstract spatiality of representational sport was attributed to changes in the value-creating capacities of representational sport—from early forms of commercialism to current forms of monopoly in the consumer marketplace and monopsony in the labor market place. Several concepts have been used to describe this change, including valorization, commodification, and professionalization. One of the consequences combining these processes is that of the changing relations between producer and consumer groups, especially the disenfranchising of ordinary people in the determination of what would be popular.

Now we do not wish to fall prey to the very politics of nostalgia that we have been critiquing all along: of course, there has never been full participation in the cultural formation called "community," nor has there been equal access to representational sport "communities." Still, following Clarke and Critcher (1985, pp. 95–97), a case can be made that the audience of professional sports has been transformed from one that had an active, membership-style commitment to the club into one that, even if it could not enjoy the status of membership, did at least expect a customer's stake in the club in the form of a producer-consumer contract. Currently denied the active commitment of

membership and the informal contract between producer and consumer, the sport's audience is reduced to a dependency upon monopolistic sources of supply to which there are no viable alternatives and to a dependency that limits the audience to only one sanction against displeasure—the choice of not to buy.

The crucial question is whether representational sport remains an effective vehicle for the manufacturing of “community,” or whether it can merely serve momentarily in the generation of spontaneous *communitas*. We argue for the latter. The die-hard fan may be there no matter what, but spontaneous *communitas* requires something above the mundane—a league championship or equivalent. Only the diehard can be satisfied with miserable serial civic rituals—indeed, it may be that audience subcommunities are generated from misery loves company conditions. Only the exceptional can provoke spontaneous *communitas*. But spontaneous *communitas* is fleeting and cannot form the basis for community per se. Community involves time and social commitment, and the investment of social capital. Community, in the utopian sense, involves trust and obligation, and representational sport, especially in North America, provides no basis for such. Here franchise relocations are frequent, and the threat of relocation plays a large role in the blackmailing of urban centers with regard to stadium improvements (see Euchner, 1993; Ingham, et al., 1987; Johnson, 1978, 1983, 1985, 1986; Richmond, 1993; Schimmel, Ingham, & Howell, 1993).

Thus another consequence of the transformation of sport from social to abstract economic space is in the elevation of surplus and exchange values over use-values. This confrontation between abstract surplus and exchange value definitions and social use-value definitions of sport and sporting space may lie at the heart of the private/public, capital/community contradiction that civic ideologies of urban boosterism (“We are a major league city, so invest here!”), trickle-down effects (sport franchises create jobs—albeit, we note, low-paying, part-time jobs with no health insurance or pensions), and the magical creation of community as a whole seek to mystify. Just as a class formation must be seen in terms of a founding moment, a possible deforming moment, as well as possible reforming moments or periods (see Therborn, 1980, p. 93), so too should we view “community.” And in this viewing we should remember one fundamental relation between capital and “community.” It is that economic capital is mobile; geophysical communities as a whole⁴ (as social and cultural capitals) are not (Hill, 1983, pp. 80–125). In the United States, we also can state that sport franchises are mobile, while urban populations are not. Thus the chicken and the egg question for cities is: do “communities” deform and franchises leave, or do franchises leave and assist in the “community” deformation process? Is this question as relevant now as it was when Ingham et al. (1987) asked it in 1984? Is it now the case in the United States that, given the competition between cities for sport franchises, there will always be an incentive for relocation as long as the sport has an effective demand (see Schimmel et al., 1993)? If this is

the scenario, then “communities” will be forever blackmailed into meeting the sport capitalists’ and public entrepreneurs’ demands. It matters little whether this involves major league teams or the public subsidization of world-scale events (e.g., the Olympic Games). The major issue for the dominant classes in contemporary society is that hegemony is incredibly fragile. Ideology work is more important than ever. The magical recovery of “community” or the manufacturing of “communitas” is a significant component of this work. With capitalist tennis star Andre Agassi (the Canon commercials), we might be tempted to conclude that “image is everything.” Yet because we can deconstruct images and the politics involved in them, any magical “community” will soon appear fictitious. A final thought is needed concerning the articulation between community and communitas. It is one involving history.

In traditional preindustrial communities, a case might be made that without a geophysical community there could be no communitas. In such relational configurations, community was both the *being at one with* others and where “community” *happened* (see Turner, 1969, pp. 126–127). In contemporary society, there may be instances of spontaneous communitas in conditions of exceptional “happenings” (e.g., earthquakes and floods), but for the most part communitas has become rather orchestrated in the sense that the limbic and the ideological are combined, with the former being subsumed under the latter. Parades and celebrations are now organized. Communitas now is absorbed by civic rituals. But are the limbic and the liminal completely contained?

In our attempt to answer this question, we combine the themes of this chapter with help from Richard Sennett’s (1990) *The Conscience of the Eye: The Design and Social Life of Cities*. Here Sennett (p. xii) observes that “the spaces full of people in the modern city are either spaces limited to and carefully orchestrating consumption, like the shopping mall, or spaces limited to and carefully orchestrating the experience of tourism.” Presumed dangerous spaces, first walled off by train tracks, now are walled off by highways. Spaces once social are now neutralized. The environment is built rather than peopled. Thus the inner city and its central business district are, with the notable exceptions of areas containing the mobility frozen poor, “socially dead” once the business day ends, or when there are no tourist events to attract those who have fled city life. The construction of downtown amenity infrastructures do re-people a city, but only for the times when they are open. Thus on a typical weekend, only the tourists and the mobility frozen—strangers to each other in most respects—populate the downtown public spaces.

Civic rituals, such as the celebration of a major league championship, involve both the mobility frozen and the tourist. The former are there; the latter visit. Sometimes such orchestrated celebrations of “communitas” turn ugly. A major league championship celebration turns violent and vandalistic. To return to previous thoughts, we offer the following as a repudiation of ideological attempts to create the “community as a whole” through orchestrated

"communitas." A celebratory crowd is not homogeneous. Those who unwillingly subsidize the building of amenity infrastructures and those who benefit from these subsidies may join with the tourist and the mobility frozen. Also in the crowd will be those who willingly subsidize professional sport both through taxation and paid attendance at the live event. In the celebratory crowd, therefore, there are those who maintain an, albeit, fictional belief that they somehow are investors in the city and all that the city stands for. There are those for whom the idea that they "own" the city makes no real sense and for whom a degraded urban existence shouts out "if the city stands for something, it does not stand for or by me." For those who subsidize without a return on their investment or who stand at the margins of business and tourist life, the orchestrated celebration of *communitas* may be ironic indeed. Under such socially stratified and differentiated circumstances, why would we be surprised that the attempts at *communitas* go awry, especially when the orchestrated civic ritual takes place in routinely neutral or "socially dead" space—tunnels of glass and concrete? In the articulation between representational sports and their "communities," we should be aware of the distinction, made by Turner, between *communitas* anchored in the liminalities of the marginalized and disenfranchised and structured *communitas*, in the form of civic rituals, orchestrated for the dominant by the dominant. Civic rituals, as representations of the extraordinary, are a far cry from everyday life and reveal all of the latter's contradictions. Presumed to be popular, in all of its meanings, they serve to further distinguish between the popular and the dominant—those who confront normal human misery on a daily basis, and those who, in the guise of working for the "community as a whole," add to it.

NOTES

1. In recreational sports (and we include the consumption of representational sport as recreational), one must assume that social differentiation and social stratification determine who does what, with whom, at what time, and in what spaces. After all, in recreational sports, we are forced to pay for our participation. However, when one looks at recreational sports as ordinary or popular participatory cultures, the long-term trend toward managerialism (the corporate plan, the right to manage) has the fundamental impact of decontextualizing our participation in terms of place as a crucial element in the bonding process and in the reproduction of community (see Williams, 1989, p. 242). Moreover, managerialism in the form of nationalized, cultural paternalism bulldozes the whole intricate structures of local communities in the name of a postulated universality of cultural values (see Bauman, 1987, p. 60). Managerialism, coupled with the commodification of recreational spaces, represents the redeployment of social power in the sense of the right to initiative and control over time and space (see Bauman, 1987, p. 67; Ingham & Hardy, 1984). In this regard, both public and private "community" recreational centers become estranged from their

roots in locality—they may serve the “community,” but they do not promote its intrinsic value.

2. There are many descriptors being used to label contemporary occidental societies. Some talk about postmodern, others late capitalist, or postcapitalist, postindustrial, or high modern. We reject the notions of postcapitalist and postindustrial, because capitalism is alive and kicking, although in new formations, and because there remains an industrial base to capitalist production, even if much of this production is beginning to be centered in so-called underdeveloped nations. The distinction between high modern and postmodern lies in the continuity/discontinuity debate. For those who accept the argument that there is continuity between the Fordist (industrial capitalist) and post-Fordist (flexible capitalist accumulation) conjunctures, then high modern is an apt term to describe reformed political economies. For those who see discontinuity, especially in cultural production, between the two, then postmodern is more appropriate. We argue that there is continuity in both political economy and in its hegemonic institutions. However, we do note that there is discontinuity in popular cultural productions, but that this has not yet overdetermined the political-economic process: it forms the basis of a reactionary bourgeois *angst*, as evidenced in the moral rhetoric of conservative politicians. Lacking a good descriptor, we shall use the concept of contemporary.

3. Social capital has been defined as “features of social organization,” such as networks, values, and social trust, which facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit. It involves responsibility for and obligation to others. It is the social effort and human care that have been invested in the making of community (see Putnam, 1995, p. 67; Williams, 1989, pp. 123–124).

4. Here we have used community as a whole, because we recognize that people do migrate from one residential location to another as a result of increased or decreased affluence. To use a phrase of Goode’s (albeit, out of context), there is a principle of homogamy that often contours “community” preference.

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