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Cricket in Consumer Culture: Notes on the 2007 Cricket World Cup

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Abstract

This article reflects on the position of the game of cricket in the development of sport as an emergent feature of 21st-century capitalist consumer culture. Its focus is on the International Cricket Council Cricket World Cup West Indies 2007 (CWC 2007). It suggests that detailed analysis of sports megaevents, such as the cricket and association football World Cup competitions and the Summer Olympics, enables consideration of several overlapping and intersecting issues of contemporary social scientific interest. Consideration of the CWC 2007 staged in the Caribbean reveals several of the underlying tensions that emerge when a sports megaevent is staged outside the advanced urban centers of the northern hemisphere, exposes the relations that continue to operate between international sports organizations and local organizing committees, and provides the chance to reflect on the role of the media in the culture of consumption that surrounds such events. The article aims to show the importance of approaching the study of sport and sports megaevents in consumer culture with emphasis placed on the production of consumption as much as on the meanings or pleasures of consumption.

Keywords

consumer culture, cricket, Cricket World Cup, globalization, megaevent

Reviewing various responses to his bestselling book *Consumer Culture and Postmodernism*, Mike Featherstone (2007) noted that the concept of "consumer culture has become too firmly established as part of the taken-for-granted value assumptions of the contemporary age for it to be easily modified" (p. xviii). He continued, "If there is an emergent global culture, consumer culture has to be seen as a central part of this

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field" (Featherstone, 2007, p. xviii). For Featherstone, in these circumstances, consumption cannot be seen as an "innocent act" but rather as "part of the chains of interdependencies and networks which bind people together across the world in terms of production, consumption and the accumulation of risks" (Featherstone, 2007, p. xviii). Studying sport under such circumstances requires reflection on the manner in which sport has become one of the transnational cultural forms in and through which consumer culture is fueled.

To understand this feature of sport in consumer culture, it is necessary to adopt a "production-of-consumption" approach, and this effectively means sensitivity to the dynamics of neoliberal economic globalization. It could be argued that the concept of consumer culture masks the existence of capitalist relations of production and exchange. By adopting the production-of-consumption approach, I seek to signal how consumer culture is a product of globalizing capitalist relationships. This is not to say that only economic relationships matter; rather, it is to counteract the drift of the past 15 years or so toward a concentration on identities associated with the postmodern turn to culture.

Much recent writing on sport has attempted to show how the three main features of contemporary consumer capitalism—globalization, commodification, and inequality—shape and contour contemporary sport (see, e.g., Andrews, 2006; Horne, 2006; Smart 2007).[1] A global sports market has developed, and in this, the mass media have played and continue to play a significant role in the commodification of sport. The commodification of sport is assisted by the growth of sponsorship and the use of sport as an adjunct to advertising—particularly focused, but not exclusively, on men as consumers. In this context, the state has had a role to play in regulating sport and defining "consumer interest." With the dominance of neoliberal political economic discourse and a move toward "cultural governance," the main beneficiaries of state intervention in sport have tended to be global corporations and private capital more generally. Horne (2006) argues that consumerization—the process of the construction of people with consumer values and outlooks—has affected personal and collective identities and the development of new lifestyles.[2] Here, two features of consumer culture and their impact on sport are highlighted: transformation and consumerization. I will briefly sketch these features of consumer culture and their relationship to sport and sports megaevents and then provide an outline of the rest of the article in the following section.

Transformation, Consumerization, and Sports Megaevents

Mike Featherstone (2007) remarks that central to consumer culture is the transformation "of lifestyle, living space, relationships, identities, and, of course, bodies" (p. xxi). Consumer culture itself has a developmental history of transformations, and as Lee (1993, p. 135) suggests, the growing importance of cultural and service markets since the 1970s has represented a dematerialization of the commodity form and the growth of "experiential commodities," including cultural events, heritage attractions, theme

parks, commercialized sport, and other public spectacles. Echoing D. Harvey (1989), Lee (1993) concludes that the rapid growth of these experiential commodities represented a "push to accelerate commodity values and turnovers" (p. 20) and to "make more flexible and fluid the various opportunities and moments of consumption" (p. 137). Hence the last two decades of the 20th century saw the restless search for novel ways to expand markets in the advanced capitalist economies and develop new ones elsewhere. Lee suggests that this explains the spread of consumerism to the rest of the world, the development of a vast children's market, and "the deeper commercial penetration and commodification of the body, self and identity" (Lee, 1993, p. 131). Sport has been part of this transformation and has been transformed in turn.

John O'Neill (1985) argued more than two decades ago that "the consumer is not born but is produced by anxiety-inducing processes that teach him or her to want things that service needs which arise in the first place only from commercial invention" (p. 102). He continued, "Millions of consumers are conscripted to the labour of learned discontent from their earliest childhood" (O'Neill, 1985, p. 102). New production, circulation, and retailing practices have assisted in the process of market expansion and the creation of consumers. Central to identity in consumer culture is the development and spread of consumer identity or consumer habitus. For this to occur, the process of *consumerization* has to take place. Bocock (1994) notes how new patterns of consumption developed among the urban middle and working classes at the end of the 19th century witnessed the emergence of consumer identity and "a new kind of individual who was anxious . . . 'to preserve the autonomy and individuality of his existence in the face of overwhelming social forces'" (p. 181). He argues that these types of people have an increased awareness of style and "need to consume within a repertory or code which is both distinctive to a specific social group and expressive of individual preference" (Bocock, 1994, p. 181). This feature of consumption also forms the basis for different status groups to establish their position or rank in distinction to others.

Consumption for symbolic purposes and status value might be thought to be the preserve of the affluent in the advanced capitalist countries. Indeed, substantial numbers of the world's population—including between a third and a quarter of those people who live in the advanced capitalist countries—are mainly interested in consumption for material provision rather than for "show." Yet the idea of consuming goods for their symbolic value as much as if not more than for their use value is not restricted to these postindustrial societies. By the end of the 20th century, consumerism has spread as a global "culture ideology" mainly for two reasons (Sklair, 2002, pp. 108-115): First, capitalism has entered a globalizing phase, and second, the technical and social relations that structure the mass media have "made it very easy for new consumerist lifestyles to become the dominant motif" (Sklair, 2002, p. 108). Hence "'consumerism' may influence even the symbolic life of the poor" (Bocock, 1994, p. 184), and sport is one means of bringing this about.

Of course, contemporary sport is not simply a set of commercial media spectacles, even if it often seems that way. Sport as an active practice continues to be undertaken

and played by millions more participants than by the relatively small number of elite athletes whose performances are routinely broadcast on national and, increasingly, international media networks. In addition, many more people than actually participate in it *follow* any particular sport. Popular involvement in sport is one of the major accomplishments of the 100 years or so since modern sport was established. But sport is not naturally followed any more than people naturally shop. Sport consumers and audiences are made, not born. Sport consumerization appears initially to have relied on local and national affiliations. Globalization has offered the opportunity to expand this process of consumerization, and the mass media of communications have played a major role in the creative process whereby sport is transformed. In turn, as mediated sport has become an accepted part of everyday life worlds, it has also come to play a role in consumption choices and aspirations for particular consumer goods and lifestyles. Hence sport today—especially through a focus on large-scale ("mega") mediated events and celebrity accomplishments—plays a major role in the maintenance of consumer culture via marketing, advertising, and other promotional strategies.

Maurice Roche (2000) has argued that megaevents are best understood as "large-scale cultural (including commercial and sporting) events, which have a dramatic character, mass popular appeal and international significance" (p. 1). Two central features of contemporary megaevents are, first, that they are deemed to have significant consequences for the host city, region, or nation in which they occur and, second, that they will attract considerable media coverage. By this definition, therefore, an unmediated megaevent would be a contradiction in terms. For Kenneth Roberts (2004, p. 108), what defines certain sports events as "megas" is that they are "discontinuous," out of the ordinary, international, and simply big in composition. Megas have the ability to transmit promotional messages to billions of people via television and other developments in telecommunications. Megas have attracted an increasingly more international audience and composition. An estimated television audience of 3.9 billion people, for example, watched parts of the 2004 Athens Olympic Games, and the cumulative TV audience estimate was 40 billion. Thirty-five thousand hours were dedicated to its media coverage—an increase of 27% over the Summer Olympics held in Sydney in 2000 (see http://www.olympic.org/uk). Another example, the 2002 Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) World Cup, staged in Japan and South Korea, provided even more television—41,000 hr of programming in 213 countries—and produced an estimated cumulative audience of 28.8 billion viewers (Madrigal, Bee, & LaBarge, 2005, p. 182). A case study of another one of the leisure industry's "supernovas" (Roberts, 2004, p. 112) is the empirical focus of this article.

This article considers the sport of cricket as it underwent transformation into an emergent force in the spread of consumer culture and focuses on the International Cricket Council (ICC) Cricket World Cup West Indies 2007, or ICC CWC WI 2007 (hereafter, CWC 2007 or CWC). Although the economic impact of the event, which took place from March 13 to April 28, 2007, continues to be debated, at least in the region, rather than engage in detailed consideration of the cost or geopolitical implications of the CWC for the Caribbean, this article focuses on the attempt made to signal,

promote, and build a transnational space suitable for media coverage through this major international sports event. The consumer culture of the new capitalist creative knowledge and information economies relies not on rational argumentation to persuade and promote but on visual images, stylistic connotations, and symbolic associations (Gruneau & Whitson, 1993, p. 137), and consumerization is a process targeted at the emotions as much as, if not more than, at the intellect. As Lash and Lury (2007) note, the new global culture industry uses "play and mimicry . . . this emotionality—this affect—for the accumulation of capital" (p. 191).

Consideration of the CWC, staged in the Caribbean for the first time in 2007, and of developments since then in the game of cricket, also reveals some of the underlying tensions that emerge when a sports megaevent is staged outside the advanced urban centers of the northern hemisphere, exposes the relations that currently operate between international sports organizations and local organizing committees, and provides the chance to reflect on the role of the media in the culture of consumption that surrounds such events.

The Growth of the CWC

The growth of the form of cricket played at the CWC—limited over, 1-day internationals (ODI)[3]—can be seen as fueling one of the most significant transformations underpinning the sport since the 1970s. The attraction of the 1-day form has led to a growth in the cricket calendar. In 1976, there were 23 test matches (5-day internationals) and only six ODIs. By 2006, following an expansion of countries recognized as first class and the overthrow of apartheid in South Africa, there were 46 test matches but 159 ODIs played (Rumford, 2007). As Rumford (2007) notes, cricket has seen a new world order emerge since the 1970s. The ICC, the governing body of world cricket, was originally established in 1907 as the Imperial Cricket Conference and was largely dominated by "White" nations in the former British Empire, then Commonwealth—England, Australia, South Africa, and New Zealand—for the first 70 years of its existence. Since then, the game has spread; a more equal status for South Asian test-playing nations—India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and Bangladesh—has developed, such that the main power blocs in the sport today are Anglo-Australian and South Asian; and in many respects, the newest form of 1-day cricket—an even faster short form known as Twenty20, 20/20, or simply T20 cricket—looks set to revolutionize the sport as a media spectacle.[4]

The ICC has promoted a CWC competition for men's cricket every 4 years since 1975. The competition has been transformed constantly since, and the ICC formally agreed to make the event quadrennial in 1979. The first three competitions took place in England, were sponsored by an insurance company, and were known as the Prudential Cup. Subsequent competition sponsors Reliance, Benson and Hedges, and Wills had their names attached to the event until 1999, when it became the ICC World Cup. The number of teams involved has gradually increased: from 8, to 9, then to 12; 14 in 2003; and finally, 16 in the ninth competition in 2007. In response, the scale of the

event has expanded. The first competition lasted 2 weeks and involved 15 matches. The 2003 competition, cohosted by South Africa, Kenya, and Zimbabwe, saw 54 matches played in 44 days and included a 2-hr opening ceremony. In 2007, the local organizers—a corporate subsidiary of the West Indies Cricket Board named the Windies (West Indies) World Cup 2007, Inc.—also produced extravagant opening and closing ceremonies.

Of the 16 teams at the CWC 2007 alongside the 10 "first class" teams or "test match nations,"[5] there were 6 national ODI cricket teams that qualified through a World Cup qualifier competition (the ICC Trophy): Bermuda, Canada, Ireland, Kenya, the Netherlands, and Scotland. By 2011, every test-playing nation will have hosted or cohosted the CWC at least once.[6] For the past 20 years, the ICC has adopted a system of rotation between the test nations for deciding on hosts, but in the future, the executive committee of the ICC will assess bids prepared in a similar method to that of cities seeking to host the Olympic and Paralympic Games.

The West Indies, represented in the CWC by a single team popularly known as the Windies, was first awarded host status in 1998.[7] In the years leading up to the event, CWC promoters championed it as an opportunity to boost Caribbean economic development and deepen the region's political integration—in addition to featuring a rousing series of games (Jordan, 2006). Since the quadrennial CWC began in 1975, the Windies had won it twice, including the first competition.[8] But this was in the 1970s and 1980s, when they were the force to be reckoned with in world cricket. According to rankings compiled before the 2007 event began, the Windies were languishing in eighth position.

Journalist and commentator Darcus Howe identified many reasons for cricket's decline in the Caribbean, including the changing attitudes of youth; incompetent cricket management; greedy players; interisland rivalry; cable television's showcasing of the alternative attractions of more U.S.-based professional sports, such as baseball and basketball; and economic recession (Howe et al., 2007). Some observers hoped that staging the CWC in the Caribbean would reveal that the sport's decline in the region was cyclical rather than permanent. In the event, history was not on the observers' side. No host nation has ever won the CWC, and 2007 was no exception. The Windies—renamed "Waste Indies" by some in the Caribbean after their poor showing (Mair, 2007, p. 32)—won only one of their six games in the Super Eight knockout stage, confirming pretournament rankings. By the end, the Windies' Australian coach had resigned, and team captain Brian Lara, the "Prince of Port-of-Spain," had announced his retirement. The tournament favorite, Australia, completed a remarkable winning run of 29 World Cup matches to take the trophy for the fourth time (and the third time in succession).

From "Nello" to "Mello" at the CWC 2007

As sports scholars acknowledge, C. L. R. James's (1963) book, *Beyond a Boundary*, is a classic in writing about sport and social relations. It vividly portrayed, arguably better than any monograph before or since, the complex relations between sport and politics and between the local and the international through close consideration of

cricket and anticolonialism in the Caribbean. How the Trinidadian Marxist critic, known to his close friends as Nello (a diminutive of his middle name, Lionel), would have reacted to Mello, the orange-colored raccoonlike event mascot designed by a team of consultants for the CWC held in the Caribbean in 2007, is still open to conjecture. Mello—the mascot who, according to the ICC, embodied a lifestyle rather than a particular country or single culture—was found inside all the stadiums at "Mello Zones," where event-branded refreshments, merchandise, and entertainments were all on offer during the CWC 2007.

In a discussion of James's (1963) work, Hilary Beckles (2004) remarked that Caribbean cricket has long involved much more than sport. It has reflected both the region's colonial history and its postcolonial aspirations; indeed, cricket's political potential was most profoundly demonstrated in the West Indies, which first competed in a test match in 1928. Roughly from the 1930s to the late 1980s, cricket represented an avenue of social mobility in a rigid social order, and its relative autonomy as a form of popular culture allowed things to be said in the language and literature of the game that colonial authorities could not fully censor (Smith, 2006). In today's period of globalization, commodified culture, and growing inequality, however, Caribbean cricket's meaning and political potency seem less clear. As Darcus Howe et al. (2007) reflected, "The collapse of our team since [the 1980s] mirrors the breakdown of Caribbean society. The pride we felt in the post-independence years has disappeared." Referring to his teenage godson, who lives in Trinidad, he noted that he does not play the game and that "cricket gives him no sense of racial identity in the way it would have done 20 years ago" (Howe et al., 2007).

As James's writings (1963) illustrated well, alongside social class and gender, race and ethnicity have always played a large part in the social configuration of cricket, especially in the Caribbean. Most of the cricket grounds were built in the late 19th and early 20th centuries and reflected in microcosm the structure of West Indian society. Sabrina Park cricket ground in Kingston, Jamaica, for example, had a "pavilion for whites and the wealthiest coloreds, the main stands for the black lower middle-class, the bleachers for the masses" (Burton, 1991, p. 19). In June 1950, when the touring West Indian team beat England at Lords cricket ground in London, the headquarters of world cricket at the time, the relationship between national self-determination and the sport began to grow. A White man was still selected as captain of the West Indian team in first-class matches until 1960, yet as Burton (1991) notes, cricket from the 1950s onward in the Caribbean became a site for popular fiestas and a mass carnivalesque collective rite, as crowds took on a heightened, exaggerated, and stylized form of West Indian male street culture featuring "expansiveness, camaraderie, unruliness, jesting, joking, verbal and bodily bravado, clowning, in a word, playing" (p. 17). He notes that the qualities most esteemed in West Indian cricket players were similar: "scoring with style, panache, flamboyance, an ostentatiously contemptuous defiance of the opposition" (Burton, 1991, p. 17). The spectacle of international cricket especially was played out against "the accompaniment of a percussive crescendo of rattling beer-cans, clapping, hooters, whistles and shouts" (Burton, 1991, p. 18). As Brian Stoddart (2006) wrote,

in the Caribbean, the game was never simply a sport but a political institution, because "cricket was introduced by the imperial authorities for reasons other than recreation, because the colonial elites took it up for reasons other than exercise, and because the modern players have seen in cricket lessons other than purely sporting ones" (p. 804). Nonetheless, as Robert Lipsyte (1983) noted in his introduction to the American edition of *Beyond a Boundary*,

> C.L.R. James gets to the root of the exhilarating liberation from class and race and future that exists during the transcendent moments of play; but he never forgets that this liberation exists only within the boundaries of the game, and then only for the gamers. (p. xii)

He added, "The liberation and the oppression are inextricably bound" (Lipsyte, 1983, p. xii). The same can be said for the sport as media spectacle.

Cricket as a Transnational Media Sport Spectacle

Few teams can ever aspire to "punch above their weight" in terms of population size and GDP so consistently as the West Indies once did. Yet professional cricket has changed greatly since the Caribbean's heyday. In the past 20 years, the ICC has increasingly integrated the sport into a global sport-media-advertising-tourism complex, in which the aim is not merely to sell all manner of commercial products—from sponsors' goods and services to branded merchandise—but also for hosts to showcase the attractions of their cities and regions to global television audiences and thus help to attract tourism and investment (Nauright, 2004).

According to Roche (2000), sports megaevents can be classified by scale, scope, and reach. The first-order events are the Summer Olympic Games and the FIFA World Cup finals. Next are the second-order games, such as the Winter Olympics, the Union of European Football Associations championships, and the International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) World Championships in Athletics. Finally, third-order events include the Asian and Pan American Games, the African Cup of Nations, and the America's Cup sailing event. The CWC remains outside the first order, although understandably, the CEO of the ICC portrays it as the "most sought after prize in cricket and one of the greatest tournaments in world sport" (Speed, 2007, p. 8). The serious consideration given to scheduling some of the CWC 2007 matches in the United States, Canada, or Bermuda indicates the ICC's ambition to spread the game to larger, more lucrative markets.

The ICC has operated a "post-Westernization" strategy as it has attempted to globalize the sport of cricket, according to Rumford (2007). This has been marked by three main developments. First, the headquarters of the ICC relocated from London to Dubai. Second, as I have noted, there are now two versions of first-class cricket in play as the global game: test match cricket, played in 3, 4, or 5 days between nationally representative teams; and ODIs, the premier event of which was the CWC. How long the CWC

can retain this prominence in the face of the growth of T20 cricket as a commercial spectacle is questionable, especially in what is cricket's largest market, India. Third, and central to cricket's political economy during this period, has been the emerging Indian market, with a population of 1 billion, a substantial proportion of whom are middle-class consumers.[9] The influence of India, with hundreds of millions of cricket fans responsible for 60% of cricket's revenue from sponsorship and television broadcasting contracts, is profound (Gupta, 2004; Marqusee, 2005).

The development of the CWC as a mediated spectacle was very apparent during the CWC 2007 opening ceremony, which took place at the newly built Trelawny Stadium in Jamaica's Montego Bay. The $2 million, 3-hr media show had the theme "Caribbean Energy" and attempted to reflect the Caribbean's diverse cultures and passion for cricket. The event featured more than 2,000 singers and dancers, and the music ranged from calypso and raga to dancehall reggae and soca, with performances from, among others, Sean Paul, Buju Banton, and Jimmy Cliff. Some of the game's all-time Caribbean greats, including Gary Sobers, gave speeches, generating nostalgia for the good old days of West Indian cricket.

The game at the highest level is now unimaginable without such spectacles and commodified relations of cultural production, involving a focus on celebrity players; branded mascots, such as Mello; event-related merchandise; and entertainment. This is an attempt both to develop consumers and sustain an audience and to generate revenues supposedly required to develop the sport. As a media spectacle, the CWC has changed its format to accommodate television and other media requirements, with the ICC selling broadcasting rights underwritten by a major contract with the Global Cricket Corporation (GCC, co-owned by Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation).

In this economically driven relationship, the media require exclusive coverage, and advertisers and sponsors require guarantees against being ambushed by competitors' guerrilla marketing. Hence CWC officials tightly enforced restrictions on unlicensed merchandise and the consumption of refreshments from nonsponsors. In 2000, GCC agreed to pay $550 million for TV, Internet, and sponsorship rights for both the 2003 and the 2007 CWCs and other ICC competitions through 2007. It then sold packages to other media companies around the world, including several Murdoch-owned TV channels in New Zealand, Australia, and the United Kingdom. As the ICC's official "commercial partner," GCC also sold sponsorship packages for the event to "global partners" Pepsi-Cola, Hutch (an Indian mobile phone company), Hero Honda (an Indian motorcycle and scooter company), and LG Electronics as well as to official "sponsors" Indian Oil, Cable and Wireless, Visa, Scotia Bank, Johnnie Walker, and Red Stripe.[10]

The Allure and the Risks of Sports Megaevents

In the context of neoliberal globalization, nation-states—including developing small nation-states, such as those that make up the Caribbean—use sport for different nonsports ends: economic development and social development, nation building and signaling (branding the nation), and to assist in economic and political liberalization.

The allure of sports megaevents, such as the CWC for the Caribbean, relates to their economic, political, and symbolic potential. Economically, the CWC would permit the construction of an enhanced infrastructure for tourism (roads, hotels, and leisure spaces, including five new and seven other refurbished cricket grounds). Politically, the CWC would offer an opportunity to create greater regional integration, even though temporary, through a unified customs and currency space. Symbolically, the CWC would help identity building and signaling in the Caribbean through the very prospect of pulling off the remarkable feat of cohosting a major sports event across nine small island nations containing barely 6 million people in total. The use of cricket to reestablish these goals, some of which were very long-standing, would also enable the West Indies to claim it was the true heartland of postcolonial cricket.

Although these were the positive aspirations, as Dimeo and Kay (2004) have demonstrated, developing countries run several risks when hosting large events, not least of which is being portrayed negatively in the global media. To deliver the required infrastructural developments, including new stadiums, on time, several of the islands became reliant on assistance from other countries—especially India, the People's Republic of China, and Taiwan. As not only the technical know-how but also labor for several of these projects came from outside the Caribbean, it can be argued that a form of economic *recolonization* took place.

It was claimed after the CWC 2007 event by officials that their predicted TV audience of 2 billion in 200 countries (Hawkes, 2007) had been achieved. If accurate (and as is evident from the claims made for the Summer Olympic Games and the FIFA World Cup finals, there are major questions to be asked about the way this estimated audience was calculated), this would place the CWC on a par with the second-order megaevents, such as the Winter Olympics and the Commonwealth Games, in terms of its global reach. However, until the final stages of the competition, live spectators in the stadiums were much fewer than had been anticipated. The combination of high ticket prices and strict regulations surrounding supporters' behavior and the prohibition on the consumption of nonendorsed products inside and around CWC grounds led to small crowds at many of the 2007 matches.

Arjun Appadurai (1996) once suggested that in India, a form of cultural decolonizing had occurred through cricket. At the CWC 2007, with the typical involvement of several multinational sponsors (including many Indian firms) and the exclusion of many locals from the event, it seemed instead that a form of not only economic but also political recolonization was taking place. Tickets for the England-Ireland match in Guyana, for example, cost the local equivalent of a month's wages. Dependent primarily on the millions of cricket fans on the Indian subcontinent, including Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka, as well as the fewer but wealthier numbers of fans in the other test match nations, the length of the 2007 tournament, especially the Super Eight competition, extended for almost a month by scheduling one match a day, was a classic example of an attempt to maximize the selling price of the exclusive broadcasting and sponsorship rights.

Through TV coverage, the CWC enables the host region an opportunity to present itself on a world stage and promotes itself as a tourist destination. But owing in part to

time differences with other major cricket-viewing nations, especially southern Asia, mounting good television programming has been one of the main restrictions on increasing commercial income for cricket staged in the Caribbean. Even with nonstop coverage, an event so long risks creating apathy toward day-to-day outcomes. Shortly before the final game, the ICC CEO at the time, Malcolm Speed, admitted to the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) that the CWC had been too long, saying, "We'll seek to reduce this 47-day World Cup by seven or 10 days, and hopefully we'll get it down to somewhere between five and six weeks next time" (as cited in BBC, 2007).[11]

Coverage of events in developing nations is always prone to negative responses when something goes wrong. Maintaining a good image can be difficult, as the much-publicized death of Bob Woolmer, the Pakistani team's coach, after its early exit from the tournament made clear. This, together with the restrictions on crowd behavior—banning big baskets of food, large radios, musical instruments, flags, and nonsponsors' alcohol from the stadiums—affected the atmosphere and contributed to poor attendance, which in turn led to dismissive headlines in the U.K. and Caribbean media: "World Cup Killjoys?" (*The Nation*, Barbados, May 31, 2006), "Weep for the Ghosts of Calypsos Past in This Lifeless Forum" (*The Guardian*, April 5, 2007), and "Everything's Banned at the Accountancy World Cup" (*TimesOnline*, March 29, 2007). Inflexible holiday packages for tourists contributed to fewer numbers arriving from the United Kingdom, and the surprise early exits of the Indian and Pakistani teams before the knockout stages meant that fewer fans from those countries made the journey as well.

The infrastructure and facilities built for the event appeared to many people to be more a form of monumentalism than a contribution to the communities where they were built. The building or refurbishment of 12 stadiums at a cost estimated at between $250 million and $300 million—equal to or more than the entire cost of staging the previous CWC in 2003—raised familiar questions about the likely impact these facilities would have for nonelite use after the competition. Another estimated $200 million to $250 million was spent on hotels, roads, transport, security, and infrastructure (and in Antigua, officials at the new Sir Vivian Richards Cricket Ground suggested that visiting Major League Baseball teams might use it, contradicting the stated aim of using the CWC to develop cricket locally).

Much of the funding—and, indeed, the labor—to build these stadiums, however, came from abroad. Taiwan put money into Warner Park, built for $8 million, on St. Kitts. The Indian government contributed to building Guyana's Providence Stadium, constructed by the Indian firm Shapoorji Paloonji Company at a cost of $25 million. Money and labor from the People's Republic of China helped build stands and pavilions in Grenada and Jamaica as well as Antigua's stadium, and most funding for the reconstruction of Queen's Park Stadium in Grenada came from China. It was reported in 2006 that the Chinese workers associated with the project had "worked night and day to play 'catch-up'" after the disruption caused by Hurricane Ivan (McDonald, 2006). The *Trinidad and Tobago Express* reported in February 2007 that disgruntled Chinese immigrant workers, contracted through the Shanghai Construction Group to work on several projects, including the refurbishment of Queen's Park Oval, protested their 12-hr workdays and wages of less than $450 per month ("Chinese Protest," 2007).

The Seductive Language of Legacy

The warm word *legacy* figured heavily in official CWC 2007 discourse. Several expected legacies were declared long before a single ball was bowled. Politicians and organizers spoke of a more unified region, an improved security system, and even a net profit in the tens of millions of dollars. More concretely, they predicted new industries, infrastructure, and jobs; public revenues from fees, taxes, and tourist spending; and improved facilities for local communities. The prime minister of Antigua said $28 million would be spent on infrastructural improvements and $300 million in total across the region on the new and refurbished stadiums. About 100,000 tourists, spending up to $250 million, were expected. Owen Arthur, prime minister of Barbados, anticipated growth in financial services, insurance, real estate, and most significantly, tourism, which he said would grow from 8.5% to 50% of the Barbadian economy within 5 years.

Moreover, Caricom leaders thought they had found an opportunity through the CWC to further kick-start the process of regional integration, which has proceeded slowly. The host countries (along with Suriname and Belize) looked forward to greater cross-border cooperation as a precursor to a trade bloc similar to the European Union. To this end, they created a special 4-month "single-domestic-state" visa to facilitate easy travel between the host nations. The region's leaders hoped this would lead to closer security ties, airline amalgamation, regional stock exchanges, and a currency union as a means to better competing in the global economy. An economic boon would come, they said, through expanding tourism after the "circus had left town."

This strategy of hosting events, sporting and otherwise, has become popular among "semiperipheral" or emerging countries, because it offers two prospects difficult to obtain any other way: the ability to respond to external pressures for global competitiveness (at the risk of heightening internal inequalities) and a chance to reinforce collective identity (at the risk of damaging international reputation if things go wrong and the foreign media negatively report the event). The organizing committee saw hosting the CWC as exactly such an opportunity (Black & van der Westhuizen, 2004). But research on sports megaevents throughout the world has demonstrated that the benefits of staging them tend to be overestimated and the costs underestimated (cf. Horne & Manzenreiter 2006).

It is clear that the CWC 2007 organizers' objectives were beset by the same contradictions that have confronted many previous hosts of large-scale sports events. Before the opening ceremonies, stadium construction proceeded behind schedule, hotel prices soared, and ticket sales were sluggish. Although the temporary single domestic space came into operation, easing travel between the islands, it was not without incident; applicants from Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, for example, had to submit applications for a visa to the Trinidad and Tobago embassy in New Delhi, India (Cricinfo, 2007; Williamson, 2007). Similarly, New Zealand applicants had to send their requests for a visa to offices in Sydney, Australia. Greenidge (2007) noted that although Barbados's tourism performance was strong during the CWC and shortly after (posting a 15.6%

increase in long-stay arrivals), when looked at in terms of the first 6 months of 2007, aggregate tourist arrivals increased by only 1.9%.

As with other major sports events in South America, greater security was evident during the CWC (McLeod-Roberts, 2007). Support from Interpol and intelligence officers from the United Kingdom, South Africa, France, Canada, and Australia meant that the tighter arrangements surrounding the stadiums and the clampdown on guerrilla marketing contributed to the antiseptic feel to many of the matches. The hoped-for return to the heyday of "calypso cricket"—played with an exuberance to excite the already passionate fans—barely surfaced, and the Windies' failure to compete beyond the Super Eight stage was a great disappointment. As John Mair (2007), a journalist based in Guyana for much of the CWC, summarized,

> The International Cricket Council had rigidly imposed a "one-size-fits-all" policy on the nine West Indian countries hosting the World Cup. Stadiums were built very alike and the ticket prices were alike too—very, very high. Crowd spontaneity was restricted by the banning of bands and musical instruments from the grounds. The consequence at most matches was, at best, torpor. (pp. 28-29)

Conclusion: Sport, Globalization and Consumer Culture

Sport is not the only uniform cultural activity through which to demonstrate difference, although the competitive contexts within which it is played out do provide the potential for heightened and exaggerated claims, especially rooted, as it is, in embodied athletic performances that are routinely related to gendered, ethnic, national (and nationalist) diversity. Under these circumstances, (global) structural uniformity is perfectly compatible with (local) symbolic diversity. *Beyond a Boundary* by C. L. R. James (1963) highlighted this issue in the context of the development of cricket in the Caribbean.[12] Despite the White, English, upper-class, and colonial origins of the sport, cricket could serve as a vehicle for aspirations from quite different social, ethnic, and spatial groups. The same is true of cricket in other postcolonial nations, especially India and Pakistan in Southern Asia, as we have noted. What distinguishes the influence of the South Asian subcontinent in the present climate is that cricket teams and players express a unified identity, nationalist sentiment, and racial pride based on an emerging market power rather than an anticolonial nationalism (Nalapat & Parker, 2005).

Understandably, writers on sport and globalization do not want to write off cultural forms as mere ciphers for economic processes (Appadurai, 1996). A problem with this, however, is that it can imply a denial that there are actual imbalances of power and influence at work in sport and transnational relationships. This would be incorrect. Clearly, as we have related here, "anational" holders of power—international sports federations and transnational sports businesses often located in places protective of corporate interests, such as Dubai, where the ICC has its headquarters—can shape the direction and momentum for change of nationally based sports competitions and international events (Houlihan, 2008, p. 563). There are occasions when national market

power is able to contest this. In the case of the ICC, both Anglo-Australian and South Asian power blocs operate. The small island nations of the Caribbean were not in a position to do this, however, and it is this power imbalance in international cricket in the context of the CWC 2007 that has been noted in this article.

Research into sports megaevents can provide insights into three main dynamics of contemporary capitalist consumer culture: globalization, increased commodification, and growing inequality. Sports megaevents also bring large groups of people together in collective displays of devotion and celebration. Sports megaevents have been largely developed by undemocratic organizations, often with anarchic decision making and a lack of transparency and more often in the interests of global flows rather than local communities. In this respect, they represent a shift of public funds to private interests. Sports megaevents promise (albeit brief) moments of "festive intercultural celebration" (Kidd, 1992, p. 151). Yet as we have suggested here, it would be a failure of the social scientific imagination to be seduced by the allure of megaevents. Whether the focus is on the business of sport in a globalizing world (involving the global trade in sports goods, services, sponsorship, and team and property ownership), the mediation of megaevents by transnational media conglomerates and new technologies, or the shifting balance between public and private financing of sport, commodification and the heightened spectacularization of sport through sports megaevents should remain central concerns of research.

It is often the case with megaevents that those distinctive characteristics of a sports culture in one place either are legislated away or become a refashioned part of the media-tourist spectacle. And nearly always, the number of attendees is much less than heralded in advance. In the case of the CWC 2007, the media televised scenes of empty seats in the modern and refurbished cricket stadiums and reported the impact that overzealous security and inadequate accommodations had on the CWC "experience." All of this reinforced the impression that, as one dissenter put it, the CWC's most likely legacy would be one of debt (Gordon, 2007). This was also the conclusion of a report from the International Monetary Fund (IMF), which noted, "'The net effect of the CWC could well be negative in light of its heavy fiscal costs and the already high public debt burdens in the region'" (as cited in Sanders, 2007). As another reporter put it, "Like a snake with a long tail, the cricket circus—players and press—wound its way around the nine Caribbean venues for two months…the world cup failed to ignite much interest locally or worldwide" (Mair, 2007, pp. 31-32).

As cricket develops in these circumstances, processes of commodification, consumerization, commercialization, and "lifestylization" are apparent (and embodied in the event mascot, Mello), and inequality, reflected in social divisions in patterns of involvement and participation in the sport as well as the power to influence control over hosted events, persists. Cultural governance sees governments, in developing as well as in developed economies, attempt to create and sustain imagined communities through sport. The ICC, the international governing body of cricket, may well be undertaking a "post-Westernization" strategy, or may be influenced by the power of the emerging Indian consumer market especially as a result of post-Westernization,

but as seen here, it is not a *postcapitalist* strategy (Gupta, 2004; Rumford, 2007). Developments in media coverage of sport continue to be dependent on transnational corporations that operate according to an economic logic in which cricket is a content filler delivering audiences a commodity to be traded and sold, constituted by "meta-commodities," including star players, who themselves enable the promotional culture of consumption to expand.[13]

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Notes

1. The editors of one of the most recent books to review the relationship between globalization and sport agree that globalization is "the axial theme of contemporary times" (Giulianotti & Robertson, 2007, p. 1). For them, sport is conceived of as both a "motor and metric of transnational change" (Giulianotti & Robertson, 2007, p. 1). The main debate in sport studies relating to globalization, as with much globalization theory in general, revolves around the extent to which, whatever dimension of globalization is being studied (economic, cultural, or political), it is either a "one-way" or a "two-way" process (for some of the contributions to this debate, see Appadurai, 1996; Harvey, Rail, & Thibault, 1996; Maguire, 1999; Miller, Lawrence, McKay, & Rowe, 2001). This article suggests that before specific empirical research is conducted, however, the simple answer to this is, of course, *it is both*. Another distinction, between the global and local, operates in a similar way, leading to neologisms such as "glocalization," "glocal," and the "global-local" (Jackson & Andrews, 1999; Ritzer & Andrews, 2007; Wilson, 2007). Kelly (2007) rather succinctly states the problem thus:

   > The catch-all notion of "glocalization" . . . captures the sense that local appropriation is seldom simply assimilating and imitating. Rather, it is generally a process of indigenization—of appropriating the foreign objects and practices by recontextualizing them into local matrices of meaning and value. (p. 79)

   It is not our ambition here to promote one particular theory or approach to sport and globalization and thus resolve the issues emerging from "multiparadigmatic rivalry." Rather, our ambition is to contribute to the sociology of sport by investigating a one-off event in light

of the wider concerns of the production of consumer culture. Sport has become more of an integral part of the "economies of signs and space" of late capitalist modernity in the past 20 years or so, but it has not always been thus. Our contention is that what is required, if research into sport in consumer culture is to develop, are methodological pluralism and theoretical openness. Theory should be seen as a process, not an accomplishment. It is worth remembering that concepts are shorthand, provisional, and nearly always contested in terms of precise meaning. Additionally, the concepts of globalization, megaevent, and consumer culture are all contributors to what in other ways is construed as a wholly external "objective" process (Cameron & Palan, 2004, p. 25). It is important to remember that analysis of these concepts and their consequent refinement is still relatively new. Theoretical oppositions, or dualisms, should be mobilized to address substantive concerns rather than argued away.

2. The relationship of these developments to older social divisions in sports participation and involvement, based on social class, gender, "race," and age especially, are noted but are not explored in detail in this article (see Horne, 2006, pp. 140-159, for a sketch of these issues).
3. Traditionally (before the 1960s), domestic and international cricket matches were played on 3, 4, or 5 days. The short form, 1-day cricket, was introduced in Britain in the early 1960s in association with sponsorship (initially, Gillette) and has regularly been reformed since then—from the number of overs bowled per side (60 to 20, with various permutations in between) to the tactics permitted. An over consists of six regulation ball deliveries bowled consecutively by a bowler from one end of the cricket pitch. Overs are bowled alternatively from each end of the cricket pitch. For those readers unfamiliar with the sport, the American edition of C. L. R. James's (1983) *Beyond a Boundary* offers the following in "A Note on Cricket":

   > Each team bats in turn, completing an innings when ten of its eleven members have been dismissed. One-day matches usually consist of one innings per side, won by the team accumulating the most runs. . . . Test or international matches can go for thirty playing hours . . . with the winner determined by the aggregate score of two or more innings. (pp. xvii-xx)

4. It is not possible to discuss all the developments that the Twenty20 format underpins in this article, and it is hoped that they will be considered elsewhere. At the time of writing, three new T20 tournaments—the Indian Cricket League (ICL) and Indian Premier League (IPL) in India and one in the Caribbean funded by billionaire Sir Allen Stanford (the Stanford 20/20 Tournament)—are promising to shake up the format of the game in ways that have not been seen since the late 1970s, when a "rebel" league (World Series Cricket) was established by Australian media tycoon Sir Kerry Packer in an effort to secure greater access to television rights (Haigh, 1993). As both the IPL and the Stanford 20/20 have been recognized by their respective cricket authorities, only the ICL is currently referred to as "unofficial" and those contracted to play in it "rebels."
5. In order of acquiring test match status, they are Australia, England, South Africa, New Zealand, West Indies, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Zimbabwe, and Bangladesh.
6. Bangladesh will cohost the Cricket World Cup (CWC) in 2011. Test status is obtained through application to the International Cricket Council (ICC), which ranks teams in terms of playing performance, the level of organization of the game, and commitment to the

development of the game. As Ireland debutants beat two teams of 1-day-international (ODI) status at the 2007 competition, they have now secured ODI status themselves.

7. Just before the various Caribbean countries that compose most of the West Indian "imagined cricketing community"—Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, St. Kitts and St. Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and Trinidad and Tobago—cohosted the CWC, the question was posed, "Why does a tournament designed to establish which international one-day team is the best in the world have to take nearly seven weeks and involve no fewer than 51 matches?" ("The ICC's Absurd Cricket World Cup Schedule," 2007). This article examines some of the answers to it.
8. A women's CWC first took place in 1973, although it was not until 1993 that a West Indian team participated in that competition. It has never finished higher than fifth place.
9. Although the chairman of the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECWCB), David Morgan, has been president of the ICC since July 2008, he will step down after 2 years to enable his Indian counterpart, Sharad Pawar, to take over. Such an arrangement is symptomatic of the power that the "global South" exerts in world cricket off the field of play. On it, India's national team won the inaugural ICC World Twenty20 tournament in September 2007, beating Pakistan. Indian capital is also heavily invested in the new T20 format of the game, the ICL, and the IPL.
10. With Guinness also enjoying "pouring rights" at all World Cup venues, the drinks conglomerate Diageo had three brands firmly associated with the event. In December 2006, ICC's television rights for the next 7 years were sold to ESPN Star Sports, a joint venture between Murdoch's Star network and ESPN, for an estimated $1.1 billion, twice the amount paid for the previous period. This figure was considerably less than the $1.5 billion paid by Murdoch's Sky Sports for the 3-year rights to broadcast live English Premier League soccer, but by cricketing standards, it was a major development. The new T20-format IPL, sanctioned by the Board of Control for Cricket in India, has since attracted more money from television companies.
11. The final, between Australia and Sri Lanka, also reached farcical lengths when the last three overs were played in almost complete darkness owing to weather conditions and the absence of adequate lighting in the stadium.
12. Klein (1991), writing about baseball in the Dominican Republic, provides another example of this. Rather than reflecting U.S. cultural hegemony, baseball became a means by which to promote Dominican excellence.
13. In India, Sachin Tendulkar became a "pivotal figure" in the entertainment industry as a result of the growth of the consumer market and media interest in sport (Nalapat & Parker, 2005, p. 436).

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