Olympic Dreams and Social Realities: a Foucauldian Analysis of Legacy and Mass Participation

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Abstract

Focussing on the London 2012 legacy claim relating to increased activity levels and sports participation, the paper discusses a range of factors which appear to militate against its achievement. Utilising a Foucauldian theoretical framework, we discuss how some of these operate at the conceptual and linguistic level, while others relate to governmental processes, and still another to the distinction between active engagement with the Games as carnival/festival and passive consumption as spectacle. Closest attention is paid to the negative effects on mass participation of a mind-set and collateral social practices, amplified in sport, which prioritise the avoidance of all risk, and particularly the risk of abuse. Drawing on data from a recent ESRC-funded research project, we demonstrate how this has resulted in a culture of fear and corrosive mistrust, which can only reduce grassroots willingness to take up sports, and the effectiveness and commitment of the coaches required to support it. The social context of discourse is considered, and Foucault's conceptual 'toolbox' is deployed, to encapsulate the interrelationship of risk society, moral panic, and governmentality.

Keywords: Olympic Legacy, Foucault, Discourse, Risk Society, Spectacle, Celebrity, Moral Panic

Discourse and the problematics of speaking about legacy

1.1 In early August 2012, as the success of Team GB at the London Olympics became clear, and the verbs 'to medal' and 'to podium' entered everyday usage, media and public discussion focussed on how this elite achievement could be sustained, and on how the aspiration to inspire a generation to take up sport and be more active could be realised. Interviews with sports administrators, and also particularly with politicians, tended to elide these two issues, eliciting answers which featured funding streams, pathways into sport, performance systems, and delivery mechanisms. The problem was understood in terms of resourcing and organisational arrangements, but the social and cultural context within which these challenges would be faced was unexplored and taken for granted, as if sports related policy could be implemented in a vacuum. In this paper we argue that such an approach to legacy achievement and widening sporting participation is naive, and likely to be at best only partly successful. Utilising a Foucauldian theoretical framework to examine an eclectic evidence base, including recently completed ESRC-funded research (Piper et al. 2012), we identify significant contrary social and cultural pressures, which need to be addressed.

1.2 Our analysis draws its inspiration and methodological impetus from the work of Foucault and his conceptual 'toolbox' (e.g. 1979, 1980); we take him at face value:

> 'if one or two of these gadgets of approach or method that I've tried to employ with psychiatry, the penal system or natural history can be of service to you, then I shall be delighted. If you find the need to transform my tools or use others then show me what they are, because it may be of benefit to me' (Foucault 1980: 65).

In particular, we embrace the triad of discourse, power and knowledge to interpret tensions between notions of elite achievement in sport and the assumed unproblematic legacy of widening participation. Through a synergy of eclectic discursive themes and social practices, our analysis focuses upon: the

problematics of speaking about legacy; spectacle, festival, carnival, and celebrity; legacy delivery; and risk, fear and moral panic. While interpreted in isolation none of the configuring elements is wholly unique, we contend this synergetic combined analysis of counter-discourses and practices provides an innovative sociological account. In our analysis, Foucault's concept of discourse serves as a power-*full* heuristic, as all 'legacy-statements' relate to more than just words. Each has the ability to enunciate, name and describe in order to bring into existence particular ideas, ambitions and contemporary practices. Discourses thus have constitutive effects, the site at which knowledge and power productively intersect. Through such discursive arrangements, notions of participation and social practice are 'spoken of' and constructed to create meaning, in turn manufacturing practice through the production of 'truth' (Foucault 1972, 1980). We conclude the paper by arguing that the identified discourses, both complex and contradictory, ultimately have the effect of subordinating the rhetorical aspiration to create an Olympic legacy of mass participation in sport.

1.3 The idea that Olympic Games should leave a legacy dates from 1940 (Torres 2011), and from the late 1940s the word legacy appeared in Olympic documentation (McIntosh 2003). The notion was accepted enthusiastically, even uncritically (MacAloon 2008), since who could oppose the idea that the financial and emotional investment required to support a Games should have wide and lasting beneficial effects? The IOC, a 'transmitting authority' (Foucault 1972), now expects such effects to be manifest even when a Games-bid is unsuccessful (Torres 2011). In Foucauldian terms, this suggests power and knowledge are manufactured by knowledgeable 'experts' who are able to ask the 'right questions' and further understand the terms of reference, in order to influence prospective bids and help organise future practice. In its Candidature Acceptance Procedure for the 2020 Games (IOC 2011), for example, prospective host cities must identify 'the long-term benefits for [their] city/region/country', irrespective of the outcome of the bid. This expansive approach reflects a 'regime of truth' (Foucault 1980), the reality and micro-politics of which suggests that long term debt problems and white elephant facilities can be linked to successful bids, and some argue that the best outcome in terms of legacies can be for a bid to fail (De Blauwe 2010). For example, Moss (2011) demonstrates this ironically in ***How New York City Won the Olympics***, an account which also highlights positive legacies from the unsuccessful Manchester bid (e.g. the National Cycling Centre, which helped deliver success in the velodrome during London 2012). Such examples provide compelling evidence of apparently contradictory discourses, in which perceived failure can paradoxically produce material success, leading to a disconnect between notions of policy-oriented, discursive governmentality and the more material and concrete 'art of governing' (Foucault 1979, McKee 2009).

1.4 Given the prominence of the legacy concept, the varied or even contradictory discourses of expert authorities including the IOC, and the multiple and changing pressures experienced by any host nation while preparing for the Games during the extended period between writing the bid and finally lighting the flame, it is hardly surprising that the claimed legacies for London 2012 demonstrated a fluid quality, sliding around with the change of government and falling stock markets. However, the claim central to this paper, and the linked priority of community engagement, has existed discursively in one format or other throughout the process:

> Harnessing the United Kingdom's passion for sport to increase grass roots participation, particularly by young people – to encourage the whole population to be more physically active. (DCMS 2010: 1)

Sebastian Coe, the Chairman of London 2012, said in 2006 that:

> Winning the Olympic Games and Paralympic Games represents the single biggest opportunity in our lifetime to transform sport and participation in sport in the UK forever. We have a unique opportunity that we must not squander to increase participation in sport, at community levels as well as elite levels; from the school playground to the winner's podium. (The Observer 2012: 32)

His comments map onto the substantial discursive claims made for the long term benefits for London 2012 (including enhanced health and wellbeing) contained in the successful bid documentation and accompanying video (Full Moon 2005). However, central to the concerns of this paper, questions may be asked about the purchase of these aspirations on relevant characteristics of British society: the reality of community, children's experience of school, the engagement of teachers in extra-curricular sport, the willingness of parents to allow their children to travel alone to venues, and the nature of non-familial intergenerational relationships. Indeed, for Foucault (1976: 102) 'discourses are multiple, contradictory and can vary from context to context', and so it is hardly surprising that optimistic legacy discourses do not always match the experience of more material conditions on the ground.

1.5 Crucially, to make a legacy claim is to make a power-full prediction, and the challenges of prediction have attracted considerable interest and comment. Stevenson (1998) advised that, in business, prediction is both important and hard, the difficulty stemming from the intractable problem of knowing the future, and how to take action to impose your vision so that your prediction is proved accurate. Revered blue skies thinkers in organisation and management theory (e.g. Drucker 2012) and information technology (e.g. Kay n.d.) have commented that the most effective way to predict the future is to ***invent*** it. Unfortunately, it may be easier to invent the future through a business innovation or new software than it is to generate a significant change in human behaviour at societal level. However, Simon Ings (2012) of the ***New Scientist*** has taken the prediction/invention link further, defending science fiction literature as a contribution to futurology and suggesting that an effective way of predicting the future is to just ***make it up***. Of course, this is more easily achieved by authorities and powerful 'experts' who are readily able to access power and also deploy it strategically. 'Transmitting authorities' (Foucault 1972) are thus able to produce a picture of the future, along with ***savoir***, the expressive power of knowledge, to create the conditions in which productive networks of communities are influenced and predisposed to act. Indeed,

this is the challenge and 'art' of governmentality, Foucault's neologism for the idea: 'concerning government' (Foucault 1979).

1.6 The use of the word legacy in the current context is both telling and problematic, since its normal usage refers to an intergenerational bequest, in which the receiver's role need only be passive (Griffiths & Armour 2012), a 'docile body' (Foucault 1977). MacAloon (2008: 1984) identifies further tensions in the use of the word legacy by the bilingual Olympic movement. He notes that the discursive 'equivalent' in French is the word ***héritage*** but while sharing some common ground (e.g. the idea that the present leaves some heritage for the future), the French term is more weighted towards the past arriving in the present, bringing 'accumulated historical, cultural, and moral capital'. The more restricted English meaning has led to plans prioritising urban projects, relying on a managerial and 'magical' discourse, tending to overlook the idea of inherited cultural capital and the fact that power does not fall evenly upon its subjects (McKee 2009).

1.7 For the claimed legacy of mass participation to be realised, the response from its recipients cannot be passive. Power, more actively inscribed within its subjects, is where the impact of inherited cultural capital needs to be substantial and, equally, the nature of government more efficacious. Activity is prescribed and essential, and it may be the passive character of legacy infrastructures which led to a failure to inspire prior to the start of London 2012, thus reinforcing the potential disconnect between discursive and material forms of governmentality (McKee 2009). It has been reported that the number of young people in the UK taking up sports is falling and that those aged 16–19 playing sports three times a week dropped by more than 100,000 since 2007 when the Olympic bid was secured, with a similar decline in the number of women participating (Scott-Elliot 2011). Such figures may have led the incoming Conservative-led coalition government to drop the pledge made in 2005 by the previous Labour administration to get more than two million extra people active in sports.

1.8 In summary, whether or not a legacy target is firm and measurable, merely asserting that something good will happen does not guarantee success. Without appropriate awareness of social and cultural realities, and the often contradictory discourses that happen to fall in between, those proposing a particular legacy will be unable to create or invent their desired future, and may be shown in retrospect to have been ***making it up***. The legacy claim to achieve the involvement of more people in sports, and to thus foster health and wellbeing, seems unlikely to be realised, not least because powerful, recalcitrant discourses allied to social and cultural practices militate against it.

1.9 Identifying the mechanism or alchemy required to translate elite performance of the few into the subsequent participation of the many is not straightforward, and the two priorities may prove contradictory in order of scale. Toohey commented after the 2000 Sydney Games that:

> [E]lite sport in Australia has profited at the expense of sport for all. Yes, the nation was successful ... winning 58 medals, including 16 gold. Yet, the sustainability of keeping Australia in the top four nations in the medal count ... achieved at the Sydney games is expensive ... Is this a price that the nation can continue to afford? What happens if the nation starts to slide down the medal tally? An increase in passive sports consumption is the last thing Australia needs, given its increasing obesity problems. (Toohey 2008: 1966)

As Team GB secured a position in the top three at London 2012, while Australia was by its own high standards less successful, this assessment exemplifies the risks associated with non-delivery of legacy claims.

Discourses of spectacle, festival, carnival, and celebrity

2.1 How do we translate elite sports performance in the Games, by very few people, into sports participation and activity, by very many? To understand the significance for legacy achievement of different and often contradictory public responses to the Games, the complex model developed by MacAloon (1984) is useful. He identifies distinct discursive genres (including spectacle, festival, ritual, and game); all are present, but the relative importance of each varies across different aspects of the Games. For present purposes, spectacle and festival, in a dialectical relationship, are most germane. MacAloon argues that each genre reacts with others; spectacle can be a destructive force on festival, ritual and game – all of which reduce distance between audience and spectator, while spectacle increases it. The Games, as spectacle ***par excellence***, are a televisual event and hence disciplinary technology (Foucault 1977) for the majority of people, consumed passively. Further, even for those present in person, while the element of festival and inspirational active participation is powerfully present in some elements (e.g. enthusiastic public interaction in the Games park, and around the pre-Games torch relay), in the sporting events and performance the dominant mode of government is the spectacle, downplaying the joyful individual and shared engagement of the festival, and instead requiring passive and distanced consumption. This is an uncanny paradox insofar as consumption, although passively construed, is an active concept requiring subjects to allow power relations, immanent within the discursive practices of ***spectacle***, to play upon the self and further regulate the conduct of one's own conduct, through self-government (Foucault 1983). The tension between the active elite and the passive majority, invoked in MacAloon's (1984) analysis, is thus arguably misleading, being just as apt to convey this concept of practice and government.

2.2 Also pertinent to the status of the Olympics, conceived simultaneously as spectacle and festival, is Bakhtin's (1941) concept of 'carnival'. This is characterised as an event in which individuals collectively express their subject positions through the release of energy (cathexis), defining their subordinate identity. This release ensures the preservation of the social and cultural conditions that subjugate them, occurring safely and confined to the carnival, in this case the Olympics, which defines the limits of the

inversion of the order by which this group is ordinarily governed. Typically, carnival celebrates the denigration of order, through a discourse which weakens the barrier between the elite and the many, suggesting a momentary revolutionary triumph of the less powerful. Bakhtin's concept, however, implies that carnival, whilst culturally instituted, demonstrates an irreducible condition of all social, intellectual and cultural orders, that the possibility of their inversion is harboured in the very authority by which such orders are regulated and governed. Thus, no order through which hierarchies and subordinate positions are maintained, including the modern Olympic Games, is immune to inversion and displacement, the result of the exercise of power by which they are discursively constituted and practiced, to function as 'true' (Foucault 1980). In this case, inversion is achieved not by meeting the power of authority on its own terms, but through the demonstration of the irrational (the idea of widening participation) in relation to the assumption of the rational order (sustaining elite achievement) upon which the authority of systematic governmentality (Foucault 1979) is based and from which it takes its legitimacy.

2.3 As an impediment to the possibility of such material displacement, it might also be questioned whether the fixation on celebrity for its own sake (so that teenagers announce their ambition as 'being famous'), in certain quarters of popular culture in the UK, is currently conducive to mass sports participation and hard won achievement. The pervasive emphasis on chance, rather than effort, as the basis of success was inadvertently highlighted during London 2012 by successful Team GB members' grateful acknowledgement of their Lottery funding. Earlier, celebrity discourse pervaded media reporting of the pre-Games torch relay; presented as a 'people's event', it received most coverage when the torch-bearer was famous, even if unconnected to the location, sport, or to the Olympics. The torch itself was accorded celebrity status and a personality: it struggled through the rain, enjoyed a warm welcome, needed its own weather forecast, and kissed other torches.[1] While the relationship between sport and celebrity may be complex, the issue is widely recognised (see Boorstin 1992). Bradley Wiggins, multiple gold medal winner, and in 2012 the first British winner of the ***Tour de France***, commented that it was good to be famous for having achieved something, as 'so much of British culture is built around people who are famous for doing nothing' (Wiggins 2012: n.p.). Some discussion of successful Team GB competitors stressed the apparent disjuncture between elite Olympic performance and frequently identified characteristics of contemporary Britain. Echoing Putnam (2000):

> These people are ... embodiments of deferred gratification ... self-denial and hard work ... They're the opposite of the gimme-now, look-at-me, celebrity B-list fame academy set we keep being told epitomises modern Britain. If it looks egotistical ... it's really a story of graft, and of group loyalty ... And if we take those two things ... then we have the glimpse of a different Britain ... If Britain's remarkable per-capita success at these Games teaches us anything, it's that when we bowl together, we bowl better. (Ashley 2012: n.p.)

From a Foucauldian (1976: 52) perspective, this reinforces the point that discourses are both uncertain and contradictory, producing 'specific rules that make it possible for some statements, but not others, to be made at particular times, places and institutional locations'.

Discourses of legacy delivery

3.1 Of course, different discursive legacy claims pose different levels and types of predictive challenge; once a building or facility has been provided, its continued availability depends on resourcing, and later governmental removal of support can threaten the achievement of particular participation-related legacy claims (see Butler 2012). This again invokes the concept of 'carnival' (Bakhtin 1941) in which an inversion of power is but a momentary triumph! Another potential difficulty is that, for essentially ideological reasons (e.g. centrally directed funding being regarded as 'big brother' style bureaucracy), one part of government may undermine an element of legacy-related policy discourse which had been prioritised by another. The destruction of the school sports partnerships instituted by the previous Labour government, through the withdrawal of £160m per year, as an early act of office by the Minister for Education, Michael Gove, and its only partially effective replacement with an annual Olympic-styled sports competition for schools by the Minister for Culture and Sport, Jeremy Hunt, is a powerful case in point (The Observer 2012: 32). Pupil participation in schools may become a key component in future claimed legacy achievement, even if such activity and participation can hardly be termed voluntary, or necessarily likely to continue beyond formal schooling. However, news during London 2012 of teachers reporting declining specialist coaching in state schools following funding cuts does not bode well (Vasagar & Campbell 2012).

3.2 Indeed, there are pervasive difficulties around all governments' capacity to remain committed to the achievement of complex and challenging outcomes beyond the short term; a desirable goal such as increased physical activity may not be truly owned within government at all (Burnham 2012). As noted above, talking in valorising terms about a desirable outcome discursively is easier than ***actually*** achieving it and any new government may see priorities differently. The House of Lords Science and Technology Committee expressed disappointment at the apparent failure of government to plan for the achievement of the claimed Olympic health legacy arising from increased activity levels (Lords' Select Committee 2012), the Chairman, Lord John Krebs, commenting:

> Tessa Jowell [the relevant Minister in the previous government] said that one of the legacies would be ... a healthier, happier, more active nation ... a unique opportunity to get us off our couches and out there being active … What we found was … the government doesn't have a credible plan to deliver that Olympic Legacy promise … there should be a bit of joined up thinking … We were really surprised [that] Hugh Robertson, the sports minister, told us he was not interested in the health legacy of the Olympics. (Krebs 2012: n.p.)

3.3 These difficulties were perhaps to be expected, for as Foucault (1980) reminds us, power is neither

sovereign, nor juridical, nor indeed the equivalent of a physical determination, but circulates and traverses discourse in rather more elusive, multiple and arguably subtle ways. McCartney et al. (2010) reviewed the effects of major sports events on health and socio-economic factors affecting the population and the city hosting the event. They reported 'little evidence that major multi-sports events held between 1978 and 2008 delivered health or socio-economic benefits for the populations in the host countries' (ibid: 8) and that, while 'the available evidence did not refute expectations of a legacy, positive or negative … it does establish that very little is known about the impacts of previous large multi-sports events, and … the possible impact of future events', adding that this contrasts starkly 'with official documentation used recently to promote such events' (ibid: 3). Beyond such governmental issues, having global companies identified as purveyors of high fat, salt and sugar content foods among the London 2012 sponsors (Rawnsley 2012) might be thought to have warranted further consideration.

3.4 When a claimed legacy requires a substantial mass behavioural or cultural change, unless those responsible for making the aspiration a reality apply a sophisticated understanding of current and future social conditions and processes, they are unlikely to be successful. These problematic consequences are exemplified by an assessment of the Sydney Games, eight years on:

> The sports infrastructure legacy is improving, but at continuing cost ... Sydney Olympic Park is iconic. It has nine major ... venues ... it hosts nearly 1,800 events each year. On the other hand, any social impacts ... claimed as a result of the games appears to have dissipated. In this respect, the games have gone on – to the next city. (Toohey 2008: 1966)

Discourses of risk, fear, and moral panic

4.1 However, the difficulty of achieving the increased participation legacy of London 2012 goes beyond governmental fragmentation and short-termism, as suggested by a New York Times correspondent's report from London just before the Games. It argued that appeals to the 'Olympic Spirit' are problematic in the UK,

> the land ***par excellence*** of 'safety management', where risk, initiative, personal responsibility and experience of extremes are being crushed in the name of the need to nanny everyone through the supposed dangers of stepping out the front door ... just because accidents happen does not mean life should be lived as if they are always imminent. (Cohen 2012: n.p.)

Rather than being raised as Olympians, Cohen reported that children in the UK learn to put on goggles before using glue, and to desist from dangerous three-legged races, while teachers must complete time-consuming risk assessments before doing anything or going anywhere with their pupils. A related recent example is children being banned from playing tag because it is 'too rough' (The Daily Telegraph 2013: 21). Allowing for journalistic hyperbole, this identification of the impact of safety management in the UK is indicative of issues addressed in this paper. It suggests strong discursive cultural pressures militating against both young people embracing sport and their parents entrusting them to the care of clubs and coaches. Adults acting ***in loco parentis*** are both 'spoken of' and constituted discursively as dubious and dangerous.

4.2 In theorising discourses of risk as they intersect with relations of power, Beck (1992) identified the imperatives and further production of knowledge that constitutes risk management. A roaming danger, such as potential child abuse or indeed the claimed prevalence of sexual abuse in sport (Brackenridge 2001), constructs the attempt to calculate and eradicate ambivalence (Bauman 1991). Life's contingencies are subjected to disciplinary technologies, human regulation, and control, in an attempt to avoid all risk (Giddens 1999), and risk-management becomes ubiquitous (Prescott 2004) in a context of extensive policing and self-policing (Foucault 1988), prioritising avoidance of the bad over achievement of the good. Corollary negative effects have been considered through risk-averse discourses of 'worst-case thinking' (Furedi 2010; Schneier 2010), which identify the worst possible scenario and then proceed as if it were reality. Thus, if the situation under consideration is 'adult and child', the 'worst first' thought is likely to be 'predator and victim'. Flawed logic and bad decisions result, with attention focussed on relatively low risks (Gill 2007). Proponents of alternative actions (e.g. less risk averse practice), are expected to prove that imagined nightmare scenarios could never happen. Thus, through a process of 'dividing practices' (Foucault 2002: 50), the 'techniques of an observing hierarchy and normalizing judgement … make it possible to qualify, to classify and to punish' (Foucault 1977: 184). In practice, through 'popularizing the belief that worst cases are normal, it incites people to be defenceless, and vulnerable to a wide range of future threats' (Furedi 2010: n.p.). Draconian policy and practice are facilitated through a range of disciplinary technologies, apparently immune from critical interrogation despite apparent negative consequences. A risk-based discourse around security was particularly apparent around London 2012, justifying ***inter alia*** missile batteries situated in residential areas, and evidence from the Sydney games suggests the persistence of some such 'special' arrangements (Toohey & Taylor 2012).

4.3 Such explorations of the processes inherent in contemporary risk discourses provide a context in which to apply the concept of moral panic (e.g. Cohen 1972), manifest in the context of child abuse and protection, leading to a culture of 'no-touch' practice by adults acting ***in loco parentis*** (Tobin 1997; Piper & Smith 2003) and its impact on sport, coaching, and physical education (Piper et al. 2011). Recent research has documented a pattern of policy and practice in education and childcare where disciplinary technologies of child protection (or, more cynically, adult protection) produce the regulatory effect of reduced levels of care and support (Piper et al. 2006). Adult fear of allegations of abuse, inscribed through a 'means of correct training' (Foucault 1977: 170), culminates in not applying first aid or sun-cream to young children. More generally, distressed or lost children are left at risk because self-governing (Foucault 1988) adults are anxious about approaching them. The practice referred to as 'safeguarding',

which starts from the assumption that all adults are abusers unless proved otherwise (and which seeks to control risk through codes of behaviour and bureaucratic checks), has in effect rendered non-parental adults toxic to children and young people. The process is reciprocal since the negative consequences for an adult even suspected of inappropriate or abusive acts are substantial; this reality is well known to children and young people, with devastating effects on the lives and careers of some adults acting *in loco parentis* (Sikes & Piper 2010).

4.4 The experience of many sports coaches and PE teachers, reported during the ESRC-funded ***Hands-off sports' coaching: the politics of touch*** project (Piper et al. 2012[2]), included ways in which their activities have been affected and curtailed. This research focussed particularly on three sports – football, swimming, and paddle-sport – but included interviews in some other contexts (e.g. rugby union and gymnastics) so that more generalised outcomes could be achieved. Over 50 interviews were conducted with coaches (this included at least 10 for each of the three sports, representing a range of age, experience, performance levels, employment status, gender etc), and a further 10 with PE teachers from a range of contexts and at different stages of their career. There was also a group interview for each of the three sports including different coaches to those referred to above. A number of coaching and teaching sessions were also observed (three for each of the three main sports). Towards the end of the process, further discursive interviews were conducted with managers (at least one for each of the three sports), administrators (at least one from the relevant major NGBs), and policy makers responsible for both specific sports and sporting provision more generally, including oversight of child protection and safeguarding. Project outcomes and implications will continue to be developed and disseminated (see Piper et al. 2011, 2012, 2013), and this work is the source underlying otherwise unreferenced points and arguments in the remainder of this paper.

4.5 In summary, discourses of moral panic and risk avoidance appear to have been particularly intense in sporting contexts (see also Garratt et al. 2012), with dramatic effects on the experience and anxiety levels of adult coaches and teachers *in loco parentis*. While younger coaches who had known no other way of operating appeared less surprised, others reported annoyance at what they perceived to be restrictive practices and disciplinary technologies, including repeated Criminal Records Bureau checks (17 in a 2 year period was the maximum reported). Assumed no-touch practice presented problems, even in extreme circumstances like deciding how to pull a capsized young canoeist from cold water, which did not happen quickly and spontaneously but required thinking through possible negative outcomes first. Football coaches were aware of cases like one in which a young girl ran across the pitch and launched herself to hug her coach as part of her goal scoring celebration, resulting in his suspension and investigation when the opposing team's coach accused him of 'grooming' behaviours. Defensive practice (i.e. protecting the adult as much as the child) was common, and in sports including swimming and gymnastics, characterised by semi-nakedness, male coaches working with young female athletes were particularly suspect.

4.6 Children, young people, and females are rendered simultaneously, and paradoxically, vulnerable ***and*** dangerous in this discourse. Laurendeau (2008), builds on Foucault's account of discourse as 'things both said and unsaid' (1981: 133) to explore 'the history of risk discourses surrounding the "protection" of women's bodies' in the Olympic movement, and how they 'operate to authorize and legitimate particular exclusionary practices' allowing the dominant to rationalise the exclusion of women (Laurendeau 2008: 383). These risk discourses (silent and/or articulated) have served to mark women as 'subjects in need of policing (by themselves and others)' (ibid.: 385). Many of these discourses are historical and medical, with a silent or spoken concern for women's perceived physical weakness and their reproductive organs, but their impact is wider, prompting judgemental and even exclusionary responses to female participation in demanding and challenging physical activity. Laurendeau draws on Donnelly (2004) in comparing different public responses to the deaths of male and female mountaineers who have left children at home, in which the men are understood as tragic and brave, but the women as heartless and irresponsible. Such risk discourses impact on the coaching context, where female athletes are constructed as being at risk, and infantilised. Although intimate relations between coach and athletes above the age of consent are not prohibited in law, they are nevertheless forbidden in many sports, as Olympic champion cyclist Victoria Pendleton knows to her cost (see McRae and Pendleton 2012). While rationalisations are offered (e.g. power imbalances, age differences, contrary responsibilities, avoiding favouritism), the underlying assumption, is that women (even 27 year-old Pendleton) need protection from male coaches, just as do children.

4.7 In the wider context of social concern, such discursive practices are unsurprising, as anxiety around the possibility and avoidance of sexual abuse is likely to impact powerfully on any site of activity where the bodies of children and young people (and women) are the focus of attention, and where intervention from non-parental adults could all too easily escalate with negative consequences. Further, the multi-layered context of regulation and organisation in which sports coaches operate (i.e. quasi-governmental overarching funding bodies, training and accreditation bodies, national governing bodies, local authorities, employers, clubs etc.), enables the 'ratcheting-up' of guidelines and practice, as each level of organisation and authority seeks to demonstrate its commitment and good practice. The pressure has been tightened further by the incorporation of the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC), through its Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU), into the processes through which many sports are regulated. At each level there is a determination to avoid reputational damage and the 'bad press' that attends cases of abuse. Developing an auditable set of avoidance-oriented procedures is one way of doing so, even if they are more effective in terms of adult protection than child protection.

4.8 Significantly, these pressures are not experienced equally but are manifest as 'dividing practices' (Foucault 2002: 50) at all levels of sport; their impact at grassroots level is greater in comparison with those at a higher level. While anxious PE teachers and club level coaches reported their preference for avoiding touch, or reliance on the 'sideways hug' if unavoidable, the Director of a national outdoor centre

argued that, while the culture of fear was damaging, the high status of the centre allowed staff to ignore it, thus classifying a moral hierarchy of difference (Foucault 1977). This response matches the lasting impression of many successful Team GB Olympians, semi-naked, post-event, greeting their extensive supporting teams with full body hugs and warm kisses that would be terrifying at lower levels of sport. For the elite, especially when successful, motive is less questionable. Even if the diver Tom Daley had won a medal in Beijing when he was 14, rather than in London aged 18, it seems unlikely that 'safeguarding' concerns would have been raised when five or six coaches or support team members leapt into the pool with him for communal celebrations. This disparity is not benign, since the anxiety reported by many grassroots coaches (Piper et al. 2012) can only have a negative effect on the aspirational legacy of widened sports participation, and further reinforces the paradox of moving between 'the many' and the 'elite', free of conflict and/or dissonance.

4.9 The decision by sports bodies to in effect hand control of child protection/safeguarding to other organisations with focussed expertise has been highly significant; they have bought into, and further transmitted an uncritical discourse which sustains a moral panic (Piper et al. 2011). Press releases from charities with a stake in the figures claim that abuse (typically defined widely and loosely) is on the rise, with a high proportion (1 in 10 or even 1 in 5) of children and young people as victims. The resulting restrictive discursive practices (don't touch, don't text, don't give a lift, don't take a photograph), are particularly powerful at grass roots level. These discourses (whether silent, spoken and/or written) speak into existence the idea that coaches are perverts or perverts in the making, and also serve to infantalise women, keeping them firmly in the category of women and children. Further, by privileging professional risk discourses above more favourable ones that portray the coach as reliable mentor, with capability beyond the purely technical, coaches, many of whom are volunteers, are placed in vulnerable situations which are likely to test their commitment. The contradictory nature of this discourse results in privileging risk free practice and a particular definition of child protection or safeguarding over other goals which sporting organisations would normally promote, and applying guidelines and practices which make the achievement of other goals less likely. In the process, many on whose enthusiasm the sports depend are demotivated, impoverishing the experience of many young people.

Conclusion

5.1 It has been argued here that, in addition to other issues discussed, the context of widespread anxiety, mistrust and defensive practice in sports coaching is particularly unsupportive of the achievement of targets associated with the claimed widened participation legacy from London 2012. At both a broad socio-cultural level, and also in relation to mainstream assumptions and practices within UK sports organisations, such a context supports the imposition of mind-sets and defensive practices which militate against mass participation and increased activity. From a Foucauldian perspective, a key tension relates to the *telos*of the spoken vision of Olympic legacy campaigns, particularly the idea that orderly social progress is spoken of and further constituted through the practice of mass participation in sport. However, in actuality such practices co-exist alongside contradictory discourses that serve to sustain notions of elite participation and achievement. As we have seen, the legacy narrative of social progress is further displaced by competing, multiple counter-discourses. The 'avoid risk at all costs' discourse, for example, which pervades many contemporary contexts of sport and physical education, produces power, knowledge and the organisational arrangements to promote hierarchical practices, where issues of fear and intergenerational mistrust prevail. All of which serve in the subordination of the legacy concept to widen participation, relative to the aim of promoting elite achievement. In this sense, the legacy of mass participation in sport exists as a sort of 'dead cult' in the 'strange heterotopia of the cemetery' (Foucault 1967), a non-place or 'fundamentally unreal space' in which the discursive heterotopia of mass participation, while almost universally and enthusiastically espoused, is hardly anywhere seriously practised. The question then remains as to whether the London Olympic legacy campaign will be eventually laid to rest, alongside its predecessors from other cities, in the cemetery of the subjugated dead.

5.2 Rhetorically at least, the LOCOG video successfully deployed at the 2012 bid presentations in Singapore invoked and evoked the positive international effect of a London Games. Children were shown in a number of relatively disadvantaged locations, supposedly dreaming of representing their country in London. It will be ironic if the claimed London 2012 legacy of increased participation and linked health benefits is most obviously realised in less well resourced, but less fearful, less risk obsessed societies. Sebastian Coe pledged 'to reach young people all around the world and connect them to the inspirational power of the Games … improving their lives as a result' (cited in Childmatters 2012:10). UNICEF, a lead partner in *International Inspiration*, has reported this pledge has resulted in a programme through which 250,000 children in Bangladesh have learnt to swim (SwimSafe n.d.), which is obviously good news. It seems likely that those involved, whether as organisers, learner-swimmers, or proud parents, regard their experience of the project as an opportunity rather than a reason for fear and mistrust; and the involved adults will have attracted respect, rather than suspicion and a feeling that they should be doubting their own motives, and those of their colleagues.

5.3 Thus, through applying a Foucauldian lens, our analysis has demonstrated that, while interpreted in isolation, thematic discourses that speak about legacy and its delivery, of the theatre of spectacle, carnival, and celebrity, and the management of risk and fear, may appear benign, in fact the synergy of contradictory and counter-discursive influences poses a real danger of displacing the legacy-aspiration to widen participation. Rather than treating all intergenerational coaching contact as sites of particular risk, those responsible for sports policy might consider that the concept of legacy is at risk of becoming further marginalised, banished to a 'dark resting place', the proximity of which may well fatefully propagate the actual death of mass participation (Foucault 1967).

Notes

[1]No doubt future postmodern PhD theses will analyse the occasion when the torch was carried by an actor playing a character in the BBC TV soap opera ***Eastenders***, in 'real' life and live on the 'fictional' programme, in a staged setting rendered real, in character but also as 'himself'.

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