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From Promotion to Protection: Human Rights and Events, Leisure and Sport

Abstract

This Special Issue of the journal *Leisure Studies* is an explicit engagement with human rights. Within the fields of events, leisure and sport there is no previous collection. There exists a rich supply of work on social justice, and moving forward, it is our contention that more concerted engagement with, and application of, human rights frameworks can enrich interdisciplinary work on social justice, international relations, politics and policy as well as the scholarship of sociology, anthropology, cultural studies, philosophy, history and law.

In this collection there are nine papers that cover, broadly, the ways human rights are denied, articulated and not realised. Mega-events, either sporting or otherwise (e.g., Gay Pride) tend to be the focus of this inquiry, although there are important contributions on grassroots NGOs that illuminate circumstances faced by Refugees in France and local youth workers, within Sport for Development and Peace (SPD) projects, in South Africa.

We thank the sixteen authors who have contributed their work. It is this collective voice that is essential for setting in motion a new era of human rights scholarship across the diverse reach of *Leisure Studies*.

Introduction

“And if our human rights laws stop us from doing it,
we will change the laws so we can do it”
PM Theresa May 6th June, 2017
(in Pasha-Robinson, 2017 ¶ 7)

Theresa May’s interpolation of human rights legislation during her pledge to prevent terrorism in the UK echoes long-standing political and popular perceptions of human rights. Within this political and popular framing, human rights laws are often [mis]interpreted simply as wrongly protecting people who commit atrocities. Days before the UK 2017 general election, and days after the third fatal attack within three months, May made strong claims to veto components of universal human rights legislation. Her renouncing of human rights echoed similar political party rhetoric in the aftermath of the UK 2015 general election when Michael Gove MP (then Justice Secretary) laid down plans to annul the 1998 Human Rights Act, and to withdraw the UK from the European Convention of Human Rights (McDonald, 2015). Such dismissals of, and disregard for, universal human rights legislation are not new, and not particular to the UK. United Nations (UN) secretary general Ban Ki-moon, discussing the erosion of international human rights and humanitarian law, made this point:

Some governments are sharply restricting people's ability to exercise their rights, attacking fundamental freedoms and dismantling judicial institutions that limit executive power. Others are detaining and imprisoning human rights defenders and clamping down on civil society and non-governmental organizations, preventing them from performing their vital work. (2016, ¶ 6)

As Ban Ki-moon highlights, this is happening at a time when 'racism and homelessness are rising in Europe' (¶ 5) and 'abuses continue against civilians who are starved, denied humanitarian aid and prevented from moving to places of safety' (¶ 7).

Human rights have long been ingrained in the legal, ethico-moral, and socio-cultural fabric of nation states and the international community, specifically in the purportedly shared visions of a global future characterised by the pursuit of freedom, justice and peace for all. Yet, over a half-century on from the adoption and development of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)(1948), attitudes and behaviours surrounding human rights remain fraught with controversy, critique and gross violations such as repressive and hostile state sovereignties, anti-immigration politics and policies, and terrorism. All of which have had starkly inhumane consequences for minority groups and displaced peoples across the world. Conversely, we face a time when Non Government Organisations (NGOs) and civil advocacy groups are actively championing human rights as their *lingua franca* in the fight against the exploitative and oppressive undercurrents of global capitalist expansion, and an ever-deepening tide of global socio-cultural injustices and socio-economic inequalities.

Clearly human rights, as legal and discursive societal and global entities, have currency. However, defining the terms can trouble the theoretical and conceptual appreciation of human rights. For example, Turner (1993) highlights that, unlike law, philosophy and politics, early sociology was skeptical of human rights:

... on at least two grounds. First, it is critical of the idea of the 'human' or 'humanity' as a universal category, because it has adopted a social constructionist view of the body ... and a relativistic view of culture ... 'Human' is not a category that can be applied cross-culturally, because the divide between human and not-human is socially and historically variable. Secondly, 'rights', especially in the utilitarian tradition, have been regarded as a product of individualistic, possessive and egotistic society, and as an inevitable adjunct to and legitimization of inequalities in capitalist society. (p. 500)

Turner makes the point that such arguments can extend to 'social rights', 'women's rights', 'aboriginal rights', 'animal rights', and we can add 'labour rights'. With that said, he does persist in providing an outline for a social theory of human rights because: '[c]ontests over rights as claims or entitlement are a major feature of modern social life' and 'the institutionalisation of rights through the United Nations charter has to be regarded as a central aspect of the social process of globalisation' (p. 490). As such, 'human-rights concepts can be seen as a progressive paradigm which is relevant to a world system' (p. 498). At the same time as referring to human-rights solidarity, Turner acknowledges that '[i]t is not possible to defend the concept of rights from all the various charges' (p. 500) – e.g., biased, western, individualistic, and providing 'western powers with an authority to intervene in the Third World' (p. 499). However, remaining wary of the 'constant political processes which erode the rights of citizens' (p. 508), and through a focus on embodied human frailty, social precariousness and collective sympathy, he did clear the way for the potential of a 'dynamic sociology of human rights' (Hynes, Lamb, Short & Waites, 2012, p. 787).

Hynes *et al.* argue that there is a need to move beyond debating the ontological dimensions of human rights to consider the social life of rights, especially if we are concerned with power, inequalities and resistance (2012), and the challenge of social engagement and activism (2010). They concluded that: '[A]nthropology has been ahead of sociology in developing empirical research on the reception, interpretation and effects of human rights in local contexts' (2012, p. 789). It is this turn to the social and cultural flows of human rights that underpin this Special Issue. Coupled with the contexts—events, leisure and sport—this Special Issue aims to capture the functioning of human rights and civil activism at the level of the relationships between the individual and the social, and *vis-à-vis* abuses, contestations and transformations.

It is not the first to offer such a scholarly intervention and it is important to acknowledge previous contributions. For instance, work on sport and human rights (Donnelly, 2008; Giulianotti & McArdle, 2006; Giulianotti, 2004; Kidd & Donnelly, 2000; Schneider, 2004; Singh, 2002; Taylor, 2000), including youth sport (David, 2005), and sport [mega] events (Adams & Piekartz, 2015; Schofield, Rhind & Blair, 2017; Van Rheenen, 2014). Despite highlighting the right to participate in sport, and showing how

sport can serve to promote human rights, authors also demonstrate how competitive sport endangers the rights of child and adult athletes in terms of their autonomy, privacy and civil liberties. The work on sport [mega] events is explicit in focusing on human rights violations and the various responses to these harmful breaches. In comparison, leisure has not received the same amount of scrutiny. Risse (2009) considers the philosophical and legal arguments surrounding labour rights, the right to work, and the right to rest and leisure. From within leisure studies, Veal (2015) charts existing critical scholarship that can be viewed as leading leisure theorists to an ineluctable engagement with human rights. Indeed, the Australian and New Zealand Association for Leisure Studies (ANZALS) 12th Biennial conference (2015) was entitled 'Leisure as a Human Right'. From this, McGrath, Young & Adams (2017) sketch a view of human rights and leisure to include arts, cultural heritage, tourism, first nation peoples, community development and environmentalism.

This Special Issue, focused on human rights, adds to this existing bank of work. Its scholarly contribution to *Leisure Studies* is an explicit engagement with human rights. Within the fields of events, leisure and sport there is no previous collection. There exists a rich supply of work on social justice, which we endorse. Moving forward, it is our contention that more concerted engagement with, and application of, human rights frameworks can enrich crucial interdisciplinary work on social justice, international relations, politics and policy as well as the scholarship of sociology, anthropology, cultural studies, philosophy, history and law.

Before outlining the nine papers herein, we provide further insight into the complexities and contradictions of human rights by exploring two dimensions: the promotion of human rights; and the protection of human rights. We do this to signal the value of taking a human rights perspective, the incompleteness of this Special Issue, and as a prompt for further work on human rights and events, leisure and sport.

Promoting Human Rights

The United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) is often cited as the starting point for the promotion of human rights. However, as Ishay (2004, 2008, 2012) contends, in her work on the origins and history of human rights, this is not the case.

Through an exploration of six (2004) controversies, she challenges 'several misconceptions that persist both within and outside the human rights community today' (p. 359). For instance, by tracking back to ancient times she argues that 'each great religion contains important humanistic elements that anticipated our modern conceptions of rights' (p. 360), and that 'religious humanism and ancient traditions influenced our secular and modern understanding of rights' (p. 361). Moreover, she claims that contemporary social and economic rights are not original:

Traditions from Hammurabi's Code to early Islamic thought contained perspectives that paralleled either Plato's communist vision of economic redistribution or Aristotle's defense of property, setting the stage for the tempestuous debates and struggles of the past three centuries. (p. 362)

Ishay (2004) does acknowledge that certain people were denied entitlement to early forms of human rights, namely slaves, women and homosexuals. Women, children, property-less men and the so-called insane (Hunt, 2007) were also failed during the period of European Enlightenment and the birth of modern liberalism, including the Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen (1789). Although this [French Revolution] moment signaled the advent of the promotion of human rights language, it was later during Western industrialisation when notions of equality expanded further. Ishay (2004) argues that the growing international labour movement during industrialisation, and accompanying socialist ideals, promoted stronger social justice and social welfare principles of human rights.

By tracing previous incarnations of rights, Ishay (2004) demonstrates how '[t]he spirit of human rights has been transmitted consciously and unconsciously from one generation to another' (p. 359). As such, it is possible to recognise previous iterations of rights in the articles of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Echoing the French revolutionary exclamation: 'dignity, liberty, equality, and brotherhood', articles 1 and 2 promote dignity and the idea that all humans are born free and equal. Articles 3-19 reflect:

... the first generation of civil liberties and other liberal rights fought for during the Enlightenment; the third, delineated in articles 20-26, addresses the second generation of rights, i.e. those related to political, social and economic equity and

championed during the industrial revolution; the fourth (articles 27–28) focuses on the third generation of rights associated with communal and national solidarity, as advocated during the late 19th century and early 20th century and throughout the post-colonial era. (Ishay, 2004, p. 359)

As many readers know, the making of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights began in earnest post-second world war. It was initiated in 1941 by Franklin Roosevelt's address to congress in which he presented a universalist vision of four freedoms, including free from want and fear. This was followed by the Atlantic Charter, which was clearly founded upon the conditions set by the first and second world wars:

Being convinced that complete victory over their enemies is essential to defend life, liberty, independence and religious freedom, and to preserve human rights and justice in their own lands as well as in other lands, and that they are now engaged in a common struggle against savage and brutal forces seeking to subjugate the world. (Declaration by the United Nations, 1942)

Twenty-six countries subscribed to the Atlantic Charter and this involvement signals the emerging world order in promoting human rights. Further 'international' human rights rhetoric developed and culminated in the 1945 UN Charter. An executive group, consisting of Eleanor Roosevelt (USA), René Cassin (France), Peng-chun Chang (China) and Charles Malik (Lebanon), was established as well as a drafting committee involving 12 countries (U.S., China, Lebanon, Australia, Chile, France, Philippines, Soviet Union, Ukraine, UK, Uruguay, Yugoslavia). The committee considered elements from 55 national constitutions and recommendations from human rights NGOs.

In drafting the UDHR (1948) a decision had to be made concerning the status of the proposed human rights – should they appear within a declaration or convention? The former serves as a recommendation that has moral weight. The latter is legally binding for signatories. The UDHR is not a legal document, but together with the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)(1966) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)(1966) as well as the existing core treaties,¹ there are serious obligations for signatories that endorse individual covenants

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1. ICERD International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination 21 Dec 1965
2. ICCPR International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights 16 Dec 1966
3. ICESCR International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights 16 Dec 1966
4. CEDAW Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women 18 Dec 1979
5. CAT Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment 10 Dec 1984

and conventions. Once State's governing bodies ratify via Parliament and/or President, the approval means they are held accountable by the terms. Of the 193 member states of the United Nations not all members sign up to individual covenants/conventions. The promotion of human rights, internationally, is uneven and inconsistent despite the advocacy of universality. For instance, 189 countries ratify the Convention for the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and 196 countries ratify the Convention on the Rights of the Child, however, only 48 countries ratify the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (Pécoud, 2015).

It is the so-called universality embedded in the development and language of contemporary human rights that causes concern. Clearly, the people and countries involved in crafting the official documentation—through which human rights are defined and promoted—represent the west/global north (Merry, 2009). As such, important concepts are socially and culturally constructed. For example, Burman (1994) argues that the definitions of the child, and childhood, in the Convention of the Rights of the Child are 'western fantasies' (p. 238) given the local conditions facing many young people in a number of countries.

It is this tension between universalism and cultural relativism, which is '[o]ne of the most intense debates within the human rights community ...' (Ishay, 2004, p. 364). The other, as alluded to by Turner (1993), is the process by which human rights are globally circulated and [trans]planted. Global flows are usually contingent upon a dominant and particular world order, which is often shaped by processes of capitalism. However, this might not always be the case. For example, Waltz (2004) claims that 'the concept of human rights may be poorly understood and uncritically equated with Western philosophy' (p. 800), as such there is a supposition that 'international human rights

6. CRC Convention on the Rights of the Child 20 Nov 1989

7. ICRMW International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families 18 Dec 1990

8. International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance 20 Dec 2006

9. ICRPD Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 13 Dec 2006

standards were negotiated without active participation by Middle Eastern and Muslim states' (p. 799). She offers a challenge by arguing that:

Diplomats from the Islamic world did not always agree with each other, but their various contributions resulted in the assertion of a right to self-determination, the most comprehensive statement of universality, culturally sensitive language about religious beliefs ... (p. 799)

The debates and controversies surrounding universalism, cultural relativism and the globalisation of human rights shed light on how the contemporary rights system operates. It is a complex system of promotion supported by written formal documentation (human rights instruments), international allegiances and official alliances. The system impacts the study of events, leisure and sport. It is relatively easy to seek out and interpret appropriate human rights instruments. However, in events, leisure and sport contexts, more work (theoretical and in practice/policy) is needed on the application of rights, including the socio-cultural life of human rights.

Protecting Human Rights

For the millions living amidst war and extreme poverty, and for countless others whose rights are violated or neglected in other ways, the ideals and aspirations of the [United Nations] Charter remain elusive. The blatant disrespect for fundamental principles of international human rights and humanitarian law defies our common humanity. (Ban Ki-moon, UN Secretary General, 2016)

In a series of forceful statements delivered at the United Nations' Headquarters, New York, throughout 2016, Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon issued a rallying cry for greater global unity and commitment to the protection of human rights. Dismissing claims of UN 'interference' in matters of national sovereignty, Ban Ki-moon voiced frustration over what he saw as an erosion of 'respect' for, and a neglect of 'responsibilities' towards, the safeguarding of human rights among member states. Many of whom, he explicitly alleged, are 'attacking fundamental freedoms', 'imprisoning human rights defenders', and 'clamping down on civil society and non-governmental organisations' that seek to challenge State power. It was time, he motioned, to usher in a new era of human rights – an era which would see the protection of human rights become a 'powerful driver' of sustainable global transformation.

If indeed the social sciences were ever waiting for a call to shape the future of human rights praxis, few are likely to resonate more loudly than Ban Ki-moon's rallying cry. After all, in stepping beyond purely juridical, technocratic or philosophical 'rights-talk', Ban Ki-moon directly confronts the violent border sovereignties and political push-back of neoliberal state actors by implicitly asking critical questions of their ongoing legitimacy as the politico-legal guardian of human rights. Not just abstract norms or ideas, he reminds us, the protection of such fundamental freedoms demand 'concrete actions' – the responsibility for which increasingly falls on non-governmental and civil society actors, even where it means 'policing' the State itself. Beyond this inverted state-civil society nexus, however, Ban Ki-moon's comments also foreshadow a shift of more systemic scale – one which, in sociological shorthand, motions us to (re)consider the protection of human rights as but one 'key pillar' in an integrated socio-political pursuit of peace, security and sustainable development.

The significance of such a shift will not be lost on scholars who have long stressed the need to contextualise human rights struggles within the cultural and historical conditions that enable and constrain their protection. As Hynes et al. (2010) aptly posit, such protections acquire ethico-moral traction only within the contested terrain of social life, and the relative inequalities that foreclose access to particular societal and institutional structures. In fact, in bringing to light the socially-negotiated politics of human rights protections *in situ*, and across difference, social science scholars are ideally-placed to realise Ban Ki-moon's aspiration towards an integrated human rights agenda – one which is conversant with core questions of power, inequality and justice.

The moral imperative of a human rights approach thus shifts from its existing focus on the formal documenting of violations and abuses towards a more proactive emphasis on devising modes of protection through prevention, and by encouraging parallel domains of research and advocacy that foster respect for human dignity in its broadest sense. In other words, the responsibility to protect is extended beyond legal and constitutional mechanisms to include a responsibility to 'fact-find' and information-share, to identify fault-lines in existing doctrines, to shape policy reforms, as well as to organise movements towards social change, to challenge injustice, and to advocate on behalf of Others. To enact such a human rights approach, as Hynes et al. (2010: 826) argue, is not

merely to 'study' rights but to actively pursue their protection as part of a much larger commitment to shaping progressive social policy, public education and the realisation of human emancipation at large.

Drawing inspiration from such an approach, this Special Issue offers a richly situated angle of vision onto the inherent tensions surrounding human rights protections in a range of events, leisure and sport contexts. It builds on the critical momentum generated by recent scholarly and journalistic reportage on a broad corpus of human rights issues at so-called 'mega-events', particularly international sporting events such as the FIFA men's World Cup and the Olympic Games (Giulianotti et al., 2015; Horne, 2015; Jennings, 2011; Tomlinson, 2014). As Adams and Piekarczyk (2015) summarise, such reportage has broadly condemned the handling of human rights protections, revealing issues of community censorship, human displacement and trafficking, police brutality, housing rights, abject poverty, discrimination and labor exploitation. At its best, such work has mobilised the global media spotlight of mega events – 'the eyes of the world', in Lenskyj's (2010: 15) terms – as a platform on which to expose inadequate human rights protections, giving voice to marginalized or indigenous peoples, and often motioning for public action towards state reform of governance and accountability. Take, for example, Millward's (2017) relational sociological analysis of the systematic violation of human rights protections in the lead up to the FIFA men's World Cup 2022 to be hosted in Qatar. While documenting the large numbers of migrant workers who were injured or killed in stadia construction to date, Millward (2017) proceeds to examine the transnational vacuum of accountability which has seen the Qatari state, FIFA, construction (sub)contractors, corporate sponsors and recruitment agencies collectively shirk responsibilities pertaining to the safety, rights and dignity of 'foreign workers'; many of whom – under the 'Kafala system' – have had their passports, and hence mobility, controlled by local sponsors (Brannagan and Giulianotti, 2015; Human Rights Watch, 2012). On a similar note, Timms (2012) traces the unseen struggle by PlayFair2012 to secure the rights of workers found to have been subject to 'poverty wages' and exploitative conditions in factories tendered with supplying merchandise and sportswear at the London 2012 Olympic Games. Beyond sport and leisure events, but allied to this, Lamond in this Special Issue, reveals how rampant Western-led commercialisation of Gay Pride events has served to depoliticise the transgressive ethos

of LGBT protest and rights claiming such that they become co-opted into a form of celebratory capitalism (Boykoff, 2014).

Echoing Woodiwiss's (2005) call for research that refuses to separate human rights from socio-political processes, cultural practices and structural conditions, such scholarship moves beyond detailing rights violations to examine how their protection, or lack thereof, is intimately tied to the broader processual (re)making of leisure spaces connected to mega-events. That said, as a word of caution, the apparent magnetism of mega-events as a catalyst for scholarship on 'human rights issues' often results in all-too fleeting modes of critique – modes that move with, and hence are partially conjoined to, the normative timeline of the event itself. When the show leaves town, so too, it often seems, does the scholarly inclination towards protecting human rights. Fleay (2012) captures the dangers of such short-termism in her analysis of Amnesty International's unsuccessful efforts to publicly pressure the Chinese government to address widespread political and civil rights abuses in the lead up to the Beijing Olympic Games. In particular, her concluding call for more sustained, longer-term modes of advocacy and campaigning further accentuates the need to avoid the sociological 'bandwagoning' of human rights onto the agenda surrounding mega-events.

After all, as many have argued, the advancement of human rights protections through sport remains fraught with controversy (Kidd & Donnelly, 2000; Donnelly, 2008). Recent years have seen widespread rights claims centred on child abuse (Brackenridge et al., 2015; David, 2005; Taylor, 2017), gender pay-gaps (Kelner, 2017), allegations of child trafficking and labour exploitation (McGee, 2012) as well as the exclusion of disabled people, racial discrimination and related intolerance, homophobia, even denied access to the right to play. Once again, however, there are seeds of optimism to be found in the recently re-launched United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's)(2015-2030), which actively call for a strategic deployment of human rights protections – as with sport as a 'cost-effective and flexible tool' – in the pursuit of 'comprehensive solutions' to global challenges (Winkler & Williams, 2017). 'The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development', in particular, indexes the 'immense potential' of human rights instruments in strengthening accountability and transparency, in monitoring SDG commitments across member states, and in providing a moral

scaffolding for a systems-based response that can challenge inequalities and 'leave no one behind'.

In responding to Ban Ki-moon's rallying cry, then, we must confront these urgent challenges to human rights protections. Doing so will require novel forms of collaboration with, and outreach to, grassroots activists, human rights NGO's, critical think-tanks and state governing bodies, as well as conjoining the moral and political reach of research, advocacy and policy in the pursuit of transformative, structural change. As a step in the right direction, this Special Issue should be read both as a vibrant cross-section of existing scholarship, and as a departure point – even a critical provocation – towards such novel forms of socio-cultural engagement with human rights protections vis-à-vis events, leisure and sport.

Special Issue content

In this collection there are a range of papers that cover, broadly, the ways human rights are denied (e.g., Horne; Suzuki, Ogawa & Inaba; McGee & Pelham; and Van der Klashorst), articulated (e.g., Caudwell, Davidson & McDonald; and Talbot & Carter) and not realised (e.g., Dowse, Sacha & Weed and Lamond). Mega-events, either sporting or otherwise (e.g., Gay Pride) tend to be the focus of this inquiry, although there are important contributions on grassroots NGOs that illuminate circumstances faced by Refugees in France (e.g., McGee & Pelham) and local youth workers within Sport for Development and Peace (SPD) projects in South Africa (e.g., Van der Klashorst). Overall, a range of research methodologies are deployed and the tendency is towards approaches that capture the empirical, everyday experiences e.g., ethnography, autoethnography, interviews, focus groups and observation. Not all of the papers rely on primary research. One paper reflects on commissioned research for the human rights advocacy organisation: Terre des Hommes International Federation (e.g., Dowse, Sacha & Weed), and two papers present theoretically grounded arguments informed by the work of the late sociologist and criminologist Stanley Cohen (e.g., Horne), and through a detailed, applied conceptual critique of cosmopolitanism (e.g., Davidson & McDonald).

In the first paper, Horne continues his work on sport mega-events by turning our attention to the historical lack of resistance to hosting these events despite accepted knowledge of the regular social injustices they generate. Framing his arguments within ideas posited by Stanley Cohen, namely – states of denial, folk devils, moral panics and social control, Horne explains the complex processes of exposing, contesting and transforming human rights abuses. He draws on examples from FIFA men’s World Cup (2014) and summer (2016) Paralympics and Olympics, and ends with praise for investigative journalist, activists and some academics for working to expose atrocities and suffering. We might add human rights lawyers to this list.

Sport mega-events are now established and entrenched features of our global economy. Turning to a context that is very different, but arguably a consequence of dominant global political and economic circuits of power that blatantly deny human rights, McGee and Pelham show us the nature of contemporary refugee status when they explain efforts by grassroots NGOs, working in Calais France, to uphold the condition, and dignity, of: ‘We are Human.’ Informal and formal refugee camps exist in many places around the world, some are more or less known, most are dependent upon the hope—in its many guises—provided by individual and collections of humanitarian workers. McGee and Pelham focus on the NGOs Play4Calais and the Refugee Youth Service and their ephemeral offerings of ‘normal’ daily opportunities for play, sport, cinema and art. Such provision clashes with State refusal of humanitarian aid and State nihilism of refugee human rights.

The next three papers, in very different ways, consider the collective – lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender (LGBT) and human rights [non]claiming. Lamond, drawing together critical event studies (CES) and reflexive autoethnography of Sao Paulo Pride 2017, explores the simultaneous suspension of human rights rhetoric and the expanding corporate take-over. He argues that this Pride is a marketised and corporately colonised event of dissent. The slick, manicured and merchandised Sao Paulo parade can be juxtaposed with the complect human rights claiming carried within the activities, and people, supporting EuroPride 2015 in Rīga, Latvia. Caudwell’s paper details the presence and absence of human rights discourse during the week of EuroPride 2015. Embedded within the discussions is a critique of transnational west to

east flows of human rights discourse that can perpetuate dominant western notions of sexualities and LGBT rights, and obfuscate local conditions. Davidson and McDonald make a similar critique in their examination of western LGBT protest surrounding Sochi winter Olympics 2014. By interrogating the limits of cosmopolitanism, the authors show how western activist intention to protect the human rights of Others operates to propel and upholds a hegemonic world order.

Turning to the previous and subsequent summer Olympics (Rio 2016 & Tokyo 2020), authors provide detailed coverage of known violations of human rights that perpetually occur during the preparation and staging of the Olympic games. This coverage is at the level of the local and particular, and revealed via on-going ethnographic field work. Talbot and Carter's study centres forced evictions and police brutality, and Suzuki, Ogawa and Inaba focus on housing, eviction, the elderly and the homeless. By examining the use of human rights discourse by activists and the media, Talbot and Carter highlight the paradoxes of contestation. Mainstream and international media are shown to report police brutality towards anti-Olympic protest through a human rights abuse lens, but did not use this approach to frame the enforced removal of home dwellers. Whereas activists adopted, explicitly, human rights to confront the processes of eviction, but not in their calling to justice police violence. Suzuki, Ogawa and Inaba also highlight State disregard for the right to housing during Olympic infrastructure construction. Their research is concerned with two groups of people: the elderly and the homeless, and how the building of sport stadia affects their rights to live, and die, at home. The authors make the important point that demolishing homes, offering alternative housing and relocating residence often deny human dignity, which for the elderly can mean a denial of the right to die at 'home'.

The final two papers in this Special Issue illustrate the importance of children and young people in any discussion of human rights. Dowse, Powell and Weed, looking towards the future development of evidence-based event policy, call for the inclusion of children as a recognised stakeholder group. Human rights advocates tend to document labour rights and issues related to exploitative employment contracts and safe working conditions; housing and forced removal of residence/citizens; the taking of indigenous land; and the silencing of citizens, activists and journalists. To date, little is available

that forefronts the rights of the child during the many processes involved in hosting mega-sporting events. Van der Klashorst makes a similar point when she argues that the conditions faced by local youth workers in her research in South Africa are often forgotten by the broader Sport for Development and Peace (SDP) industry. In particular, she highlights the irony in SDP projects that are founded on, and/or carry human rights sentiments, but fail to consider promoting the rights of local youth workers who deliver the activities.

As a collection, this Special Issue covers a range of events, leisure and sport cultures and practices. We thank the sixteen authors who have contributed their work to this first-of-its-kind collection. Each have brought a wealth of empirical knowledge, theoretical acumen and commitment to bear on renewing—even rescuing—the promotion and protection of human rights. It is this collective voice that will be essential for setting in motion a new era of human rights scholarship across the diverse reach of *Leisure Studies*.

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