

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Massive events like the Olympic Games create a huge number of complex risks



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114 > Preparing for the worst

115 > Keeping music live 116 > OPINION: Perceptions of privacy

117 > Sustainability on tour 117 > TV takes issue 118 > Thinking global, acting local 119 > The culture of car audio 120 > A variety of views

120 > Good sports 121 > Body talk 122 > OPINION: Doing it for charity



Two past Olympic heroes: Sebastian Coe, now Lord Coe and chairman of the London Organising Committee for the Games, and multiple gold-medal winner, Carl Lewis

PA Photos

Preparing for the worst

Next summer the Olympic Games are coming to London. Martin Ince talks to Dr Will Jennings about the risks involved when staging such a massive event

DR WILL JENNINGS, a research fellow at the University of Manchester, was awarded an ESRC fellowship to study how the many risks that surround running the Olympic Games are being managed. He says that although we hear more about risk now than in the past, it is not a new concern for Olympic organisers. As long ago as 1900, the Games carried insurance against injuries to workers and other hazards. Even the 1936 Games, held in Nazi Berlin, were heavily insured against accidents and losses.

In recent times, these concerns have become more concrete. In common with other organisations, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) now has risk policies and conducts formal risk assessments of host cities. Since the 1980s, Olympic organising committees have carried insurance against the cancellation of the Games, mainly because of the immense TV fees that would be lost if they failed to take place. In 1984, when the Soviet bloc boycotted the Los Angeles Olympics, Moscow said that its athletes were staying away because of concerns for their safety. After the 9/11 attacks on the US, the IOC took out enhanced insurance

Risk itself has become a unifying concern for differing organisations

cover against the possible cancellation of the 2004 Athens Olympics.

Jennings points out that one type of risk the IOC does not take is financial. He says: "The IOC transfers all the financial liabilities to the host city through the host city contract. In practice, no city can afford to write an open-ended cheque for the Games, so that risk is taken on by national governments. For example, the British government had to step in when it proved impossible to find a private property developer to take responsibility for the Olympic Village in London." Like other major projects, he says, the costs of the Games tend to exceed their budgets. But because of their world prestige, no government can afford to let them fail.

Anyone thinking about risk at the Olympics is bound to think about the chance of a major terrorist threat. The attack on the Israeli team at the 1972 Munich Olympics is a grim precedent. Dr Jennings adds that before the 1996 Olympics in Atlanta, contingency plans were made to cope with the possibility of an aircraft being flown into the stadium as an act of terror during the Opening Ceremony.

Since then, says Jennings, the risk management culture surrounding the Games has grown. Looking at London, he says that the engineering of the Olympic sites, the gathering of intelligence on possible threats, and the sheer number of people on the ground, add up to what seems to be a huge, well-managed operation.

He adds that risk itself has become a unifying concern, which allows people from widely differing organisations to have a discussion on common ground. "I have been at meetings where people from the insurance industry, the Cabinet Office and other government departments, the police, transport, and infrastructure, have all been able to talk about risk because it is a shared language. Risk is a very real concern, but it is also an administrative way of thinking that allows organisations to control events. That is a new development and is one difference between the Games in London in 1948 and 2012."

MULTI-AGENCY INVOLVEMENT

The involvement of a wide range of agencies is inevitable, says Jennings, partly because the risks posed by the Olympics are not confined to the highly visible Olympic Park in East London. Instead, there will be events across London and at other venues around Britain,

from football in Scotland and Manchester to sailing off the south coast of England. "Most of the risk management applies to the Olympic Park itself, but it is essential to look at resilience in all these areas."

The biggest single risk to the Games, in Jennings' view, is the possibility that carefully-planned systems will be overwhelmed by some unexpected event. "When there were riots in London in the summer [of 2011]," he says, "police officers were called in from all over the country. That meant that the capacity of the police elsewhere was reduced. We do not know fully how all the systems being designed for the Olympics will cope with the strain that may be put on them by a similar unexpected event somewhere else in the country." A civil emergency such as serious flooding could place a big strain on fire and rescue services at a time when the Olympics are already asking for unprecedented resources.

EXPECT THE UNEXPECTED

The Games are most vulnerable, he thinks, to unexpected interactions between different parts of the system. "Imagine if there was a transport breakdown near the Olympic Park. It might be caused by a power cut, because demands for electricity during large-scale events can be unpredictable. If it happens when over 100,000 spectators are leaving the venues at the end of the day, its potential effect is amplified in significance and impact."

He adds that the existence of threats such as these forms a definite part of the International Olympic Committee's thinking. "Risk management is important to the IOC's thinking when it awards the Games. But that does not mean that it bases its decisions solely on the need to minimise it. Sochi [the Russian site for the 2014 Winter Olympics] is not the world's most risk-free city." As well as risk, the choice of venue takes into account factors like the need for the Games to go to new parts of the world, for symbolic and sporting reasons. Jennings contrasts the thoughtful approach to these issues taken by the IOC to the controversy stoked by FIFA, the governing body of world football, over its choices of venues for the football World Cup.

He comments: "The IOC pays far more attention to risk than FIFA seems to. In the late 1990s the IOC had to deal with a damaging scandal over bid-rigging for the [2002] Winter Olympics at Salt Lake City in the US. This led quickly to major reform. By contrast, FIFA has never done anything much to deal with the many complaints about its procedures. The IOC may seem to be very bureaucratic, but in fact it is also very thoughtful and thorough." ■

www.manchester.ac.uk

Will Jennings' book Olympic Risks will be published by Palgrave Macmillan in 2012

Keeping music live

Why do music festivals go from strength to strength?

THE MUSIC INDUSTRY, like any business that depends on paid-for content, has been changed irrevocably by the internet. In Britain, although sales of downloaded albums have been increasing (by 30 per cent in 2010) this is well short of compensating for the loss of sales of CDs over time. But an area that has been bucking the trend is live performance, particularly festivals, with over 200 majors a year in Britain generating over £100 million in direct and off-site spending.

Research by Professor Nic Beech of the ESRC-funded Advanced Institute of Management (AIM) Research explored musical events from the perspectives of organisers, musicians and audiences to see what makes festivals work. Fifty gigs and events were observed and interviews held with 53 organisers, 69 musicians and 180 audience members. Organisers were mainly interested in the music and, while they were concerned with audience numbers and the quality of the experience, they were not primarily commercially oriented. Good organisation was about choosing the space to fit the band and audience, ensuring sound and light worked well, generating the audience and enabling the music to work well. They needed to generate sufficient income to pay the bills and keep the festival going, but many organisers used profitable gigs to subsidise less popular or more experimental work, or community and charity events.

The audiences were highly mixed, ranging from the enthusiast with the complete CD collection to those who wanted to go to a gig and happened to be in the right place at the right time. Festivals attract audiences because of reputation and specific headline acts, but many attend just because of a partner or friend. While communicating with audiences through festival and artist websites and traditional media is important, word of mouth is a strong influence on decisions to attend. Social media, as part of a word of mouth, plays an increasing role, most often influencing last-minute decisions about which gig to go to. Some audience members wanted to hear 'the hits', while others wanted new material. But almost all were interested in 'connection' with the musicians and the audience, although what they meant by 'connection' varied greatly. Many musicians played festivals

because of the atmosphere, the opportunity to see and talk to other bands, and to play to a large audience. Some bands played songs or styles they would not normally perform at their own gigs. Many watched friends play and backstage it was common to see collaborations being worked on.

To make a tour of festivals viable many bands would re-orchestrate music so that it did not require large instruments or more players that would be expensive to transport.

Some audience members wanted to hear 'the hits', while others wanted new material

However, the musicians did not see this as detracting from quality and often saw it as a spur to creativity. Playing festivals was an important source of income for many bands. The possibility of growing their own audience was also a benefit, but these commercial

considerations, while important for some, were less important than connecting with the audience and having fun in big venues.

The research revealed that certain festivals worked because of an overlap between what organisers, musicians and audiences valued and did. However, it was not a simple case of everyone wanting the same thing. Audiences were highly mixed and ambiguous in what they valued, although most wanted 'connection'. Organisers were aware of commercial, musical and other goals, but were motivated by the music and the experience rather than raw commerciality. Musicians were strategic in what they chose to do and financially aware, but did not necessarily see this as detracting from creativity. ■

www.aimresearch.org



It's all about being 'connected' at a festival

Perceptions of privacy

Community spirit can help individuals balance social networking and privacy issues

COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY IS rapidly transforming services used in the social, consumer, administrative and political areas of our lives. What we tell people about ourselves online is a fundamental activity and, for each of us, this means learning to balance our desire to be sociable with our desire to be private. Communities play an important part in the way we learn how to strike that balance.

The Visualisation and Other Methods of Expression (VOME) project uses social research to influence the development of technology designed to support privacy and consent decision-making. The problem that VOME is exploring is summed up by Conn Crawford from Sunderland City Council.

"Consider the case of a young person, aged 13 years, who is 'at risk' of offending. They are one of the target groups for the Empowering Young People programme, which will shortly commence on the Trust Services Infrastructure (TSI) platform. Some of their peers have heard about the scheme and are saying it will be used by the police to keep track of them. Our young person is shy, reserved and has some learning difficulties. How will they express their concerns about how their data will be used, or will they simply choose not to engage? How might this be further complicated if the young person were to be a member of a minority ethnic group?"

PRIVACY AND SOCIAL COMPUTING

One of the project's first research activities was to look at how the media portrayed privacy in the context of social computing and the effect this had on how people perceived privacy as an issue. The team worked with i to i Research to produce a report showing that media content often contains negative messages about social networking by focusing on privacy-related topics such as identity theft, damage to reputations, damage to face-to-face relationships, adverse changes in behaviour and dangers for personal safety.

Through work in communities across Britain, it became clear to researchers that the community plays an important role in helping individuals to balance their desire to be sociable with their need for privacy. In particular, youth groups, community centres and the family were mentioned as sources of support for social networking users negotiating the complexity of online privacy issues.

The researchers used a number of research methods, in particular performance



People's privacy issues online and offline are very much connected and linked to community identity

art and focus groups, to explore how community support is given. In 2010, the project teamed up with physical theatre company Bimbilibausa to make a play of the first year's social scientific findings. Art was used to stimulate grassroots community debate on the use of the internet, in particular social networking. Both wanted to develop a play that encouraged the audience to participate by working through the different privacy scenarios with the performers.

The play was set in an office environment and examined the relationship between the three characters: Margareth, John and 'the Boss'. Using theatre, the play was able to encourage the audience to explore physical and virtual privacy and identity issues, just as these issues occur in everyday lives. The audience used an e-voting tool to vote on the privacy practices that the play's lead character Margareth should have followed, and then discussed with the actors the issues raised in the play and the role that families and society play in influencing and supporting privacy practices.

Techniques such as performance art have allowed the researchers to draw out community dynamics and discuss sensitive topics such as the influence of social networking on family tensions, the role social networking plays in community disputes, and the role of family members in helping social network users respond to online disputes. All these topics have privacy and identity issues and the focus groups and technology design sessions examined the community relationships that play a strong role in helping individuals shape the social/private balance.

One such relationship that the research explored with the Pallion Action Group in

Sunderland is that between granddaughters and grandmothers. The research shows that this relationship is important as grandmothers are often active participants in their granddaughters' online lives and granddaughters also encourage their grandmothers to participate in a variety of ways. Contrary to the media message, the work with Pallion showed that social networking provides a form of social cohesion.

One granddaughter commented, "I am really shy, but using social networking gives me the chance to be able to talk to anyone."

The research also showed that issues of privacy and identity are not separate online and offline problems, but part of a person's overall identity, and people's online behaviours are very much rooted in their lives within the community. The message from community research is that social networking often plays a useful and productive role in community life and community members often have a positive influence on online behaviours. ■

www.vome.org.uk



DR LIZZIE COLES-KEMP

Principal Investigator, VOME, Royal Holloway, University of London. VOME is a five-partner project

funded by the ESRC, the EPSRC and the Technology Strategy Board

Sustainability on tour

Measuring the social and environmental impacts of rural arts touring schemes

IN BRITAIN, PUBLICLY-funded rural touring schemes of live performers improve access to the arts for people living in rural areas, but what impact do they have on the rural economy, environment and community? Research by the ESRC Centre for Business Relationships, Accountability, Sustainability and Society (BRASS) at Cardiff University has been finding out.

Touring schemes connecting voluntary promoters with professional performers have been extending access to the arts in rural Britain for more than 30 years. In Wales, the Night Out Scheme, subsidised by the Arts Council of Wales, allows local communities to experience live performance in a range of venues in rural and urban areas.

The scheme works with local authorities to help local community groups host live professional performances without incurring the normal financial risks. A central philosophy is that rural isolation, poverty, social exclusion and similar disadvantages should not prevent people from having good access to the experiences of live performance. To date, the scheme has supported over 7,000 performances in Welsh communities.

Lori Frater and Jeroen Dijkshoorn from BRASS, working with the Arts Council of Wales, looked at the sustainability impact of the Night Out Scheme through an assessment of its economic, social and

environmental benefits and detriments. They visited venues around Wales collecting data from performers, promoters, venues and audiences on a wide variety of issues including: energy; modes of transport; waste generation; volunteering practices; consumption; community involvement and funding.

The research looked at the role the scheme plays in connecting the community, as local people are essential actors in arts development. Local people acting as the promoter working with a local venue often play an important role in the success or failure of a performance as they take on the responsibility for promotion, ticket sales and event organisation. Therefore, the scheme doesn't just provide access to a service, it also involves the community directly in all aspects of its delivery.

The delivery of events is not without problems and the research identified that in some areas a lack of funding for community venues resulted in decaying buildings, with some areas unsafe for occupation. Yet these venues are often at the heart of the community and the people interviewed repeatedly stressed the importance of the events for the cohesion of the community. ■

www.brass.cf.ac.uk

Touring schemes have been extending access to the arts in rural Britain for more than 30 years

Rural theatre depends on touring companies to help build community spirit



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TV takes issue

Should the entertainment media educate?

A RECENT PROJECT conducted by Dr Bethany Klein from the University of Leeds investigated the representation of social issues in entertainment programming. The project focused on programmes that offered unconventional framings of social issues, examined the production processes involved in representing social issues and identified audience responses.

Interviews with media professionals found that writers, directors and producers of entertainment television programming recognise conventional/unconventional representations of social issues. Discussion and conduct of research is taken seriously, even in the case of fictional programming, suggesting a sense of responsibility, both legally and morally. But media professionals are hesitant to embrace the role of educator and the label of education, although they do embrace the goal of making a difference.

Focus groups of viewers explored perspectives of the role of entertainment television and responses to specific storylines. Participants were encouraged to discuss the three social issues selected for the project (disability, immigration, crimes against children), media representations of these issues, and the role of media with respect to education. Discussions addressed conventional and unconventional media framings of social issues; the social role of entertainment television in their lives; and the benefits, limitations and responsibilities of entertainment television that addressed issues.

Television viewers hold strong opinions about media's responsibility in terms of representing social issues. They tend to discuss social issues using examples of current affairs or documentary programming and while they recognise that 'entertainment' programming can address social issues, thought these types of programmes weren't necessarily applicable to themselves. The value of entertainment television as a useful complement to news programmes paradoxically depends on the content's distance from explicitly educational media, but the lack of clarity on what that content is trying to achieve may obscure the potential use and value of such programming for producers and audiences. ■

ics.leeds.ac.uk

Thinking global, acting local

Despite tough challenges local media can still create a sense of community

LOCAL NEWS MEDIA include regional newspapers, community radio, local television, citizen journalism and news blogging, and they perform numerous functions in society, scrutinising and holding to account local authorities and individual institutions.

In Dresden and Leeds these individual media provide a comprehensive local news service in their respective communities without direct competition, although there are other threats: the global economic recession, declining circulations, classified advertising revenue migrating online, non-classified revenues threatened by online group discount models, and the rise in social media, have resulted in changes to the way people live their lives, how they communicate with one another, and how they use different media.

Doom-laden warnings predicting the end of newspapers and public service journalism are prevalent, but a study of local news media firms in Leeds and Dresden by Dr Gary Graham and Dr John Hill from the ESRC Centre for Research on Socio-Cultural Change (CRESC) reveals a different reality.

The researchers have found that local news media remain highly relevant in the modern world and their unique engagement with audiences across print and digital platforms continues to deliver significant levels of action on advertising. Strong branding is vital in the 'chaos' of the internet marketplace as it enables the news media firm to differentiate itself.

Firms with a strong brand for high-quality local news journalism are an authentic source to consumers and the consumer is more prepared to pay for this authenticity and quality.

The Dresden local newspaper *Saechsische Zeitung* – with a circulation of 49,000 copies (population of 523,038) – aimed to protect high-quality journalism in spite of the current economic climate. The digital editor said: "We are aiming to have more reporters working throughout our city. We have plans to launch iPhone and mobile applications of the newspaper and to offer free iPads to our subscribers who pay a 12-month subscription. Circulation depends on having detailed knowledge and intelligence of your patch and knowing where your potential buyers are." The newspaper charged a weekly subscription rate of €7.50 (£6.59). They now have over 2,000 online subscribers and 29,000 subscribers to their printed editions.

Individual media are the most effective source for helping people to integrate with their community

In Leeds there was a clear message from the CRESC study that people value community even more highly than they used to and so will be more willing to engage with brands that get involved at a local level.

Local media also remain highly relevant in the modern world with their unique audience engagement across print and digital platforms. Some form of paid-for content remains vital for maintaining the brand identity of the regional newspaper, and the segments identified to sustain paid online content include: domestic (living out of the area)/overseas readers; corporates requiring archives; sport/business; and (premium) customised services.

Although printed newspaper circulations are in decline, opportunities to monetise content and attract new revenue sources are emerging from radical technological innovations such as digital printing, DIY/micro advertising, social media, foldable screens, iPads or android smartphone applications. While community radio and local television had good engagement with younger consumers, the newspapers recognised that they needed to improve their participation levels.

Local news media firms have faced tough challenges recently, but can take heart from these findings. Individual media are by far the most effective source for helping people to integrate with their community, and the increased importance of local has a real impact on how readers perceive brands. Ironically in an era of globalisation, community has become critically important to the development of a healthy local news media service. ■

www.cresc.ac.uk

Local media are as relevant in the community as ever, particularly with new emerging platforms



Alamy

Consumers customise their cars with subwoofers, iPod docks and TV screens



The culture of car audio

An investigation into how car audio is embedded in popular culture, and how it influences how we listen to music and create it

DESPITE THE RISING prices of petrol and the related environmental impact, people are still driving in the 21st century. Part of this has to do with the lack or high cost of public transport, as well as the fact that roads are embedded in our lives – but is there something else at work?

Dr Justin Williams of Lancaster University (now of Anglia Ruskin University) argues that for many, driving is a pleasurable experience, and it is from the soundscapes of the car that we often derive the most pleasure. His research, with Professor John Urry at the Centre for Mobilities Research at Lancaster University, looked at our relationship with the car from the perspective of the intersection of popular music and the automobile. Car audio dates back to the 1920s, but the Galvin Manufacturing Company in Chicago invented the first commercially successful car radio in the early 1930s, named the ‘Motorola’ (combining motorcar and Victrola). Later, Galvin changed the name of the company to reflect its most successful product.

Although the Ford Model T is seen as the exemplar of ‘Fordism’ – mass assembly-line production of a single product – the model had over 5,000 different accessories available in

its lifetime, suggesting that the desire to customise the car is as old as automotive mass production. Car customisation is not restricted to the realm of a car’s exterior either. Over the past 25 years, the mobile audio market has grown to a multi-billion dollar industry, and a wide range of consumers customise their car sound systems to varying degrees with subwoofers, iPod docks and even television screens. At the extreme end, enthusiasts build audio sound systems to compete for the loudest and highest-quality car sound systems, competitions referred to as ‘sound-offs’, ‘crank-it-up competitions’, or ‘dB drag racing’.

The automobile has also been an important playback space for music producers since at least the 1960s. Many producers and sound engineers still leave the studio to do a ‘car check’ during the mixing process, some have wireless technology to hear their mixes on radio frequencies, and some studios now have a built-in car audio system in addition to their other reference speaker configurations. So it is safe to say that the automobile has helped shape the sounds of certain popular musics in a real and definable way; it has been an idealised listening space assumed to be a

prime location of popular music listening – and the sounds have been tailored accordingly.

The automobile has therefore become a crucial object in the imagery, ideologies and the sounds produced in various popular music cultures. Looking at popular music through the lens of automobility creates a new history that takes into account fan-listening practices and the implied listening spaces considered by producers in post-production mixing.

In the 1918 Booth Tarkington novel *The Magnificent Ambersons*, inventor Eugene Morgan proclaimed, “I think men’s minds are going to change in subtle ways because of automobiles.” The influence of the automobile on music production and consumption in the 20th century is just one of the many ways that this statement rings true. Investigating the auditory pleasures of the automobile fills a gaping hole in car culture literature and has potential relevance on social policy when looking to a more realistic post-car future. When we locate the symptoms of automobility in the contemporary state of urban cultures – most crucially the pleasures of the car’s interior soundscape – we begin to fully understand our relation to, and dependence on them. ■

www.lancs.ac.uk/fass/centres/cemore
www.anglia.ac.uk/justinwilliams

A variety of views

The loss of media could affect diversity of views more than mergers

OFCOM NATURALLY FOCUSED on political pluralism when considering the proposed purchase of BSkyB by News International, but should regulators always equate media pluralism with political pluralism? No is the answer offered by recent research at the ESRC Centre for Competition Policy (CCP) at the University of East Anglia.

In principle, a variety of views is important whenever knowledge is uncertain, and not just in politics. The practical difficulty is that little is known about how media mergers affect the diversity of non-political views. For instance, do differences in non-political view map reasonably closely onto political ones, so that measures of political pluralism actually capture the diversity of most types of view?

The CCP research offers insight on this by examining the aesthetic pluralism that is revealed in film reviews across British broadsheet newspapers. It finds that these differences in aesthetic view do not correlate well with political ones. This could, of course, be because there are no significant differences in these non-political views (and if this was the case in general, then again only political pluralism would matter in media mergers). However, it also finds that there are significant differences in aesthetic view for any one film.

A variety of views is important whenever knowledge is uncertain, not just in politics

In particular, under some reasonable assumptions about the 'wisdom of crowds' (ie, reviewers as a whole), the activity of reviewing removes about half the uncertainty that would otherwise exist over the quality of any one film. In one sense this is an endorsement of the activity of reviewing. But it also means, in effect, that the typical difference in view over any one film is of a similar magnitude to the

variance in the underlying quality of all films. So, if we think the variance in the quality of all films is significant, then so is the variety of views that is usually expressed by newspapers over any one film. Another way of looking at the value of this range of views comes from seeing how they relate to 'objective'

measures of a film's quality – for example, those that come from awards and the judgement of a wider community of film buffs. Here it seems that while each title's assessment correlates similarly well with such measures of quality, the average of all reviews correlates significantly better. Thus, the newspaper 'market' with its range of views is a better predictor of quality than any single newspaper.

It is natural, therefore, to wonder how such aesthetic pluralism would be affected by mergers and by the loss of one or other title. The answer may surprise some. The joint ownership of titles in itself seems not to make their



Joint ownership of newspaper titles seems not to make their views similar

aesthetic views any more similar. Perhaps this is not surprising as proprietors rarely seem to acquire titles to promote their aesthetic, as opposed to their political, views. But the loss of titles could be important. In particular, the loss of the *Independent* would have the biggest effect on the average (ie, 'market') judgement of quality, and it is the *Sunday Telegraph* and *Sunday Independent* that are least correlated with other titles. So it is their loss that poses the greatest threat to the diversity of aesthetic view. ■

competitionpolicy.ac.uk

Alamy



Major sporting events require significant resources to stage

Good sports

Why the ecological footprint of the 2012 Olympics will inform development policy

IN 2012, LONDON will be at the centre of the world's attention as it hosts the 2012 Summer Olympic and Paralympic Games. Hosting major sport events has formed a key part of the economic development strategies of many cities across the world, including London, but most events are relatively short-lived and require significant resources to stage.

PA Photos

Body talk

Body image and eating disorders in elite gymnastics

ON THE VERGE of the London 2012 Olympic Games, there is considerable focus and pressure on elite British athletes. What about the elite athletes who may suffer from eating disorders? The national eating disorder charity, b-eat estimates that 1.6 million people in Britain are directly affected by eating disorders. It is believed by some that the rate is much higher in both male and female elite athletes generally, and higher again in athletes whose sports emphasise aesthetic considerations, leanness, or specific weight categories or restrictions.

People with eating disorders often suffer from low self-esteem and depression. Research by Professor Mike McNamee, Dr Jacinta Tan, Dr Andrew Bloodworth and Dr Jeanette Hewitt, College of Human and Health Sciences, Swansea University, explores body image and eating disorders within elite gymnastics, and assesses levels of depression and self-esteem along with symptoms of eating disorders. The study includes male and female gymnasts aged 11-25.

The research is ongoing but has revealed the difficulty of assessing what counts as an eating disorder in the context of elite gymnasts. Both boys and girls begin competing seriously at the elite level in gymnastics at a very young age, and it is unclear what 'normal' physical and emotional development means for this population who are highly-disciplined, high-performing athletes from early or mid-childhood. They

also have unusually high muscle masses and low body fat, in a subculture where rigid control of and ideals concerning (unrealistic to 'normal' populations) weight and shape are normalised and promoted. The gymnast's body is effectively a 'tool of the trade'; working with their own body weight, somersaulting and/or lifting the body, or lifting another gymnast. Weight regulation is therefore seen as an occupational necessity. These factors make the assessment of whether a particular athlete's body weight is too high or low, or whether they have an eating disorder, problematic. The study has revealed

the lack of medical data and guidance for elite athletic children and parents.

The effects of eating disorders extend into socio-psychological domains. In particular eating disorders affect the autonomy and identity of the individual, and may derail normal development. This is of particular concern in sports such as gymnastics where elite athletes may be very young adolescents. Findings so far suggest that many elite gymnasts appear to have very high confidence and self-esteem, but are at the same time constantly preoccupied with their weight and shape and the perceived need to lose weight. The intense and long-term training demanded of them through their formative years also seems to mean they make strong friendships within the sport and have a more limited sense of possibilities for careers or lives outside sport when they retire from competition. ■

www.swan.ac.uk/humanandhealthsciences



Weight regulation is seen as an occupational necessity by gymnasts, particularly women

Measuring the environmental impacts of major events is important as the environmental limits of our planet become more visible. One measure of resource use is the 'ecological footprint'. Developed initially to assess the environmental impact of resource consumption by nations, this approach has now been used to calculate the impact of tourism and events.

Researchers at the ESRC Centre for Business Relationships, Accountability, Sustainability and Society (BRASS) at Cardiff University used the ecological footprint to assess the global environmental impact of a major sporting event in London – the British stages of the Tour de France in 2007. From 6-8 July 2007, the Grand Depart of the Tour was held in London and Kent with the majority of spectators originating from Britain (94 per

cent), 17 per cent Londoners, and six per cent from Europe and beyond.

BRASS researchers found that the event's ecological footprint was almost 58,000 global hectares – the land area needed to provide the resources used by spectators during the event. This included spectator travel to and

Measuring the environmental impacts of major events is important

at the event, food and drink consumed, and energy used in overnight accommodation. This footprint was almost two-and-a-half times greater than their everyday activities had they not attended the event. Spectator travel used the most resources

and generated a footprint of 47,300 global hectares – 75 per cent of the total event footprint. Spectators travelled almost 1.4 billion kilometres to watch the Grand Depart with 75 per cent of the travel footprint due to European and international visitors, the majority travelling to London by air. The event

footprint is likely to be even greater as the analysis did not include resources used by others such as the teams, sponsors or the media.

The 2012 Summer Olympic Games will have similar but much larger global environmental impacts when spectators travel from across the world. A carbon footprint study commissioned by LOCOG has estimated that London 2012 will generate 3.4 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalents with an estimated 20 per cent attributable to spectators. Significant steps are being taken by LOCOG and other stakeholders to reduce this footprint and stage the first 'sustainable games'.

If such events continue to form part of Britain's development policy, the ecological and carbon footprint can increase understanding of their environmental impacts and how effective our efforts have been in reducing them. ■

www.brass.cf.ac.uk

Doing it for charity

How can charities get more from their relationships with celebrities?

DISCUSSIONS ABOUT CELEBRITY and charities are always lively. Is it a necessary evil for charities to use celebrities to raise awareness and funds, should it be encouraged more, and does it depend on the charity and the celebrity? Realistically, the issue facing the charitable sector today is not whether to work with celebrity, but how to use it, where and when, so it would help to learn more about the current relationship of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) with celebrity.

First, we have to recognise the extent, and relatively recent development, of organised relationships between the celebrity and NGOs: the BBC calculated recently that 75 per cent of the top 30 charities have celebrity liaison officers and most of these have come in the last ten years; since 2000 three of the four major talent agencies in Hollywood have established foundations to promote charitable activities to their clients; since 2003 the Media Trust in Britain has organised celebrity advice workshops for NGOs; about seven years ago the Red Pages began listing celebrity ailments (to help health charities target the right people) and launched a newsletter detailing deals between celebrities, brands and charities in 2007; Third Sector's column on celebrity engagements went weekly in 2007; and the websites Look to the Stars and Ecorazzi – both documenting diverse celebrity activity for good causes – were set up on 2006.

CLOSE RELATIONSHIPS

Charities are now a recognised part of the celebrity news economy. Celebrity magazines will try to get at public figures through their charitable connections, and collaborate on the coverage of trips. The charitable sector is part of the celebrity industry. But these closer relations are not resulting in more news coverage. Articles about charity that mention celebrity peaked in the mid-2000s and have since declined. The growth of celebrity articles more generally, which was most marked in the broadsheets, appears to have halted too, while the proportion of celebrity articles in the tabloids has fluctuated but generally remained constant over the period for which data is available. And the rather dramatic rise of articles mentioning 'celebs' in the tabloids has not accompanied any increase in celebrity articles more generally – it is merely a change in terminology.

What's more, we cannot infer from the prominence of celebrity culture in the media that it dominates our domestic lives. Articles mentioning celebrity are a minority of news coverage, and analyses of large-scale surveys of media consumption suggest that less than 15 per cent of the population dwells on celebrity



Celebrities are much used in the charity sector, but do liaison officers get the results they really want?

culture. We may not be able to get away from it, but our interactions with it are not always intimate or particularly strong. Celebrity culture is more vigorously sustained by interest from elites in the media, politics, other celebrity circles and, most especially, among corporate leaders. It is that interest that is partly responsible for the prominence of celebrity in NGOs. With limited news space, varied public response, but a constant elite eagerness to meet celebrities, and celebrities (almost always) giving their time for free, much of what celebrity liaison officers do is less about getting access to public figures and more about making that access get results.

Celebrity liaison officers can discourage work with celebrity. Some of the pressure to work with celebrity comes from within NGOs from staff who do not understand the practicalities of celebrity work and from those who do not realise that you cannot just add celebrity to make a story or campaign work. As one celebrity liaison officer puts it: "Half of my job, my week, is about managing colleagues' expectations."

The other pressure comes from the corporate partners of NGOs hungry to get access to talent. One celebrity liaison officer spoke for many saying: "A lot of the corporates obviously see [charities] as a way to get free talent." Corporates seek access to celebrity for the publicity it generates, their brand associations, or simply for the pleasure of their presence at functions. They can exert strong pressures on NGOs to provide talent, and there are cases when charities have had to buy in temporary talent from agencies to satisfy the demands of corporate partners. The work of celebrity liaison is one of constant relationship management.

Some of the strongest and most thoughtful challenges to NGOs' work with celebrity have come from the NGO sector itself. Andrew Darnton

and Martin Kirk's *Finding Frames* questions the development work of NGOs, including work with some celebrities, that ultimately promotes individualistic and consumerist values at odds with citizen engagement and collective action. Their call is not necessarily to stop working with celebrities, but rather to work with them on the NGOs' own terms, and to take a long hard look at what that work with celebrity actually achieves to see what those terms should be.

These results suggest that the measured, limited and careful engagements Darnton, Kirk (and many others) advocate could ironically require an even deeper relationship with the celebrity industry. Working with celebrity requires constant compromise between the interests of the media, agents, managers, publicists, corporates, political elites and public, as well as other NGOs.

Being able to effectively manage those to produce results that NGOs want – on their terms – will require better and stronger relations with the celebrity industry.

If the longer-term strategic consequences of working with celebrity are better understood, the rapid intensification of relations between celebrity and NGOs in recent years could yield desirable results in the future. ■

The BBC calculated that 75 per cent of the top 30 charities have celebrity liaison officers

www.celebrityanddevelopment.wordpress.com



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