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With a Postscript on the Nuclear Question

by

Michael J. Shapiro

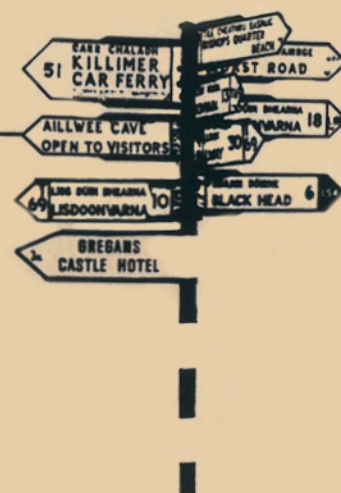
Working Paper No. 9

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First Annual Conference on
Discourse, Peace, Security and
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Ballyvaughn, Ireland

August 9-16, 1987



**Representing World Politics:
The Sport/War Intertext**

**With a Postscript
on the Nuclear Question**

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The conference held at Ballyvaughn, Ireland, in August 1987 was the beginning of an on-going international intellectual interchange on topics related to the discourse of peace and security and international society. It will include annual meetings, the second to be held in summer 1988, again in Ballyvaughn. Sponsored by the University of California Institute on Global Conflict and Cooperation, the conferences are intended to foster general inquiry into these scholarly topics and to stimulate research and teaching that incorporates these perspectives at University of California campuses. This year's series of working papers comprises the writings which seventeen authors submitted to their colleague-participants in preparation for the 1987 conference. Some have been updated somewhat before publication here. Some have been published elsewhere and are reissued here by permission. The Institute on Global Conflict and Cooperation hopes that these working papers will help to interest even more scholars in pursuing these lines of thought.

James M. Skelly
Series Editor

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The Institute on Global Conflict and Cooperation is an interdisciplinary Multicampus Research Unit of the University of California, established by the Regents in June 1983. The mission of the IGCC is to promote research and teaching on international conflict and cooperation, with particular emphasis on threats and avoidance of nuclear war. The IGCC Central Office is located at the University of California, San Diego.

Representing World Politics: The Sport/War Intertext
With a Postscript on the Nuclear Question

Any text is an intertext; other texts are present in it at various levels in more or less recognizable forms: the texts of the previous and surrounding culture.

Roland Barthes

The language of Sports, its organization, its values, its class system, its discipline, its energies, are used by politics, by business, by all the factors that engineer our daily lives, to justify, vivify, enhance, sometimes obscure nonsports activities, and then these words and concepts and values reenter sports, changed, and insidiously they affect our games.

Robert Lipsyte

Introduction

The provocation for this analysis can be found in Paul Fussell's masterful study of the British experience on the "Western Front" in World War I, a study he described as an analysis of "the literary dimensions of the trench experience itself."¹ In rendering this literary analysis, Fussell strikes a note of puzzlement at the power of the various ways that the war was figured or given mythical or rhetorical and narrative elements by English participants and on-lookers. He states that if the book were to have a subtitle it would be, "An Inquiry into the Curious Literariness of Real Life."² Although much of Fussell's emphasis is on the imaginings of self and Other, which had a role in vehiculating the strategies and tactics in the fighting itself (the physical engagement of the English and German soldiers), he conveys effectively the considerable socio-cultural depth of the imagery used not only to direct fighting styles and engagements but also the legitimation of the war effort as a whole carried in the various domains of British print journalism and literature.

The particular figuration that inspires this inquiry is Fussell's description of the way the British conceptions of a person's relationship to competitive games directed much of the ideational impetus and content of what the English fighting forces believed was involved in dealing with the Germans. For example, citing a contemporary "quasi official and very popular work of propaganda," Lord Northcliffe's *War Book*, Fussell demonstrates the sporting metaphors involved in the English sense of superiority over German counterparts.³

Our soldiers are individuals. They embark on little individual enterprises. The German...is not so clever at these devices. He has never been taught them before the war, and his whole training from childhood upwards has been to obey, and to obey in numbers.... He has not played individual games. Football, which develops individuality, has only been introduced into Germany in comparatively recent times.

The power of Northcliffe's particular form of sporting imagery comes from the ideational depth that certain forms of the gaming culture had acquired in English society. English sporting figuration entered into the war with manifestations well beyond mere legitimation for regarding the Germans as the kind of less worthy Others that would place them as appropriate targets of violent confrontation. Indeed in some corners of the English military mentality, confusion over or at least mixing of the sport versus war forms of agonistics reigned. Some of the commanders treated battles as sporting contests, with disastrous results for their soldiers. In the Battle of the Somme, for example, Captain W. P. Neville brought footballs to the front and offered a prize to the one of his four platoons which at "the jump-off" could kick its football first to the German frontline during the "attack." Among the many who failed to survive this attack was the sporting Captain Neville.⁴

While a good case can be made against the wisdom of mixing the genres of gaming and fighting in the case of actual battles as did Neville, who perpetrated an irrational enactment of a figural representation of the war, this analysis strikes a somewhat different note from Fussell's evocation of wonderment at such seemingly strange or irrational imaginative enactments. This particular aspect of the literariness of war, the effects of a sporting figuration, should not be regarded as curious for two reasons, one a fairly specific historic standpoint and the other a more general, epistemological one.

First, and more specifically, that sports imagery should vehiculate the thinking in international conflict is not surprising when one takes note of the origin of many sporting contests in military activities. The leaves from the sports and war texts have been sorted together in human societies for centuries. Since early antiquity the sporting and warrior dimensions of the social body have been intimately conjoined, and both have had a similar relation to social status. That in modernity, this intermixing of the ideational and thus policy dimensions of the sporting and warring bodies retains considerable import, was shown rather dramatically in the famous Soccer War described by LaFeber: "When a soccer match between Honduras and Salvadore ended in a bloody riot, Lopez's government seized the opportunity to expel all Salvadorans. War broke out between the two nations. It ended after both sides suffered heavy casualties and the Central American Common Market began to break down."⁵

Second, and more generally, conflict, war, or any domain of human understanding is always already textualized or shot through with figuration which has a venerable history. To understand the current text of conflict and war, then, one has to go back to its earlier inscriptions in the "archetypal body metaphors" stretching back to antiquity.⁶ It is therefore less useful for us to adopt an attitude of curiosity than it is to adopt a particular kind of textual analytic, to seek to detail the textualized modes of thought whose historical development and current powers of delegation are implicated in bringing us the objects, events, and processes we contemplate.

However, it is important to recognize that to recommend a textualizing approach to conflict and war as social policy is not to advocate the reduction of social phenomena to various concrete manifestations of language. The kind of textualizing implicated in post-structuralist approaches, where one encounters the methodological injunction to consider intertexts, is based on the recognition that social practices are always mediated by modes of thinking which are, themselves, practices whose most immediate expressions are linguistic. "Reality" within such an analytic is a mediated, textual phenomenon consisting in various modes of representation, where representation is understood not as a place-holder (*lieutenant*) for some unmediated presence but as a form of practice — a way of making the real — which happens to dominate over alternative possible practices.⁷ And critique, among other things, takes the form of questioning the privileged representations whose dominance has led to an unproblematic acceptance of the subjects, objects, and acts that they contain. But such a textualizing approach goes beyond the simple recognition that it is misguided to seek an unmediated presence behind forms of representation. It combines that recognition with an attention to the social depths in which these forms of representation have taken root.

For example, just as the psychiatrization of criminal danger sprung in the nineteenth century from a set of power relations, wherein health and penal officials together allocated legitimate versus illegitimate social identities and activated related forms of social control, the sportization of the conduct of international conflict springs from another broad set of social relations.⁸ The language of psychiatry is now lodged in so privileged a place its discursive practices are naturalized, and the allocation of deviant identities relatively unchallenged. Its privilege derives not only from the increasing importance of the scrutiny of "criminals" and other deviants in the modern age but also from the depth to which psychiatric language has penetrated into the language of everyday life such that psychiatric talk is wholly intelligible and relatively uncontested as the linguistic currency for allocating marginalized identities.

Similarly, sport talk is pervasive both because of the social depth of sporting activities — almost everyone has an identity related to competitive games, whether it is active or passive, current or a matter of past personal history — and because the overlap between the spectator-oriented sport culture and culture in general is considerable. Therefore, sport talk, shaped by the current structure and social relations of contests, has a significant "figurability" as a representational practice; it encounters interpretive codes that are widely held.⁹ Moreover, the figurability of sport talk has a depth which goes beyond the broad attention to sporting contests in the U.S. culture. In the U.S. as elsewhere, the culture of sport is radically entangled with the norms of other aspects of the social formation. Sociologists of sport have discovered increasingly, as Eichberg has summarized it, that:¹⁰

The single sport disciplines, the games and exercises of people all over the world, are more than just interchangeable techniques. They are by no means incidental. Recent research on behavioral patterns and social configurations in sports showed that important relations exist between the games of a people and its social structures, its forms of cooperation and conflict solution, its concepts of social space and time, etc.

Therefore, an understanding of the effects of the contemporary version of sports discourse requires an appreciation of the evolution of sporting activities and their developing connection to other practices in the social formation. Among other things, that evolution in the Western world has involved what Elias has called the "sportization of pastimes," the increasing tendency for ruling classes to take over, centralize and control, through an elaboration of rules, competitive games which often had their origins in folkish pastimes.¹¹ However, before turning to the relevant parts of the evolution of competitive games, it is important to elaborate on more general aspects of representational practices as they relate to the issue of foreign policy and to offer an account of the society that receives and incorporates such representations.

Representational Practices and Policy

The emphasis on the representational practices that vehiculate public and foreign policy allows us access to aspects of policy legitimation that are less obvious when we operate within the more traditional, psychological metalanguage of policy studies. For example, traditional social psychological approaches impoverish the understanding of policy legitimation insofar as they give us "policy" as a contentless set of opinions or choices and construct the perceiving citizen as a collection of beliefs, attitudes and values. Within such a conceptual frame, both "policy" and the consciousness of the policy audience is radically dehistoricized and decontextualized. Psychologically oriented conceptual frames tend to be insensitive to the discursive practices representing policy, which are to a large extent historical inheritances. Thus, the intelligibility that a policy discourse engages derives not merely from the cognitive orientations of individuals but from widely circulated "interpretive codes of connotation" (in Barthes' language) which operate effectively to the extent that there is a stock of signs held by the receivers of statements which activate the interpretive codes.¹² These codes range from the unreflective — e.g., those with which people project three dimensions onto a two-dimensional image reproduction (paintings and photographs) — to the more controversial — e.g. those with which incompetence is ascribed to very young and very old people.

Representations of public policy, then, have an ideological depth to the extent that they engage a stock of signs with which people make their everyday lives intelligible. Everyday life, as Althusser has argued, is thus ideological not in the sense that people function within a false consciousness but in an ontological sense; it allows subjects to recognize themselves and make

intelligible self-other relations. Ideology within this Althusserian frame is therefore a kind of representational practice, a "lived relation to the real," and insofar as persons naturalize their lived structures of intelligibility, they fail to appreciate the historically developed structures of authority and legitimation immanent in those structures of intelligibility and are thus uncritically open to the persuasive force of representations which accommodate to the naturalized forms of the "real."¹³

What a perspective oriented toward ideology as representation suggests is that the understanding of policy and its legitimation requires us to historicize the production and acceptance of the prevailing representational practices and, perhaps more significantly, to understand the economies of those representational practices, the meaning constitutive attention getting, and valuational effects they enjoy. Part of this understanding is supplied by a particular view of the epistemology of figuration. Within a traditional view, the use of figuration such as sport talk used to represent violent conflict is the employment of a mode of representation to express something which is not a representation (i.e., an unmediated presence). But as both Derrida and de Man (among others) have shown, the real is always mediated by one or another representation. Recognizing this, the issue becomes not one of the fidelity of the representation to the real but the kind of meaning and value a representation produces.¹⁴ The lending discourses, those from which imagery is taken in the figuring of a domain of meaning, do their valuational work whether or not they contain active and thus recognized figures or dead and thus implicit, unrecognized ones.

In the case of public policy, many of the figures are generative or narrative in structure. For example, urban policies directed toward removing urban poverty depend for their orientation on the valuing implicit in the generative figures for slums. Schon has demonstrated this in his contrast of the effects of figuring a slum as a "blighted" area versus as a "natural community." These differing, implicit stories provoke and legitimate different policy responses.¹⁵

More to the point since we are concerned here with international violence are the modes of figuration which have vehiculated conflict and war policy. In the history of the dominant mode of strategic thinking, which still characterizes the ideational orientations of powerful nations, the discursive practice that Karl von Clausewitz helped to create provides a good example of rhetorical or figurative legitimations for violent policy options. In this particular passage, which is rich in effective, legitimation figuration, Clausewitz states that war (which he figures as "policy," thereby already domesticating its more ugly manifestations) is:¹⁶

...a strange trinity. It is composed of the original violence of its essence, the hate and enmity which are to be regarded as blind, natural impulse; of the play of probabilities and chance, which make it a free activity of the emotions; of the subordinate character of a political instrument, through which it belongs to the province of pure intelligence.

The first of these three sides is more particularly the concern of the people, the second that of the commander and his army, the third that of government. The

passions which flame up in war must be already present in the peoples concerned. The scope and the play of courage will get in the realm of probability and chance depends on the character of the commander and the army; the political objects are the concern of the government alone.

It is unnecessary to linger over the invocation of the trinity, which has the effect of sanctifying war by absorbing it into one of Christian theology's most sacred symbols, for this metaphoric sanctification is a minor part of the figuration of the passage. Undoubtedly, the most effective legitimating part of the passage is the narrative built around the three sides of Clausewitz's trinity. It is not simply the case that Clausewitz is theorizing the passions and enmity of the population as part of war, he is placing it at the beginning of a narrative. The conflict process seems to *begin* with a (natural) enmity, which by Clausewitz's account then becomes rationalized and regulated by the other two sides of the trinity, the military which enacts the enmity and the leadership of the state which supplies the overall strategic direction, aiming the military force at the appropriate objects.

Certainly anyone with more than a storybook familiarity with the course of events in the Thirty Years War, the historical event that inspired much of Clausewitz's theorizing, would resist Clausewitz's narrative. At a minimum, the enmity of the populations involved, to the extent that they had *any* unified and articulate affect toward the states engaged in the war, was epiphenominal to the strategic machinations of leadership in both the militaries and governments, whose greater object of Christianizing the globe and lesser one of breaking the power of Catholic or Protestant nations created a shifting pattern of friend and foe that would defy the enmity formation of even a sophisticated, policy attentive population.

This sample of Clausewitz's musings, like his more celebrated pacifying of war by making it a benign verb (a policy action) should be read as a laundering of violence. The people's passions serve as a legitimating device. Except in the case of long-held, historical grievances, articulate enmity is always epiphenominal to a leadership-induced constitution of enemies. But we should not simply dismiss Clausewitz's thinking, because in theorizing the population and placing it, as he did, at the center of the justification of war, he was expressing something that has since become integral to the modern understanding of the strategy of conflict and war. The modern importance of the people, or better, the "population" is underlined by Foucault in an analysis of another domain of policy, the surveillance of sexuality.¹⁷

One of the great innovations in the techniques of power in the eighteenth century was the emergence of "population" as an economic and political problem: population as wealth, population as manpower or labor capacity, population balanced between its own growth and the resources it commanded. Governments perceived that they were not dealing simply with subjects, or even with a "people," but with a "population."

This privileging of the population as a major actor and identity in the modern nation state provides much of the impetus and legitimation for conflict and war. However, as modernity has witnessed the demise of the mercenary army, whose unreliability Clausewitz deplored, and the production of the citizen-soldier, whom Clausewitz helped to theorize, there has developed the need for a different kind of currency to recruit and mobilize an army. Citizens have to be encouraged to support the strategic understanding among competing states and be willing both to mobilize for war (offer their bodies) and support that mobilization (offer their political acquiescence). And we can understand the production of that acquiescence by appreciating the discursive economies within which international strategy and war are represented. As Foucault has shown, the discourses that vehiculate understanding are not simply linguistic expressions to be viewed on the basis of representational adequacy; they are power-related resources. In deploying identities for actors and producing the overall meaning frame within which they operate, they constitute and reproduce prevailing systems of power and authority in general and direct the actions flowing from those systems in particular.

However, in addition to appreciating the discursive economies of strategy, it is important to appreciate as well the structure of the meaning culture within which discourses can become effective. For example, while it is the case that modern western populations think increasingly with sports imagery (the particulars of which are elaborated below), a more venerable mode of thinking is a thinking with animals. Certainly, given the proximity of animals and their significance in diet, leisure, war, aesthetics, etc., and the range of difference they provide as a semiotic system, people have found them useful to develop modes of representation for the self and the Other (as Levi-Strauss has pointed out). And this representational practice has not abated. For example, animal names are frequently used to distinguish ability groups in elementary schools (e.g., bluebirds, squirrels, and moles, which represented in descending order, the reading ability groups in my first grade class).

Apart from the mere source of differentiation the language of animal difference provides, however, it can be shown that thinking with animals resonates with various social cleavages. For example, observations of predatory behavior in the animal world have been used historically to supply ideational support for human social inequality. And, with the rise of bourgeois society there developed ways of distinguishing the bourgeois from the lower/peasant classes on the basis of the way animals were treated by the different classes. Bourgeois society distinguished itself from lower classes by pointing proudly to its more humane treatment of animals. How this could provide a coherent self-understanding appears mystifying, given the remorseless bourgeois attitudes towards animals when they are objects in either culinary or industrial production activities. However, when we recognize the sharp division that developed between spheres of leisure and spheres of production in bourgeois society — with the former reserved for

humane treatment of household pets, etc. — the seemingly contradictory mode of thinking becomes more coherent.¹⁸ What this illustrates is not simply the ability of different social classes to tolerate contradictions, anomalies, or incoherences in the discursive modes through which thinking is produced, but rather one's need to situate the thinking or representational practices of a society within the other aspects of the social formation, which collaborate in producing their effects and consequences.

The Social Body

The depth of the social penetration of sports discourse relates to two opposed aspects of the social body, those processes which produce consensus and solidarity and those which produce or reinforce cleavage or difference. Modern sport contests, like ancient sport contests, partake of both of these processes, which Levi-Strauss has described in terms of the significance of rituals versus games.¹⁹

Games...appear to have a disjunctive effect: they end in the establishment of a difference between individual players or teams where originally there was no indication of inequality. And at the end of the game they are distinguished into winners and losers. Ritual, on the other hand, is the exact inverse; it conjoins, for it brings about a union...or in any case an organic relation between two initially separate groups.

Sport does not fit entirely into either the ritual or game conceptions as Levi-Strauss constructs them, although modern sport contests have lost much of their original, ritualistic origins, which were based on their connections with religious rituals, seasonal fetes, etc. To the extent that they retain ritualistic dimensions, these are largely secular, invoking symbols of national unity, for example, in their preliminary or ending ceremonies. However, it is not enough to say that the sporting practices and discourse impacts on a social formation involved in both solidarity and difference creating processes. One must characterize the social body in a more specific way.

Apart from what is perhaps the most obvious aspect, class difference, which connects primarily with aspects of occupational stratification and political power, the various subsectors of the social body distinguish themselves not simply on the basis of their concrete positions in economic, social, and political hierarchies, but on the basis of the possession of an ability to participate in various language games. Here, Lyotard's assertion that the observable social bond is composed of various language "moves," fragmented clusters of "performativity," is useful.²⁰ Whether or not one believes that the modern (or postmodern as Lyotard puts it) condition consists primarily of such localized meaning groups in the absence of a generalized meta-narrative such as that supplied by religion (Lyotard's position), or whether the meta-narratives have simply gone underground, creating what Jameson has called a "political unconscious" (Jameson's position),

there is evidence of a fragmentation of meaning systems within modern sports cultures.²¹ For example, the rules relating to the role of the contemporary British football fan operate within a limited, working class male subculture. Despite the recent egregious levels of violence which may well be symptomatic of some broad, societal level of social strain, in general, a shared social competence has governed football fan rowdiness, and there are compelling arguments to the effect that violent acting-out by football fans is more a local, class-based semiotics than a measure of an intensification of class warfare or a general cultural decline.²²

With the observation of the actual process of football fan rowdiness, a picture emerges of football rowdiness in its milder forms as a rule-governed phenomenon which *limits* violence. In many cases, "the apparently unrestrained aggressive behavior of the fans is in fact tightly structured and rule bound — these seemingly disorderly actions are guided by a shared social competence."²³ Part of this shared competence has involved a semiotic or language game of aggression in which a lot of lesser hooliganism such as chasing goes on, with an episode of someone being chased off serving to communicate toughness and submission while avoiding injurious confrontation.²⁴ Even the case of more extreme forms of football violence seem to be based on shared codes and a relatively tight, rule-governed structure. Football rowdiness is, in effect, an extreme form of factionalism in which "hooligans" derive their identities less from their affiliation with a particular football club than from the extra-spectator violence they organize and effect.²⁵

This brings us to the other aspect of social process which sports attachments involve, cleavage. Before exploring relevant aspects of the history of sports factionalism, however, it should be noted that despite evidence of fragmentation in sports-related language game subcultures, it is highly problematic whether one can, after Lyotard, construe the "postmodern condition" as one more of fragmentation than centralization with respect to practices and codes. In the case of sports discourse, much of the trend has been toward centralization, for reasons that are elaborated below.

Historically, sports partisanship has, since ancient times, been a major force in the production of cleavage as well as civility and solidarity. This is not the place to offer a comprehensive history of sports partisanship. It is worth noting, simply, that sports partisanship has frequently reached deeply into the social formation, attaching itself to other cleavages — class, ethnic, religious, political, etc. — becoming a vehicle for a radical production of forms of Otherness based on abiding affiliations.

For example, there is significant evidence that the color-coded circus factions articulated with deep and abiding religio-political cleavages. By the first centuries of Byzantine supremacy, the political order was significantly affected by both debates and episodes of crowd disorder based on attitudes toward the divinity of Christ. These cleavages, which also reflected economic and social

divisions, tended to coincide with the major chariot-racing factions of the Byzantine hippodrome. The "Blues" tended to be orthodox trinitarians, and the "Greens" the dissident, monophysites who ascribed to God a single composite character.²⁶

Although the evidence for the endurance and consistency of these cleavages is equivocal, it was undeniably the case that these ancient sports factions had in certain periods (most notably the sixth century) a marked political significance.²⁷ At a minimum, they articulated with religious cleavages which in that age had a significant, even controlling, effect on the reigning political discourse. Not incidental to all of this was the fact that the Emperors of the period were identifiable as Blue or Green partisans.

The long history in which sports partisanship has enjoyed a significant place in the play of identity and difference, which produces the identifiable social groupings in the social order, has continuously manifested itself in the history of politics, policy, and persuasion. And what is perhaps most significant in the modern period is the waxing of the influence of sports-related discourse which has paralleled the waning of the influence of religious discourse, to the point where today, the average citizen can be arguably more easily summoned and engaged by sports talk than by religious or God talk.

Both of these developments, the waxing of sports talk and the waning of God Talk — undoubtedly owe much to the history of print and broadcast media as well as to the history of sport, especially sports-related commerce. The media story begins of course with the development of print media. Before that, modes of representation were primarily visual and aural, and the only general language for structuring mass-based interpretive codes, Latin, was controlled by a centralized ecclesiastical authority. Not surprisingly, then, the development of print aided the development of codes for identities and subjectivities based on vernacular languages and more local connections.

Anderson places the development of print media in a privileged place in the production of the kind of imagination oriented more to consciousness of nationality than Christendom.²⁸ Certainly, at a minimum, the vacuum left by the waning of the influence of ecclesiastical modes of representation must be thought of on the basis of what has taken its place. And the story develops to the point where modern sports news not only claims an increasing share of the media but also articulates itself with identities that tend to be far more active than religious affiliations in modern industrial societies. Without going into a detailed historical chronology, it should suffice to recognize that not only is sports news far more pervasive and closely attended in all modern media than other traditional sources of identification but also that it has played a role in shaping both modern sports consciousness and the structure of modern sports.

The Historical Development of Modern Sport

The modern sports discourse (and thus consciousness) is explicable only when we recognize that what we have as sport reflects who we are and further that who we are is constituted as a set of practices, sporting practices among others. Moreover, to recognize the modern ontology of the social body as a set of practices it is necessary to historicize the present and thereby see it as an evolved set of practices that could have been otherwise. Turning specifically to the sport dimension of that ontology, it is the case that the present structure of sports discourse is an authority reinforcing practice which, in its effect in constituting identities — sports virtuosos, spectators, amateurs, professionals — as well as activities thought of as sporting versus non-sporting, participates in the discursive economies that create and orient us to modern social and political reality. To interpret the role of the sport discourse in shaping and managing that reality, we need to treat seriously the "economies" of the sports discourse.

The codes or discursive practices regulating modern sports events contain silences. Sports discourse, like any discourse, sits atop a history of strife or at least contention in which the resulting practices represent only what has dominated. Most notably, two kinds of pressures involved in shaping modern sports are no longer voluble or easily recoverable in what remains in the way sporting contests are structured and represented. One is the military or warrior dimension and the other the dynamics of class struggle. The legacy from the military origin of many modern sports presents an irony. In a sense the use of sports figuration to vehiculate international conflict, strategy, and war-related thinking represents a movement in which sport has come full circle. When sports talk becomes the lending discourse for war/strategy talk, it is a case of sport talk coming home rather than being estranged from its wholly separate meaning context.

To put the case briefly, most sporting events had their origin in military engagements or at least military training activities. A historian of sport, reading the available traces of the earliest sporting contests recorded in western civilization concluded that in the Summerian civilization, "official sport served only military or paramilitary purposes."²⁹ And in general in the ancient world, sporting practices were designed primarily as preparation for war. Certainly the Greek and Roman civilizations added dimensions to sport, the former being oriented primarily to an idea of body culture which expressed interests beyond mere war preparation and the latter absorbing sport-as-spectacle into stadia festivities designed to amuse crowds and create political capital for the event's sponsor(s). But the sporting activities themselves still remained closely tied to "skills" which took on their primary significance in war.

It appears that the beginning of the estrangement between sport and war, at a level of explicit practice, was technologically produced. Such things as the development of artillery reduced the need for the warrior/athlete and opened up "physical education" for play and other dimensions of

competition. Of course technology still leaves space for the warrior/athlete if the idea of athletics is confined to a person's reflexes and the hand-eye coordination dimension of sports. Given the newest military technology, heralded recently in a news magazine article, "One Shot, One Kill: A New Era of Smart Weapons," modern warfare can be likened to a vast video game with deadly strikes guided by laser weapons.³⁰ For war constituted as this kind of "contest," the most appropriate warrior/athlete would be the teenage video game virtuoso. And the American film industry, whose imagination usually exceeds that of the Pentagon, has already figured this out. One fantasy science fiction film has a teenage video game expert summoned into a space war with battles whose technology is wholly congruent with the structure of the video game on which he had excelled. After helping to win a space war, he is returned to his (postmodern) culture.

But, to return to the historical narrative, technology has not been the only influence affecting the sports/war relationship and pushing sports' military origins more into the shadows. There are ideational contributions as well, such as the Renaissance commitment to physical education as part of the "whole man."³¹ In any case, by late in the sixteenth century, changes in the pattern of war were reflected in sporting activities. The nobleman ceased tilting, and modern horse racing is all that is left of the old jousts.³² And, in general, the Aristocracy began changing their forms of play, dismounting from the horse in favor of paid riders and indulging in games which belonged to a cult of the gentleman, e.g., bowling.

It is at this point that the other silence becomes recoverable. The shape of modern sport has been intimately connected with the dynamics of class, the structure of which is of course closely connected with various social and economic developments. To understand this part of the narrative it is useful to evoke some of M. M. Bakhtin's insights on the social dimensions of discourse. In speaking of the ideational effects of the novel as a genre of writing, Bakhtin sets up a tension between what he calls the "centripetal forces" in a society, those "forces that serve to unify and centralize the verbal-ideological world," and the "centrifugal forces," which he saw as operating against or in resistance to this unifying and centralizing tendency.³³ The contrasting tendencies operate within the general pattern of voices in a society which Bakhtin called "heteroglossia" or a plurality of contending voices.³⁴

At any given moment of its evolution, language is stratified not only into linguistic dialects in the strict sense of the word...but also...into languages that are socio-ideological: languages of social groups, "professional" and "generic" languages, languages of generations and so forth.

Something very much akin to Bakhtin's understanding of the contending social forces immanent in the discursive practices of a society has not been obscure to the ruling classes. While, as suggested above, much of the development of sport culture has come from above and operated, in Bakhtin's terms, to reinforce the centripetal forces involved in the official, centralized

verbal-ideological system, there has also been a development of the sporting culture from below, which has operated in a centrifugal mode, pulling away from the center.

Through the early part of the nineteenth century, workers' festivals and religious holidays in England involved sporting contests which had evolved from folkish pastimes, and they frequently contained an anomic dimension. The sporting activities of the eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century crowds often spilled over into agitation against official authority, and "tended to incapacitate the existing means of social control."³⁵ In contrast with the pacific and rule-governed gentleman games of cricket and even rugby, whose violence was tightly controlled, was an event like Shrove Tuesday football, pitting village against village and frequently creating violence whose boundaries were never clearly defined. Such events posed at least a symbolic threat and often a more immediate one to the public order, as it was defined by ruling classes, for, as E. P. Thompson has noted, there was not enough cohesion in the ruling classes to produce a consensus and therefore a budget to pay to control eighteenth-century crowds.³⁶

Thus, in general, the forms of sporting play which took place in public space during this period was plebian-sponsored and often oriented toward or causing elements of protest against privilege. At this stage, in any case, the sport culture which developed from below represented what Bakhtin called centrifugal forces. Certainly, contemporary control over public space has been consolidated, and sport from below has largely lost its forum. The recent banning of visiting Americans' softball games from Hyde Park is simply a small reminder of the extent to which both sport and its venues have become domesticated and controlled both commercially and politically.

At the beginning of that process, class dynamics in eighteenth-century England weighs in heavily. One of the first significant political developments was the breaking away of the ruling classes from the monarchical state. King James had created space for sports by subduing puritan protest against Sunday games and had declared Sunday a day for sporting activities.³⁷ Then, subsequently, as the ruling classes exacted a greater degree of independence from the monarchical state, the result was that they ceased observing traditional constraints which had relegated sports to highly stylized and ritualized courtly festivities.³⁸ In addition, the process of industrialization created an interaction between aristocratic and bourgeois classes that was to have an overwhelming effect on the development of sporting contests, for it was in this class dynamic that there developed the still significant values which organize British amateur sports and thus sports on much of the globe.³⁹

However, even more significant than this bourgeoisification of sporting competition as gentlemanly sports evolved into competitive sports, is the bourgeoisification involved in what Elias has called the "sportification of pastimes."⁴⁰ In a major way, this process consisted mainly of controlling lower, peasant, and working class violent protest and resistance by "civilizing" them. While this was to some extent a benign socialization process in which rules of equality and fair play

were imposed to make games accord with the principles of justice and fairness constitutive of the peaceful transition to parliamentary power in the eighteenth century (Elias' "civilizing" reading), and it is also the case that the modern theory of sport has owed something to the development of liberalism,⁴¹ a more politically acute reading would emphasize social control and the centralization of political discourses. And this centralization was certainly partly politically motivated as attempts increased to suppress such games as folk football. It was one among the many processes of domesticating the insurrectional aspects of village life.⁴²

At a minimum, this bourgeoisification saw the development of uniform rules and careful score and record keeping which shifted control over the shape of games away from local groups who had made their own rules and had thereby absorbed sports consciousness into the generalized meaning frames with which they had created local solidarity and differentiation from centralized authority. Bourgeoisification thus meant loss of control over a discourse in which the local subject could use sport talk as a form of resistance to the centralizing verbal-ideological system. The boundaries of games, the rules governing play, and the subsequent inscription of results and records had become centralized and more subject to both governmental and commercial control.

The development of an increasingly commercial spectator-oriented dimension of sporting contests played into this centralization of control over sporting activities and discourse as there developed sharper boundaries among the identities of the athlete versus the non-athlete, amateur versus professional, and as there began an increasingly intensified process of surveillance over the rules of the game, eligibility to play and record keeping. Fairness in competition was still a value as sport became increasingly commercialized, but the idea of fairness had to do mostly with ensuring good, even competition lest contests became too onesided and therefore boring to paying customers and disruptive of gambling practices. This latter practice has had an extraordinary impact on the shape of games. As Brailsford has noted, "It is sobering to consider that the rejuvenation of games grew up not from noble motives of "fair play" or even merely out of a desire for tidiness, but to protect the financial investments of gamblers."⁴³

The current preoccupation with video replays of close or controversial official judgements during American football games is simply one of the recent manifestations of this kind of surveillance/fairness preoccupation. Certainly this commercialization of sport has an added centralizing impact on "pastimes." While one could here reproduce Huizinga's now famous lament that modern games have shifted away from play, the realization of the body's capacity for gaming, and toward display or the shaping of contests to maximize spectator enjoyment, but more significant for understanding the impact on public policy or "foreign" policy is the centralization of control over the sports discourse that commercialization of sporting activities has aided and abetted.

Certainly there remain some local dimensions of sports, but this now amounts not to a definition of self and membership group as local compared to a more centralized authority but rather to a local sports partisanship amplified by the media, which rarely intersects with politically significant cleavages. For example, Philadelphia fans oppose New York or Los Angeles fans especially when their teams compete in professional level sports. And recently, when the Chicago Cub baseball organization played the San Diego Padres in the playoffs for the National League baseball championship, the media helped to create a contest over which of the cities was worthy of having a World Series contender. Serious doubt was raised as to whether San Diego, a franchise relatively new to professional baseball, has yet adequately established itself as a baseball tradition worth watching or backing.

And certainly at the level of amateur sport, international competition in the Olympic Games and Worldcup Soccer Championships evoke deeply rooted aspects of international competition, some of which connect to the history of deadly quarrels. This level of partisanship has an undeniable amplifying effect on the more directly political forms of inter-nation partisanship. But both within and between nations, sports partisanship has far less significance in sports discourse as a political text than the socio-genesis of modern sports that is discernible in the shape of the modern sports contest and the social configuration it evokes.⁴⁴

The relevant discursive amplification of sports, then, is not so much the contemporary forms of partisanship with which sports partisanship may coincide but the actual shaping of the social body represented in modern sport, which gives sports discourse its figurability and thus its ideational effects. The more relevant way to amplify the effect of modern sport is by relating its socio-genesis to the socio-genesis of the modern work place, for amplifying the centripetal discursive tendencies of modern sporting activities, which has involved the loss of local control over games, is the remarkable parallelism between the sporting contest and the work place. The history of the factory is, among other things, a history of two developments shaping the working environment. The first is related to the pattern of release versus control in the work place. For example, the twentieth-century worker's forms of release such as drinking alcohol or playing games are wholly after-work phenomena, whereas in the earlier work place, up through the nineteenth century, such forms of release were integral to the factory space, which manifested alternatively release and control within its confines.⁴⁵

Adding to the tighter regulation of the factory space has been the increasing individualization of tasks in which a job has involved fewer and fewer kinds of operation, with the result that each worker has done just one, monotonous, repeatable and thus more easily measurable and regulatable task. Work has thus, for many, lost all of its ritualistic and craft dimensions that give labor an expressive quality controlled at least in part by the laborer.

Quite similar is the movement in sports "from ritual to record," as Guttman has put it.⁴⁶ Both of the dimensions of the work space are characteristic of the evolution of the modern spectator sport. Indeed regulation of athletic release habits (e.g., drug testing) even off the field has increased significantly in recent years, and the innovation on the field by the "player" has been decreased by the coming to prominence of remote forms of control and prescribing (e.g., the "play book"). Moreover, the "player" has changed, increasingly being restricted to a limited part of the game. Accordingly, there are more and more "special teams" in American football, "role players" in basketball, and more "platooning" (here war finds its way back into sports) and such things as short, middle, and long relief specialists in baseball.

Indeed, so radical has been the shift in the role of the athlete, who, like the worker has been subordinated to corporate/team success of the business/sport franchise, that the result is clearly readable in a variety of texts. One such text is the contemporary sports page, which brings us a very different text from its predecessors. For example, a *New York Times* pregame report on a football game between the New York Giants and Cleveland Browns in 1953 stressed the play of the participants, using such expressions as the "Giant eleven," while a pregame report for the same contest thirty years later never referred to the number of players on the field. The figuration used was more remote and business oriented, referring to the team owners, the recent successes and failures of the franchises, etc. In short, what one might as well have been reading in the more recent pregame report was the financial page, for the article from the 1980s dwelled on what seemed to be a clash between the Giant and Brown corporations.

Another revealing text is the body of the athlete. When recently an Australian football team, which had yet to achieve the corporate style and shape of American football, visited the U.S. to play exhibition games against American teams, the shape of the modern football body was made apparent. Increasingly, in the American version of football, the role of each players is more limited and differentiated, and with that differentiation is prescribed a particular body shape. The guards, for example, have no discernible necks, a bulky upper body and chest, and thin hips — more or less the shape of a bull dog — acquired through long hours of exercise and drug-assisted body sculpting. In contrast, the Australian football players — soon no doubt to be "dead meat" — appeared undifferentiated and indistinguishable from ordinary people.

The modern sports text, so clearly readable in a variety of sites, is not without its broad institutional supports. It gets written increasingly in the feeder organizations, the most notable of which is the contemporary school system which reproduces the practices and modes of evaluation that will articulate with the work place in general and the sports franchise in particular. Both academic testing and placement as well as "physical education" migrated significantly if not totally away from the old Renaissance ideal of the "whole man" which fed an aristocracy-

dominated society and toward a student-worker/athlete, which feeds into the modern capitalist workplace/sports business.

The Evocation of the Sports Discourse

The historical account of what sport has become and how it has been shaped by the development of the contemporary form of the social body helps us to contemplate the shaping effects of the sports discourse, particularly as it functions within public and foreign policy discourses. Several aspects of the modern social formation invite the effective use of sports figuration. Part of this has to do with sport as it has evolved. Insofar as it has become maximally estranged from local level rituals and thus lost its once broad participatory basis, it has become a spectator phenomenon whose meaning is controlled by centralized media. While each spectator does the bulk of his or her viewing from within the private, "electronic cottage," sports as a system of signification evokes few moments of resistance. Mediaization, along with professionalization and spectatorship rather than body culture or local expression and play, make sport a mediated phenomenon which resembles the way the modern politics (in the sense of national and local level decision making) is brought to viewers as a series of political dramas which are relatively remote from people's everyday lives. Philip Rieff, recognizing this phenomenon and writing on the aesthetic functions in modern politics summarized this effectively. "In mass politics as in other aspects of modern culture, spectatorship has become the method of participation." And the implication was clear to him: "Spectatorship stabilizes power relations; participation disrupts them, or at least provides a possibility of disruption."⁴⁷

Moreover, with the decline of competing, shared objects of reverence, sports heroes, and paradigmatic and memorable sporting events known throughout a nation (at least to a large percentage of the male population) provide some of the new cohesive aesthetics with which persons are connected to the social body as a whole. The ritualization of self and Other provided by the agon represented in the contemporary sports discourse is thus at least as influential as the religious and geopolitical discourses which are also significant interpretive codes broadly dispersed in the population. Certainly as a practice within the social formation, "sport not only eased but actually promoted the mental adaptation of the whole population to the demands of the modern world," by providing after-work spectacles and thus a release for people incarcerated within less than pleasant and poorly remunerated work sites. But the overall system of signification in which sport participates is more politically significant in its role as policy legitimation. This dimension has been well expressed by Lipsyte in his remark that sport, "has surpassed patriotism and piety as a currency of communication, while exploiting them both."

The legitimating role of the sports discourse has not been lost on political leadership in the United States. American presidents have appropriated the sports world directly by calling victors in widely publicized professional and amateur sports contests to congratulate them, by appearing at the beginning of the baseball season to "throw out the first ball," and even, in the case of Nixon, trying to vindicate United States participation in the quasi-genocidal Vietnam War by having former prisoners of war throw out baseballs to inaugurate seasons and championship series. And, more to the point for this analysis, presidents — here again Nixon is exemplary — have figured themselves as athletes or team coaches. Indeed the president's role as quarterback or coach was at least as prominent a figuration as the president as commander-in-chief or the president as spiritual leader.

In the case of President Nixon the sports discourse moved beyond a mode of figuration to a virtual epistemology. As Lipsyte notes, "Nixon believed that SportWorld was the real world, that competition was the only true crucible of the soul, that success was the only true goal of the self."⁴⁸ Nixon turned repeatedly to sports metaphor, usually football in its specific representational nuances, to represent security policy. And Nixon's figurative style spread throughout the cabinet, to a point where Defense Secretary Laird described the U.S. military forces, which were then involved in a stepped up bombing and the mining of Haiphong Harbor in Vietnam, as "an expansion ball club," while the White House was called "operation linebacker," and Nixon was using the code name quarterback.⁴⁹

The Nixon administration's defense of its policy went well beyond the simple use of sports figuration. It mounted a cultural policy that sought to blunt criticism by controlling both the media and the imagery it used. Apart from the well-known attempts to control unfavorable publicity with various intimidation tactics used against the press, it attempted to control the very discourse within which policy had been framed and represented. Vice President Agnew seemed to be in charge of the administration's cultural policy, which involved an explicit understanding of the politics of representation. In the face of a growing literature attacking the American competitive sport culture and the political economy in which it was situated, Agnew wrote an essay in *Sports Illustrated*, whose major narrative was a seemingly innocent meditation on his golf game.⁵⁰

The implicit story, however, valorized competitive sport and extolled sport success as an exemplar of the success one attains through determination and work, implying that all of society's privileged positions are earned through hard work and competitive zeal. He noted, moreover, that success must be carefully measured. There should be no doubt about one's level of achievement. Agnew thus liked golf, he said, because, "In most games you are not sure whether you are doing well or your opponent is doing poorly. Golf removes the doubt. Furthermore, it's a scientific game; the margin for error is infinitesimal."⁵¹

In this remark of Agnew's we see in part why the sports metaphor is ascendant in contemporary U.S. society. It is like Balbus' highly plausible thesis that the increased use of the sports metaphor for policy legitimation (he was speaking of the Nixon and Ford administrations) comes at a time when the effective operation of American capital depends on the "mass internalization of a legitimating ideology which asserts the neutral, "scientific" character of state economic decisions, the scientific competence of those who make them, and their overall integration in the form of a plan." ⁵² Balbus sees this increasing use of sports language as both signalling and promoting the acceptance of a scientific, depoliticizing ideology. The analysis here shows this depoliticizing effect of the sports discourse applies to the realm of conflict, security, and war policy as much as it does to domestic, economic policy.

But Agnew went well beyond merely legitimating policy, domestic or foreign, with resort to the sports metaphor. He went on to attack critics of the modern sports system:⁵³

One of the things that has unraveled our society, in my judgement, is that a man's basic need to have objectives, to achieve, has been obscured by all manner of philosophical gabble that would dilute his taste for competition...I would not want to live in a society that did not include winning in its philosophy; that would have us live our lives as identical lemmings, never trying to beat anybody at anything, all headed in the same direction....

The direction of this attack is clear; it is part of a cultural policy aimed at the policy legitimation process. It attempts to defend not specific policy but an entire social infrastructure which produces an ethos and thereby a discursive practice used to articulate and figure policy. This kind of cultural policy is typical of today's neo-conservative cultural policies aimed, as Habermas has pointed out, at intellectual forms of discourse which produce a critical questioning rather than assisting in creating orderly system-supporting motivations in the population. This policy (exemplified by Agnew's remarks) is supposed, says Habermas, "to discredit intellectuals whose analyses are seen both as "threats to the motivational resources of a functioning labor society and a depoliticized public sphere."⁵⁴

What Agnew's statement/activity makes clear, among other things, is the highly politicized self-understanding within which modern national-level policy functions. More specifically, the selling of American security policy operates with a sports metaphor that is employed not only because it articulates well with the spirit of conflict and security policy and because it is so figurative within a society that is sports conscious in a particular sense but also because it stacks the legitimation deck in favor of the policies and against its questioning or politicization.

Conclusion

Sports discourse is now firmly institutionalized as a primary mode of representation for international conflict policy, so what remains is to examine one of its most recent expressions and consider the consequences that the preeminence of this mode of representation entails, especially the forms of silence it countenances and encourages. For this purpose, Zbigniew Brzezinski's recently published *Game Plan* has emerged at a convenient moment.

There is no need for a close reading of the Brzezinski treatise, for the sports metaphor represented in the title is not carried out very much at the level of specifics. It is the case, simply, that the game plan metaphor represents the contemporary sport/war or sport/security policy mentality, which is exhibited throughout the book. This shows a preoccupation with an image in which the U.S. and its adversary are involved in a contest which functions within a space emptied of any significant content (e.g., the life styles and fates of everyone on the globe) other than the kinds of strategic locations — in this case geopolitical rather than sporting — one finds on a sports field or arena. The sporting figuration articulates well with the kind of geopolitical imagery that has promoted a strategic and thereby mystifying model of the effects of conflict and security policy.

Moreover, the sports discourse articulates well with the geopolitical discourse in its current form because of striking similarities in the evolution of both modern sport and modern security policy. A recent remark by the quasi-academic quasi-official security policy analyst, Fred Iklé, represents a major feature of contemporary security policy when he states, "It is important not to be hurt by catastrophic surprises."⁵⁵ This seemingly unproblematic, self-evident statement takes on significance in historical context, for it represents a major trend in the military strategic doctrine, a trend that has seen an increase in intelligence and surveillance of the globe. Within this tight surveillance model, no aspect of a nation or its people is trivial, not just because of the fear of nuclear attack — the up-front justification for surveillance — but also because of the number and pervasiveness of global-level, economic interests which will not tolerate surprise. Such concepts as fate (or fortuna in Machiavelli's old construction of defense) or even luck and chance, which still survived in Clausewitz's construction of international dangers, have disappeared in the "security"-oriented thinking of modernity.⁵⁶

Similarly, sporting contests now have stakes associated with them that produce a sport structure with tightened rules of eligibility to participate, rules about reporting injuries, and now drug testing of athletes, all innovations reflecting an intolerance of unpredictable factors which could affect the likelihood of a team's success. Just as the health of a national leader anywhere in the world is now read in terms of "regime stability" (which is connected to the predictability problem), the health of an athlete is an object of scrutiny, for it is read in terms of likelihood of participation connected to the predictability of the team's level of play.

It is thus in the context of how modern sport and security policy have evolved that one can situate Brzezinski's construction of the inter-nation power process as a sporting contest. But Brzezinski denies all the valuing that his discourse carries. He begins with a statement that immediately vindicates Habermas' observation about the modern depoliticization of the public sphere, arguing that there is no motivational dimension of his discourse. His evidence for this is that he does not engage in an explicit moral language game such as referring to the Soviet Union as an evil system. His effort amounts rather, he states, to a "practical guide to action."⁵⁷ As is typical, then, of the realist mode of international relations discourse, Brzezinski's meta statements treat representation as an unproblematic, non-valuing activity. Representations, for Brzezinski, are accurate or inaccurate, and in his discussion of Russian Foreign Minister Gromyko's preoccupation with maps as representations of the world as a strategic arena, he ponders the limitations of a "flat map," concluding that it "is not a fully accurate rendition of the world."⁵⁸

This realist epistemology of figuration supports a depoliticizing of the public sphere, allowing Brzezinski to state, as if it were a description summoned by reality itself, that the American-Soviet engagement is a "two-nation contest for nothing less than global dominance."⁵⁹ Ironically, as the text proceeds, it turns out that Brzezinski is just as preoccupied with a flattened, geopolitical map mode of representing the world as the Gromyko he describes. But Brzezinski thinks his geopolitical representation is far more complex because he adds one dimension of depth, conceiving of the "American-Soviet contest" as one involving struggle for control over the ocean depths and space. All of Brzezinski's representations are governed, finally, by his announced ambition to supply "an integrated geostrategic framework for the conduct of the historical American-Soviet Contest."⁶⁰

There is an interpretive impoverishment here that parallels the impoverishment one encounters when sport is read only on the basis of actual engagements of "contests." For example, in the case of intercollegiate sports, a focus on actual contests blinds one to social process surrounding college athletic contests — the recruiting of players, the costs associated with providing space for such contests rather than other social uses, the organizing of school curricula and other related identity-producing institutions which feed these contests with both participants and spectators, and, finally, the commodity flows (including media space) associated with sports as an enterprise. If we move outside the context of collegiate sport to American sport in general, the American sporting contest is situated within a global political economy that matches the general political economy of inequality (e.g., without going into details, one can imagine the economies associated with the fact that "official" baseballs are made in Haiti).

Any reading of sporting contests that takes us beyond a description of the contestants, the arena itself, and a history that is restricted to description of other contests (here we exhaust Brzezinski's focus on the "American-Soviet contest") shows us the inextricable linkage between

events and the class dynamics and other distributive outcomes one needs to appreciate to have an effective political reading of the contests. C. L. R. James explicitly evokes this need to read sports outside of the actual arena of the contest with the title of his book on cricket in Trinidad, *Beyond a Boundary*.⁶¹ Under James' penetrating reading, one sees the interplay between race, caste, and class dynamics and the game of cricket as a developing Institution in Trinidad. The cricket structure becomes an allegory, where players are operating within a drama reading well beyond the actual games.⁶² There exists, as James' reading brings out, an "intimate connection between cricket and West Indian social and political life."⁶³

Similarly, we can begin to understand the political impoverishment that a Brzezinski, sporting contest-oriented discursive practice, imposes on the politics of international transactions if we resist being locked into Brzezinski's arena. One way to take a temporary exit from Brzezinski's contest (in which even individual national states lose their identities as they become aggregated into strategic zones such as "Eurasia") is to consider the politics of international arms sales and transfers. If we recognize that the modern state, even a superpower such as the U.S. or Soviet Union, is not simply involved in a security conflict process but also in an internally driven attempt to reproduce its way of life, we can effectively situate arms sales. Focusing on a capitalist economy such as the United States, Mandel has explained how arms sales help to overcome one of the major limits to the expansion of capital. A major contradiction in the capitalist system is that frequently the mode of production of commodities impoverishes the worker/consumers who are supposed to buy them, particularly under the situation of "late capitalism in which labor is often exported and production is mechanized and decentralized to avoid large expenditures for labor power. In the case of weapons as a commodity, there is an external market, and the state itself helps to create the market and serve as sales agent."⁶⁴

When we focus on this structure, some aspects of contemporary U.S. policy, which are unintelligible within Brzezinski's sports contest discourse, becomes intelligible and coherent. Given the historical dependency of industrial economies on arms sales and thus the importance of arms sales to all major as well as many minor powers, it is not surprising that often arms sales patterns display an inconsistency with strategic codes, even at the same time as the justification for the state's role as marketing agent for the arms industry relies on the strategic code. When, for a variety of reasons, information leaks show the inconsistency between security and economic interests, the contradiction becomes publicized, and a legitimacy crisis can ensue (which is very much the case as I write).

The current crisis of confidence in President Reagan's leadership can be read not simply as a reaction to some duplicitous policy *thinking*, where the avowed policy of not paying off "terrorists" was contradicted by arms sales, which were seen as rewarding and strengthening "terrorists," but as a reflection of a contradiction with deep structural roots. Moreover, this structural aspect of

international behavior is conjured away in sports contest discourse. The security-oriented discourse in which nations are seen as players in a contest for either global domination or at least more security simply obscures or leaves in silence the extent to which global control policies are oriented, in Ashley's terms, to "make the institutions of domesticity possible."⁶⁵

In light of this, what Brzezinski's discourse does is to reproduce an ideology, an encouraged misreading that is part of an enduring official discourse. The appropriate questions, then, turn on the consequences or costs of the silences administered by this official discourse. Among other things, the costs can be measured in lives. Most of the deaths in "local conflicts" in the Third World are owed to arms produced and marketed by "major powers." And although the arms distributions often match a pattern produced by the security-oriented, egopolitical understanding which Brzezinski reproduces, they often do not. When they do not, the weapons sales operate within principles of political economy through which states maintain their fiscal operations with all of the internal aspects of economic domination and control that the innocent "fiscal" metonymy hides.

Rather than providing a frame within which one could read the interactions and frequent contradictions between security-oriented ways of representing the globe and economic-encouraged modes of representation and policy, Brzezinski's sports contest discourse implies that what it simply involved is a struggle between two implacable forces which manifest a difference in ideology and historical motivation. He consistently represents the U.S. and Soviet Union as "two powers...fundamentally different."⁶⁶ And much of the book is addressed to aspects of this difference between the two "contestants."

If we were not encouraged to read the U.S. and Soviet Union as two very different types of contestants, we could assess better the costs of a process of global management that amounts to an institutionalized catastrophe, when the arms transfers and other aspects of the policy of global managers are read from the point of view of the families of victims in such managed conflicts as the Iran/Iraq war. Such catastrophes connect not just to reasons of state which emerge from a superpower contest but to the global management of catastrophe by superpowers whose interests in controlling the nature and scope of such catastrophes are markedly similar.

An enabling discourse, one which allows us to read the process of victimization would thus eschew a figuration that evokes an image of the U.S. and Soviet Union as contestants. If, for example, we shift more to a business-oriented mode of figuration we are within a discourse that denaturalizes the institutionalized state of war by showing how it is produced not as a series of strategic episodes but as a result of an evolutionary mode of global management connected with the perpetuation of modes of domesticity in the first and second worlds, for which the people on the rest of the globe pay a very high price.

When we shift to such a reading, we see locations such as Afghanistan or Pakistan not as "linchpin states" in a power contest,⁶⁷ or Nicaragua as a "Soviet outpost,"⁶⁸ but as states whose citizens have their lives affected by the process of global management, whose abilities to work, play, and associate are shaped by the life-style demands in other places on the globe. Within the flattened narrative of the security contest only national-level goals are implicated, and the "threats" and "catastrophes" that emerge as possible events touch only the interests of abstract entities situated in a geopolitical arena. The shape of the modern sports discourse and its use as a vehicle to figure world politics has the effect of situating us as spectators in a contest rather than as subjects in structures which create identities and locate us generally in a political economy allocating forms of danger in a consistent way which defies the kinds of discernments encouraged within the episodic language of the sporting event.

A Postscript on the Nuclear Question

In the extended consideration of sport figuration and its role in vehiculating state policy thinking, I emphasized what can be termed the "ontological depth" of discursive practices. The effectiveness of an ontologically deep discourse such as sport talk, I argued, is a function of the way that sport is integrated into the lives of contemporary populations such that sport talk is figurable for so many. The concept of ontological depth can take us beyond the limitations inherent in merely psychologizing — treating as an issue of cognition — the way a people connects to official levels of a state's legitimating discourses. The theoretical domain evoked beyond cognition (accessible through attention to the ontological depth) is the domain of representational practices or the rhetorical patterns through which problems are produced and understood.

Once we recognize that individuals, in their contributions to the meanings shaping public life, cannot be understood simply as mentalistic information-processing beings but rather as socially and temporally situated human beings, connected to each other in a network of practices, we are able to explore the nuclear issue in the context of who and what we are at present. This means, among other things, that we must resist many of modernity's professional and academic discourses which have produced modern "man" as a psychological being (as Philip Rieff pointed out a few decades ago). If we treat this identity as a fact rather than a historically produced text, our analysis is parallelized in the same way as are these psychologizing practices. Rather than focusing on individual beliefs or other cognitive components, then, it is more enabling to understand how the nuclear issue is situated. Instead of exploring people's beliefs, for example, we can do a genealogy of belief itself, locating "beliefs" in the context of the history of practices related to the management of danger. Beliefs, as an identity for persons, are a kind of data, providing a way of reading the script of modernity rather than an analytic device aiding

interpretation. That modern individuals have beliefs is less a fact about persons than the contemporary way of constructing them. By analyzing this self-producing practice, we can also move in the direction of disclosing the more cryptic modes of legitimation for nuclear policy.

One way to manage such a disclosure is to achieve some distance from the psychological person with cognitive categories such as beliefs by comparing that person with a person living in a radically different context. To do this, I evoke a conversation, early in the twentieth century, between the Danish anthropologist, Knud Rasmussen, and an Eskimo shaman, described in Barry Lopez's work on the arctic region. It becomes clear in Lopez's treatment of the exchange that Eskimos use fear rather than belief as a central epistemological category.⁶⁹

Eskimos do not maintain this intimacy with nature without paying a certain price. When I have thought about the ways in which they differ from people in my own culture, I have realized that they are more afraid than we are. On a day-to-day basis, they have more fear. Not of being dumped into cold water from an umiak, not a debilitating fear. They are afraid because they accept fully what is violent and tragic in nature. It is a fear tied to their knowledge that sudden, cataclysmic events are as much a part of life, of really living, as are the moments when one pauses to look at something beautiful. A Central Eskimo shaman named Aua, queried by Knud Rasmussen about Eskimo beliefs, answered, "We do not believe. We fear." (Lopez, 1986: 201)

Many would be tempted to use this anecdote as an excuse to exoticise Eskimos, to place them in a different cognitive and moral space. But if we follow Lopez's discursive strategy, allowing the Eskimo to help us learn who *we* are, and add to that a genealogical strategy, reflecting on how the world we understand has been historically invented, the Eskimo shaman's remark on fear can help disclose the discursive economies immanent in the way we use the idea of belief.

Within the general strategy, our first reaction might be that the Eskimo is saying that beliefs are an extravagance. The pattern of need fulfillment and the survival demands placed almost daily on the Eskimo make it sensible to link knowing with fearing in contrast with an agricultural-industrialized society in which survival for most is bureaucratized. With our level of bureaucratization, the average person is so estranged, both in terms of knowledge and responsibility, from what there is that might be feared, it is almost impossible, however desirable it might be, to link knowledge and fear as effectively as does the Eskimo.

"Belief" becomes a relevant human identity of people who have, among other things, a complex division of labor with respect to survival and even with respect to lower-level value issues. Moreover, the sheer size of industrialized and centralized populations, along with the growth of a mediaized, technological structure of communication make cognitive categories for receiving information more significant than the kind of alertness that fear implies. When face-to-face ways of coordinating collective action and maintaining authority are surpassed, and legitimation for such things as national-level policy requires media such as print, voice-at-a-distance, and remote visual

signs, attributes of the receptivity structure, related to a person's acceptance of remote authority, become relevant.

Certainly "beliefs" have a significance beyond their role in power relations, but the modern concern with influence and coordination of collective efforts in non face-to-face situations is undoubtedly very much implicated in the central role the "belief" and similar cognitive categories play in academic disciplines, private concerns, and public agencies. And, most important for present purposes, is how this meditation on belief, inspired by the difference revealed by the remark of the Eskimo shaman, discloses who we are and contrasts with a perspective that would naturalize our knowledge practices and thereby exoticize or objectify the Eskimos, placing them in a lesser cognitive, social, and moral/developmental space.

What this scenario concerning the genealogy of "beliefs" provides, among other things, is an intimation of how representational practices relate to policy issues. Because we live in a world in which danger is institutionalized, the ability of an individual to rationally relate his or her fears to situations of danger is severely compromised, making the individual a consumer of representations from institutions which legitimate their interpretations of danger and responses to it. Cognitive categories are part of this legitimation process inasmuch as they represent the distance of persons from control over the interpretation of danger. Therefore, academic discourse preoccupied with such categories serve interests which live off the mystification of modes of representation, the naturalizing or dehistoricizing of the psychological identity.

In contrast to such ideological modes of analysis, a critical theoretical practice will develop interpretive frames which help disclose representations as forms of practice rather than helping to normalize them. In addition to this critical function, they will serve to politicize and make public the domain of individual and collective safety by providing both an intertext or discursive economy that effectively connects who we are as people with what can be done to enter the professionally oriented logistical talk which characterizes the nuclear issue and a counter-discourse that broadens and revalues the issue, making it more susceptible to political discussion.

There are various ways of approaching this problem, but my bias is increasingly genealogical, i.e., in the direction of historicizing the present by showing how it is a relatively recent invention. Although there remains much to be done to reproduce the process of coming into being of the prevailing strategic/nuclear understanding, the thinking of Paul Virilio⁷⁰ provides a convenient and impressive point of departure. He suggests that the current meaning frame which dominates state security policy is owed to the "logistical tendency of American economic power," or, in short, "the American war economy." Indeed, "strategy" is a historically outmoded concept for it was relevant to the period between the Greek city states and the beginning of war economies in the 1870s (pp. 14-15). "Strategy" is something that connects with politics, for the strategist operates

with an understanding that relates issues of defense of the state, which are bound up with the whole range of political issues, to the problem of particular military tactics.

Virilio argues that after 1870 we move into an era of logistics, which is "the procedure following which a nation's potential is transferred to its armed forces, in times of peace as in times of war" (p. 16). In this era, in which logistical thinking is highly technicalized, the "civilian" is given no status in the discourse within which defense against nuclear surprise attack (one of the primary construals of the danger) is presented. As Virilio puts it, "The civilian finds himself discriminated against in favor of a kind of crystallization of the scientific and military" (p. 16).

The preeminence of this mode of military intelligence amounts to a depoliticizing of international danger in general and nuclear danger in particular insofar as it deprivileges anything but a scientific/military standpoint as valid knowledge. Among the most prominent concepts that belong to this logistical mode of representing nuclear danger is that of deterrence. The age of deterrence, in which planning is skewed in the direction of reducing the threat of sudden nuclear annihilation, is characterized by the masking of other kinds of war or modes of violence between states, which, ironically, deterrence thinking encourages. Deterrence thinking is thus what Virilio calls an "intelligence of war that eludes politics" (p. 18).

The mystifying of the state of war that now exists is the illusion that war itself is only full-scale, nuclear combat. While logistic thinking preoccupies itself with the avoidance of such catastrophies, the armed hostilities that go on are represented not as war but as some form of "interstate delinquencies," as "state terrorism" (p. 26). The modern politics of preoccupation with extermination amounts, then, to a depoliticization of all violent confrontations that stop short of nuclear combat.

This pattern of representation allows, increasingly, what Virilio calls "acts of war without war" — the taking of hostages or their rescue, retaliatory raids for ship movements interpreted as hostile or transgressive, etc. The point is that these acts of violence, which elude the obloquy of being "acts of war," operate within a mystified zone, within representations monopolized within logistical thinking and thus outside of a broader, politicizing impetus.

According to Virilio, this demise of a political perspective on the production of international danger is owed in part to the "dwindling of the last commodity, duration" (p. 28). The privileging of speed — understood as the reduced time one has to make decisions in a nuclear confrontation — has encouraged the technicalizing of the nuclear "contest." As long as danger is identified within the ambit of state contests, with the status of the decisional issue reduced to the problem of making "electronic decisions" (p. 29), the nuclear issue will remain depoliticized. In order to recapture the issue for political discussion, it must be repoliticized within a discourse that resists the contest/game figuration that I have analyzed above and the technological/logistic/electronic figuration that is part of the logistical being and thinking of modernity elaborated by Virilio.

Notes

1. Paul Fussell, *The Great War and Modern Memory* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1975), p. ix.
2. *Ibid.*
3. *Ibid.*, p. 26.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 27.
5. Walter LaFeber, *Inevitable Revolutions* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1984), pp. 183-84.
6. John M. Hoberman, *Sport and Political Ideology* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1984), p. 54.
7. Jacques Derrida, "Sending: On Representation," trans. Peter and Mary Ann Caws, *Social Research* 49 (Summer, 1982), pp. 249-326.
8. Michel Foucault, "About the Concept of the 'Dangerous Individual' in 19th Century Psychiatry," *International Journal of Law and Psychiatry* 1 (1978).
9. On the explication of the concept of figurability applied to the impact of representations see Fredric Jameson, "Class and Allegory in Contemporary Mass Culture: *Dog Day Afternoon* as a Political Film," *College English* 38 (April, 1977).
10. Henning Eichberg, "Olympic Sport — Neocolonialism and Alternatives," *International Review for Sociology of Sport* 19 (1984), p. 98.
11. Norbert Elias uses this expression in his introduction to Norbert Elias and Eric Dunning, *Quest for Excitement: Sport and Leisure in the Civilizing Process* (New York: Basil Blackwell, 1986).
12. Roland Barthes, "The Photographic Message," in *Image, Music, Text*, trans. Stephen Heath (New York: Hill and Wang, 1977), pp. 15-31.
13. Louis Althusser, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses," in *Lenin and Philosophy*, trans. Ben Brewster (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1971).
14. Jacques Derrida, "White Mythologies: Metaphor in the Text of Philosophy," in *Margins*, trans. Alan Bass (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), pp. 207-271; Paul de Man, "The Epistemology of Metaphor," in Michael J. Shapiro, ed., *Language and Politics* (New York: New York University Press, 1984), pp. 195-214.
15. Donald Schon, "Generative Metaphor: A Perspective on Problem Setting in Social Policy," in Andrew Ortony, ed., *Metaphor and Thought* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1979).
16. Karl von Clausewitz, *War, Politics, and Power*, trans and ed. Edward M. Collins (Chicago: Gateway, 1962), pp. 86-87.
17. On the concept of discourse as a resource see Michel Foucault, *The Archeology of Knowledge*, trans. A. M. Sheridan Smith (New York: Pantheon, 1972), p. 120.
18. Orvar Lofgren, "Our Friends in Nature," *Ethnos* 50 III-IV (1985), pp. 184-213.
19. Claude Levi-Strauss, *The Savage Mind* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966), p. 32.

20. Jean-Francois Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*, trans. Geoff Bennington and Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984).
21. Fredric Jameson, "Foreward" to Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition*.
22. For the different position on football rowdiness see James Walvin, *Football and the Decline of Britain* (London: Macmillan, 1986); Eric Dunning, ed., *The Sociology of Sport: A Selection of Readings* (London, 1971); and Eric Dunning and Kenneth Sheard, *Barbarians, Gentlemen & Players* (Oxford: Martin Robertson, 1979).
23. Jonathan Potter, Peter Stringer, and Margaret Wethrell, *Social Texts and Contexts* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1984), p. 67.
24. *Ibid.*
25. Walvin, *Football and the Decline of Britain*, p. 122.
26. Richard Mandell, *Sport: A Cultural History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1984).
27. One scholar argues that the evidence does not support the view that circus factions had any consistent political cleavages; Alan Cameron, *Circus Factions* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976).
28. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983).
29. Mandell, *Sport: A Cultural History*, p. 18.
30. *U.S. News and World Report* 102 (March 16, 1987), pp. 28-35.
31. Mandell, *Sport: A Cultural History*, p. 123.
32. Dennis Brailsford, *Sport and Society: Elizabeth to Anne* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1969), p. 27.
33. M. M. Bakhtin, "Discourse and the Novel," in *The Dialogic Imagination*, trans. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981).
34. *Ibid.*, pp. 271-72.
35. Robert W. Malcolmson, *Popular Recreation in English Society 1700-1850* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), pp. 79-80.
36. E. P. Thompson, "Patrician Society, Plebeian Culture," *Journal of Social History* 7 (Summer, 1974), p. 403. See also his "The Moral Economy of the English Crowd in the Eighteenth Century," *Past and Present* 50 (February, 1971), pp. 76-136.
37. Brailsford, *Sport and Society: Elizabeth to Anne*, pp. 85-99.
38. Dunning and Sheard, *Barbarians, Gentlemen & Players*, p. 269.
39. *Ibid.*, p. 270.
40. Elias, Introduction to Elias and Dunning, *Quest for Excitement*.
41. The relationship between the development of liberalism and the structure of sport is mentioned in Johan Galtung, "Sport as a Carrier of Deep Culture and Structure," unpublished paper, Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin.

42. Elias and Dunning, *Quest for Excitement*, p. 178.
43. Brailsford, *Sport and Society: Elizabeth to Anne*, p. 213.
44. "Socio-genesis" is Elias' expression *op. cit.*
45. For a good discussion of the historical change in the relationship between release and control in factory settings see Joseph Gusfield, *The Culture of Public Problems* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981).
46. Allen Guttman, *From Ritual to Record: The Nature of Modern Sports* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1978).
47. Robert Lipsyte, *SportsWorld: An American Dreamland* (New York: Quadrangle, 1975), p. xii.
48. *Ibid.*
49. *Ibid.*, pp. 12-13.
50. Spiro Agnew with John Underwood in *Sports Illustrated* 34 (June 21, 1971), pp. 61-72.
51. *Ibid.*, p. 62.
52. Ike Balbus, "Politics as Sports: The Political Ascendency of the Sports Metaphor in America," *Monthly Review* 26 (March, 1975), pp. 26-39.
53. Agnew and Underwood, p. 66.
54. Jurgen Habermas, "The New Obscurity: The Crisis of the Welfare State and the Exhaustion of Utopian Energies," trans. Phillip Jacobs, *Philosophy and Social Criticism* 11 (Winter, 1986), p. 11.
55. Fred Iklé, *New York Times*, December 17, 1986, p. B-10.
56. On the changing history of strategic doctrines see Bradley Klein, "Strategic Discourse and its Alternatives."
57. Zibgniew Brzezinski, *Game Plan* (Boston: Atlantic Monthly, 1986), p. xiii.
58. *Ibid.*, p. 7.
59. *Ibid.*, p. 8.
60. *Ibid.*
61. C. L. R. James, *Beyond a Boundary* (New York: Pantheon, 1963).
62. Robert Lipsyte develops this allegory theme in his introduction to the 1983 edition of James, *Beyond a Boundary*.
63. James, *Beyond a Boundary*, p. 217.
64. Earnest Mandel, *Late Capitalism*, trans. Joris De Bres (London NLB, 1975), pp. 299-300.
65. Richard Ashley, "Hedley Bull and the Anarchy Problematique," December, 1986.
66. Brzezinski, *Game Plan*, p. 18.

67. *Ibid.*, p. 63.
68. *Ibid.*, p. 80.
69. Barry Lopez, *Arctic Dreams* (New York: Scribner's, 1986), p. 201.
70. Paul Virilio, *Pure War* (New York: Semiotext, 1983).

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