THE EXCLUSION OF SPORT FROM CARIBBEAN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

Historically, sport has been excluded from official and dominant notions of economic development in the Caribbean. This paper attempts to account for this situation in terms of the historical roles assigned to sport (1) in the polity as a source of nationalism and regionalism; (2) in civil society as a conduit of moralism and normalism through the development of ‘good’ character through notions of amateurism and the amateur-gentleman; (3) as a source of health together with (4) the conception of sport as a form of “play” and “recreation” as opposed to work and (5) the low academic value attached to the study of sport in the education system through notions of “physical education” and extra-curricula activities. These related factors all represent the colonial derived received or orthodox view of sport. As a result of this received view, the present discourse on sport in the Caribbean is largely a pedantic and pathetic one driven primarily by a quest for excitement and satisfying urges for pride, prestige, symbolic power and illusory notions of unity that have done little to aid in its total development.

The paper argues further that if sport is to become an integral part of the Caribbean economy, whether it is single or not, it will require some shift in orthodoxy through new conceptions of sport, the athlete and the economy on the part of Caribbean states, the business sector, sport administrators and Caribbean peoples on the whole.

Introduction

One of the salient developments of the 20th century, particularly its last two decades, was the increasing commercialisation of sport and its transformation into an important pole of capital accumulation and economic development consistent with the expansionist dynamics of capitalism. This development however has not taken place at the same pace and to the same degree either across the world or across all sports. In the main, it has found greatest expression in some of the more industrialized countries in Europe, North America, Asia (e.g., Japan), and Latin America (e.g., Brazil, Argentina, Mexico). However, in most parts of the world, particularly the developing world, neither the commercialisation of sport, nor its study, figure prominently in the discourse on economic development and transformation. The Commonweath Caribbean and moreso, the countries that constitute the regional grouping called CARICOM, can be considered
one of these developing areas. The major aim of this paper is to examine some of the principal reasons for the general exclusion of sport from notions of economic development in the CARICOM. Consistent with this objective, the paper is divided into 5 major parts which examine (i) the origins and early functions of sport in pre-industrial and traditional society; (ii) the role of industrialization and the media in the commodification and professionalization of sport, together with the conflicts it generated; (iii) the orthodox and dominant conception of economy, economic development in the Caribbean; (iv) the various colonial derived or influenced socio-political functions ascribed to sport and athletes in the Caribbean and their role in excluding sport from traditional notions of economy and economic development and (v) the requirements for change if sport is to become a significant industry in the Caribbean Single Market and Economy and aid in the process of social and economic transformation.

**Early Origin and Functions of Sport**

Historically, and universally, the structure and function of sport has been shaped by the structure, culture and particular stage of development of the society where it is practiced. In this light, it should not be surprising that in pre-industrial and traditional societies, one of the major functions served by sport was a sacred or religious one given the dominant role assumed by religion in these societies. That is why German philosopher, Carl Diem, can state "The origin of all games is cultic" (Guttman 1978). In these societies, the staging and involvement in games formed part of rituals to pay homage to their Gods and to request favours be it in relation to female and agricultural fertility, sickness, producing rain or prolonging life (Guttman 1978: 16-17). The crown games of ancient Greece for instance were religious festivals held every 2 to 4 years to pay homage to various Gods. These included: the Pythian and Nemean games in honour of the God Apollo, the Isthmian Games held in honour of the God Poseidon and the Olympic games held in honour of the God Zeus (*ibid.*, 21). The games were called the "crown games" because the winners were literally crowned with olive, bay, pine or parsley wreaths (*ibid.*, 21). The Olympic games, therefore, which are held today in a
different context and with quite different objectives, is the only one of these crown games to have survived, since its reactivation in 1896. But a part from this religious function of games in early societies they also assumed secular purposes, namely, as sources of preparation for war and achieving social recognition and mobility. In addition, it is important to note that given the warlike and violent nature of some societies, sport also assumed a violent character as evidenced in the way some games were played and the gladiatorial contests that took place among the Romans, which had a mass appeal. The Romans are said to have had an "appetite for violence" and relished the sight of blood and death played out before thousands in their various stadia. There existed a veritable gladiatorial culture and schools where persons were trained to become gladiators, but because it was expensive to train gladiators, slaves and prisoners were often used. Gladiatorial contests did not only pit man against man, but man against animals that included lions and tigers (Cashmore 1990). In these contests it was not unusual for the individual’s entrails to be pulled out as a mark of victory to the delight of the crowd. In Britain, the folk activity of football was also a rowdy, violent affair which could have involved hundreds of people spread over a whole village, who could have held the ball with their hands as well as kick it. It was also not unusual for those involved to wear shoes that had a piece of steel at its tip (Dunning 1999). With the advent of industrialization and democracy, the early violent nature of sport was to subside.

**Sport, Industrialization and Commercialization**

The watershed period in the transformation of sport from a religious to a more secular activity has been generally identified as the 19th century, a period that coincided with the industrial revolution, the rise of capitalism, and the spread of bureaucratic rationality (Guttman 1978, 1994; Dunning 1999). The transformation in the nature, structure and function of sport was informed by several related processes that included, notably, codification (the formulation of formal rules), bureaucratization (the establishment of formal organizations), standardization (the establishment of uniform measures for playing surfaces, equipment, balls, bats, discuss, javelin etc., size of teams etc.), quantification, democratization, (concern over fairness and equality) and commercialization. This
transformation of early folk activities, pastimes and games into modern moderns sport and the creation of explicit rules to control the behaviour of participants and achieve equality and fairness has been referred to by Elias as *sportization* (Dunning 1999). \(^1\) For the purpose of this paper, however, we are particularly concerned with the process of commercialization that formed part of this transformation process and the long-term implications it has had for the development of sport.

A significant aspect of the process of commercialization was the development of professional sports. The growth of professional sports in the 19\(^{th}\) century and the conflict that it engendered with amateurism constitutes one of the most significant controversies in the development of modern sport (Gruneau 1983, 1999; Hargreaves 1986; Ingham 1978; Mc Cree 1995, 2000). Contrary to popular thinking, amateurism, variously called the amateur code, the amateur ethos and the cult of the amateur-gentleman, did not just refer to the absence of the monetary motive in sport participation, but also symbolized a set of vaunted virtues which included such notions as fair play, obedience or respect for authority (e.g., the decision of the referee or umpire is final), discipline and loyalty which were all geared to the creation of ‘gentlemen’, hence the term, “the amateur-gentleman.”

The amateur ethos can be seen as a part of the broader games ethos, dished out by the British public schools in the second half of the 19\(^{th}\) century, which also inculcated notions of courage, endurance, stoicism, and collectivism (e.g., team, nation) over individualism (Mangan 1986). Thomas Arnold, headmaster at Rugby from 1828-1842, pioneered the development of the games ethos within the British public schools, and it was through the public schools that the association of sport with the development of good character was formally expressed and developed (Hargreaves 1986:38-45; Dunning 1972: 141-143). \(^1\)

\(^1\)It should be noted that *sportization* did not originate in the 19th century for this process took place in two broad phases or “waves”: “… an eighteenth-century wave in which the principal pastimes that began to emerge as modern sports were cricket, fox hunting, horse racing and boxing; and a second, nineteenth century wave in which soccer, rugby, tennis and athletics began to take on modern forms” (Dunning 1992, Elias and Dunning, 1986, cited in Murphy, Sheard and Waddington, 2000, p. 93). In addition, there are also competing explanations of *sportization*: an economistic one that focuses on the effects of industrialization and a socio-political one that stresses the development of democracy and concerns over equality and fairness.
Describing the short and long-term impact of the public school and the games ethos on the development of British society in particular, Hargreaves (1986: 44-45) has noted:

The public school made gentlemen of the rising bourgeoisie at the expense of their potential liberal rationalism and the main vehicle was the games cult and all the ritual surrounding it. An ideology was encoded in the practice of public-school sport, which was to become an important component of British political culture; and it was also to have long-lasting effects on the character of sport in Britain. The public-school model of sport had an ultimately wide-reaching and indirect influence. Not only was it disseminated by public-school and Oxbridge men over a relatively long period lasting well into the next century, via their direct presence in sporting institutions, but also some of its main features were institutionalized in other sectors of society which mediated sport for the majority of the population, notably the state schools in the following century.

The British public schools had three major related aims: (a) to produce gentlemen of good character; (b) to develop leaders for the British Empire and British society itself and (c) to develop submission among peoples both within Britain and its Empire as a whole through the values it thought (e.g., discipline, loyalty etc.). This is why British sport scholar, John Hargreaves (1986: 42), can describe the “games cult” as “a new disciplinary technology” outside of work to regulate and control individuals.

Given the intrinsic or non-materialist underpinnings of amateurism, however, professionalism was considered its antithesis for, in professionalism, athletes and officials received monetary rewards for their services. In Britain, Canada and the USA, the elite classes, which controlled the organization of sport, reacted negatively to professional sport because they saw it as a direct threat to the amateur ethos, which they upheld, and the class distinctions, which underpinned it. In the latter regard, it has been noted that the articulation of amateurism as the ideal way for the conduct of sporting activity in the 19th and 20th century was part of a strategy employed by the new bourgeois middle classes or nouveaux riches, the product of the process of capitalist industrialization, to create a lifestyle that could have distinguished them from the working classes/lower orders on the one hand, and facilitate their acceptance by the more established landed and aristocratic
classes on the other. Thus, persons who belonged to the working class were debarred from joining middle class controlled sport clubs even if they did not take part in professional sport. Writing for Britain thus, John Hargreaves (1986: 46) noted:

The rules of the Amateur Athletic Club, the Amateur Rowing Club and the Bicycle Union in the 1860s explicitly excluded ‘mechanics, artisans and labourers’ and the numerous sports clubs in the country catering for the middle and upper classes were busily excluding the majority of working-class people in one way or other. The linchpin of the system was amateur-gentleman status.

For the USA, in the late nineteenth century a member of the elite Manhattan Athletic Club stated:

I have no aspersions to cast on men who work for a living with their hands, but they are not exactly desirable members for a club, which wants to establish itself on the plane of social clubdom. (Willis and Wettan 1976:53-54-cited in Ingham 1978: 239).

Similarly, for Canada, Gruneau relates that amateurism was used as a “conscious strategy of exclusion in class relations” by upper and middle class urban sport clubs, in the late nineteenth century (Gruneau 1983: 109). In addition to this restrictive practice, other strategies used against professionalism included: (i) banning players from amateur sport who played against or on the same team as professionals, whether such persons were professionals in the past or currently; (ii) disqualification from selection for national teams; (iii) debarring even qualified or trained persons who lectured on sporting activity from amateur sport since they were considered professionals; (iv) rejection of “broken time”: the notion of broken time dealt with the question of whether national athletes should be compensated for wages lost through time lost from work, but the idea was generally rejected in various sports since it was seen to be incompatible with the amateur ethos; (vi) separatism as existed in cricket where professionals and amateurs had to eat and take the field separately (Vamplew 1988: 185-188). Additionally, in cricket, the amateur-professional divide was also evident in the annual Players vs Gentlemen game, with players representing professionals and gentlemen, amateur members of the elite classes. In certain sports, the amateur-professional conflict had very divisive long-term
consequences. In British Rugby for instance, the conflict resulted in the formation of the professional oriented Northern Rugby League in 1895, in opposition to the then dominant amateur-oriented Rugby Union. A similar development also nearly occurred in football but this was thwarted as a result of an accommodation between opposing class interests in 1883 (Hargreaves 1986: 70-71).

Yet, notwithstanding elite opposition, many of them were also known to be involved in various capacities in pecuniary or professional sporting activities such as horseracing, cockfighting and prize fighting. In addition, some amateur athletes were also known to have received monetary payments in several sports including rugby, athletics, cycling and cricket, which gave rise to the notion of “shammateurism.” Even in the idyllic amateur-gentleman sport of cricket, some cricket clubs were known to employ players in various capacities as either club secretary, assistant secretary or ‘cricket instructor’ and justify payments to them on this basis (Vamplew 1988: 199). Elite duplicity notwithstanding, amateurism for a long time remained the dominant legitimizing framework for the staging and participation in sport activity within Britain and without because of the dominant role assumed by their elite adherents in the organization of sport, nationally and internationally (Ingham 1978; Hargreaves 1986: Gruneau 1983, 1999). The Olympic Games, which were reactivated in 1896 was to become an international mouthpiece for amateur sport.

The amateur-professional conflict therefore that was a prominent feature of sport in the 19th and early 20th century was a product of antagonistic class relations and class formation in the aftermath of capitalist industrialization. But, while elite opposition did serve to constrain its development, professional sport was to supersede amateurism eventually in the second half of the 20th century as a dominant feature of organized sport in Europe and North America. Undeniably, several factors aided this development which included, namely, industrialization, urbanization, increases in population size, disposable income, increased demand for leisure together with technological developments in

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2It maybe of interest to note that Rugby Union finally turned professional in 1995, some 100 years after the split.
transport (e.g., introduction of the train which enabled large numbers of supporters to travel around easily to support their team), lightning (viz., flood lights) and mass communication in particular relation to the media (Gruneau 1983: 100-135; Hargreaves 1986: 114-138; Ingham 1978: 187-276).

The media, particularly the television, have played a very important role in the massification, globalization and commercialization of sport through its effects on sport sponsorship and the cost of media rights to broadcast particular sporting competition. For example, the cost of media rights for the Olympics moved from US$350,000 in 1960 for the Rome Olympics to US$715m for the 2000 games held in Sydney Australia (see Table 1). The American company NBC has also reportedly paid US$793m to broadcast the 2004 Games in Athens, Greece, and has also paid some US$894m to broadcast the 2008 Games to be held in China (Rowe 1999:79).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Media Company</th>
<th>Cost</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>Rome</td>
<td>CBS</td>
<td>$350,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>ABC</td>
<td>$4.5</td>
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<td>1972</td>
<td>Munich</td>
<td>ABC</td>
<td>$7.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>Montreal</td>
<td>ABC</td>
<td>$25m</td>
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<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>Moscow</td>
<td>NBC</td>
<td>$87m</td>
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<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>Los Angeles</td>
<td>ABC</td>
<td>$225m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>Seoul</td>
<td>ABC</td>
<td>$225m</td>
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<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>Sydney</td>
<td>NBC</td>
<td>$1.27m</td>
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<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Greece</td>
<td>NBC</td>
<td>$794m</td>
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<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>China</td>
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Sources: Seifart 1984; Coakley 1998; Rowe 1999.

As regards viewing audience, the TV viewer ship for the opening ceremony at the 1988 Seoul Olympics was estimated at 1 billion worldwide while the corresponding figure for the 1996 games in Atlanta was put at 3.5 billion (Rowe 1999: 34). In relation to football, the 1994 World Cup reported a total TV audience of some 32 billion viewers spread across 188 nations (ibid.). And in relation to NBA basketball, figures up to 2001 indicate
that the NBA is now televised in 206 countries across 128 networks and in 42 languages (Miller et al 2001:64).

Unlike professional sports, however, the development of other aspects of what today is a global sport industry was not met with similar opposition and resistance (e.g., manufacture of sport goods and equipment). The sport industry/economy today has seven (7) major related dimensions:

1. **MANUFACTURING**
   - clothing
   - footwear and equipment (balls, bats, stumps, bails, helmets, racquets etc.)
   - ticketing

2. **MEDIA COVERAGE**
   - Radio, TV, Internet, Fanzines (Publication)

3. **PROFESSIONALIZATION**
   - Merchandising
   - Product endorsement

4. **GAMBLING**

5. **SPONSORSHIP**

6. **SERVICES**
   - sport medicine (e.g., drug research and testing)
   - nutritionist
   - physiotherapy
   - psychology
   - biomechanics
   - Leisure Centres/Gyms. (weight training; aerobics)

7. **RESEARCH AND PUBLICATIONS**
   - medical
   - industrial
   - social science(economic, sociological, psychological)
   - fanzines, player biographies etc.
While these different dimensions of the sport industry can be analytically distinct, they are in fact intimately connected and feed off each other. As regards its value, figures for the USA reveal that sport represents the 11th most important industry nationally, which is valued at some US$200 billion annually. In the UK the value of just the sports goods industry has been put at £3 billion http://www.lboro.ac.uk/departments/mm/research/sports-engineering/overview.html).

Linked to these economic developments, and the demands for improved importance from team owners, managers and fans, modern sport has also become heavily influenced by research, science and technology, which form a very lucrative component of the sport industry. Also related to this growth of the sport industry has been the growth of the field of sport studies, which has contributed to the increasing application of science and technology to the field of sport.

The Rise of Sport Studies

A related and equally important development in modern sport has been the growth and development of the field of sport studies. The field of sport studies comprise several disciplines dedicated to the teaching, research and development of sport that include medicine, exercise science (e.g., biomechanics), economics, management, psychology, history, sociology and law. The study of sport internationally at the University level has increased by leaps and bounds over the last twenty years, coinciding with the wider commercialization and professionalization of sport itself. Undergraduate and graduate degrees in the study of sport are now offered in many Universities in both North America and Europe. For instance, Loughborough University, one of the leading sport oriented Universities in the UK can serve as a useful example of some of the recent developments in sport studies. At Loughborough, a wide range of undergraduate course offerings is available to students that include the following:

1. BSc (Hons) Sport and Exercise Science
2. BSc (Hons) Sport Science with Management
3. BSc (Hons) Sport and Leisure Management
4. BSc (Hons) Chemistry and Sports Science
5. BSc (Hons) Sports Science and Mathematics
6. BSc (Hons) Sports Science and Physics
7. BSc (Hons) Sports Science and Geography
8. BSc (Hons) Geography and Sport and Leisure Management
9. BSc (Hons) Sports Science and Social Science
10. BA (Hons) English and Sports Science

In the United States, which has led the way internationally in the commercialization and professionalization of sport, the field of sport studies is also well developed. At the University of Ohio, there even exists an undergraduate programme of study called the "Sport Industry" ([http://www.ohiou.edu/rsps/sportindustry.htm](http://www.ohiou.edu/rsps/sportindustry.htm)). The development of teaching and research programmes has also meant the creation and consolidation of a multi-disciplinary cadres of researchers or staff at various Universities who focus principally on the study of sport, many of whom also benefit from a vibrant consultancy market. The development of the sport industry and the development of sport studies have meant the creation of a wide range of occupations and careers dealing specifically with sport outside of the traditional positions of playing and coaching.

**Sport, Economy and Economic Development in the Caribbean**

Historically, in both pre and post-independence periods of Caribbean history, sport has never been an integral part of Caribbean economic development, which has been significantly influenced by the received or orthodox view of sport, the athlete and the economy itself.

In the Caribbean, economy and economic development has been historically equated with several major activities or sectors: mineral extraction (e.g., oil, gas, bauxite), agriculture, tourism and manufacturing. While in some islands, there is a mix of mineral extraction, agriculture, tourism and manufacturing, in most, it is the case that the lifeblood of the
economy is centred around one or two of these industries. Thinking, planning or policy formulation on economic development in the Caribbean therefore at the level of the state, the traditional private sector, intellectuals, trade unionists, never included sport or popular culture as a whole. It should not be surprising thus that theorizing on Caribbean economic development be it in terms of modernization, dependency, Marxist, or plantation theories never considered sport and popular culture as part of that process. The renowned Caribbean scholar Lloyd Best, who has written at length on the nature of plantation economy in the Caribbean and how it has been modified over time, has never really modified his thinking on sport in such a way as to make it an integral part of the process of theorizing and economic development. So, for all his radical posturing and claims to independent thought and action, Best like others of his ilk and generation remain trapped in orthodoxy, which by its nature preempts the very thought and action he has historically advocated. As a result of this situation, while we continue to cry shame on the West Indian cricket teams because of their recent performances, there is no shame in the fact that as a region we cannot even manufacture a cricket ball or any other good and equipment which this game requires.

In spite of the dominant thinking and orthodoxy surrounding economy and sport, however, there have been several attempts at commercializing sport in the Caribbean on the part of private individuals through namely, the introduction of professional sports and sport gambling. Most of these efforts however have been restricted to certain islands, certain sports and not particularly successful or sustainable. In Jamaica, for instance, professional cycling reportedly existed in the 1930s and 1940s (*Port of Spain Gazette*, August 14 1945; *Trinidad Guardian*, January 13 1946) and professional football was also attempted there sometime in the 1980s, but these developments are yet to be researched and studied. In Trinidad and Tobago, research by this author has shown that there were several efforts to professionalize football between 1969 and 1982 but these failed due to a mix of factors that included financing and organizational problems, but what proved even more crucial was the strong resistance from the governing football body who saw these developments as a threat to their power and control over the game locally (Mc Cree 1995, 2000). In 1995, professional football was again introduced to Trinidad and Tobago in
the form of a semi-professional league, which became fully professional in 1999 (*Trinidad Express*, March 29 1999; http://www.ttproleague.com). Since that time therefore, there has been a professional football league operating in Trinidad and Tobago, but the league still suffers from serious problems which include very poor public attendance, poor media coverage, low salaries and incentives linked to financing limitations (*Trinidad Guardian*, March 5 2003). The league operates more or less oblivious to the public at large. In addition to professional football, in Trinidad and Tobago, in the late 1940s and 1950s preliminary research by this author has found that there existed a betting pool based on local football (*Trinidad Guardian*, September 3 1949; *Trinidad Guardian*, January 6 1950; *Trinidad Guardian*, July 26 1951; *Trinidad Guardian*, July 26 1952)), but more research is still to be done to ascertain the particulars concerning this initiative.

Apart from attempts at commercialization in cycling and football in the Caribbean in the form of professionalization, the sport of horse racing historically has been organized along commercial lines in several islands (namely Jamaica, Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago), and around which there exists a thriving gambling culture involving both local and foreign racing. Scholarly research into this sport across the Caribbean however and its economic value and potential has also been wanting. In addition, while professional boxing has also existed in some islands of the Caribbean, there does not exist a professional boxing circuit generating significant income and employment opportunities. Like all the other sports, therefore, it remains very much undeveloped.

The critical reason(s) for the general exclusion of sport from the notions of economy and economic development in the Caribbean, however, may have to do not so much with the conception of economy *per se*, but with the very conception of sport and the role it was assigned in the broader process of social development and transformation. That role has centred principally around its value as a source of morale virtues and political symbolism for Caribbean peoples.
The Socio-Political Value of Sport in the Caribbean

As a result of British imperialism, the conception and development of sport in the Caribbean has been founded squarely on the public school model. Consequently, the conception of and approach to sport within the education system and the society at large has been functionalist in nature centering around its value or roles as a source of (i) normalization/moralism or character formation; (ii) recreation; (iii) health; (iv) unity/harmony/integration/order and (v) nationalism/nation building. Relatedly sport was also to assume importance as a source of anti-imperialism and regionalism. From its inception thus, sport in the Caribbean was not located in the economy but in the polity and civil society.

Within the education system, sport was conceived under the rubric of “extra-curricula activity” and “physical education.” And, the ideological and pedagogical value of “extra-curricula activity” and “physical education” within the education system rested not only on its morale and other functions but on its supposed role in the learning process as expressed in the clichés, “all work and no play makes jack a dull boy” and the oft repeated proverb *mens sana incorpore sano* (a sound mind in a healthy body). In this conception thus, sport was directly associated with intelligence or performing well in school. However, while this view prevailed, there was always the opposite view or suspicion that those who were talented in “extra-curricula activities”, particularly sport, were generally not academically inclined or intelligent. And, as an extension of this, it was believed further that such talent that they had served primarily to compensate for their intellectual deficiencies. Almost by definition then, an athlete was someone who was considered intellectually challenged. At one and the same time therefore, sport was associated with and not associated with intelligence. No less a person than Lloyd Best, a member of the Afro-Saxon middle class and intellectual cadre, symbolizes this snobbish thinking, when, in relation to Trinidad and Tobago, he wrote in 2000 that “The entrepreneurs and creators lie among the great multitude of the failures, compelled to take up art, craft, music and sport” *(Saturday Express, December 30 2000).*
This thinking was expressed further in the fact that “physical education” itself was accorded very low academic or intellectual value in the school curricula. In this regard Jennifer Hargreaves, a top British sport scholar, writing on the development of sport studies in the UK, noted in 1982:

> Physical education as a whole tended to be viewed as intellectually undemanding and devoid of ‘important’ and ‘useful knowledge’ equivalent to that of the ‘academic’ curriculum- an attitude supported by the historic view of physical education as a health giving process and a force for discipline and the inculcation of important values. (Hargreaves 1982: 3)

Thus while supposedly integral to educational learning, physical education was also marginal or peripheral to it. In addition, as far as this author can tell, it was perhaps the only subject in school for which there were neither written examinations nor homework. Physical education was just not the stuff of which academia was made contrary to the hype about *mens sana in corpore sano*. Of course, these contradictory notions rested on a more fundamental dichotomy between the mind and body and intellectual/physical activity, which privileged or valorized the mind/intellect at the expense of supposed “physical activities.”

In addition to this contradictory or ambiguous association between sport and formal education, sport was really never associated with the dominant notion of work or employment. And what is ‘work’? In a very broad and general sense, the term work can be defined as the expenditure of energy (mental, physical, emotional) towards the realization of a particular objective or set of objectives. By this very broad, all-inclusive definition, almost everything can possibly qualify as work. In everyday and popular usage however, the term work usually refers to some form of paid employment, and because sport in general and amateur sport in particular were never equated with financial remuneration, from its inception sport was not equated with the dominant and popular notion of work. This helped to develop a dichotomy between sport and work and to relegate it to the sphere of ‘play’ and ‘recreation’, in the narrow, non-economic conception of these terms. Invariably, sport was not associated with the generation of
wealth and potential occupations or professions, which also ranked high on the occupational pecking order.

Historically therefore, the conception of and approach to sport has been informed by certain false or misleading dichotomies as between body/mind, intellectual/physical activity, work/play, which have contributed to its general exclusion from Caribbean economic development and its location at the very bottom of the traditional edifice of the academic research and teaching agendas consistent with a historical, universal pattern.

In this traditional research and development edifice, apart from economic growth and economic development, the other important dimensions included (i) a concern with certain social conditions (viz., education, health, poverty, crime, delinquency); (ii) political culture, organization, and administration (viz., constitution reform, electoral behaviour, equal representation, participation in decision making, public sector reform, decentralization and the new buzzwords [of old vintage] called governance and policy studies), (iii) science and technology and more recently the environment. These have always been the core and overriding developmental, research and teaching concerns in the Caribbean since the early and heady days of nationalism and decolonization. In addition, this traditional agenda of teaching, research and development was reinforced further by the very policies and funding priorities of regional and international institutions such as the UNDP, UNECLAC, and the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB). In this respect for instance, a 2002 circular from the CDB offering some US$750,000.00 to the UWI for research, conferences and workshops is telling. The circular stated *inter alia*:

Priority areas for funding are:
(a) poverty reduction (including, for example, health, HIV/AIDS, small and micro-enterprise development, community development/empowerment)
(b) the environment;
(c) human resource development and
(d) governance and institutional development
As is clearly evident, research funding was made available primarily for the traditional research and development agenda.

Thus far, I have attempted to define directly the meaning of economy together with the dominant conception and approach to sport within the general context of orthodox development thinking, planning and research in the Caribbean. However, equally important for our purpose is the definition of athlete that has prevailed.

**What is an athlete?**

The orthodox conception of sport also involved invariably a particular conception of the athlete and their role and responsibilities in the development of human society in general and Caribbean society in particular. As we have shown, this orthodox conception of sport centred around particularly its value as a source of moralism and political symbolism to Caribbean people. By extension, an athlete’s chief role, responsibility and burden were conditioned by this moralism and symbolism. I contend that the way the athlete has been defined or constructed, albeit not only in relation to the Caribbean, can be captured in the following related formulations:

1. The West Indian athlete is a gladiator whose primary task is to beat some other athlete or team of athletes in order to generate pride, prestige, pleasure, and power for their fans and their “people”.
2. To Afro-Saxon leaders and their followers, the West Indian athlete (particularly West Indian cricketers) is a gladiator whose primary task and *raison d’être* is not to generate wealth but to beat white people and generate pride, prestige, pleasure and feelings of power for black people in order to compensate for the ravishes of slavery, colonialism and their historical dislocation in world affairs.
3. To Indo-West Indians, the West Indian athlete (particularly Indian cricketers) is a gladiator whose primary task and *raison d’être* is not to generate wealth but to beat white people in order to generate pride, prestige, pleasure and feelings of power for Indian people in order to compensate for the ravishes of colonialism,
identureship and their historical marginalization from West Indian society. An allied function of the Indian athlete (particularly cricketers) is to give visibility and voice to Indians who feel alienated from West Indian society and among whom there is still a perception of discrimination with respect to their selection on the West Indies cricket team.

4. The West Indian athlete (particularly the cricketer) is a gladiator whose primary task is to beat any and everybody whether white or non-white in order bring pride, prestige, pleasure and power to ALL West Indian people regardless of their ethnicity and compensate for their general powerlessness, invisibility and marginalization in world affairs.

5. The West Indian athlete (West Indian cricketers in particular) is a gladiator whose principal raison d’être is to unite a disparate West Indian people whose leaders only talk of same but have shown no political will or commitment towards its realization. It is through sport and the athlete that this imagined regional unity becomes real and broadcasted live in vivid colour.

6. The West Indian athlete (West Indian cricketers in particular) is an exemplar/model, hero/heroine and symbol or emblem of anti-imperialist resistance, nationalism, regionalism, autonomy/sovereignty and moralism.

7. Although they maybe paid, the West Indian athlete is not a worker in the conventional or legal sense of that word with a right to be unionized, protest, strike, or make demands for better wages and working conditions in their own interests and those of their families. Where they do so, they are liable to be branded as uncommitted, indiscipline, only concerned about money, bringing the game into disrepute and possibly victimized through banning or non-selection. In the sport of cricket, this situation can be illustrated in the 1979 Kerry Packer cricket controversy, where West Indian and other cricketers who took part in this league attracted by its financial provisions were dropped and debarred from selection on the West Indies team. In football, this can be illustrated by a recent case in Trinidad and Tobago where around 19 national footballers were debarred
from national selection after they protested and initiated a strike over pay and training conditions (*Trinidad Guardian*, January 28, 29 2003, February 2 2003; *Trinidad Express*, January 30 2003, April 4, 5 2003; *Newsday*, March 19 2003). It is not known what have become of the players attempt to form a players union in the aftermath of this development (*Trinidad Guardian*, January 30 2003; *Trinidad Express*, February 1 2003). Thus, though they symbolize power, athletes are generally powerless. Though they symbolize resistance, athletes can hardly resist. Though they symbolize the voice of the downtrodden or underdog, they themselves have little or no voice. For almost all other category of workers, the rules of engagement are different. Furthermore, in the Caribbean, where blackmen challenge white men, they are seen as great acts of anti-imperialist and anti-hegemonic resistance but when black men challenge black men (particularly athletes), they are labeled as indiscipline and uncommitted. Or, as happened in with Walter Rodney in Guyana and the Grenada Revolution, they are liquidated.

8. West Indian athletes (West Indian cricketers in particular) exist solely to please and satisfy the needs and insecurities of a disempowered West Indian people suffering from low self-esteem. They owe this to West Indian people. West Indian people do not owe them.

In their attempt to construct societies and nations in the aftermath of colonialism, West Indian leaders and people have constructed athletes themselves in terms of roles, which reflect their own ideals, aspirations, needs and insecurities. In the same way that the *nouveaux riches* and bourgeoisie of 19th century European and North American society used amateurism to develop a particular identity, similarly, West Indians have attempted to use sport, both amateur and professional, in the 20th century as part of a process of identity formation. The process, however, has been fraught with contradictions, which have undermined its very realization. These contradictions are more sharply revealed in the sport of cricket where the construction of the athlete as ‘hero’ and political symbolist has been most developed. Some of these contradictions include the following: (1) the continuing receipt of Knighthoods by West Indian cricketers from the British (examples
include Garfield Sobers, Clyde Walcott, and Everton Weekes; (2) dependence on professional cricket in England although this has lessened over the past ten years largely because of a decision by the English cricket authorities to restrict this practice as a reaction to the then dominance of the West Indies in world cricket; (3) dependence on foreigners for the supply of cricket gear, equipment and even medical expertise and (4) the poor, dismal track record of the state and the private sector in the development of West Indian cricket. In addition, another striking lacuna is the absence of biographies of our renowned cricketers, the supposed superheroes and emblems of anti-imperialist resistance and regional unity. And, of those biographies which have been written on Sobers, Weekes, Worrell, Walcott, Lloyd, Haynes, Richards, Greenidge, Holding and Marshall, most have been written by English journalists or the white man, the historical \textit{bête noire} of our (under)development. For example, Brian Scovell has written the biographies of Sobers (1988) and Lara (1995), Bob Steen wrote that of Desmond Haynes (1993) and Patrick Symes wrote that of Greenidge (1980). So much for cricket then as a symbol of anti-imperialism and sovereignty.

The above contradictions have also undermined the potential of sport and athletes to generate wealth and contribute to economic and social development.

**Sport and Economic Development: The Way Forward**

The use of sport to generate wealth and serve as a source of profits, income, and lasting professional careers would require a radical change in orthodox thinking surrounding the notions of economy, sport and the athlete.

**Economy**

The orthodox and restrictive notion of economy thus as referring primarily to the commodities of oil, gas, steel, bauxite, sugar, bananas, and tourism has to be broadened to become more inclusive. With this in mind, it is suggested here that we see economy as representing ALL the resources in a particular territorial or geographical space, both
human and non-human, that can be capitalized and monetized in such a way as to bring sustainable material benefits to the society and so aid in its development. In such a conception, economy will include sport and popular culture in general, which today constitute two of the biggest billion dollar industries internationally. It is reasoned further that the smaller and more dependent an economy is, the more important it is to use all the resources at its command to contribute to its transformation.

Within recent time in the Caribbean, while there have been several developments, which point to some change in orthodox thinking, there is still a lot more to be done. These developments include the following:

1. The formulation of or plans to formulate official sport policies in several Caribbean countries, namely, Trinidad and Tobago, St. Vincent and St. Vincent.
2. The construction of several new sporting stadia and facilities in several Caribbean countries that include Trinidad and Tobago, St. Vincent, St. Lucia and Grenada.
3. The construction of a Center for Sports and Physical Education at the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine campus, and the introduction of an undergraduate degree programme in Sport management, together with minor certificate offerings in sport coaching.  
4. The recent decision of the Government of Trinidad and Tobago to provide an annual grant of TT$2,000,000.00 to the existing professional football league over the next four years (Trinidad Express, January 24 2004).

While these developments are welcomed, there is still a long way to go in relation to providing an adequate sport infrastructure, financing, proper governance in sport organizations, professionalization, and engaging different aspects of the sport industry in a more systematic and coordinated manner. Moreover, these developments have not been

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The author has also been part of these developments. In view of the initiative to offer an undergraduate major in Sport Management at the St. Augustine Campus of the UWI, and to develop the field of sport studies locally, the University agreed in 2000 to fund partly my pursuit of a doctorate in the sociology of sport at the University of Leicester, UK, as part of the process of staff and programme development. As a result, at present, I deliver an introductory course in the sociology of sport (see Appendix) as part of this new management major in sport offered since 2001.
really articulated as part of a new economic development policy, which sees sport as another pole of economic growth.

**Athlete**

Since the athlete is at the center of sport, there is need not so much to alter the orthodox conception of their role based on moralism and political symbolism but to broaden it, and to make it also more inclusive like the notion of economy of which it should be part. To this end, one suggests that we need to see the athlete first and foremost not as a gladiator but as a person and a worker who has a particular skill or talent in sport and whose skill or talent can be so valorized and monetized that it can be used to transform their own lives, those of others, their community and their society. As a person and a worker, an athlete like anybody else has particular basic needs for food, clothing, shelter, security, motivation, personal development and rights to defend him/herself, without the fear of victimization, against false accusations or lies, half-truths and innuendoes that threaten their person and livelihood. In short, the athlete is not a gladiator of Roman vintage who exists solely for the pleasure of and at the beck and call of the masses and their leaders.

In this suggested (re)conceptualization of the athlete, one sees no necessary conflict or incompatibility between their historical moralistic, symbolic role and the generation of wealth. If anything, it is felt that the latter can serve to solidify or enhance the former since the more well off the athlete, the stronger or more potent is their value as a symbol of resistance, independence, pride, power, prestige, self-esteem and commitment to their downtrodden and powerless community.

Such alterations in orthodox thinking are fundamentally necessary though not sufficient in making sport and athletes a more integral part of economy and economic development.

**Conclusion**
Internationally, modern sport has come a very far way from being a religious ritual for paying homage to the Gods to being an activity being heavily driven by the profit motive, research, science and technology. After a period of stringent and fierce opposition to professional sports from the adherents of amateurism, sport is now firmly planted in the economic mainstream of several developed and developing nations and not restricted to civil society and the polity to serve as cannon fodder for some idyllic moralism and political symbolism. In these societies, there is generally no conflict or dichotomy now between the generation of wealth and the generation of pride, prestige and power on the part of athletes as obtains still in the Caribbean.

In the Caribbean, however, the legitimizing or validating framework for the conduct and support of sporting activity continues to be driven and dominated by one main thing: identity formation. This identity formation expresses itself at several levels that include: the individual, nation and the region and is centred around three main related (isms) things; moralism (viz., character formation etc.), nationalism and regionalism. As a result, the discourse on sport in the Caribbean has been trapped in an orgy of nationalism and regionalism. In this framework, the primary function of sport and the athlete is not to generate wealth but to generate pride, pleasure, prestige, and power on behalf of an oppressed and marginalized people. This orthodox conception of sport has articulated with the orthodox notion of economy and Caribbean economic development (oil, gas, agriculture, tourism etc.), to exclude it from the latter. As a result, leadership in the West Indies whatever their gender or ethnic derivation, be it Caucasian, African or Indian, has been an unrepentant and unmitigated disaster in relation to the development of sport either economically or non-economically.

While there have been attempts to depart from these orthodoxies through attempts at professional sports, and more recently, through the establishment of national sport policies, new sport facilities and education programmes in sport studies at the University of the West Indies, these have varied in their outcomes, character and trajectories. As a result, there is still much left to be done as the historical orthodoxies remain dominant and vibrant. If sport is to become an integral part of Caribbean economic development
and constitute an industry in its own right, it will require a radical departure from orthodoxy surrounding sport, the athlete and economy, a process which should involve the state, the private sector, the media, sport administrators and civil society on the whole. To do anything less is to do nothing at all.
APPENDIX
THE SOCIOLOGY OF SPORT AS OFFERED AT THE UWI, ST. AUGUSTINE
COURSE CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

Course Description

This course deals with a range of fundamental issues and topics in the world of sport as part of the relatively new sub discipline of the sociology of sport. It is made up of seven modules which cover the following related topics: theories and definitions of sport, the origins and development of sport in traditional and industrial society, commercialization, the media, politics, social stratification, gender, deviance and the role of sport in the Caribbean.

Aims

The aims of the course are (i) to introduce the student to the study of sport as a social institution or activity in its own right; (ii) to show its reciprocal relationship to other institutions or spheres of existence such as the economy, politics, social structure and culture; (iii) to sensitize the student to the wider social contexts in which the management of sport has to be effected and (iv) to develop in the student a more scientific, and rigorous approach to the analysis and study of sport and the possibilities and problems that it presents.

Module 1-Theories and Definitions of Sport
Module 2-Origins and Development of Sport
Module 3- The Commercialization of Sport
Module 4- The Role of the Media
Module 5- Social Structure and Politics
Module 6-Gender
Module 7-Deviance/Disruptive Behaviour
REFERENCES


