International Review for the
Sociology of Sport

http://irs.sagepub.com

Global Regimes, Local Agendas: Sport, Resistance and the Mediation of Dissent

Mark Falcous and Michael Silk

International Review for the Sociology of Sport 2006; 41; 317
DOI: 10.1177/1012690207079230

The online version of this article can be found at:
http://irs.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/41/3-4/317

Published by:
SAGE Publications
http://www.sagepublications.com

On behalf of:
International Sociology of Sport Association

Additional services and information for *International Review for the Sociology of Sport* can be found at:

Email Alerts: http://irs.sagepub.com/cgi/alerts

Subscriptions: http://irs.sagepub.com/subscriptions

Reprints: http://www.sagepub.com/journalsReprints.nav

Permissions: http://www.sagepub.com/journalsPermissions.nav

Citations (this article cites 39 articles hosted on the
SAGE Journals Online and HighWire Press platforms):
http://irs.sagepub.com/cgi/content/refs/41/3-4/317

© 2006 International Sociology of Sport Association and SAGE Publications. All rights reserved. Not for commercial use or unauthorized distribution.

INTERNATIONAL REVIEW FOR THE SOCIOLOGY OF SPORT 41/3–4(2006) 317–338

© Copyright ISSA and SAGE Publications (Los Angeles, London, New Delhi and Singapore)
www.sagepublications.com
10.1177/1012690207079230

GLOBAL REGIMES, LOCAL AGENDAS

Sport, Resistance and the Mediation of Dissent

Mark Falcous
University of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand

Michael Silk
University of Bath, UK

Abstract Rearticulating Chen (1992, 1994; see also Silk and Andrews, 2005), this article argues for the need to establish an agenda of 'internationalist localism' to analyse the place of sport within unfolding socio-political agendas of neoliberal globalization. In doing so, it constitutes a response to calls within the academy to register critical, reflective responses to ongoing international crises (Martin and Shohat, 2002; Denzin and Lincoln, 2003). We thus extend recent calls to interrogate sport as a site through which various socio-political discourses are mobilized in the organization and discipline of daily life in the service of particular political agendas (Andrews, 1995). We do so by illustrating both the global extent of these agendas and the locally conjunctural nature of such processes. We centre upon the case of Aboriginal Muslim-Australian boxer Anthony Mundine, and the response to his post-9/11 criticism of Australian involvement in the US-led 'War on Terror'. Mundine was vilified and demonized within the Australian corporate media, and sanctioned by world boxing bodies. Critically, the dominant media discourse of the moment revealed that inherently local agendas contour the connection of the national with the global. Specifically, the contested nature of Australian identities in and through the framing and rebuttal of dissent are writ large in responses to global events. Thus, the intimate, yet nuanced connection between local and global power dynamics is revealed.

Key words • dissent • local/global • media • Mundine • terrorism

Following a successful start to his boxing career, prominent Muslim-Australian Aboriginal Anthony Mundine appeared on the Australian Channel 9 *Today* show (a high-rating daytime show) in late October 2001. Interviewed by presenter Richard Wilkins, Mundine was questioned about the deployment of Australian troops to Afghanistan at that time. The full dialogue of the significant part of the interview proceeded as follows:

> Wilkins: As one of Australia's more prominent Muslims, do you support Australian troops going to Afghanistan?
> Mundine: Do I support? No. I really feel that it's not our problem and it's unfortunate that our country has to be involved. But, at the end of the day, I really feel that we're trying to bring peace and humanity amongst every culture and every religion.
> Wikins: So you don't support your Australian fellow countrymen going to the other side of the world, standing up against the sort of terrorism we've witnessed in the past six weeks?

> Mundine: Well, it's . . . they call it an act of terrorism. But, if you understand the religion and our way of life that . . . it's not about terrorism, it's about fighting for God's laws. And it's been brought upon . . . America's brought it upon themselves in what they've done in the history of time.

Mundine had, albeit clumsily and somewhat ambiguously, explained his opposition to Australian involvement in the 'War on Terror' by suggesting that interpretations of 11 September 2001 needed to be located within historical contexts and that perceptions of 'terrorism' were contextualized by one's vision of righteousness. In doing so, he had refuted the dominant premise of mainstream political and media rhetoric within 'the West' at that moment — that is, the isolation of contemporary events from history, and the insistence that terrorism is the result of an evil impulse absent of context (see Butler, 2002; Johnson, 2002; Roy, 2004).

Within this article, we explore the response to Mundine's publicly stated opposition to Australian support for the US-led 'War on Terror'. In doing so, we seek to extend the literature that has explored the place of sport within the post-11 September 2001 United States through addressing the relational contingencies between local and global contexts. Through consideration of the often unquestioned and insidious, place of sport as a powerful economy of affect in the service of particular geo-political trajectories (see for example, King, 2004; Falcous and Silk, 2005; Giardina, 2005; McDonald, 2005; Silk and Falcous, 2005) we address several intersecting issues. These include: the scope for political dissent from prominent athletes; responses to that resistance; the politically conservative agendas of sports governing bodies; and the role of the (sports) media in 'framing' the national imaginary within unfolding global frames. In particular, we are concerned with local manifestations and discourses of power as they relate to neoliberal trajectories of globalization, of which the 'War on Terror' is but one manifestation.

Sport, the Academy and 'Policing the (International) Crisis'

Perhaps intensified after the 'rupture in imperial management' (Negri, in Cocco and Lazzarato, 2002) on 11 September 2001, sport in the US has been re-entrenched as a component of the contemporary lexicon of consensus within which the seemingly pervasive and ubiquitous shift to the political right appears as uncontested terrain. That is, in the service of particular political agendas, sport has been insidiously mobilized as a powerful public pedagogy and has thus been a component in cementing the organic success of the right in the US. As scholars whose central focus is the critical interrogation of sport, it is essential to confront such disquieting developments head-on, understand, interrogate and intervene in the 'moral' regulation and management of populations by those who act on our behalf, and mobilize dissent in the interests of minimizing the degree of oppression in people's lives (Denzin, 2004a; Giroux, 2005). Leading the clarion call to intervene and interrogate, and indeed, to mobilize dissent, Denzin and Lincoln (2003: xv), with clear allusions to Hall et al. (1978), suggest a need to 'police the present international crisis' — and for, a reinvigorated critical cultural studies that can provide the space for human, personal and biographical, critical, and political reflection against a status quo. To remain silent, Denzin (2004b) argues, is to be in collusion with this immoral political regime, is to ignore the moral responsibilities afforded to us as academics and would allow for scholars of sport (or otherwise) to be 'mistaken for an anonymous functionary or careful bureaucrat' (Said, 1994: 13).

There is a small, yet burgeoning, literature that has investigated the place of sport within a post-9/11 US characterized by: omnipresent fear; ongoing military 'interventions' and non-state terror acts; re-imagined and reasserted nation(s); the glaring absence of media scrutiny; 'homeland security'; legal reconfigurations that curtail civil rights, and, the militarization of everyday life (see King, 2004; Falcous and Silk, 2005; Giardina, 2005; McDonald, 2005; Silk and Andrews, 2005; Silk and Falcous, 2005). Necessarily, this work has focused on the mobilization of sport within the United States as a symbolic tool in the contemporary totalitarian regime's 'Orwellian' theatre of misrepresentation and propaganda (Denzin, 2004b). This focus is perhaps not surprising given the geographical location of these scholars and their commitment to working through the most defining and irreplaceable element of cultural studies: the relationship between the theoretical and the empirical in a manner that acknowledges, and seeks to explicate, the national (in this case) peculiarities of the context under scrutiny.

Our present, it has been argued however, is a time in which sovereign nation-states as powerful leviathans have become extinct monoliths, supplanted by a utopian vision of a benign and free floating market economy characterized by accelerated economic momentum, free flows of capital without borders, surpranational juridicial structures, international cooperation, and global democracy, all policed and supervised by imperial (as opposed to sovereign) rule (Hardt and Negri, 2000; Wang, 2002). This trajectory of theoretical debate is significant in providing the stimulus for explorations of the way in which various cultural forms operate in the context of globally entwined geopolitics, contestation and dissent. The cluster of associated questions surrounding the continued resonance of national cultures — and resistance therein — needs unpacking. The task lies in understanding how the contemporary nation — cultural, political, economic — informs and is informed by global interconnectivity. That means thinking about globalization as messy, paradoxical and at times contradictory, a set of processes that directs us towards the intersections, disorders, and, juxtapositions of global, national and local scenes, emergent modes of power, sovereignty, and resistance, and, the (re)emergence of a sovereign nation-state — exemplified in the US case — that has mobilized political will, civic spirit, patriotism, and national security, silenced dissent, and curtailed, civil liberties (Ahmed, 2002; Dallmayr, 2002; Kellner, 2002a, 2002b; Wang, 2002; Sivanandan, 2006).

This crabgrass-like conception of the intersections and entanglements between local, global, and, perhaps other yet unimagined scales requires a theoretical and methodological toolbox that can aid in the construction of what Grossberg (2006) has termed a radically contextualist history of the present. To embrace complexity and contingency, and avoid the many faces of reductionism, there is a need for scholars to reconstruct the conjunctural relations between the scrap of ordinary under investigation (Frow and Morris, 2000) and the various forces operating within the social structure. We recognize that such an exercise will be different for every piece of research that aims to excavate and theorize the contingent relations, structures and events that link the banal with prevailing determinate forces given that there are no necessary correspondences and no necessary non-correspondences between one level of a social formation and another, between the social structure and the human agent, or between a cultural practice such as sport and the varied forces acting within a social structure (see Hall, 1985; Grossberg, 1997, 2006; Andrews, 2002). Based in Andrews (2002) *sport without guarantees*, we thus sought out the *non-necessary correspondences* (Hall, 1985) as we set out to 'unearth the socially and historically contingent matrix of social, economic, political and technological articulations' (Andrews, 2002: 114) that would allow us to reconstruct, remake and forge connections between Aboriginal Muslim-Australian boxer Anthony Mundine and contemporaneous social structure.

As we moved in an array of different directions in our efforts to grapple with, critically engage, or rework theory — or, as Stuart Hall (1992) rather eloquently put it, 'wrestling with angels' — we found ourselves being drawn back to the scholarship of Kuan-Hsing Chen (1992, 1994). Chen's work recognized that capital, patriarchy and racism have no nationality; he proposed 'where international political and economic power has formed a solid alliance with local power blocs, it makes no sense to struggle only on the level of the local' (1992: 481). While writing from a position advocating for interventional work in Taiwan that delegitimated the political boundaries of the nation state and refused to reproduce existing neo-colonial imperial power structures, Chen (1994) offered a strategy that could simultaneously confront the local *and* international reconstruction of power. Chen (1994: 704) urged that local struggles be articulated with international connections; 'though there will always exist polylogic and irresolvable tensions along the edges of the local/global divide, that positioning is also the energy source for theoretical innovation: changing historical conditions demand a new internationalist localism.' As Chen (1994: 681) pointed out, while 'discourses from elsewhere cannot be appropriated directly into immediate, situated confrontation,' there does appear to be conceptual relevance to articulating Chen to both the spatial and temporal dimensions of our cultural research. That is, in our present, a modified international localism provides us with a strategy that can address — as Ritzer (2004) would attest — how discourses from *nowhere* (global) are challenged, solidified, intensified, resisted, or reworked *somewhere* (the local).[1]

Thus, following Chen, it became clear that to recreate a radically contextual history of the present (Grossberg, 2006) we needed to draw upon — or wrestle with — what Chen (1994) described as an 'internationalist localism'. That is, to understand our present, we need to articulate how discourses from *nowhere* — what Kincheloe and McLaren (2005: 305) identify as the American Empire's 'rank imperialist sham' — become manifest, embodied, and, resisted *somewhere*: within particular locales around the world (in our case Australia). Within the context of critical analyses of sport and physical culture, this approach is one that can be used to insist on the dialectical or dialogical tensions of local and global. As Silk and Andrews (2005) propose, an invocation of Chen (1992, 1994) can aid the academy in coming to terms with the neoliberal, neoimperial, and, neoconservative peculiar or juridical conceptualizations of 'right' (Baudrillard, 2001; Johnson, 2002; McClaren, 2002), the seemingly ubiquitous, deterritorialized and decentred (yet far from subtly 'located') apparatus of market rule (Hardt and Negri, 2000), *and* the specificities of the locale in question. Thus, and following this position, to excavate or map the connections between the supranational and the specificities of a dissenting Muslim-Australian boxer we sought to articulate politically expedient *connections* between experiences of the differentially located disempowered (internationalist), while simultaneously recognizing the need to work with, and through, social, cultural, economic, and political difference as one comes to an empirically grounded, theoretical interpretation of the context in question (localism). This is a sensibility that connects or articulates the local with the global, connections that are not necessarily guaranteed in advance (Grossberg, 1997), is deeply conscious of its own geographical/conjunctural location, and, is not locked into any pre-determined theoretical or methodological framework. What emerges is a strategy that is able to go/see beyond, but does not omit the specificities of any one national culture. This should not be mistaken for an attempt to construct a 'universally valid and cross-culturally suitable analytical framework' (Chen, 1992: 481), or a totalizing of all cultural studies of sport and physical activity for how the local articulates with the global will be conjuncturally unique. Alternatively, as Chen (1992: 481–2) makes clear, a dialogue is needed in local work that 'should always be conscious about, and possibly forming connections with, the international.'

Within the balance of this article we thus develop this agenda and extend the work conducted on the United States, exploring the place(s) of sport as a site of significance within the politics of alternative locales in the post-11 September 2001 world. Specifically, grounded in the contention that there is a need to establish local agendas within which to situate the global machinations of the 'War on Terror' and the concomitant cultural, political, and, economic transformations, we propose that adequately contextualizing sport within culture in our current moment involves excavating the *connections* between the supranational and national (Kellner, 2002a, 2002b). Such an approach avoids the abstracted, obsequious, frequently deductive and predictable theoretical and interpretive work that all too easily, if not monolithically maps a global (or American) socio-historic context onto the local (Silk and Andrews, 2005). After all, it is redundant to talk of globalization other than as a process subject to specific local manifestations and readings — we thus turn to Australian cultural politics in the post-9/11 moment to contextualize the 'dissent' of, and subsequent response to, Anthony Mundine.

Local and Global Frames: Australia

The immediate post-11 September 2001 moment featured frenzied realignments of international alliances and relations within the confines of a reasserted binarism (Johnson, 2002), in which it was apparently only possible for nations to be with or against (the terrorists). In this moment, 'the West,' and specifically the United States, at least in government and mainstream media discourses, was framed as ‘hallowed’, ‘moral’, ‘indispensable’, a ‘vast inaccessible reality that can never be questioned’ (Debord, 2002: 12). This is a position which explicitly and implicitly views the United States and its allies as culturally, morally, and politically superior to all others, that sets the parameter of capital accumulation as the only way to achieve success (Johnson, 2002; Giroux, 2005), and serves — in the US case — as the beacon of Republican virtue in this world apparently promoting ‘democracy’, ‘human rights’ and the ‘international rule of law’ (Hardt and Negri, 2004).

Within this context the longstanding economic, political and military alignment of Australia with the ‘western alliance’, and specifically with the US (see Wesley and Warren, 2000), was consolidated with the commitment of troops in October 2001 to the ‘War on Terror’ — at that point targeting Afghanistan. This was unsurprising given that the right-wing Howard government had placed US–Australia relations at the centre of its understandings of Australia’s place in the world (Curry, 2001). This explicit alignment with the US, however, is not to suggest that the Australian response simply revealed the translocal alignments of countries apparently under attack for their liberal democratic traditions. Indeed, as Osuri and Banerjee (2004) note, the event was localized in Australian governmental and media discourses in specific and profound ways.

This localization was most visibly manifest in the Howard government linking its ultra-conservative approach to asylum seekers and refugees to the threat of international terrorism by suggesting (without evidence) that asylum seekers might be terrorists (Saikal, 2002; Osuri and Banerjee, 2004). Indeed, an Orwellian veil of discursive deceit saw Howard condemning the raft of post-9/11 anti-Islamic racism directed toward Muslim-Australians: attacks on mosques and businesses; physical assaults; and the harassment of women wearing hijabs; whilst he simultaneously bolstered the apparatus for detaining asylum seekers (most from Afghanistan at that point) by consolidating exploitative arrangements with Pacific neighbours and redesignating national boundaries (Khoo, 2003; Osuri and Banerjee, 2004). Furthermore, the formulation of anti-terrorism legislation fuelled a divisive antagonism toward Muslim-Australians as part of the national community (Turner, 2003). As Turner (2003) argues, the events of 11 September 2001 exercised a deeply conservative influence accelerating a politics of identity which has at its heart a regressive Australian national imaginary. Specifically, the Australian reception of 11 September 2001 fed existing ferment about nationhood in which a palpable sense of racist history was translated and coalesced into contemporary struggles which had belonging, post-colonial — specifically ‘racial’ — reconciliation and ‘security’ at their centre (Gunew, 2003).

The immediate cultural landscape of Australian cultural politics at the turn of the third millennium was marked by the ongoing challenge to its anglocentric (colonial) ties and domination marked by shifting demographics, heightened pressure from indigenous groups, and growing interdependence within a global economy and the fluid patterns of dis/investment, opportunity and migration therein. There are, of course, manifest tensions between the demands for the free flow of capital and labour across borders within a globalizing market economy, and essentialist ideologies of nationalism premised upon exclusive barriers both imagined and manifest. Indeed, these tensions, with their specific national manifestations in Australia's case had bought debates concerning post-colonial 'reconciliation', multi-culturalism and 'race' relations to front and centre stage even prior to the 11 September terrorism (Hage, 2000; Turner, 2003).

One key feature of reconciling the legacy of an institutionally racist past — associated most clearly with the 'White Australia Policy' — had focused on the dispossession and oppression of its indigenous inhabitants[2] — centring on land rights, deaths in custody and the state removal of Aboriginal children from their parents — the aptly named 'stolen generations' (see Broome, 1994; Kane, 1997; Bourke et al., 1998; Reynolds, 1996). That any reconciliation would be politically contentious and indeed contested was signalled by the emergence of the ultra-conservative right-wing 'One Nation' party during the mid-1990s. The populist rhetoric of the Pauline Hanson-led party was grounded in demands to stem both action aimed at redressing the legacy of structural inequity faced by Aborigines, and contemporary 'Asian' immigration (Kell, 2000). The startling success of 'Hansonism', and the subsequent mainstreaming of the attack on multiculturalism and cultural pluralism under an electorally returned Howard government, is read by Turner (2003) as an endorsement of 'a much more fearful, exclusivist, and aggressively nationalist formation' (p. 415) from the mid-1990s onward.

The cultural backdrop to these trajectories and the subsequently retrenched post-9/11 political, economic and military alignment with the US noted above, is a post-colonial popular culture long regarded as a 'backwater awash' (White, 1983) with American influence, products and ideologies. In this regard, popular currents of fascination, and avid consumption are juxtaposed, at least in a cultural sense, by dislike, suspicion and fear of Americana as integral to the post-(British) colonial emergence of a distinctive sense of Australian nationhood. In the historical emergence of a dominant sense of Australianess, popular cultural symbols — most prominent among them sport figures and teams (see Rowe et al., 1998; Kell, 2000; Bruce and Hallinan, 2001; Miller et al., 2001; Gardiner, 2003) — have been at the forefront of efforts to discursively contour national identity. Unsurprisingly, given its supposed role as de facto cultural shorthand (Silk and Andrews, 2001), a sporting context — the Sydney 2000 Olympics — emerged as a prominent catalyst in projections of positive, if superficial, images of national reconciliation to the world at the turn of the third millennium. As Kell (2000) notes, much of the bidding and subsequent hosting of the games was couched in rhetoric and symbolism which sought to convey an image of a tolerant multiracial and multicultural nation. In particular aboriginal athlete Kathy Freeman was constructed as the perfect symbolic incarnation of the 'new nation' (Lenskyj, 2002; Wensing and Bruce, 2003; Bruce and Hallinan, 2001). Whilst largely silenced in media dialogues herself, Freeman's world-beating gold medal success and symbolic prominence in the opening ceremony had asserted to the globe an apparently confident, racially reconciled nation desirable to investors, 'viable' migrants and tourists alike. This image is far removed however from the lived experiences and realities of the Australian nation. Like its US counterpart and with true neoliberal zeal, it has hawked the corporatization of civil society, shifted toward a culture of fear and 'patriotic' correctness, has a complicit and compliant commercial media, and, operates with an inherent attendant racism that marginalizes the poor, the elderly, youth, women, and, 'people of colour' (Butler, 2002; Giroux, 2003, 2005; Harvey, 2003).

Within this formulation, 'contaminating agents' (Zylinska, 2004), especially Muslim-Australians and Aboriginal youth who are discursively positioned within the broken promises of capitalism and onto which class and racial anxieties are projected, are defined as requiring tight discipline through social, judicial, and, architectural discourses and regimes (Smith, 1998; Macleod et al., 2003; Turner, 2003). Indeed, as in the US, the civil liberties of these citizens — those non-white, especially those Arab, Aboriginal, of Islamic faith, and indeed, those who 'look' 'middle-eastern' — are curtailed through official immigration policies, racial profiling and at airports, through a parade of degraded stereotypical images in the popular media, or, through physical and psychological abuse on the bodies and minds of the abject (see e.g. Ahmed, 2002; Hage, 2002; Couani, 2003; Harvey, 2003; Gunew, 2003; Turner, 2003; McLaren and Martin, 2004; Merskin, 2004; Osuri and Banerjee, 2004; Giroux, 2005). It is within this context that Mundine's dissenting voice must be considered. Critically, Mundine's comments occurred only one year after the triumphalism surrounding Sydney 2000 which had affirmed the role of sport as a key popular cultural site in the reassertion of the multiculturally tolerant — racially reconciled — Australian national imaginary on a global stage. Crucially, responses reveal the significance of sport within the messier juxtapositions and intersections between nation-state sovereignty and emergent modes of power, religiosity, moral tyranny, and the inherent racisms therein.

The Black Vernacular Intellectual: Anthony 'the Man' Mundine and the Contested Nation

Within our present, a time of global uncertainty characterized by ubiquitous violence, endless attacks on democracy, and a seemingly perpetual state of war (Denzin, 2004a; Hardt & Negri, 2004; Giroux, 2005) there is clearly something encouraging about Mundine's dissent as a challenge towards the seemingly unquestioned notion of righteousness. Indeed, Anthony Mundine is an intriguing figure in the context of the role of Australian sport as a forum in which cultural politics are contested and affirmed. He first rose to national prominence as a highly talented rugby league player during the early 1990s.[3] Having made his first grade debut at age 18 in 1993, he emerged as a prodigious talent at his St George club. His abilities were acknowledged by his peers as he was voted 'players' player' in both 1996 and 1998. During his rugby league career Mundine cultivated a persona characterized by an outspoken demeanour, styled on his hero Muhammad Ali. Indeed, as he rose to prominence Mundine adopted an approach of self-confident promotion styled upon Ali's vernacular — he even proclaimed himself with braggadocio as 'The Man'. Mundine's outspoken style soon courted controversy as he criticized established players, whilst asserting his own abilities and confidence in public.

Mundine also located himself politically as an outspoken athlete-activist, noting 'I want to make a difference in the Aboriginal community and be a role model for kids' (cited in Weidler, 1998). Mundine was vocal on issues of racism in Australian society, challenging variously, the emergence of right-wing politicians noted above, and the police harassment of young Aboriginal men — to which he himself was subject (see Weidler, 1998). He also publicly challenged racism within Australian rugby league, in 1998 lodging a complaint regarding on-field racial slurs he had suffered. Mundine's complaint was upheld and Canterbury player Barry Ward was fined $10,000 which was later reduced to $5000 on appeal.

Mundine converted to Islam in 1999. By this stage in his career he was a high profile national sporting figure subject to increasing media attention. Following his 1999 representative selection for New South Wales, Mundine confidently asserted himself as 'the best five-eight in the world'.[4] He was, however, given little game time during the high profile 'State of Origin' series.[5] Despite Mundine's prominent role in his St George team's success throughout 1999, he was not selected for the Australian national squad. Upon this, Mundine claimed racism was evident in national team selections, and that he and other prominent aboriginal players had been excluded on those grounds (for observations of the institutionally 'racialized' nature of rugby league in Australia, see Hallinan, 1991).

Mundine's self-aggrandizing demeanour, high profile and explicit criticism of the structurally entrenched nature of privilege within Australian rugby league and beyond raised the ire of conservative journalists and columnists. In particular, Mundine's outspoken individualism and criticisms of the game were at odds with the conservative, conformist culture of rugby league entrenched within dominant — that is, masculinist, White Anglo-European, corporatist — Australian media and popular cultures. Indeed, in an inversion of his claims to be 'the man', he was popularly labelled in several newspapers as 'the mouth'. Notwithstanding this, Mundine was subject to increasing media attention as his career was punctuated by controversy and newsworthy print for an avaricious media.

Mundine's outspoken demeanour eventually brought him into conflict with St George club administrators who imposed a team media ban aimed at silencing him. Increasingly disillusioned, Mundine missed training sessions and games, and was again overlooked for national team selection in April 2000. After an unscheduled sojourn in May 2000, he affirmed his convictions in an interview with aboriginal TV journalist Stan Grant. He reasoned:

> We're in Australia on land that rightfully belongs to the Aboriginal people. To be oppressed for so many years and continually be that way I don't see any positives for the future for us, and it's up to people like myself and yourself and our brothers and sisters to send our plight to the world. (Cited in Grant, 2000)

Mundine subsequently announced his desire to be an international boxer and thus retired, mid-season, from his lucrative and prolific rugby league career.

Boxing in the international arena, Mundine reasoned, would provide a more high-profile platform to advocate for Australian Aboriginal people. Mundine noted 'if I want to conquer the world in sport and politics and be a loud voice for my aboriginal people it all comes down to the ring, and how I perform in the ring' (BBC Sport website, 2004). Thus, Mundine established an overtly political, populist, platform for his boxing endeavours. He affirmed: 'when I see an evil happening, I want to stand up and make a noise because I'm fighting for humanity' (BBC Sport website, 2004).

As this brief biography details, Mundine represents an intriguing figure within Australian sport. His success within mainstream sport — rugby league — certainly speaks to his own talents and mobility as an Aboriginal. For his playing successes he was lauded by the mainstream media. His overt self-promotion and criticism of racism had, however, brought him into conflict with the dominant culture — specifically, sporting establishments and elements of the (mainstream, that is corporate) media. Crucially, as one of rugby league's star players, Mundine had 'stepped out of line' in that he was critical of the racism within the sport, such that he eventually rejected it to pursue an alternative career. Likewise he had used the platform of his celebrity to speak out on wider issues of racism.

Mundine's presence as a cultural figure in Australia has parallels with Farred's (2003) conceptualization of prominent 'Black' politicized figures — including athletes — who have leveraged their access to public platforms as 'vernacular intellectuals'.[6] That is, as figures who arise within the discourse of popular opposition but outside of the formal articulations of organized political structures. For Farred (2003: 23) '[v]ernacular intellectuals are oppositional public figures who use the cultural platforms and spaces available to them, but not ordinarily accessible to their disenfranchised communities, to represent and speak in the name of their communities'. While Mundine may not have the same significance and scope of, for example Muhammed Ali, there are similarities, especially in his self-proclaimed location as exceptional athlete *and* radical public figure — sporting icon as cultural dissenter. Mundine's stance as an oppositional cultural figure, his vernacular styled on Ali's pre-bout hyperbole, and his activism — grounded in his biographical experience has parallels with Ali's 1960s fusion of an African-American US politics and the articulation of Islam as a counter-hegemonic force. In doing so, Mundine created a unique public space from which to address the racial politics of Australia — activism that centred upon his stance as a spokesperson for the experience of aboriginal Australians. His politics, that connect his own biography, public presence and symbolic activism clearly surfaced prior to the 1999 Grand Final — in a pre-match gesture he dedicated his performance to the 'Stolen Generations' of Aborigines, of which his grandmother had been one. He noted 'My performance today is for the stolen generation. It's a sad part of my family history and a sad part of my culture. I want to show all those people . . . there is someone who cares' (cited in Weidler, 1999). Mundine's vernacularity came through the utilization of the rhythms and speech of his people in a populist political engagement that was fused with an assertive and empowered aboriginal masculinity. However, and perhaps of little surprise, Mundine's confident, even aggressive assertions of his sporting abilities and pointed cultural criticisms were largely interpreted by mainstream media as brash self-promotion.

Just as Farred (2003) reads Ali's cultural resonance as premised on an entwinement of the local–national, that was US-based struggles — with the global — specifically, post-colonial Third World struggles; so Mundine's post-11 September 2001 opposition linked the national with the global. His public opposition to Australian foreign policy located him as a figure at once intensely localized, yet simultaneously international in outlook. Responses to his opposition toward Australian foreign policy further reveal the entwinement of local agendas with global regimes.

‘America’s Brought it Upon Themselves’: The Consequences of Dissent

As we noted at the outset of this article, Mundine’s dissent ran counter to the dominant terms of the rhetoric of political leaders at the time, which had been uncritically relayed by the agenda-setting corporate media. Indeed, we suggest that the corporate media patterned the very nature in which dissent was framed and rebutted. Interviewer, Richard Wilkins, presented the ‘discussion’ on the Australian Channel 9 *Today* show with which we opened the article in a manner that, in and of itself, demonstrated the narrowing parameters of ‘western’ media discourse. In highlighting Mundine’s faith in the first question, Mundine was effectively elevated to speak on behalf of ‘all Australian Muslims’, thereby essentializing Islam in a simplistic, reductionist way. Similarly, a loaded second question was presented such that the only way in which Mundine could have expressed his opposition, and not appeared to advocate terrorism, would have necessitated him challenging the very parameters of the question as it was delivered to him. In other words, it was an extremely leading question, resulting in Mundine’s opposition — clumsily articulated — to appear as sympathy toward terrorism.

Despite his hasty public apology and attempt at clarification later that night on Channel 9’s *Ray Martin Show*, in which he condemned terrorism but affirmed his opposition to Australian support for the war, Mundine was lambasted. Condemnation rained in from politicians, corporate-media editorialists and columnists, sports administrators, and right-wing radio talk-show hosts. Amongst the chorus of criticism, Kim Beazley, leader of the opposition (ostensibly left-wing) Australian Labour party, for example, denounced Mundine (see Wilson and Phillips, *Herald-Sun*, 23 October 2001). Chief executive of the Parramatta Rugby league club, Denis Fitzgerald, meanwhile described his comments as ‘disgraceful’ (*Daily Telegraph*, 23 October 2001).

In terms of his sporting career, Mundine was also sanctioned for his comments by world boxing authorities. The Mexico-based World Boxing Council (WBC) indefinitely stripped Mundine of his world ranking (he was ranked 26th). WBC president Jose Sulaiman explained the decision as follows: ‘The WBC read with stupefaction the statements made recently by Anthony Mundine justifying the terrorist attacks and the consequent deaths of so many innocent victims that occurred on September 11th in New York . . . such statements are unbelievable and intolerable and seriously hurt world society and boxing’ (*Townsville Bulletin*, 26 October 2001). The WBC statement went on to outline the council’s rights to penalize boxers for ‘bringing the sport into disrepute’ (Kimber, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 26 October 2001).[7] As Aboriginal lawyer Michael Mansell noted, the WBC had sent a message that boxers would be ranked not on their ability to box but ‘their declaration of support for all things American’ (Mundine ‘has right to views’, *Courier Mail*, 27 October 2001)

Meanwhile, the International Boxing Federation (IBF) retained Mundine at number 14 in its super-middleweight rankings. Nonetheless, IBF ratings chairman, Joe Dwyer, noted that whilst Mundine was 'entitled to his beliefs . . . he certainly wouldn't be welcome in the United States' (*Newcastle Herald*, 24 October 2001). These interventions, of course, threatened Mundine's career opportunities significantly. Indeed, one of the most powerful United States boxing promoters, Lou Di Bella, called Mundine a 'low-life bum', and threatened 'most of the people in this country will make sure this stiff never comes here . . . he's a hateful imbecile' (Anderson, *Herald-Sun*, 25 October 2001). Whilst the WBC is widely acknowledged as the most powerful of the world sanctioning organizations, the United States operates as the hub of the world boxing economy with access to US bouts, promoters and venues delineating the career aspirations of boxers. In sport, as in the political, economic and cultural sphere, these sanctions are not simply about nationalisms or internationalism; rather, they point to the intersections and power relations between national and supra-national forms.

These intersections are even more visible when considering the outrage of Australian corporate media commentators and the construction of responses that vilified Mundine. These were ably demonstrated in numerous print media responses, which consistently ignored the substantive political issues raised by Mundine's comments. A selection of headlines and media commentaries illustrates the nature of reportage:

> 'Mundine's dumb' (Margo Kingston, *Sydney Morning Herald*)
>
> '. . . he is thick. What he says doesn't matter' (Greg Baum, *The Age*, 'Mundine a Mental Lightweight', 25 October 2001)
>
> 'his outrageous comments . . . Such a foolish outburst' (Andre Malan, *The West Australian*, 'Oh Man, What a Lightweight', 24 October 2001)
>
> 'Mundine should explain his views or apologise for them' (editorial, *Daily Telegraph*, 23 October 2001)

These examples are illustrative of the scathing corporate media criticism and indeed demonization of Mundine for his opposition to Australian support of the United States. That the vilification of Mundine was stimulated by his opposition to a specific agenda and interpretation of events was demonstrated in the words of Piers Akerman writing in the *Daily Telegraph*. Akerman proceeded:

> Big-mouth boxer Anthony Mundine should put a sock in it . . . This is the same lunatic line mad mullahs are spouting to the brainwashed faithful in mosques in every despotic, flea-bitten, Third World country around the world where the ill educated and unemployed form lobbies of significant influence . . . If he wants to retain his right [to free speech] he should support the US. (Akerman, 'Punch-drunk on Perversity', *The Daily Telegraph*, 23 October 2001)

Here, Akerman's vitriolic, racist, ethnocentric diatribe follows a familiar line of western media discourse at this time — the equation of all Islam with an anti-democratic, evil and oppressive fundamentalism. It is revealing at two levels. First, his attack on Mundine is premised upon explicit support of US military intervention at that particular moment, equating dissent with advocacy of tyranny, anti-democratic values, and fundamentalism. Second, Akerman argues that predisposed support of the US is a prerequisite of the righteousness of one's ability to publicly comment on these issues — that is, the right to 'free speech'! (presumably Akerman does not have the wit to see the perverse irony of his argument). Of course, there is nothing ethical, righteous, or moral about this connection; it is purely a question of might, not right, and somewhat chillingly can be located in *cujus region/ejus region* — the one who rules determines religious faith (Hardt and Negri, 2004). Such reportage illustrates the nature and tone of the Australian corporate media backlash to opposition to Australian support for the US-led war on terror. Indeed, in the context of a mediated spectacle created by a dissenting Aboriginal boxer, such vitriol points toward the Australian corporate media framing of the intersection of sovereign nation state politics and emergent modes of global power, religiosity, moral tyranny and sovereignty.

Critically, the intersection between sovereign forms is played out locally within the extant cultural politics of varying national contexts. Specifically, the rebuttal of Mundine's dissent was grounded in a retrenchment of dominant discourses of 'race' and nation within the context of the wider trajectories noted above. Take, for example, Ray Chesterton's diatribe following Mundine's criticism of Australian collusion in the 'War on Terror':

> Mundine is the most grotesque Australian sporting figure I have seen in 40 years . . . A man who . . . reviles everything that is good and precious about sport and Australia . . . Anthony speaks so forcefully about aspects of Australian life he finds distasteful, it is surprising he bothers to stay. (Chesterton, 'Media Sideshow Turns Grotesque', *The Daily Telegraph*, 23 October 2001)

Here, Chesterton lambasts Mundine on the basis of his apparent 'un-Australianess'. That is, 'unpatriotic' dissent toward foreign policy is connected to his opposition on 'domestic' issues. Accordingly, Mundine's opposition to Australian support for the US are linked to his criticisms of racism within Australian sport and conveyed as representing a betrayal — indeed revilement — of nation. Here, Chesterton's reactionary conservativism employs a discourse of nationalism that obscures ethnic difference, historical inequity and contemporary disadvantage. Grounded in romanticized visions of the sanctity of sport, he churlishly expresses surprise Mundine would wish to stay in the country of his birth and citizenship, whilst demonizing him as 'grotesque'. Thus the rebuttal of dissent toward foreign military intervention(s) extends to a criticism of the nation internally constituted.

Similarly, Rosemary Neil's criticisms of Mundine's comments concerning 9/11 reveal how struggles over the political stance of a sporting figure, and hence the scope for sport to offer a political platform for opposition, were entwined in the politics of race within Australia. Neil described Mundine as:

> a noisy, juvenile parody . . . He often made out he was tackling racism in sport, while agitating on behalf of no one other than himself . . . having capitalised on his aboriginality, Mundine sought to trade on his conversion to Islam. (Neil, 'Notoriety is No Substitute for Credibility', *The Australian*, 26 October 2001)

Here, Neil reduces Mundine's political stances regarding racism to crude commercial opportunism. She stunningly suggests his aboriginality is a source of 'capital', rather than a marker of social disadvantage. At a stroke, these discursive framings, obscure the substantive issues Mundine had sought to engage, and close down the need for critical debate concerning either racism in Australian sport, wider society or foreign policy. Mundine's position is further countered by framing him as grotesque, childlike and opportunistic. Here Neil's representation is symptomatic of Giroux's (2005) observations on the tenets of 'new' neoliberal racism which either ignores or denies the condition of 'race', relegates it to an utterly privatized issue or inverts the subject of racism. Hence, simultaneously, 'colour-blindness' denies the significance of race for Mundine, whilst the framing of his activism reduces white Australia to the victims of aboriginal opportunism and manipulation.

Following the initial outcry several newspaper articles appeared which ostensibly offered support for Mundine, yet, and crucially, these focused only upon Mundine's 'right to free speech'. Peter Fitzsimmons (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 24 October 2001), for example, lamented that the public dialogue had 'been reminiscent of McCarthyism in the United States in the 1950s'. Yet, neither this nor other similar articles engaged the substantive issue Mundine had addressed concerning Australian support for the 'War on Terror'. Voices of support in substantive terms appeared only at the dissenting media margins, from 'outlawed' left-wing activist journalists such as John Pilger. Furthermore, there was little reported support for Mundine from prominent Australian Muslims. While Amjad Ali Mehboob, chief executive of the Australian Council of Islamic Organizations ('Muslim Leader Backs The Man', *The Australian*, 23 October 2001) noted Mundine was being unfairly branded as a terrorist sympathizer, his voice received little media attention. Indeed, and somewhat curiously, the *Manly Daily* reported support from Supreme Islamic Council of New South Wales chairman Gabr Elgafi under the headline 'Muslim Boxer ''out of touch'''. Voices of support, then, were reported in only muted, or indeed, distorted ways.

Shortly after the outcry at Mundine's opposition to Australian policy, when he was finally defeated in an IBF world-title fight against German, Sven Ottke in December 2001, print media reportage and columnists, once again, revealed such themes in their glee at Mundine's defeat. Jeff Corbett in the *Newcastle Herald*, for example, noted 'thank you, Sven Ottke, for providing Australia with one of its most keenly awaited sporting images. Anthony Mundine flat on his back. Spreadeagled. Motionless. And silent . . . Aah such golden silence!' Continuing the vilification of Mundine he expanded, 'It won't last long enough though, Anthony Mundine will return as the same national embarrassment . . . and inevitably his mouth will return with him'. Such reportage reinforced the central theme of previous coverage which had framed Mundine as anti-Australian, that is standing outside a series of (apparently) shared values. Reflecting this trope, Mike Gibson ('Reality Hits Home — You Can Only Lead with Your Mouth for So Long', *Sunday Telegraph*, 9 December 2001) argued that 'having been derided as rednecks, bigots and fools by a sneering loudmouth who has played the race card . . . Australians have deserted him in droves'. 'Australians', Gibson suggested, 'celebrated because he was bashed senseless'. Thus Mundine's dissent had rendered his presence as an Australian competing on a world stage irreconcilable with the ‘narrative of unity’ central to the construction of the imagined nation.

Such coverage is notable is that is demonstrates the corporate media vilification of Mundine as a result of his political positioning. In doing so it also reveals something of the corporate media defence of the status quo, Australian foreign policy and connections with the US, and by association the instantiation of an imperialist empire unilaterally dictated by a clear and superior unilateral hegemon (Hardt and Negri, 2000, 2004). Somewhat paradoxically given the seemingly unquestioned nature and legitimation of US imperial aims, the media also re-entrench Australian national ‘unity.’ Yet, this representation of the Australian nation is synonymous with unproblematized ‘normalcy’ — to dissent and critique under these terms is to ‘play the race card’, to publicly speak out is to be a ‘sneering loudmouth’. In Mundine’s case, his oppositional stances regarding Aboriginal issues and opposition to Australian involvement in the ‘War on Terror’ transcended the ability of the Australian print media to adopt the particular jingoism it reserves for international sports competitors who succeed on the world stage. Mundine’s dissent, that is, was irreconcilable with the myth of the unproblematized nation and the familiar role of international sports successes in bolstering that myth.

Perhaps not surprisingly, the media treatment of Mundine mirrors that which has confronted other non-athletic indigenous male activists or leaders. As Gardiner and Blogg (2000) detail, this tends toward the stereotyping of such figures as aggressive, negative, unsettling, or disruptive of national unity. As Gardiner (2003) argues, indigeneity in White popular (mediated) discourse is framed within a nationalizing agenda in which indigenous notions of sovereignty find no place. The significance of this is in revealing connections between nationalizing agendas of Australian (sports) media, the stifling of (indigenous) dissent and wider agendas concerning the alignment of Australia politically and militarily with US imperial ends.

Coda: Local (Sporting) Dissent, Global Regimes

Within this article we have interrogated the media framing of a dissenting Aboriginal sportsman. These responses were telling in revealing a space in which nation-state politics and their attendant ideological tenets collided with emergent modes of global power, religiosity, moral tyranny and sovereignty — a (proto-fascist) neo-conservatism (Giroux, 2005). Mundine’s case points toward the need for a research agenda that explores the multifarious local conjunctural positioning of sport within the post-9/11 world. The need for a modified ‘internationalist localism’ (Chen, 1992; Silk and Andrews, 2005) is one tool useful in revealing the manner in which the differentially located disempowered operate within, contest, and, embrace the contingent relationships between emergent and newer forms of sovereignty and ‘older’ nation-state sovereignties. As this case reveals, the dynamics of these ‘power plays’ — sporting and otherwise — are conjuncturally specific; entwined within the national/local in potent ways.

Our interpretations of media reportage demonstrate that Mundine's opposition to Australian support for US-led interventions led to hysterical vilification and demonization. The Australian corporate media framing of Mundine's dissent demonstrates the reactionary role of the corporate media in line with politically neo-conservative, militarily pre-emptive agendas. Significantly, that framing of Mundine drew upon, and was embedded within the (re)assertion of the illusion of the sanctity and (racial) harmony of Australian sport — and the Australian nation writ large — whilst simultaneously rebutting criticism of Australian foreign policy. That the substantive nature of Mundine's comments were disregarded by the Australian corporate media is of no surprise within the context of the wider post-9/11 'media moment' which significantly narrowed the scope for critical voices or discourse relating to interpretations of unfolding global events at this time (Boyd-Barrett, 2003). Such narrow framing was symptomatic of the manner in which, as Butler (2002) observes — in the US case — post-9/11 saw the media operate at a distance from their constituency and in close proximity to governments and indeed military and corporate elites. That the Australian media operated in similar, narrowing ways in this case is clear.

Our observations speak to the significance of the 'soft-core' of the cultural domain, of which sport might be regarded an important — at the very least, highly visible — feature, in the constitution of the (imagined) nation. Clearly, there are tensions between discourses of globalization premised around decentred flows of capital underpinned by neoliberal ideologies — *Empire* in Hardt and Negri's (2000) parlance, and the sovereign structure of the nation state (Wang, 2002). As we noted above, 11 September 2001 provided a 'rupture' in those very globalization discourses which posit (indeed assert) a normative global order derived from the ideology of the free market and trade (whilst simultaneously hiding its inequities and injustices). As Wang (2002: 46) notes, redolent of the grand narrative of Cold War binarism, the rupture stimulated a return to 'paranoic security needs, the bloody conflict of giant powers, the tightening of boundaries, and the hysterical assertion of national identity'. It is in the 'hysterical assertion of national identity' within a time of global uncertainty that Australian corporate media responses to Mundine might best be understood. In this context, sport provides a fertile terrain for the narrowing and retrenchment of centre nationalisms. Critically, in the case we have observed, the media does so in the context of the apparent consensus surrounding a unilaterally dictated 'War on Terror' as the uncontested prism through which the world — albeit through locally specific lenses — is viewed, understood and hence reported. Critically then, this view of a decentred and totalitarian global form of sovereignty (Hardt and Negri, 2000), is not disconnected from the national/local constitution. In this sense, it is perhaps wise not to throw the national baby out with the muddy bathwaters of *Empire*! Rather, we may well be wise to follow Johnson's (2002) assertions that Hardt and Negri (2000) vision of an all encompassing systemic *Empire* 'pay[s] insufficient attention to the relationships between national-popular formations and the bids for the legitimacy of global power' (p. 219). Global hegemony, like the winning of consent nationally, Johnson continues 'is much more contingent, partial and fragile' (p. 219). Indeed, our observations indicate that the *nowhere* and the s*omewhere* — to use Ritzer's (2004) terms — are entwined in potent, if not messy, and contradictory, ways.

Mundine's fusion of political activism and confident self-assertion present a complex and multilayered platform. As with LaFrance and Rail's (2001) reading of US basketballer Dennis Rodman, we suggest that the resistant value of Mundine's 'race consciousness' may have been diminished and/or obscured amidst his assertive sense of injustice and his particular brand of empowered, even aggressive, self-assertion in this light. Indeed, there is a further caveat to be added to Mundine's crafting of a public platform from which to speak for an aboriginal constituency which itself does not speak with a monolithic voice. This, of course, is not to belie the *potential* significance of the resonance of his platform. Indeed, Farred's (2003) conceptualization of the Black vernacular intellectual pivots on the dynamic fluidity of the public spaces and platforms that may be available. Our case study speaks to the way in which popular space can be generated by such figures, but clearly, can be challenged and removed. Indeed, following his post-9/11 comments and the subsequent backlash detailed in this article, Mundine largely retreated from his public activism. As a dissenting voice, Mundine had been countered and condemned by the dominant order — simultaneously the racisms inherent within the cultural politics of nation were entrenched — the sport media acting as a powerful pedagogical space in which dissent was silenced.

However, and signalling that this space is subject to ongoing negotiation/contestation — at the time of concluding this article — Mundine was once again publicly vocal following the 'racially' divisive violence in Sydney's beach suburbs in December 2005. Here, Mundine was foregrounding fundamental issues of a national culture that largely regards Australians of non-White origins as 'others' to be suspected or feared, that only serves to isolate and stigmatize these populations — a hauntingly similar racist directive and populism to the United States. Following prime minister John Howard's stunning denial of the existence of racism in Australian society, Mundine criticized mainstream politician's 'cowardice' in tackling the issue of racism ('Mundine Weighs into Race Debate', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 14 December 2005). Hence Mundine, in the vernacular inscribed with the history of subjugation of his own community, had re-entered the public arena. In doing so he once again intervened to challenge the confines of mainstream political rhetoric which feeds the illusion of contemporary Australia as harmonious, inclusive and multiracially tolerant.

Criticisms of Mundine's oppositional stance also reveal something of the contemporary status of sport as a cultural arena for wider political contestation. At the forefront of several corporate media criticisms of Mundine's opposition was the suggestion that as a sportsperson he should not be involving himself in political engagement on the interrelated grounds that it was: a) inappropriate and self-aggrandizing/promoting; b) that as a boxer he was 'unqualified' to do so; and, c) sport should not be sullied by politics. Yet, of course, Mundine was not commenting on the basis of his sporting status or 'qualifications'. On the contrary, he was intervening as a concerned citizen. Indeed, what such media framing reveals is sports media journalists and editorialists' liberal conceptions of sport as apolitical in nature, and their inability to conceive of the status quo as being patterned by power inequalities that privilege certain voices and agendas over others. That, at such moments, the media does not feature the capacity to critically engage the issues at stake provides impetus for the academy to offer informed and critical responses to help (re)frame and bring differing interpretations and meanings to these ongoing events and their aftermath in precisely the manner the likes of Butler (2002), Martin and Shohat (2002) and Denzin and Lincoln (2003) have called for. That the 'sports pages' are amongst the many sites to be challenged and potentially reframed is clear.

Notes

1. Following Grossberg (1997), the local and the global are mutually constitutive, yet, the exact nature of such mutual constitutions are neither specified or guaranteed in advance. Building on both Robertson's (1995) *glocal* that integrates the local and the global and Ritzer's *grobal* (2006) that emphasizes global processes that overwhelm the local rather than neatly integrating the two, Andrews and Ritzer (2007) offer one approach to reconceptualizing the debate in terms of the relationship between the *grobal* and *glocal.* Somewhat repudiating the argument offered by Rowe (2003) that privileged sport as a marker of local belonging and identification, they offer a processual and empirical continuum between *grobalization* (the imperialistic ambitions of nations, corporations, organizations and the like to impose themselves on geographic areas) and *glocalization* (the interpenetration of the local and the global, resulting in the unique outcomes in different geographical areas).
2. Centred around the *Immigration Restriction Act* of 1901, the 'White Australia policy' was the official policy of all governments and mainstream political parties based on favouring immigration from certain countries. The policy was operative from the late 1880s until the 1950s, with elements surviving until the 1970s (see [http://www.immi.gov.au/facts/08abolition.htm], accessed 13 December 2005).
3. Within Australia, rugby league is the dominant football code throughout the west coast — Queensland and New South Wales — and dominates the sportscape of the major centres of Brisbane and Sydney.
4. Five-eight was the position that Mundine played. It is a central 'thinking' position within the game (see Hallinan, 1991).
5. The annual three-game State of Origin series — played between the states of Queensland and New South Wales — is one of Australia's premier media sporting events (see Hutchins, 1997).
6. Farred's is a reconceptualization of the political interventions of the 'intellectual' as conceived by Antonio Gramsci. He 'draws upon, develops and then distinguishes' (p. 2) from Gramsci's organic or traditional model, extending what constitutes intellectual articulation and recognizing popular culture as a primary site of politics. Standing at the intersection of cultural studies and post-colonial theory it pivots on the idea of the 'intellectualized popular' (p. 5) as linked to 'cultural campaigns for self-determination and respect for black and brown cultural practices denigrated, appropriated, or dismissed . . . by European colonial powers' (p. 5). Thus, the likes of Muhammad Ali and Bob Marley are recast as vernacular intellectuals: iconic figures who are 'producers, articulators and disseminators of cultural knowledge' (p. 5) connected to their originary constituency and its antagonistic relations with the dominant culture. Thus it offers a reading of the post-colonial figure that acknowledges political engagement beyond formal structures and avenues and the significance of a vernacular component.
7. Of note is the fact that, at the time, the WBC's top ranked heavyweight boxer was Mike Tyson, a convicted rapist. Its number eight super-lightweight, Ray Oliveira, had been jailed three times for beating women.

References

Ahmed, M. (2002) 'Homeland Insecurities: Racial Violence the Day After September 11', *Social Text 72* 20(3): 101–15.

Andrews, D. (1995) 'Excavating Michael Jordan: Notes on a Critical Pedagogy of Sporting Representation', in G. Rail and J. Harvey (eds) *Sport and Postmodern Times: Culture, Gender, Sexuality, the Body and Sport*, pp. 185–219. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Andrews, D. (2002) 'Coming to Terms with Cultural Studies', *Journal of Sport & Social Issues* 26(1): 110–17.

Andrews, D.L. and Ritzer, G. (2007) 'The Grobal in the Sporting Glocal', *Global Networks* 7(2).

Baudrillard, J. (2001) 'The Spirit of Terrorism', *Le Monde*, 2 November, available online at: [http://www.egs.edu/faculty/baudrillard/baudrillard-the-spirit-of-terrorism.html], accessed 18 January 2004.

BBC Sport (2004) [www.bbc.co.uk/sport1/hi/1186311.stm], accessed 4 August 2004.

Bourke, C., Bourke, E. and Edwards, B. (1998) *Aboriginal Australia*, 2nd edn. St Lucia, Queensland: University of Queensland Press.

Boyd-Barrett, O. (2003) 'Doubt Foreclosed: U.S. Mainstream Media and September 11, 2001', in D. Demers (ed.) *Terrorism, Globalization and Mass Communication*, pp. 3–34. Washington, DC: Spokane Books.

Broome, R. (1994) *Aboriginal Australians*, 2nd edn. St Leonards, Sydney: Allen & Unwin.

Bruce, T. and Hallinan, C. (2001) 'Kathy Freeman: The Quest for Australian Identity', in D. Andrews and S. Jackson (eds) *Sport Stars: The Cultural Politics of Sporting Celebrity*, pp. 257–70. London: Routledge.

Butler, J. (2002) 'Explanation and Exoneration, or What We Can Hear?', *Social Text 72* 20(3): 177–88.

Chen, K. (1992) 'Voices from the Outside: Toward a New Internationalist Localism', *Cultural Studies* 6(3): 476–84.

Chen, K. (1994) 'Positioning Positions: A New Internationalist Localism of Cultural Studies', *Positions 2* 3: 681–710.

Cocco, G. and Lazzarato, M. (2002) 'Ruptures within Empire, the Power of Exodus: Interview with Toni Negri', *Theory, Culture & Society* 19(4): 187–94.

Couani, A. (2003) 'From Penal Colony to Police State?', *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 29(2): 579–82.

Curry, M. (2001) 'Perspectives on Australian Foreign Policy 2000', *Australian Journal of International Affairs* 55(1): 7–20.

Dallmayr, F. (2002) 'Lessons of September 11', *Theory, Culture & Society* 19(4): 137–45.

Debord, G. (2002) 'The Society of the Spectacle', trans. K. Knabb, available online at: [http://www.bopsecrets.org/SI/debord/], accessed 3 June 2004.

Denzin, N. (2004a) 'The War on Culture, The War on Truth', *Cultural Studies ↔ Critical Methodologies* 4(2): 137–42.

Denzin, N. (2004b) 'Crossroads in Cultural Studies 2004 Mandate', available online at: [http://www.crossroads2004.org/cfp.html], accessed 26 July 2004.

Denzin, N. and Lincoln, Y. (eds) (2003) *9/11 in American Culture.* New York: Alta Mira.

Falcous, M. and Silk, M. (2005) 'Manufacturing Consent: Mediated Sporting Spectacle and the Cultural Politics of the War on Terror', *International Journal of Media and Cultural Politics* 1(1): 59–63.

Farred, G. (2003) *What's My Name? Black Vernacular Intellectuals*. London: University of Minnesota Press.

Frow, J. and Morris, M. (2000) 'Cultural Studies', in N. Denzin and Y. Lincoln (eds) *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, 2nd edn, pp. 315–46. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Gardiner, G. (2003) 'Running for Country: Australian Print Media Representation of Indigenous Athletes in the 27th Olympiad', *Journal of Sport and Social Issues* 27(3): 233–60.

Gardiner, G. and Blogg, S. (2000) 'Indigenous People and the Olympic Games: Rights, Races and Politics in the 27th Olympiad', *Journal of Australian Indigenous Studies* 3(2): 15–25.

Giardina, M. (2005) *Sporting Pedagogies: Performing Culture & Identity in the Global Arena*. New York: Peter Lang.

Giroux, H. (2003) *The Abandoned Generation: Democracy beyond the Culture of Fear.* New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Giroux, H. (2005) *The Terror of Neoliberalism*. Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers.

Grant, S. (2000) 'Different Goals', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 6 May.

Grossberg, L. (1997) *Bringing it all Back Home: Essays on Cultural Studies*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Grossberg, L. (2006) 'Does Cultural Studies have Futures? Should It? (Or What's the Matter with New York)', *Cultural Studies* 20(1): 1–32.

Gunew, S. (2003) 'Roundtable: September 11 and Its Aftermath: Voices from Australia, Canada and Africa', *Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 29(2): 575–6.

Hage, G. (2000) *White Nation. Fantasies of White Supremacy in a Multicultural Society*. Annandale, NSW: Pluto Press.

Hage, G. (ed.) (2002) *Arab-Australians: Citizenship and Belonging Today*. Melbourne: Melbourne University Press.

Hall, S. (1985) 'Signification, Representation, Ideology: Althusser and the Post-Structuralist Debates', *Critical Studies in Mass Communication* 2: 91–114.

Hall, S. (1992) 'Cultural Studies and its Theoretical Legacies', in L. Grossberg, C. Nelson and P. Treichler (eds) *Cultural Studies*, pp. 277–94. London: Routledge.

Hall, S., Critcher, C., Jefferson, T., Clarke, J. and Roberts, B. (1978) *Policing the Crisis: Mugging, the State and Law and Order*. London: Macmillan.

Hallinan, C. (1991) 'Aborigines and Positional Segregation in Australian Rugby League', *International Review for the Sociology of Sport* 26(2): 69–82.

Hardt, M. and Negri, A. (2000) *Empire*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Hardt, M. and Negri, A. (2004) *Multitude: War and Democracy in the Age of Empire.* New York: Penguin.

Harvey, D. (2003) *The New Imperialism.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Hutchins, B. (1997) 'Mediated Violence: The Case of State of Origin Rugby League', *Sporting Traditions* 13(2): 19–39.

Johnson, R. (2002) 'Defending Ways of Life: The (Anti-)Terrorist Rhetorics of Bush and Blair', *Theory, Culture & Society* 19(4): 211–31.

Kane, J. (1997) 'Racialism and Democracy: The Legacy of White Australia', in G. Stokes (ed.) *The Politics of Identity in Australia*, pp. 117–31. Melbourne: Cambridge University Press.

Kell, P. (2000) *Good Sports. Australian Sport and the Myth of the Fair Go*. Annandale, Australia: Pluto Press.

Kellner, D. (2002a) 'Theorizing Globalization', *Sociological Theory* 20(3): 285–305.

Kellner, D. (2002b) 'September 11, Social Theory and Democratic Politics', *Theory, Culture & Society* 19(4): 147–59.

Khoo, T. (2003) 'Fortress Australia', *Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 29(2): 584–5.

Kimber, B. (2001) 'World Bodies Go in Hard on Mundine', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 26 October.

Kincheloe, J. and McLaren, P. (2005) 'Rethinking Critical Theory and Qualitative Research', in N. Denzin and Y. Lincoln (eds) *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research*, 3rd edn, pp. 303–42. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

King, S. (2004) 'War Games: The Culture of Sport and the Militarization of Everyday Life', paper presented at Crossroads in Cultural Studies 5th International Conference, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign.

LaFrance, M. and Rail, G. (2001) 'Excursions into Otherness: Understanding Dennis Rodman and the Limits of Subversive Agency', in D. Andrews and S. Jackson (eds) *Sport Stars: The Cultural Politics of Sporting Celebrity*, pp. 36–50. London: Routledge.

Lenskyj, H. (2002) *The Best Olympics Ever? Social Impacts of Sydney 2000*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Macleod, G., Raco, M. and Ward, K. (2003) 'Negotiating the Contemporary City', *Urban Studies* 40(9): 1655–71.

Martin, R. and Shohat, E. (2002) '911 — A Public Emergency?', *Social Text* 20(3): 1–8.

McClaren, P. (2002) 'George Bush, Apocalypse Sometime Soon, and the American Imperium', *Cultural Studies ↔ Critical Methodologies* 3(2): 327–33.

McDonald, M. (2005) 'Imagining Benevolence, Masculinity and Nation: Tragedy, Sport and the

Transnational Marketplace', in M. Silk, D.L. Andrews and C.L. Cole (eds) *Sport and Corporate Nationalisms*, pp. 127–41. Oxford: Berg.

McLaren, P. and Martin, M. (2004) 'The Legend of the Bush Gang: Imperialism, War and Propaganda', *Cultural Studies ↔ Critical Methodologies* 4(2): 281–303.

Merskin, D. (2004) 'The Construction of Arabs as Enemies: Post September 11 Discourse of George W. Bush', *Mass Communication and Society* 7(2): 157–75.

Miller, T., Lawrence, G., McKay, J. and Rowe, D. (2001) *Globalization and Sport*. London: Sage.

Osuri, G. and Banerjee, S. (2004) 'White Diasporas: Media Representations of September 11th and the Unbearable Whiteness of Being in Australia', *Social Semiotics* 14(2): 152–71.

Reynolds, H. (1996) *Frontier: Aborigines, Settlers and Land*. Sydney: Allen & Unwin.

Ritzer, G. (2004) *The Globalization of Nothing*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press.

Ritzer, G. (2006) 'Globalization and McDonaldization: Does It All Amount to . . . Nothing?', in G. Ritzer (ed.) *McDonaldization: The Reader*, 2nd edn, pp. 335–48. Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press.

Robertson, R. (1995) 'Glocalization: Time-space and Homogeneity-heterogeneity', in M. Featherstone, S. Lash and R. Robertson (eds) *Global Modernities*, pp. 25–44. London: Sage.

Rowe, D., McKay, J. and Miller, T. (1998) 'Come Together: Sport, Nationalim, and the Media Image', in L. Wenner (ed.) *MediaSport*, pp. 119–33. London: Routledge.

Roy, A. (2004) *The Chequebook and the Cruise Missile*. Cambridge, MA: South End Press.

Said, E. (1994) *Representations of the Intellectual.* New York: Pantheon.

Saikal, A. (2002) 'Afghanistan, Terrorism, and the American and Australian Responses', *Australian Journal of International Affairs* 56(1): 23–30.

Silk, M. and Andrews, D. (2001) 'Beyond a Boundary? Sport, Transnational Advertising, and the Reimagining of National Culture', *Journal of Sport and Social Issues* 25(2): 180–201.

Silk, M. and Andrews, D. (2005) 'Policing Our Crisis?: Toward a Contextual Insurgency within Cultural Studies of Sport', paper presented at the North American Society for the Sociology of Sport, Winston-Salem, 26–9 October.

Silk, M. and Falcous, M. (2005) 'One Day in September/One Week in February: Mobilizing American (Sporting) Nationalisms', *Sociology of Sport Journal* 22(4): 441–7.

Sivanandan, A. (2006) 'Race, Terror and Civil Society', *Race & Class* 47(3): 1–8.

Smith, N. (1998) 'Guiliani Time: The Revanchist 1990s', *Social Text* 57: 1–20.

Turner, G. (2003) 'After Hybridity: Muslim-Australians and the Imagined Community', *Continuum: Journal of Media and Cultural Studies* 17(4): 412–18.

Wang, B. (2002) 'The Cold War, Imperial Aesthetics, and Area Studies', *Social Text 72* 20(3): 46–65.

Weidler, D. (1998) 'Rugby League Star's Arrest Sparks Outcry', *Sun Herald*, 1 March.

Weidler, D. (1999) 'The Man With a Mission', *Sun Herald*, 26 September.

Wensing, E. and Bruce, T. (2003) 'Bending the Rules: Media Representations of Gender during an International Sporting Event', *International Review for the Sociology of Sport* 38(4): 387–96.

Wesley, M. and Warren, T (2000) 'Wild Colonial Ploys? Currents of Thought in Australian Foreign Policy', *Australian Journal of Political Science* 35(1): 9–26.

White, R. (1983) 'A Backwater Awash: The Australian Experience of Americanization', *Theory, Culture, Society* 1(3): 108–22.

Wilson, N. and Phillips, S. (2001) 'Anti-US Mundine Pounded', *Herald-Sun*, 23 October.

Zylinska, J. (2004) 'The Universal Acts: Judith Butler and the Biopolitics of Immigration', *Cultural Studies* 18(4): 523–37.

Mark Falcous is lecturer in the sociology of sport at the University of Otago, New Zealand. His research explores intersections of sport, globalization, media and identity.

Address: Mark Falcous, School of Physical Education, University of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand. Email: mark.falcous@otago.ac.nz

Michael Silk is a Senior Lecturer in the Faculty of Humanities and Social Science at the University of Bath. Prior to this appointment he was an Associate Professor in Physical Cultural Studies at the University of Maryland. His research and scholarship centers on the production and consumption of space, the governance of bodies, and, the performative politics of identity within the context of neoliberalism.

Address: Department of Education, University of Bath, Bath BA2 7AY, UK.