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Sport, Peace, and Development: Constraints and Possibilities (Review of Brian Wilson, *Sport and Peace: A Sociological Perspective*, Ontario, Canada: Oxford University Press, 2012. Simon Darnell, *Sport for Development and Peace: A Critical Sociology*, London and New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2012.)

David Karen
Bryn Mawr College, dkaren@brynmawr.edu

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Reviewer: David Karen, Bryn Mawr College

Sport, peace, and development have been on the United Nation's global agenda since 1978, when UNESCO declared that "sport and physical education was 'a fundamental right for all.'" Through the UN Office on Sport for Development and Peace (UNOSDP), which supports the work of the Special Adviser to the UN Secretary-General on Sport for Development and Peace (the position was originally filled in 2001), sport is being mobilized to help realize the UN's eight Millennium Development Goals: to eradicate or reduce poverty, hunger, child mortality and disease, and to promote education, maternal health, gender equality, environmental sustainability and global partnerships (see: http://www.un.org/wcm/content/site/sport/home/sport/sportandmdgs#tabs-1). On the Office's website, there are 26 separate links to get more information on how the UN "mobilizes the power of sport"; these links range from UN Peacekeeping to the International Organization for Migration to the UN Office on Drugs and Crime. I report these connections to underline the breadth and depth of sport's relationship and commitment to engaging global issues on various fronts, certainly including development and peace.

The authors of the two books under review recognize this centrality of sport in engaging our most pressing global problems and applaud the goals of the individuals and organizations involved. Indeed, both Wilson and Darnell, who thank each other in their respective acknowledgements, agree about the power of sport to engage global inequalities and conflicts and generally agree about its current limitations and future possibilities. During the course of their books, each author develops an argument about how current sport interventions are lacking in various ways and what must be done to use sport in more effective ways. Both authors ultimately argue that sport for development and peace (SDP) programs must be re-imagined in ways that transform how sport and its contributions are conceived and that recognize the structural and institutional complexity of global inequality. The latter, especially for Darnell, is the primary failure of current SDP programs: a greater understanding of development challenges and a deeper recognition of program limitations would address many of the authors' criticisms of these interventions.

A major difference between the two books is the intended audience. Wilson's book is part of a series on "Themes in Canadian Sociology," which Oxford University Press has published to

introduce students to a variety of sociological topics in a theoretically informed way. As such, Wilson's book has student-friendly characteristics, such as: "questions to consider" at the beginning of each chapter and "discussion questions," "suggested readings," "relevant websites," and "key terms" at the end. At the same time, the book offers deep analysis of its subject area, chooses its topics well, and is extremely clearly written. Darnell's book, on the other hand, is written for sports studies and international development scholars who wish to understand precisely how the two fields are related and whether and how their relationship can be beneficial. At times quite dense and very theoretical, the book examines the SDP framework in a variety of contexts and across levels of analysis – from the level of individual participants to macro-effects of particular programs. Despite the fact that Darnell's book explicitly includes "development" in its title and Wilson's includes only "peace," both authors do, in fact, address issues and concerns that are relevant to issues of international development. Below, I will point to their somewhat different foci.

Wilson's book honors the "sociological imagination" explicitly by insisting that we must see individuals and social problems in their larger social contexts; in C. Wright Mills' terms, Wilson helps the reader see personal troubles as public issues. Wilson argues that a properly contextualized understanding of social problems will enhance the likelihood that given solutions will be effective. Throughout the book, Wilson deftly weaves into his sport and peace "frame" a variety of important sociological issues. Not only can the book be used as a general sociological introduction to sport and peace but it can be used as a general introduction to sociology.[1] Wilson covers a variety of theoretical approaches in sociology – from critical theory to functionalism to symbolic interactionism – as well as subject areas that range from education and critical pedagogy to "new social movements." While addressing his primary focus of sport and peace, Wilson demonstrates how the sociological imagination can be used to engage and assess an assortment of interventions with and about sport. This leads him to consider such topics as sports and the environment (e.g., what do golf courses do to our planet?), the role of sports journalists (e.g., how do journalistic routines reinforce current sport practices and structures?), and how "peace education" articulates with sports (e.g., at the micro-, meso-, and macro-levels).

This perspective allows him to assess the effects of programs such as Right to Play with a critical eye, seeing the program's contributions to encouraging children to be involved in sports and developing community social capital in the context of a neo-liberal agenda and one in which volunteers from richer northern countries "help" citizens in the Global South to "develop." Wilson (Darnell discusses this as well) is quite critical of such programs, which are often premised on the idea that donor countries have the answers and recipient countries are supposed

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[1] Both Darnell and Wilson mention the useful distinction that Levermore and Beacom (2009) made between "sport plus" and "plus sport" programs. The former begin with sport and, through sport, hope to produce positive social outcomes. The latter are focused specifically on some aspect of social and/or economic progress and attempt to use sport in reaching the goal. Wilson's book can be seen both as a "sociology plus" and as a "plus sociology" contribution.

to adopt those solutions. More generally, Wilson is also critical of programs that fit within a neo-liberal agenda, which he explicitly suggests is a form of colonization (p. 150). Relying on some of Darnell's research, Wilson argues that this context often leads to situations in which program volunteers develop one-dimensional, even racist, conceptions of the people they wish to help. At the same time, Wilson makes clear that many of the SDP initiatives are important ways of publicizing humane, democratic and progressive values, even if they are not being implemented in the best possible ways.

Wilson's excellent chapter on "Sport, Global Politics, and Peace" defines globalization and neo-liberalism in clear language and discusses their mutual accommodation. Indeed, he argues (along with Charles Tilly) that, as global processes replace national ones, local populations have fewer opportunities to voice their concerns / opposition to new developments. As corporate actors – such as sports apparel manufacturers (e.g. Nike) -- come to operate in a global context, profitability becomes the ultimate goal and local democratic participation is closed off and becomes increasingly irrelevant.

I want to provide one final example of Wilson's clear, focused style and his attention to issues of power and context. In his overview of "sport, environmental issues, and peace" (p. 158), Wilson says that he "raise(s) questions about whose interests are being served by privileging particular solutions to sport-related environmental problems, whose voices are privileged when decisions are made, and how consent is being sought and secured for a particular solution." A wonderful guide for students, this approach captures such fundamental issues as social-structural conflict, the structuring of political participation and dissent, and the development of hegemony.

In *Sport for Development and Peace: A Critical Sociology,* Darnell attempts to provide an overview of the "sport for development and peace" (SDP) field by combining a theoretical treatise with a series of empirical chapters. Darnell's approach emphasizes that the entire field of the sociology of sport – including the focus on sport for development and peace – is a study of power (38). This recognition leads him to three sources for a deep theoretical understanding of power: Gramsci and hegemony; Foucault and bio-power; and postcolonial theory. He devotes a chapter to showing the ways that each of the theories can and has engaged sport and how sport can be better understood by using insights from each theory. While a useful overview and attempt at synthesis, the sensitivity of each of the theories to hierarchy, domination, and inequality leads Darnell to a consideration of actual SDP approaches that seems to assess them based more on their purity – do they necessarily lead to overcoming all power differentials -- than their effectiveness. Though he insists that he supports the general idea of using sport for development and peace, he criticizes even relatively successful programs because they may in some way, shape, or form be reproductive, marginalizing the positive contributions of the program along the way.

Darnell's four empirical chapters examine different aspects of the ways that sport has been used to encourage development and/or overcome conflict. One chapter is based on interviews that Darnell conducted with 27 interns who worked with the International Development through Sport programs that were organized by Commonwealth Games Canada. In this chapter, he explores the interns' experiences (positive and negative), motivations for getting involved, and how they think their experiences affected them. The interviews are richly interpreted and we get a very good sense of the interns' commitment to helping others. We learn that the interns' past experiences with sport were perceived to be key elements of their selection for the programs and they used their sporting backgrounds to encourage participation and engagement with sport in the local populations. Darnell regrets that the program seems to have done much more to build "character" among the interns and the local partners and to assuage the interns' guilt about their privilege than to level the playing field between richer and poorer countries.

Darnell's chapter on the current state of using sport for development relies on nine interviews with various stakeholders from SDP organizations (including, among others, four SDP NGO's working on youth and health issues in the Global South and a celebrity athlete foundation). Ultimately, he determines that there haven't been any revolutionary changes over the last few decades in the SDP's fundamental engagement with structural inequality and/or with empowering the excluded. It is worthwhile to develop this point a bit further. While I do not doubt that Darnell is correct about this, his goal seems to be to criticize any and all programs that do not directly challenge the structure of inequality. In a discussion of the approach of an organization that is devoted to dealing with HIV/AIDS in Africa -- even as he recognizes its utility! -- he criticizes the fact that their focus is on educating and modifying the behavior of the population, which "tends to obscure a focus on the broader history and politics of unequal development" (p. 90). He goes even further: "…the machinations of the contemporary political economy, underpinned by bio-political logic, are hegemonic to the degree that even the most progressive or radical SDP initiatives tend to understand the central chore of SDP as one of securing neoliberal conduct that eschews state support and chooses not to challenge structural or transnational inequality" (p. 93).

A third empirical chapter focuses on the new trend for countries in the Global South to strive for hosting sports mega-events. Darnell argues that this trend coincides with its framing as a "legitimate and fundamental aspect of development policy and strategy" (103). An important contribution here is that Darnell makes clear that hosting these mega-events almost never has a profitable outcome. He emphasizes that, even as these mega-events may signal an opportunity to connect sports to the greater social good, the competition to host these mega-events and the ways that the events are carried out only seem to reinforce the interests of the dominant actors in the political economy of global inequality that currently exists. Indeed, Darnell points out that FIFA and the International Olympic Committee distribute these hosting opportunities as a "development achievement award" (p. 110) *instead* of as a means of supporting sustainable

development. This insight reinforces the point that Delaney and Eckstein make in their *Public Dollars, Private Stadiums* about the perceived importance of being a "major league city." There is more symbol than substance involved. Darnell does hold open the possibility that programs like FIFA's Football for Hope can actually marry sports mega-events and social progress. The key, he argues, is for the programs to have deep local partnerships as well as global connections; it's important that Football for Hope operates around the world, not just in "development laboratories," such as Africa and Central and South America (p. 116).

Darnell's final empirical chapter explores the phenomenon of sport celebrities connecting themselves to development efforts. While acknowledging the global stage on which star athletes perform and that gives them a prominent platform for encouraging financial and political contributions, Darnell reminds us that these star athletes are themselves constrained by current and future contracts. So, even were they so inclined and even were they so articulate, the most committed among them cannot by themselves, in addition to securing contributions, shift the conversation to the power relations that underlie global inequality.

Darnell's concluding chapter attempts to come to terms with the limitations of SDP and how they might be overcome. He specifically suggests that SDP can "re-imagine sport." He sees sport as potentially liberating rather than as always reinforcing capitalist social relations and "reduc[ing] its inequities to a matter of individual failings" (p. 153-4). Darnell suggests a research agenda for SDP studies that is as critical as it is exciting.   He urges us to push the boundaries of the current conceptions and institutions of sport, understand their limitations, and evaluate how movements to resist them have fared. He encourages us to think through different models of partnerships and different models of pedagogy so that participants in SDP can imagine as well as create new paradigms of sport participation and success in a more egalitarian context.

Early in the book, Darnell articulates an important vision of what sport could be in the larger scheme of human liberation: "Achieving human rights in sport would include both social democracy of sports participation, characterized by access and opportunities for all persons, as well as the freedom within sport cultures for persons to participate in diverse ways (Kidd and Donnelly, 2000). " (p. 36) Were it fulfilled, this conception of sport and its potential would necessarily have penetrated the currently dominant individualistic, neo-liberal context and allowed sport, in Wilson's (and Mills') terms, to have transformed personal troubles into public issues. Such an outcome would allow for the development of public policies that more directly confront power differentials and resource inequalities. Were this vision realized, the possibility exists that sport's global popularity would deepen and broaden its model of a level playing field to include new forms of sport, more equal access to those forms, and a truly democratic opportunity structure for access to talent development for all sports. The implications of such a realization could be far-reaching. Indeed, changing our ideas about what a level playing field is could help us move beyond a mere meritocratic notion of fairness and highlight the ways that a

deeper conception of fairness could follow from institutionalizing opportunities for talent development at the individual, community, national, and global levels.

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