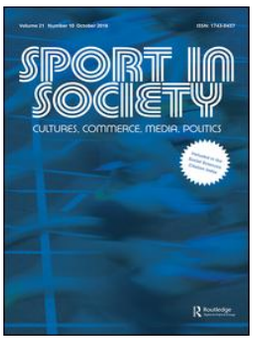

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Beyond the boundary: the sandpapergate scandal and the limits of transnational masculinity

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ABSTRACT

The public outrage expressed when Australian cricket players admitted to cheating during a Test match by using sandpaper to alter the surface of the match ball was, for some observers, matched by an incredulity captured in variants of the question, 'how did they think they could get away with it?' Drawing upon insights from recent work within masculinity studies, this essay offers an explanation into how the players could overlook the severity of their action as both an affront to the code of cricket and in regard to the response it would bring. The players are seen to be functionaries within an organizational network of 'transnational men', which characteristically tends to provide those within its institutional framework with a sense of impunity towards ethically questionable conduct. The essay also provides a means for questioning the wider cultural and organizational environment that gave rise to the Sandpapergate episode, by considering cricket as an 'unsustainable institution of men'.

KEYWORDS

Australian; cheating; cricket; masculinity; sandpapergate; spirit of the game; transnational men

Introduction

This essay examines the drama that engulfed Australian cricket in 2018; what became popularly known as 'Sandpapergate'. The term refers to the incident and aftermath of cheating by members of the men's Australian Test cricket team in a match against South Africa in Cape Town, in which sandpaper was used for the purpose of damaging the surface of the cricket ball to produce an unfair advantage to the bowling team, Australia. A media furore followed the incident, the likes of which on-field sporting scandals rarely attract. This essay commences by briefly setting out the incident and the public response before moving on to an analysis of the episode and questions of accountability via an understanding of Australian cricket existing within a patriarchal transnational organizational network. The work of Hearn and Blagojević (2013) on 'transnational men' (within masculinity studies) is particularly useful in this regard. We draw on this work in conclusion, not only as a means of making sense of the action taken by the Australian players, but also to shed light

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[†]Marina Hughson passed away during the preparation of this paper. Memory eternal.

on the broader context of contemporary international men's cricket within which the episode occurred.

Ball tampering and the sandpapergate controversy

The practice of what is known as 'ball tampering' within international cricket is not new or uncommon. However, the media and public response to and the subsequent penalty handed down to the identified perpetrators of the episode that has become known as Sandpapergate is unparalleled. Ball tampering in cricket occurs when a member or members of the fielding team seek to interfere with the surface condition of the ball by using a foreign object to either make the ball surface sticky, rough or uneven, in the latter case usually by unpicking part of the stringed seam around the circumference that encases the ball's leather exterior. In each case, the intention is to make the ball come off the pitch and towards the batsman in an unpredictable way that will enhance the possibility of a batting mistake, resulting in a wicket being claimed. The official rules of cricket declare anything other than polishing or cleaning of the ball to be illegal, yet some actions, which are difficult to detect, such as mixing the stickiness of a sweet into saliva are believed to occur on a regular basis.[1] Pakistan bowler Waqar Younis was the first international cricket player to receive a suspension for ball tampering after attempting to lift the surface of the ball in a one-day match against Sri Lanka in 2000 (Frith, 2012, 40).

It seems reasonable to say that the more 'foreign' the object used is to the field of play, the more deviant the act of ball tampering in question will be adjudged. This is a key factor in the reaction against the Australian players in 2018. While sandpaper is an item that some players may keep in their kit for the purpose of using to smooth a rough patch on their bat, it has no reason to be customarily on the playing field and certainly not in the possession of the non-batting team. That Australian players initially said that adhesive tape (an item a fielding player may well have in their possession during the game) had been used to rub dirt onto one side of the ball, indicates their awareness that an admission to the use of sandpaper would result in a harsher response. The lie about the sandpaper, as well as the premeditated and planned nature of the ball tampering also heightened the opprobrium that ultimately came to bear on the three Australian players identified as perpetrators. For example, former Australian captain Michael Clarke emphasized premeditation being the most unacceptable aspect of the wrongdoing (Majumdar, 2018).

The three Australian players involved were batsman and relatively junior team member Cameron Bancroft, team captain Steve Smith and vice-captain David Warner. Bancroft was the only player known to have actually tampered with the ball. He was captured on television footage appearing to rub a yellowish coloured item in the shape of a small strip of paper on the ball and then placing that same item down the front of his trousers. When questioned by umpires during the game about his actions, Bancroft denied that there had been any wrongdoing. However, in a subsequent press conference after the day's play, Bancroft, in the company of Smith, admitted that he had attempted to scuff the surface of the ball with dirt and grit, administered by a piece of adhesive tape. Smith admitted that Bancroft enacted a plan that had been devised during the lunch break by the 'leadership group' within the Australian team. While acknowledging that such an error was a misjudged piece of gamesmanship, Smith claimed it had no impact on the game and saw no reason as to why he should stand down as captain or for follow-up administrative penalties to apply (Cricinfo,

2018). It was not until a few days later, following an investigation by Cricket Australia (CA) that the item used in the ball tampering was identified as sandpaper rather than adhesive tape. During this process, vice-captain Warner was identified as the architect of the plan and as being responsible for tutoring Bancroft on the craft of roughing the ball with the illicit item (Barrett, 2018a). Smith's involvement was in knowing about the plan but ignoring his captaincy responsibility to stop it happening. Smith, as captain, was also the main guilty party in misleading the public, via press coverage, regarding the nature of the item used (ABC News, 2018). The CA investigation also found that no other players in the team, nor the Australian coach, Darren Lehmann, had knowledge of the plan. Subsequent discussion within the press and associated cricket punditry has questioned that such a plan of action could have been confined to just three players within a dressing room environment (Dore, 2018).

Initial penalties were raised against Bancroft and Smith by the International Cricket Council (ICC) on the basis of post-match charges levelled by the designated umpiring chief. 'Attempting to alter the condition of the ball' brought Bancroft a Level 2 charge of three demerit points and 75% loss of his match fee. The more serious charge meted to Smith, of conducing himself as a Test captain in a way 'contrary to the spirit of the game', brought a proposed suspension from the next Test match, four demerit points being added to his record and a 100% loss of match fee (Cricket.com.au, 2018). However, the public response to the cheating escalated as these initial deliberations were made and it became apparent to any keen observer that the matter was not going to rest there. The involvement of the then Australian Prime Minister, Malcolm Turnbull, in the episode, gives view to the magnitude of the upset in Australia. In a televised statement, Turnbull declared, 'the whole nation is shocked, because they hold those who wear the baggy green (the cap worn by Australia's Test cricket players) to be on a pedestal; as high as you can get in Australia, certainly higher than any politician'. This statement echoed a previous sentiment expressed by his fellow Liberal Party predecessor as Prime Minister John Howard, who, in a calmer time, made claim for the national cricket captain to be the 'pinnacle of Australian leadership', with the Prime Minister being 'second in importance after that'. Turnbull reportedly took up his 'bitter disappointment' with CA, imploring that stronger action be taken against the guilty players. The Australian Sports Commission chimed in with related demands, mainly that Smith stand down immediately as captain (SPORTINGNEWS, 2018).

CA's next line of response, following from that noted above, was to replace Smith as captain for the rest of the Cape Town Test match with wicket-keeper Tim Paine and to strip Warner of the vice captaincy, but this was soon followed by a decision to withdraw Smith, Warner and Bancroft from the tour entirely and to have three additional players replace them in the squad. Harsher penalties for the dismissed players were then decided by CA on 28 March 2018. Each was charged with breaching article 2.3.5 of CA's Code of Conduct concerned with the responsibility of a national representative player to uphold 'the spirit of the game', to not act in a way 'harmful to the interests of the game' or to 'bring the game into disrepute'. Smith received a playing suspension of one year from 'international and domestic cricket' and a suspension of one year from being considered eligible for captaincy and related positions following the conclusion of his playing suspension. Warner received an identical playing suspension to Smith, but also an effective life ban from ever again holding a leadership position within international or domestic cricket. Bancroft received a nine-month playing suspension from all forms of international and domestic cricket and

an identical penalty to Smith in regard to holding team leadership positions (Barrett, 2018b).[2] Each player was given the opportunity to appeal the penalties, but despite speculation in the media that they might do so all three accepted the verdicts without protest (Sports Staff, 2018). Based on precedent regarding ball tampering, the penalties were undoubtedly stiff, as noted by a number of former international players in media commentary roles. Indeed, the penalties seem more appropriately regarded as a response to the public outcry than being commensurate to the actual cheating within the context of cricket (Levi, 2018). However, the penalties may well have now set a new standard in how future ball tampering will be adjudicated.

Sandpapergate and 'the spirit of the game'

The sternness of the penalties applied to Smith, Warner and Bancroft are indicative of a moral outrage against their action within what might be referred to as *the cricketing world*. People in most countries around the world would have known nothing about the so-called Sandpapergate episode, but for media audiences in countries with colonial historical ties to the British Empire in which cricket is not only a popular sport, but culturally embedded, the story would have been inescapable. The penetration of cricket into the moral life of some of these countries is well-reflected by the term 'It's not cricket', which is defined by the Cambridge Dictionary to mean behaviour that is neither fair, honest nor moral. 'It's not cricket' can refer to actions occurring in either public or private life. The term may sound somewhat old fashioned today and it has for some time been used with irony. For example, two British comedy films, appearing as far back as 1937 and 1949 are named *It's Not Cricket*, and both use potential confusion arising from how this term can be understood in life as sources of humour. However, a lingering seriousness of this understanding of cricket registers both in the public reaction to Sandpapergate and in the formal sanctions taken against the players. To recap in that regard, Smith, Warner and Bancroft were all found by CA to have contravened 'the spirit of the game', to have harmed the interests of the game and to have brought the game into disrepute. The first of these contraventions is a cultural concern resting within the traditions of cricket. Indeed, the presumed existence of 'the spirit of the game' suggests, to paraphrase C.L.R. James, that the importance of cricket goes beyond its playing boundaries (James, 1994). In turn, this gives rise to the possibility of critical statements such as, 'it's not cricket'. In contrast, the latter two contraventions identified by CA are more reflective of cricket adopting the now familiar model of sport regarded first and foremost as a business. Players found guilty of 'harming the interests of the game' or 'bringing the game into disrepute' are likely to be primarily accused of causing reputational damage to *the brand*, which carries the risk of direct or indirect financial loss to the sport's governing and associated organisations. Such concerns would seem to have little to do with the public outcry that transpired over Sandpapergate, which provided the context for the severe penalties handed down by CA. This context can be seen to have carried on a lingering belief in 'the spirit of the game' within the public imagination in Australia and elsewhere. But how might this be so and is cricket exceptional in this regard?

In the quarter final match between Argentina and England in the 1986 men's FIFA World Cup, the great Argentine footballer Diego Maradona scored a goal that has become sacrilegiously associated with the term 'Hand of God' (the term was used by Maradona himself, seemingly in defence of his action) (Hughson and Moore, 2012). In scoring the goal,

Maradona jumped in the air feigning to head the ball while instead punching it over and beyond the reach of advancing England goalkeeper Peter Shilton. Argentina won the match 2–1, eliminating England from the tournament. Maradona's action was met with condemnation in the English press and continues to be regarded as a moment of infamy by critics. However, there has been little evidence of such a response in Argentina. Argentinean football culture does not operate according to a Corinthian code that is often presumed applicable to the English football tradition. According to Argentine sociologists, Alabarces and Rodriguez (2000), Maradona's goal 'can be read as a piece of Creole knavery against old enemies'. This implies a condoning of Maradona's ball handling as an act of post-colonial rebellion, whereby the rules of the master's game are turned on their head not only to defy but to deny the former master. It is interesting to think of this act of ball handling in football in contrast to ball tampering in cricket as respective breaches of 'the spirit of the game' pertinent to each sport. This consideration is usefully made with reference to the aforementioned C.L.R. James.

James's maxim, 'what do they know of cricket who only cricket know', is often cited by academics and journalistic writers as ultimate testimony to his awareness of how social and political circumstances come to bear on cricket as a cultural form within particular national contexts. A Trinidadian, James largely focussed his historical and political writings on the colonial power relations of the West Indies. Among his works on this theme is *Beyond a Boundary*, a book justifiably regarded as a landmark writing on the political and social significance of sport. Yet, unlike other works, which show an unswerving condemnation of the impact of British colonial rule in the West Indies, *Beyond a Boundary*, via its expression of a love of cricket, gives view to inherently decent values existing within British cultural practices. James believed cricket bears a moral code, which can serve as a guide to social conduct. Within the game of cricket James claims, as a player himself, he was well aware of 'what was to be done and not done'; 'I never cheated, I never appealed for a decision unless I thought the batsman was out, I never argued with the umpire, I never jeered at an opponent…my defeats and disappointments I took as stoically as I could' (James, 1994, 26). Helen Tiffin suggests that this admission is indicative of *Beyond a Boundary* lacking the sharp critical edge of James's other works on British colonialism in the West Indies. Tiffin (1981, 191) believes James was so 'seduced' by cricket that he endows it with an inherent goodness that somehow resides above or outside the sport's political dynamics. James's particular orientation to cricket and acceptance of its 'values' was, self-admittedly, acquired from his educational background within the local version of a puritanical English public-school system. Yet, rather than criticising James for making concessions to British cultural ways, other academics have been more inclined to accept his view that a sport such as cricket can contain worthy humanistic relations irrespective of where they come from (Hughson, 2009, 75–77). The prevailing racial discrimination of British colonialism in the West Indies would thus be seen as a betrayal of truly humanistic values and thus contrary to cricket's moral code followed by true adherents such as James. James's dogged determinism to play cricket 'by the rules' has thus been interpreted as a means of 'beat[ing] the masters at their own game' (Kingwell, 1986, 379–380).

The idea of cricket being essentially British, or, more particularly, English, has been challenged by a number of writers. Especially interesting is the claim made by Ashis Nandy in the opening of *The Tao of Cricket*, 'cricket is an Indian game accidentally discovered by the English' (Nandy, 2000, 1). Nandy's challenge to the idea of cricket being merely handed

down to a compliant local people was furthered in *A Corner of a Foreign Field* by Ramachandra Guha (2002). Guha's account of the historical development of cricket within India, shows that although cricket commenced as a means to calm expatriate homesickness, and thus was an English affair, once taught to local youth it took on a distinctive form by blending in techniques and style that had been acquired from already existing bat and ball games played on dusty and extremely uneven surfaces. As enthusiasm for cricket spread throughout India it was taken up and played in such culturally distinct ways and with unique purpose to justify Nandy's apparently provocative claim. But need the phrase itself apply only to India. Given the very different colonial histories of India and Australia (and the West Indies and Australia for that matter) to speak of cricket being an Australian game accidentally discovered by the English, undoubtedly upsets the implications of Nandy's meaning. Nevertheless, a reapplication of the phrase to the Australian context does initiate thought about the possible distinctiveness of an Australian cricket culture developed defiantly against the sporting customs of its colonial forbears.

Cricket and the Australian legend

Despite the first organised international tour by an Australian sporting team occurring in 1868, when an entirely Aboriginal group of male cricket players travelled to England for a series of matches (Mallett, 2002), Australia's mainstream cricket culture developed from, and in contrast to, its Anglo antecedents. Even today, cricket in Australia bears the markings of its long fostering as a key cultural domain of white masculinity. Over the years, expressions of Aboriginal or migrant identities have not been encouraged within professional cricket, the assumption seeming to be that leading players adapt to an accepted, if undefined, notion of unitary Australianness (McKay et. al., 2002, 290). This situation may become unsettled in the medium term as cricket officialdom, contrary to its longstanding conservatism (Hutchins, 2005), attempts to comply with contemporary agendas for greater cultural diversity across axes of race and ethnicity, as well as gender and sexuality. But the roots are deep, entangled within what historian Russell Ward has famously referred to as *The Australian Legend*.

First published in 1958, Ward's *The Australian Legend* argued that a distinctly 'Australian character' had developed, historically, from the arduous endeavours of white settlers to deal with the hostile environment posed by the Australian bush. The character in question was based in a spirit of egalitarianism according to which not only is every man presumed equal to his fellow, but also that challenging authority is an admirable trait. This doctrine sits at odds with the hierarchical power relations inherited from British rule and, according to Ward served as the basis for the growth of a radical political orientation in Australia. A member of the Communist Party of Australia, Ward believed that home-grown egalitarianism fostered a communal temperament needed for the building of an effective Australian leftist movement. This somewhat rose-coloured view was later challenged by other Australian leftist intellectuals who recognised not only its failure to account for the resilience of unequal class relations in Australia, but also the inability to account for negative discrimination across lines of gender, race and sexuality (McQueen, 1970). Ward's characterisation of the Australian bushman also lent itself to popular interpretations that had little to do with his own leftist leanings. In such interpretations, the communal idea of Ward gives way to an emphasis on rugged individualism with the Australian bushman portrayed much like the lone pioneering figure in American folklore. In a most chauvinistic popular

interpretation, reference to a core Australian character can lend itself to the type of national flag-waving hostility that accompanied protests in the name of being 'Aussie' against migrant groups at Cronulla beach, south of Sydney, in December 2005 (Poynting, 2006).

Cricket has lent itself to a populist understanding of the 'Australian character'. Although a team sport, cricket has produced heroic figures heralded for an individuality of style and/or personality. When players, such as Sir Donald Bradman and, more recently, the late Phillip Hughes, hail from non-urban locations, much will be made in their media profiles of them being 'boys from the bush' (Hutchins, 2002). None of the three Australian players involved in Sandpapergate are from rural backgrounds, yet Smith is known for an extreme unorthodoxy in batting style and physical gesture, while Warner is portrayed as a combative figure on the field and a rather rebellious character overall. A rebelliousness of character fits quite comfortably to the 'Australian legend' type. Within the context of cricket, an outstanding Australian player, who is regarded as rebellious, can be seen to have mastered the game while cocking a snook at the so-called gentlemanly traditions handed down by the English. While not often expressed explicitly in these terms, this is a general value underpinning the popularity of players who might be regarded in contemporary parlance as *bad boys*. David Warner's popularity with Australian cricket fans assumedly draws upon this kind of appeal. However, some critics regard Warner's reputed on-field aggression as an unfortunate expression of masculinity whereby 'Australian character' tips over into something more sinister, the 'ugly Australian' (Kimber, 2019; Wade 2019). People of this view are not likely to be sympathetic to Warner's circumstances in South Africa. Warner had been goaded in highly personal terms by South Africa players and fans prior to the ball-tampering incident. However, this garnered no pity from those Australian critics who accepted that Warner attracted provocation because of his own seemingly relentless sledging of opposition players (Kimber, 2019). To such critics, Warner appeared as the most recent and extreme manifestation of an aggressive player type that had come to inhabit Australian cricket and to besmirch its international reputation.

When journalist Peter FitzSimons attempted to widen the responsibility for what had occurred in South Africa to the Australian public, several respondents to his column in *The Sydney Morning Herald* took issue. To his own question, 'Who should take the blame for the scandal in Cape Town? Fitzsimons (2018) answered, 'much of the fault lies with us, you and me, and all the supporters of Australian cricket who have been so eager to celebrate victories that we have declined to denigrate the methods by which many of them were achieved'. Australian cricket fans do have a reputation for partisan, boisterous and even unsporting conduct. It stretches back to reports on 'plebian' Australian cricket crowds in the late 1800s (Cashman, 1984, 40). The advent of World Series Cricket in the late 1970s and the accompanying 'C'mon Aussie, C'mon' promotional campaign openly encouraged patriotic, even nationalistic, fandom (Haigh, 2007, 12). However, respondents to FitzSimons's column rejected the suggestion that a passion for national success at cricket is accompanied by an acceptance or ignoring of bad sportsmanship and cheating. This view was well-captured by one respondent:

> As a cricket tragic, I simply want our national team to play in the true spirit and seriously prefer that we lose with dignity, win with humility. I am tired and embarrassed of the ugly, arrogant way the national men's team has played for too long.

An informal survey conducted by one of the present authors among his Facebook 'friends' (16 responses from Australian men (9) and women (7) aged between 41 and 62 years) provided comments sounding general agreement with this view. Variants of comments such as, 'they have disgraced Australians', 'you don't cheat to win', 'how did they think they could get away with it', occurred across the responses. That each respondent called for penalties at least as harsh as those handed down by Cricket Australia, to four respondents saying the players should never be allowed to represent Australia again, is indicative of the overall seriousness with which the episode was viewed. It is likely that these harsh personal judgements were affected by the volume of the media outcry to Sandpapergate.

During the Ashes series played in England in 2013, David Warner received a brief playing ban for punching England player, and future captain, Joe Root in a Birmingham bar (Hoult and Pringle, 2013). The incident was reported in the Australian media without Warner receiving journalistic condemnation or related public criticism. Nevertheless, in an interview ahead of the 2014/15 Australian summer season, Warner showed an awareness of some reputational damage, when emphasizing that he wanted to be a role model for children and a player 'that people can look up to' (Knox, 2014, 27). But, beyond this public relations exercise, the episode was unlikely to have done Warner much damage and, perhaps, it increased his image as a roguish Aussie. The fan likeability of former England player Ian Botham was possibly increased when it became publicly known that he punched Australian captain Ian Chappell in an off-field confrontation. The antics of Andrew Flintoff following the Ashes victory at home against Australia seemingly increased his popularity with the English public because he was seen to go against the grain of the boring staid upper-class tradition with which English cricketing culture is associated. So much so, it was questioned by one scribe as to whether Flintoff may actually be an 'Aussie' (Malcolm, 2012, 1081). Warner's off-field scuffle with Root, undoubtedly complied with an Australian stereotype held by the English, but so too did the ball tampering in South Africa. Unfortunately, in this case it complied, coincidentally, with what Warner's namesake, the 1970s proto-punk performer Dave Warner, referred to in song as the 'convict streak'; an assumed non-Indigenous Australian national character trait of dishonesty and thievery (Hughson, 2002). It was Sandpapergate's seeming confirmation of this historically embedded national reputation that is likely to have raised public anger in Australia to such a high level. Behaving boisterously off the field and flouting conventions and accepted playing styles during the game is one thing but being exposed as cheats evoked a distinctly Australian sentiment of 'it's not cricket'.

Cricket as an institution of 'transnational men'

In the final part of the paper we turn attention to the concept of 'transnational men', as developed by Hearn and Blagojević (2013), as way to make sense of the Sandpapergate episode. This concept accepts that under increasing globalization during the twentieth century the shaping of institutions and organizations has been enduringly marked by transnational processes that operate simultaneously in formal and informal ways. Transnational institutions and organizations have been successful bearers of patriarchy because they are adaptable to changing times, but in a way that seems to further empower, rather than disempower, privileged men. The institutions and organizations of sport, including cricket, can be regarded as operating in such ways (Hearn, 2015). The International Cricket Council

(ICC) was formed in 1909 as the Imperial Cricket Council, a bastion of elitist and patriarchal relations within the British Empire (Iyer, 2013). The Australian Board of Control for International Cricket (which became the Australian Cricket Board in 1973 and then Cricket Australia in 2003) was formed in 1905, giving Australia a significant voice in the formalizing of international cricket relations from the outset. These organizations have operated transnationally from their beginning, and in ways to reinstate the privilege of male leadership against or while negotiating the shifting winds of historical change. Male cricket players have been drawn into this transnational context since the early days of international tours for test matches. They became 'transnational men' via national team representation, and by playing first class cricket in countries other than their own. For example, leading Australian players played in English domestic competition as far back as the late 1800s, but within English county cricket more customarily in years subsequent to World War II (Birley, 1999).

Cricket has changed significantly in more recent years since the advent of highly lucrative T20 (limited over) competitions based in a number of major cricketing countries. The pooling and mixing of leading international players within T20 franchise teams makes these competitions distinctly transnational and has heightened the status of current leading players as 'transnational men'. For example, both Warner and Smith, as well as representing Australia and their state of New South Wales in different forms of cricket, have played English county cricket and in T20 cricket competitions in Australia, India, Bangladesh and the Caribbean. While there need be no suggestion that this array of team membership would detract from allegiance to their dedication to the Australian cricket team, Warner, Smith and their contemporaries certainly play cricket on a more complicated landscape than the players in generations before them. T20 cricket alone is indicative of this. Officially sanctioned T20 competitions, particularly the World Cup, are sanctioned and administered by the ICC. In contrast, the major T20 tournaments played in different countries are sanctioned and administered by the national organizational bodies, for example, the Indian Premier League is run by the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) and the Big Bash League is run by Cricket Australia. These competitions are made up of teams administered on an independent franchise basis underwritten by commercial sponsorship. Via its new complexity of arrangements, cricket rather mirrors transnationalization, as identified by Hearn and Blagojević (2013) occurring across 'three domains: *beyond*, *between*, and *within* nations'.

Test matches and series sit somewhat uncomfortably within cricket's contemporary transnational mix. T20 cricket in both its officially sanctioned and national tournament-based forms is recognized widely as a much-needed boost for the sport's popularity. An understanding of cricket's arcane rules and a preparedness to sit through long periods of play where little scoring or no taking of wickets occurs is not an issue within the most abbreviated form of the game. T20 has, therefore, been pitched, successfully, to an expansion in popularity and to broaden cricket's marketing base. Unsurprisingly, traditionalists have rehearsed the objections raised some years earlier about cricket in the one-day match form (Engel, 2017). T20 is regarded and dismissed by some as being little more than what is signified by the name of the Australian competition, a 'big bash' totally lacking the finer points that allowed C.L.R. James to regard cricket as the most artistic sport of all (James, 1994, 195–211). Yet, despite ongoing suggestions and debates over modifications to the long version of the game, the T20 format may have actually helped restore the popularity of Test cricket. However, this has coincided with the strengthening of a business-orientated approach to

the running of Test cricket by both the ICC and its national affiliate bodies. As a result, men's contemporary Test cricket seems to bear an odd tension felt by players on the field, in which they attempt to negotiate their way through Test matches remaining as the ultimate occasion of the purest form of cricket and an imperative to win for financial reasons. Contrastingly, T20 cricket, especially as played within the national franchised-based competitions, despite the high level of crowd excitement and the massive salaries of players, appears to be a relatively relaxed and good-natured occasion for the participants.

While the burden of blame following Sandpapergate fell on those players identified with the ball tampering incident, some commentators called for the web of responsibility to be widened to take in Australian cricket's officialdom (Haigh, 2018; Haigh, 2019; Lemon, 2018). The first non-player casualty to fall was team coach Lehmann, who although not deemed to have knowledge of the cheating, resigned in acceptance that his coaching style may have contributed to the environment within which the cheating occurred (Press Association, 2018). Lehmann's resignation effectively shifted the focus beyond the playing field and prompted Cricket Australia to commission a 'cultural review'. This was duly prepared by The Ethics Centre and was tabled in October 2018 under the title *Australian Cricket: A Matter of Balance*.[3] A key conclusion of the report is that responsibility for what occurred during the Cape Town Test match rests not only with the players involved in the cheating, but with CA for creating the 'larger picture', i.e. the cultural framework that had developed around Australian cricket over recent years.

The report refrains from affirming the view of some critics that Australian men's international cricket had become obsessively absorbed into a 'win at all costs' collective mindset. Instead it states, less condemningly, that a prevailing ethos of 'winning without counting the costs' had developed. The practical implication of this assumed subtle difference is that while the emphasis on winning would not extend to open encouragement of cheating, a moral compass that had previously existed had been lost and players lacked an ethical bearing upon which they could reflect in regard to their on-field conduct. An aggressive culture in the quest for victory had, reportedly, developed under previous Australian captains, especially Steve Waugh who was known to favour a hostile approach to opposition players, which he referred to as 'mental disintegration' (Dixon, 2007). A related culture remained in place during the 2000s under subsequent captaincies and was ensconced by the time Smith, Warner and Bancroft came into the Australian team, the latter under Smith's own captaincy.

By November 2018, four of CA's board of directors were stood aside and its CEO and two other senior executives resigned. Chairman, David Peever, also resigned after only a week earlier signing a new three-year appointment in extension of his contract (Hytner, 2018). The Peever example is particularly interesting because it may indicate a positive shift towards accountability in organisations such as CA. Peever's resignation came after pressure following the release of *A Matter of Balance*. Merely commissioning the report and agreeing to abide by the majority of its findings was not enough on this occasion to protect the organisational figurehead. A concern with transnational organizations is that their globally linked networks have been developed in an intentional way to allow genuine ethical considerations and a vagueness in governance to slip between the cracks of the three 'domains' mentioned above. In a previous study, the present authors looked at how ethical slippage became institutionally embedded in FIFA (Hughson and Hughson, 2019). Cricket does not have the global expanse of football and the ICC does not enjoy the overarching institutional

power of FIFA. However, Sandpapergate initially exposed the uncertainty of responsibility that occurs within transnational networks; in this case should the penalties for cheating be imposed by the ICC or CA? As seen, the ICC made an initial ruling with CA then taking up the onus of authority as the national ruling body. CA officialdom may have thought that the harsh penalties imposed upon the three players would be enough to satisfy the public outcry. But this proved not to be the case. The continuing pressure from some commentators that responsibility for the cheating should go beyond the players ultimately came back upon the organisational leaders of Australian cricket.

The abovementioned study by the present authors into FIFA was part of a wider project considering transnational oganisations as 'unsustainable institutions of men' (Hearn et al., 2019). A key concern within the project was to examine whether historically entrenched patriarchies would survive external pressure towards organizational democracy, fair conduct and transparency. In the case of FIFA it was found that although change has occurred, for example, the appointment of a woman to one of the most senior administrative positions and the formation of an ethics committee, a rather autocratic leadership style, indicative of previous male leaders, remains in place. FIFA was thus seen to have sustained existing long-established organizational privilege but to be unsustainable in the sense of its resistance to meaningful organizational change (Hughson and Hughson, 2019).

Research into the amalgamation of women's cricket associations in both Australia and Britain with the peak cricketing bodies in those countries, Cricket Australia and the England and Wales Cricket Board, respectively, indicates a number of benefits for elite women players and their competition, and, in the Australian context, benefits for talented young female players. However, in both national contexts, the mergers have resulted in the male-dominated peak bodies gaining greater control over the administration of women's cricket (Stronach and Adair, 2009; Velija et al., 2014). Women have gained representation on the boards of these organisations since this research was undertaken. CA presently has three women (including one former Australian international player) on an eight-person Board of Directors and the England and Wales Cricket Board has four women (including one former England international player) on an eleven-person Board of Directors. In October 2021, Claire Connor, a former England international player, will become the first female President in the history of the Marylbone Cricket Club, the first governing body of world cricket. The impact of these appointments of women are potentially disruptive to the traditionally patriarchal power relations of cricket, but the impact will need to be reviewed over time.

Conclusion

The ethical review commissioned by CA into the events in South Africa may not have been intended to focus the spotlight on the organization's leadership, but this is effectively what occurred following the tabling of *A Matter of Balance*. Interestingly, the survey deployed by The Ethics Centre worked with a rather limited scope of participants, which included past and present national level players, senior executives and other CA employees, cricket umpires, sponsors and some people within the media. The survey was not extended to any members of the public. This raises interesting questions about cricket considered as the 'national game', a status to which the sport's administrators proudly lay claim (Hutchins, 2005). If cricket is the national game, then it surely must warrant functioning towards the 'public good'[4] and this has implications regarding peoples' rights, customarily involving

matters such as free-to-air televising of major fixtures (Hughson, 2014). In an extraordinary episode such as Sandpapergate, which prompted a large public outcry, the decision not to include the public in a subsequent review would appear not to be in step with the notion of 'public good'.

Nevertheless, that *A Matter of Balance*, a report commissioned by a body such as CA, did ultimately lead to the organisational leadership being held accountable shows that organisations within transnational networks cannot necessarily count on being exonerated by the investigative processes they put in place. Sport may be an exceptional form of transnational organisation in this regard and cricket a special case within sport because of the lingering influence of history and perceived tradition. Although the public voice was absent from *A Matter of Balance*, concerns about 'the spirit of the game' were raised in the survey, including comments by international players who believed that cricket officialdom tended to abandon this spirit by putting too much pressure on players to win matches. Similarly, and perhaps surprisingly, key sponsors remarked that 'the spirit of the game' must be held paramount over commercial and other related imperatives. Whether this is an entirely genuine sentiment, or whether it reflects business organizations tapping into and wanting to reflect the public mood, is unclear. But that commercial sponsors are prepared to be seen and heard putting the cultural, rather than commercial, interests of the sport to the forefront may auger well for how the game is played from now into the future.

Tied in with an acknowledgement and embracing of diversity issues and the rise of international women's cricket, and the prominence of the Australian women's team in this arena, Australian men's cricket will hopefully not sink to the blindly competitive depths into which it plunged in March 2018. Nor should it return to the macho chauvinism that was acceptable and the norm for previous generations of cricketers. Academic critics have called for Australian cricket to develop a future viewed in the light of contemporary social change rather than in the shadows of the past (Hutchins, 2005, 23). The fallout from Sandpapergate is not unrelated to this prospect. Widening the explanation and responsibility for what occurred in Cape Town, although not excusing individual players for their actions, provided an attempt to understand why this incident occurred and why it occurred at this particular time in cricket's history. To what extent the cheating players had absorbed a feeling of impunity often characteristic of the male leadership in transnational organisations cannot be known, but the cheating did occur at a point in time when we might say that cricket had become an 'unsustainable institution of men'. The bearing of cricket's unique tradition combined with growing external pressures for genuine accountability may ensure a cultural change to not only Australian cricket but across the transnational scope of the sport. This may impact not only on the way cricket is played, but to how it is administered by its peak bodies. If this be so, the Sandpapergate episode may be seen to have unexpectedly served a positive outcome.

Notes

1. The rules setting out what constitutes ball tampering are set out in section 42 of The Laws of Cricket as published by the Marylebone Cricket Club, lords.org/mcc/about-the-laws-of-cricket (Accessed 11 July 2020).
2. Cameron Bancroft was appointed as captain of the Durham County cricket team for the commencement of the 2019 summer season. The appointment took effect just after the conclu-

sion of Bancroft's ban. The apparent hastiness of this appointment was defended by DCC Director, Marcus North, a former Australian international player and a fellow Western Australian to Bancroft. North claimed that the suspension period had given Bancroft enough time to reflect upon his wrongdoing and to develop his leadership suitability by undertaking a number of activities, including becoming a yoga instructor (Ronay, 2019).

3. *Australian Cricket: A Matter of Balance* is referred to in some commentaries as the Longstaff Report. This is because the report was overseen by Dr Simon Longstaff, Director of The Ethics Centre.
4. The term 'public good' is used here in connection with notions of 'public' and 'service' as set out in the works of Raymond Williams. See, for example, *The Long Revolution* and *Keywords*.

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