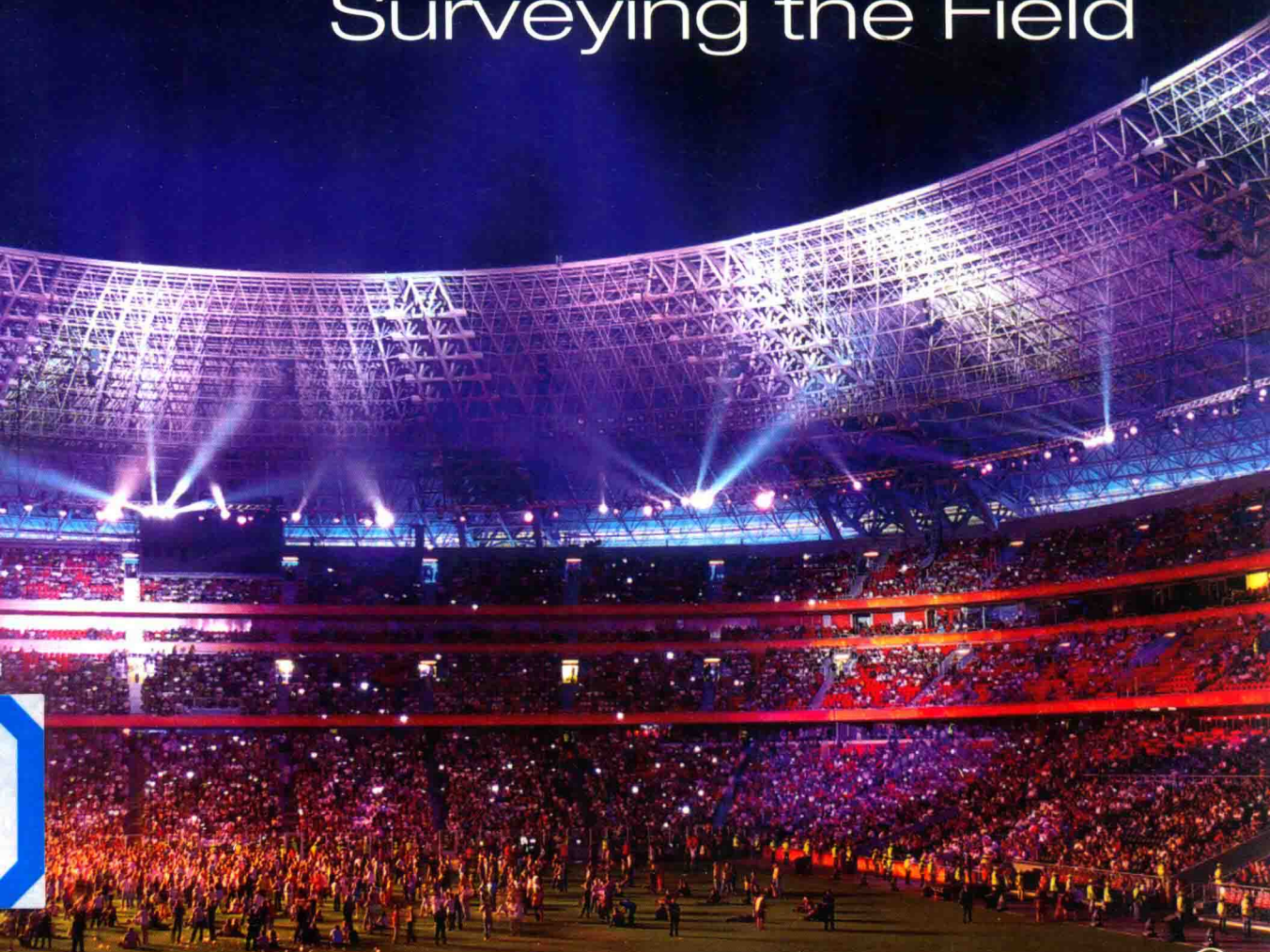


SECOND EDITION

COMMUNICATION AND **SPORT** Surveying the Field



Andrew C. Billings | Michael L. Butterworth | Paul D. Turman



Communication and Sport

Surveying the Field

Second Edition

Andrew C. Billings

University of Alabama

Michael L. Butterworth

Ohio University

Paul D. Turman

South Dakota Board of Regents



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FOR INFORMATION:

SAGE Publications, Inc.
2455 Teller Road
Thousand Oaks, California 91320
E-mail: order@sagepub.com

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1 Oliver's Yard
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Communication and Sport

Second Edition

Brief Contents

Preface	xiii
Acknowledgments	xvi
Chapter 1. Introduction to Communication and Sport	1
Chapter 2. Community in Sport	25
Chapter 3. Sports Media: Navigating the Landscape	47
Chapter 4. Sport Fan Cultures	68
Chapter 5. Sports and Mythology	92
Chapter 6. Gender in Sport	114
Chapter 7. Race and Ethnicity in Sport	139
Chapter 8. Politics and Nationalism in Sport	161
Chapter 9. Performing Identity in Sports	187
Chapter 10. Communication and Sport in Parent-Child Interactions	209
Chapter 11. Player-Coach Relationships in Sports	233
Chapter 12. Small Groups/Teams in Sport	258
Chapter 13. Crisis Communication in Sports Organizations	283
Chapter 14. The Commodification of Sport	306
Chapter 15. Sports Gaming	329
Chapter 16. Communication and Sport in the Future	351
Photo Credits	369
Index	372
About the Authors	386

Preface

Lao Tzu once claimed, “Those who have knowledge don’t predict. Those who predict don’t have knowledge.” We generally agree with this sentiment yet found ourselves attempting to do both in this second edition of *Communication and Sport: Surveying the Field*. We obviously wish to have knowledge conveyed in the most accessible and accurate degree possible, yet decisions on *which* pieces of knowledge to disseminate involve a series of educated guesses. Particularly with some of our new media information that is enhanced in this book, we attempted to paint a picture that would be useful for several years while acknowledging that sports communication will have inevitably shifted in noteworthy ways even before the book goes to press. When we asked Frank Deford to participate in our short interview (featured in Chapter 16), he was initially hesitant when we said the chapter was about communication and sport in the future. Deford offered to help, but noted that he “didn’t have a crystal ball.” Neither do we, but hopefully what we are offering in this second edition is the closest representation of the issues pertinent to communication and sport, circa 2014.

THE BOOK

Communication and Sport: Surveying the Field is designed to bridge traditional divides between notions of speech communication (a tradition that includes interpersonal, organizational, and rhetorical approaches) and mass communication (a tradition that includes media studies, journalism, and cultural studies) and all of the potential divides and schisms inherently within. The aim was the creation of a book with enough breadth that it would be difficult to have one scholar who could truly claim expertise in all of the terrain. Thus, the combination of the three of us results in a media scholar,

a rhetorician, and an applied interpersonal and organizational expert who jointly canvassed what amounts to an amazing scope of work in the field that is now outlined, structured, and synthesized for an undergraduate to grasp the scope and importance of studying communication and sport.

FEATURES OF THE BOOK

The comprehensive focus on *communication* scholarship is one of the major features of this textbook. In particular, we orient readers to the enactment, production, consumption, and organization of sport. This entails a wide range of communicative processes, including mass communication productions, interpersonal interactions, family and relational development, public speeches, individual expressions of identity through sport performances, collective expressions of community through sport rituals, and much, much more. The chapters within this textbook also feature communication scholarship that directs our attention to the ways that sport produces, maintains, or resists cultural attitudes about race, gender, sexuality, class, and politics.

The broad range of topical material is complemented by a pluralistic approach to communication and sport research. We survey scholarship that can be found in each of the major academic research paradigms: social scientific, humanistic, and critical/cultural. Each of these paradigms values different dimensions of intellectual inquiry. Social scientists, for example, are commonly interested in conducting research that allows scholars to explain how communication has worked in the past in order to offer some prediction of how it may happen in the future. Humanists, by contrast, tend to spotlight more particular instances of communication (rather than universal patterns) so that they may reveal deeper levels of understandings of human experiences. Meanwhile, critical/cultural scholars are committed to identifying relationships of power with the goal of sparking productive social change through academic inquiry. Although most researchers tend to identify with one of these paradigms over the others, they are not mutually exclusive, and, in the best cases, the insights from one approach may complement or supplement another. Communication and sport scholars also approach their research using different methodological tools, including content analysis, statistical modeling, ethnography, interviewing, experiments, survey collection, and textual criticism. Throughout this textbook we have included examples of each research paradigm and various methods of study. It is our hope, then, that

we have truly represented the diversity of scholarship conducted in communication and sport.

Another feature of this textbook is the inclusion in each chapter of a series of inserts, which include interviews, case studies, ethical debates, theoretical connections, and examinations of American niche sports. The interviews feature a range of experts in communication and sport, including renowned television figures, such as Bob Costas; leading journalists, such as Christine Brennan; prominent people within the sports industry, such as Dale Earnhardt Jr.; and established sports scholars, such as Lawrence Wenner. These interviews help contextualize and extend the ideas that are developed in each chapter. The case studies pick up on a specific dimension from each chapter in order to facilitate discussion about the communicative nature of sport. Ethical debates invite a consideration of various cultural, political, and social consequences of sport, while understanding niche sports, everyone hopes, broadens readers' conceptions of the breadth and depth of sport in society. Many of these issues are tied together in our Theoretically Speaking sections, and readers can expect all of these inserted features to clarify, extend, and challenge their understandings of communication and sport.

Finally, as those already familiar with sport are well aware, the relationship between communication and sport is one that is rapidly changing. New technologies, changing organizational structures, pervasive sports media that now include a multitude of social media formats, and the explosion of fantasy sports are just some of the ways that sport has been dramatically altered in recent years. The final chapters of this textbook, then, offer some insights into these developments and provide some cautious glimpses into the future. Although we cannot peer into that elusive "crystal ball," we are certain that communication scholarship will remain an essential lens through which we can view, understand, and modify the universe of sport.

Acknowledgments

It took several years to produce the first version of this textbook and several years more to provide the necessary updates to make the second edition a firm step forward, as we hope it is. This evolution of a project that, at times, could seem unwieldy, could not have happened without a great deal of synergy among the three of us, but we also recognize how fortunate we have been throughout this process.

First, we must thank SAGE Publications, particularly Matthew Byrnie, for believing in this updated edition of the project from beginning to end. It is nice to have a publisher that is willing to be an advocate for the burgeoning field that is the combination of communication and sport.

Second, we wish to thank the following people for their help with developing the textbook with their useful and supportive insights: Marie Hardin (Penn State University), Jacqueline A. Irwin (California State University, Sacramento), Nick Linardopoulos (Rutgers University), Mike Milford (Auburn University), David Sabaini (Indiana State University), Rebecca Robideaux Tiedge (Boise State University), and Joseph G. Velasco (Sul Ross State University).

Third, our institutions/organizations (University of Alabama, Ohio University, and the South Dakota Board of Regents) have allowed us the leeway to pursue this project in the timeframe we wished, and for that we are thankful.

Third, we wish to thank all of the faculty and students who embraced the first edition of our work, bringing it into classrooms across the country and, indeed, to other nations in an attempt to educate about the role of communication and sport in society. Without your endorsement of the first edition of this book, a second edition would not have been conceivable.

Fourth, we thank our graduate students who have assisted us over the course of both editions with the review of scholarship and other

materials for this book. These students include Cory Hillman and Erin Paun from Bowling Green State University, and Aisha Avery from the University of Alabama.

Finally, we must also note that we all are approximately in the same life stage, meaning that we have young children and understanding wives who accommodate our schedules, which often became demanding near various deadlines. The confluence of events and supporters has resulted in a revised and updated text of which we are proud, and we thank all of the people in our lives who allowed it to happen.

Andrew C. Billings

Michael L. Butterworth

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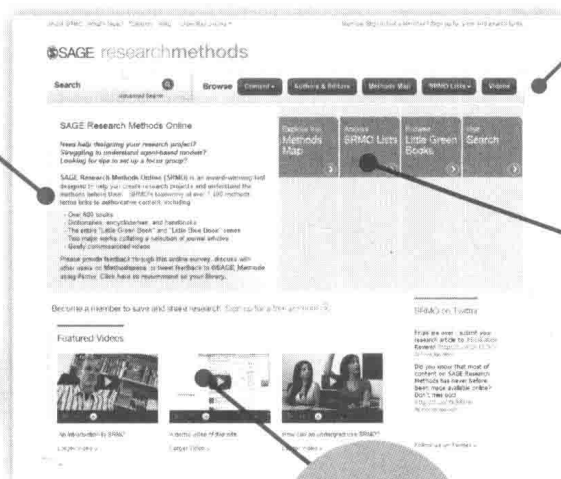
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Detailed Contents

Preface	xiii
Acknowledgments	xvi
Chapter 1. Introduction to Communication and Sport	1
<i>Case Study: Cozart's Community</i>	2
<i>Interview: Bob Costas, NBC Sports, and MLB Network</i>	5
Communication and Sport	6
<i>Communication</i>	9
<i>Sport</i>	10
Perspectives and Approaches	11
<i>Community and Sport Foundations</i>	11
<i>Negotiating Identity in Sport</i>	14
<i>Relational Issues in Sport</i>	18
<i>Emerging Trends in Communication and Sport</i>	20
References	21
Chapter 2. Community in Sport	25
Player #1: The Participant	26
<i>Interview: Bob Krizek, Communication</i>	
<i>and Sport Scholar, St. Louis University</i>	26
<i>Casual Play: Sport as Leisure</i>	28
<i>Intramurals: Introductions to Organized Sport</i>	29
<i>Off the Beaten Path: Ironman</i>	29
<i>Amateur Athletics: Altruism and Idealism</i>	30
<i>Case Study: Bloom's Battle</i>	31
<i>Professional Athleticism: Style and Substance</i>	32
Player #2: Sports Organizations	34
<i>Theoretically Speaking: Identification</i>	35
Player #3: Sports Media Entities	36

<i>Visibility Jobs</i>	36
<i>Production Jobs</i>	38
<i>Hybrid Jobs</i>	39
Player #4: The Fan	40
<i>Motivations for Fandom</i>	40
<i>A Matter of Ethics: We Are Penn State?</i>	41
<i>Modes of Fan Consumption</i>	42
Community of Sport in the 21st	
Century: Changing "Player" Roles	44
References	45
Suggested Additional Reading	46

Chapter 3. Sports Media: Navigating the Landscape 47

Sport and Traditional Media	48
<i>Theoretically Speaking: Framing</i>	50
Sport and New Media	53
Sport and Social Media	55
<i>Interview: Jimmy Sanderson, Assistant</i>	
<i>Professor, Clemson University</i>	56
<i>Case Study: Watch What You Say</i>	58
<i>A Matter of Ethics: Foster's Hammy</i>	60
<i>Off the Beaten Path: Mixed Martial Arts</i>	63
Sport and User-Generated Media	63
Conclusion	65
References	65
Suggested Additional Reading	67

Chapter 4. Sport Fan Cultures 68

<i>Interview: Lars Anderson,</i>	
<i>Senior Writer, Sports Illustrated</i>	70
Sport Fan Types	72
Live vs. Mediated Fandom	74
Fan Rituals	77
Motives of Sport Spectators	79
<i>Case Study: Unanticipated Fan Support</i>	80
<i>A Matter of Ethics: Bertuzzi's Brutality</i>	83
Sport Identification and Fandom	83
<i>Off the Beaten Path: Rugby</i>	86
Impact of New Technologies on Sport Fandom	86
Conclusion	88
References	89
Suggested Additional Reading	91

Chapter 5. Sports and Mythology

92

- Defining Terms 93
 - Theoretically Speaking: The Narrative Paradigm* 94
- Sports Myth 96
 - Interview: Dick Maxwell, Former Senior Director of Broadcasting, National Football League* 96
- Sports and Ritual 101
 - Case Study: Healing New Orleans* 102
- Sports Heroes 103
 - A Matter of Ethics: Being the "Warrior"* 104
 - Off the Beaten Path: Archery* 107
- Sports as Religion 108
- Conclusion 111
- References 111
- Suggested Additional Reading 113

Chapter 6. Gender in Sport

114

- A History of Women's Sports Participation 115
 - Interview: Donna de Varona, Olympic Gold Medalist and Award-Winning Sports Journalist* 116
 - Tipping Point #1: Title IX* 118
 - Case Study: The Unintended By-Product of Title IX* 119
 - Tipping Point #2: The Battle of the Sexes* 121
 - Moments of Recent Decades* 122
- Hegemonic Masculinity in Sport 122
 - Theoretically Speaking: Feminist Standpoint Theory* 123
- Gendered Coverage of Sport 124
- Gendered Language in Sport 126
 - Naming Practices* 126
 - Gender Marking* 128
 - Sexual Disparagement* 128
 - A Matter of Ethics: Striking a Pose* 129
 - Categorical Differences in Gendered Media Dialogue* 130
 - Off the Beaten Path: Gymnastics* 131
- Opportunities for Men and Women in Sport 134
- Globalization and Change Agency 135
- References 136
- Suggested Additional Reading 138

Chapter 7. Race and Ethnicity in Sport

139

- History of Ethnicity in American Sport 140
 - Interview: Kevin Blackstone, ESPN & The Shirley Povich Center for Sports Journalism, University of Maryland* 143

Participation and Sport Selection	145
Media Exposure and Stacking	149
Media Dialogues	150
<i>Theoretically Speaking: Cultivation</i>	151
<i>A Matter of Ethics: Serena's Shape</i>	154
<i>Case Study: What's in a Name?</i>	156
Conclusion	157
References	158
Suggested Additional Reading	160

Chapter 8. Politics and Nationalism in Sport **161**

<i>Theoretically Speaking: Hegemony</i>	164
Sport as Political Resource	165
<i>Case Study: Meeting Mr. President</i>	168
Sport and the Language of Politics and War	169
<i>A Matter of Ethics: Politics, Sport, and Sponsorship</i>	172
Sport and National Identity	173
<i>Interview: Christine Brennan,</i> <i>USA Today Sports Columnist</i>	175
Sport and Globalization	178
Sport and Resistance	180
Conclusion	183
References	184
Suggested Additional Reading	186

Chapter 9. Performing Identity in Sports **187**

Performance of Gender and Sexuality	188
<i>Case Study: Performing Maternity in the WNBA</i>	190
<i>Interview: Marie Hardin, Associate Director</i> <i>for Research, John Curley Center for Sports</i> <i>Journalism, Pennsylvania State University</i>	193
Performance of Race and Ethnicity	197
<i>A Matter of Ethics: Hail to the Redskins?</i>	200
Performance of Disability	201
<i>Off the Beaten Path: Para Table Tennis</i>	203
Conclusion	205
References	206
Suggested Additional Reading	208

Chapter 10. Communication and Sport in Parent-Child Interactions **209**

<i>Case Study: The Ride Home</i>	212
Changing Sports Culture: Game vs. Sport	213

<i>Interview: Darrell Barnett, Clinical Psychologist and Board Member for Little League of America</i>	215
<i>Sports Rage</i>	217
Sport Socialization	218
<i>Off the Beaten Path: Volleyball</i>	220
Parent–Child Sports Interaction	221
<i>A Matter of Ethics: Parental Passion</i>	223
<i>Private Family Settings</i>	224
<i>Sideline Interaction</i>	225
Sex Difference in Parental Influence	228
Conclusion	229
References	230
Suggested Additional Reading	232
Chapter 11. Player–Coach Relationships in Sports	233
<i>Interview: Kevin Wilson, Head Football Coach, Indiana University</i>	235
Sport Outcomes and Coaching	237
Parent–Coach Relationships in Sports	240
<i>A Matter of Ethics: Just Following Orders?</i>	241
Leadership Orientations	242
<i>Theoretically Speaking: Coach Immediacy</i>	243
Positive Coaching	247
<i>Case Study: Winning Isn't the Only Thing After All</i>	248
Communication Contexts	250
Conclusion	254
References	255
Suggested Additional Reading	257
Chapter 12. Small Groups/Teams in Sport	258
<i>Interview: Dale Earnhardt Jr., National Association for Stock Car Auto Racing (NASCAR) Driver</i>	259
Team/Group Cohesion	261
<i>Coach's Impact on Cohesion</i>	262
<i>Case Study: More Than Talent Required</i>	263
Group/Team Processes in Sport	265
<i>Group Norms</i>	266
<i>Theoretically Speaking: Social Loafing</i>	267
<i>Hazing in Sports</i>	268
<i>Leadership Emergence and Power</i>	270
<i>A Matter of Ethics: Tackling Tebow</i>	272
<i>Social Identity and Sport</i>	274

Sport and Communication Cultures	277
Conclusion	279
References	280
Suggested Additional Reading	282

Chapter 13. Crisis Communication in Sports Organizations 283

<i>Off the Beaten Path: Cycling</i>	285
Sense Making and Information Management	285
<i>A Matter of Ethics: Commissioner Salary Caps</i>	288
<i>Image Repair and Apologia</i>	289
<i>Organizational Image Repair</i>	290
<i>Interview: Kevin Long, CEO,</i> <i>MVP Sports Media Training</i>	292
<i>Athlete Image Repair</i>	294
<i>Coach Image Repair</i>	297
Sport Antapologia	299
<i>Case Study: Leach vs. James</i>	301
Conclusion	304
References	304
Suggested Additional Reading	305

Chapter 14. The Commodification of Sport 306

<i>Case Study: Commodification's</i> <i>Unintended Consequences</i>	307
The Sports/Media Complex	309
<i>Interview: Lawrence Wenner, Von</i> <i>der Abe Professor of Communication</i> <i>and Ethics, Loyola Marymount University</i>	311
<i>A Matter of Ethics: Playing at What Cost?</i>	313
Corporate Sponsorship	317
<i>Theoretically Speaking: Communicative Dirt</i>	319
<i>Identity for Sale</i>	320
Nostalgia	323
Conclusion	325
References	325
Suggested Additional Reading	328

Chapter 15. Sports Gaming 329

Fantasy Sports	329
<i>An Overview</i>	329
<i>Interview: Matthew Berry, Senior</i> <i>Fantasy Sport Analyst, ESPN</i>	332