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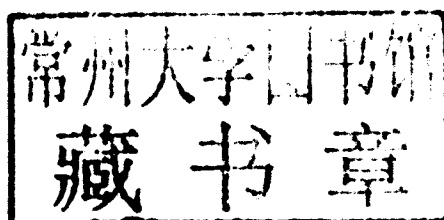


Routledge Handbook of Sport Communication

Edited by Paul M. Pedersen

ROUTLEDGE HANDBOOK OF SPORT COMMUNICATION

Paul M. Pedersen



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ROUTLEDGE HANDBOOK OF SPORT COMMUNICATION

The *Routledge Handbook of Sport Communication* is the only book to offer a fully comprehensive and in-depth survey of the contemporary discipline of sport communication. It explores communication within, through, and for sport in all its theoretical, conceptual, cultural, behavioral, practical, and managerial aspects, tracing the contours of this expansive, transdisciplinary, and international discipline and demonstrating that there are few aspects of contemporary sport that don't rely on effective communication.

Including contributions from leading sport media and communication scholars and professionals from around the world, the book examines new media, traditional (print, broadcast, and screen) media, sociological themes in communication in sport, and management issues, at every level, from the interpersonal to communication within and between sport organizations and global institutions. Taking stock of current research, new ideas, and key issues, this book is an essential reference for any advanced student, researcher, or practitioner with an interest in sport communication, sport business, sport management, sport marketing, communication theory, journalism, or media studies.

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INTRODUCTION

Paul M. Pedersen

Sport has become one of the leading economic industries around the globe, with products and services ranging from golf instruction and cricket ball production to World Cup soccer entertainment and amateur volleyball participation. Through active participation, mediated and spectatorial consumption, commercial production and promotion, and overall involvement, sport is a major institution in societies throughout the world; from baseball in Japan to rugby in Australia, and from ice hockey in Canada to soccer in Brazil. In my classroom lectures and previous published work, I have postulated that the key facilitator of sport, not only as an economic force and pervasive sociological and cultural presence, but also as an influential commercial institution, is sport communication (Pedersen, 2013). This claim is still made because the communication aspect of the sport industry affects everyone and everything in the field. While the most obvious way in which communication influences the sport industry is through the media (such as newspaper sports sections, sports television and radio broadcasts, sports websites and social media platforms, and sports magazines), it also impacts interpersonal interactions, sport event settings, organizational functions, and any other areas of the sport industry in which communicative activity takes place. In an attempt to reflect communication's wide-ranging influence and ubiquitous presence in the sport industry, the *Routledge Handbook of Sport Communication* is an academic compilation of topics and authors representing a broad view of sport communication.

In addition to the handbook's international relevance, cutting-edge analyses, leading scholar contributors, up-to-date chapters, and topical blending of theory and practice – this expansive perspective of sport communication is one of the collection's unique and appealing features. Having a published assemblage of sport communication related articles or chapters is not novel in and of itself. That's because, in sport communication and tangential fields, there have been several notable edited volumes; however, for the most part, such collections have been typically fixated on the mediated aspects of sport communication. Examples include Wenner's groundbreaking *Media, Sports and Society* (1989) and *MediaSport* (1998) as well as more recent edited volumes such as Bernstein and Blain's (2003) *Sport, Media, Culture: Global and Local Dimension*, Rowe's (2004) *Critical Readings: Sport, Culture and the Media*, Raney and Bryant's (2006) *Handbook of Sports and Media*, Hundley and Billings' (2010) *Examining Identity*

2 Introduction

in *Sports Media*, and Billings' (2011) *Sports Media: Transformation, Integration, Consumption*. Thus, one of the key features of the *Routledge Handbook of Sport Communication* is that, while it also has chapters on mass media, the handbook is quite broad in its approach with only one (Section II) of its five sections devoted exclusively to what is considered the traditional sport mass media. Another related feature is the handbook's cutting-edge approach with another part (Section III) containing chapters specifically focused on emerging and niche media platforms used in the sport industry. Overall, the handbook's fifty chapters are divided into five, ten-chapter sections. Sport communication theories, concepts, and research methodologies are covered in the opening section, followed by the aforementioned mass media section containing chapters on the print sport media (Chapter 11 and Chapter 17), sport documentaries (Chapter 13), sports broadcasting (Chapter 14, Chapter 16, and Chapter 19), sports media reporting and personnel (Chapter 12 and Chapter 15), and even sport fitness (Chapter 20). The third section focuses on new and social media, while the fourth section is a collection of chapters related to sociological issues in sport communication. The business and management aspects of sport communication constitute the handbook's final section.

With these five sections containing chapters affiliated with the theoretical, cultural, behavioral, mediated, conceptual, practical, managerial, and sociological aspects of sport communication, the *Routledge Handbook of Sport Communication* is expansive, examining a wide array of sport communication topics and giving readers an idea of the complexity and breadth of communication in the sport industry. Such a varied collection of scholarship is a testament to the growth, influence, and diversity of sport communication research in particular, and its place in the academy overall. It is not in the too distant past that if a professor took a broad view of the field and wanted to teach sport communication, the suggested route would be to use a collection of journal articles and popular press stories as required reading materials in an assembled course packet for undergraduate and graduate classes. However, over the past few years there has been impressive growth in sport communication textbooks and the body of literature in this area overall. For instance, the overall field is examined in *Strategic Sport Communication* (Pedersen, Miloch, and Laucella, 2007). As expected, though, most textbooks do not go as deep into the various subjects as they are explored in the chapters of this handbook. While some of the other sport communication textbooks and critical or cultural analyses go into some depth with their various subjects, they would not be considered broad in their approach, as they have typically concentrated on niche areas of the field such as public/media relations (for example, Hopwood, Skinner, and Kitchin, 2010; Stoldt, Dittmore, and Bravold, 2012), economics (for example, Jeanrenaud and Késenne, 2006), sports reporting and journalism (for example, Andrews, 2005; Boyle, 2006; Gisondi, 2011; Steen, 2008), and sports media (for example, Boyle and Haynes, 2009; Hutchins and Rowe, 2012; Nicholson, 2007; Rowe, 2011), to list just a few.

While many of the preceding published tomes have focused on one specific aspect or segment of sport communication, the *Routledge Handbook of Sport Communication* casts a purposive wide net and thus examines the field from a variety of paradigms and through multiple disciplinary, theoretical, and practical lenses. Such an all-encompassing approach is in line with a conceptual view of the field – illustrated in the Strategic Sport Communication Model (SSCM). My colleagues and I first released the SSCM just a few years ago in *Strategic Sport Communication* (2007). This conceptualization “illustrates the uniqueness of sport communication” and “is built on the elements of theory (i.e., communication genres), context (that is, levels and segmentation), and the communication process” (Pedersen, *et al.*, 2007, p. 85). The SSCM includes both the communication process and the main categories of sport

communication. This includes components related to personal communication (such as communicative interactions between individuals), organizational communication (for example, communication within and between sport entities), the mass media, and ancillary services and support such as advertising, public relations, and crisis communication. We noted that “Every activity and career in sport communication as well as every attribute and aspect of sport communication fits into either the process or a component of this model” (Pedersen, *et al.*, 2007, p. 86). Affiliated with this broad conceptualization of sport communication is the related definition, as detailed by Pedersen, Laucella, Miloch, and Fielding (2009). Here we note that:

to truly recognize the broad scope of the discipline, a more complex definition is most appropriate. Sport communication is a process by which people in sport, in a sport setting, or through a sport endeavor, share symbols as they create meaning through interaction.

(p. 430)

Therefore, this *Handbook* – using the aforementioned definition and conceptualization as a framework – takes an expansive look at the field of sport communication, a field that includes psychological and behavioral aspects (for example, Chapter 18 and Chapter 44) and economic ramifications (for example, Chapter 19 and Chapter 47) and everything ranging from organizational (for example, Chapter 3 and Chapter 29), gendered (for example, Chapter 10 and Chapter 32), and interpersonal (for example, Chapter 34 and Chapter 46) communication in sport all the way to the theoretical (Section I), sociological (Section IV), and managerial (Section V) issues affiliated with sport communication.

While sport communication used to be relegated to the margins of scholarly and pedagogical pursuits, the expansiveness of a publication such as the *Routledge Handbook of Sport Communication* is evidence of the field’s diversity and increasing relevance. There are numerous other illustrations of how sport communication is becoming more mainstream and accepted in the academy. One example of this phenomenon involves sport communication programmatic development and course offerings. Entire undergraduate and graduate degrees in sport communication as well as a variety of undergraduate, master’s, and doctoral courses (for example, sport public and media relations, sport communication, sport media studies) across numerous programs and disciplines are now available for interested students. Another example of sport communication’s increased presence in the academy is the increasing number of scholarly outlets. For instance, the current handbook’s wide view of sport communication is in line with the mission of the *International Journal of Sport Communication* (IJSC), a journal that is now in its sixth year of publication. As the IJSC was being formulated, I crafted the publication’s mission statement to read that the IJSC, “is to provide a platform for academics and practitioners to disseminate research and information on the unique aspects and divergent activities associated with any communication in sport, through sport, or in a sport setting.” A similar purpose could be applied to the current *Handbook*, which, as noted in the paragraphs above, is a collection of scholarship with direct and tangential affiliations with sport communication. In addition to the IJSC, there are two other journals solely dedicated to sport communication or a segment of the field. One is the more mass-media focused outlet called the *Journal of Sports Media*, which released its first issue back in 2006. The JSM was founded by Brad Schultz, who is also a contributor (Chapter 14) to the current *Handbook*. The other academic journal is the more broad-based scholarly publication *Communication and Sport*

(C&S), which just started in 2013. The inaugural editor of C&S is Lawrence A. Wenner, one of the contributors to the current *Handbook* (Chapter 41). Also contributing chapters to the *Handbook* are the journal's three associate editors, Marie Hardin (Chapter 15 and Chapter 24), Andrew Billings (Chapter 16), and David Rowe (Chapter 17).

Other examples of this burgeoning and diverse field of study include the growing number of scholars whose entire lines of research involve unique aspects of sport communication. The 74 contributors to this handbook are just a few of the hundreds of sport communication academics publishing in the journals noted above and in numerous other sport and non-sport journals which are open to sport communication-related research (for example, *Communication Research*, *Soccer and Society*, *Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media*, *Sport Marketing Quarterly*, *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, *New Media and Society*, *International Journal of Sports Marketing and Sponsorship*, *Public Relations Review*, *European Sport Management Quarterly*, *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, *International Journal of Sport Finance*, *Media Culture and Society*, *Journal of Sports Economics*, *Electronic Journal of Communication*, *Sport Management Review*, *Newspaper Research Journal*, *Sociology of Sport Journal*, *Journal of Sport and Social Issues*, and *Sport, Business and Management*). In fact, some of the journals (such as the *Journal of Sport Management* and the *International Journal of Sport Management and Marketing*) have devoted entire issues to sport communication topics. In addition to the journal research that is increasingly published in this area, as noted earlier in this introduction, there has been a rise in the number of textbooks (see, for example, Billings, Butterworth, and Turman, 2012; Reinardy and Wanta, 2009; Schultz, Caskey, and Esherrick, 2010) devoted to sport communication. Furthermore, entire academic international gatherings (for example, the Summit on Communication and Sport and China's Academic Conference of Sport Communication) and session tracks or content areas at conferences are devoted to sport communication (for instance, for the past few years, there is typically a sport communication thematic session at the annual conference of the North American Society for Sport Management). The rise of sport communication interest and research is also evidenced in academic association activity. For instance, in recent years sport communication related groups have formed within professional associations such as the Broadcast Education Association (BEA Sports Division) and the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC Sports Communication Interest Group). In fact, an entire professional academic organization is now devoted to sport communication with the arrival of the International Association for Communication and Sport (IACS).

Thus, over the past few years, an extensive overall interest and body of knowledge have emerged in sport communication. Given the growing number of scholars, textbooks, programs, courses, articles, journals, interdisciplinary activities, conference sessions, and research lines noted in the paragraphs above, it is time to take stock of the progress in this area through the publication of this expansive, transdisciplinary, and international *Routledge Handbook of Sport Communication*. While some of the research published in this area has been somewhat disconnected because it has focused on particular subjects (such as public relations, media coverage patterns, economic issues, and sociological influences), this *Handbook* helps to connect international scholars from a variety of disciplines and brings examples of their research and writings under one umbrella. Illustrating the global breadth of this multidisciplinary field of study, this *Handbook* is a collection of international contributors and content from a wide variety of disciplines – and sport-related sub-disciplines – including communication studies, management, telecommunications, marketing, psychology, gender studies,