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Security Governance and Sport Mega-events: Toward an Interdisciplinary Research Agenda

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Abstract

In the post-9/11 context, security issues have become increasingly central to the hosting of sport mega-event (SMEs). Security budgets for events like the Olympic Games now run into billions of dollars. This article seeks to advance the emerging field of SME security research in substantive and analytical terms. We identify three sets of issues and problems that are taking shape within this field: first, comparative issues in relationship to the Global North and Global South, notably given the growing number of SMEs set to be staged in the Global South; second, various risks and security strategies that are specific to different SMEs, including perceived terrorist threats, spectator violence, and broader risks associated with poverty, social divisions, and urban crime; and third, the security legacies that follow from SMEs, such as new surveillance technologies, new security-focused social policies, and security-influenced urban redevelopment. We argue that future research into SME security governance should be underpinned by a synthetic theoretical framework. This framework brings together three particular strands: first, a sociological approach that explores the "security field," drawing in part on Bourdieu; second, critical urban geographical theory, which contextualizes security strategies in relationship to new architectures of social control and consumption in urban settings; and third, different strands of risk theory, notably in regard to reflexive modernization, governmentality, and cultural sociological questions.

Keywords: security, sport mega-events, risk, security legacy, security field

Introduction

In the past two decades, sport mega-event (SMEs) have become global occasions of enormous economic, political, and social importance. SMEs such as the Olympic Games or football's World Cup finals are global spectacles that, for host nations, impact directly on urban regeneration (Burbank, Andranovich, & Heying, 2002), tourism (Degen, 2004; Euchner, 1999), and international standing (Ahlert, 2006). For example, the 2006 World Cup finals in Germany are estimated to have generated, for the host nation, the following: 5 million international visitors;

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18 million entrants to city "fan festivals"; a combined global television audience of 26 billion; and a national economic boost of US$12.5 billion (see *The Independent*, March 1, 2007; *Infront Sport*, February 6, 2007; *Associated Content*, July 26, 2006). In tandem, a wide variety of social scientific research has emerged over the past 10 to 15 years, to examine both the general aspects of SMEs and more specific issues of urban development and civic/national "branding" (see, for example, Hall, 2006; Miller, 2000; Siegfried & Zimbalist, 2006), social and cultural politics (see, for example, Close, Askew, & Xin, 2006; Marivoet, 2006; Roche, 2000, 2003; Whitson & Horne, 2006), and sport-related violence (see, for example, Stott, Hutchison, & Drury, 2001).

Arguably, over the last decade, and certainly since the 9/11 attacks and the subsequent"war on terror," the strongest realm of SME expansion, in terms of cost and personnel, has centered on security and risk management. In terms of costs, for example, Olympic security bills in the pre-9/11 context rose steadily from the 1992 Barcelona Games (US$66.2 million) through Atlanta 1996 (US$108.2 million) and then Sydney 2000 (US$179.6 million). The post-9/11 security costs subsequently ballooned, through Athens 2004 (US$1.5 billion), the Turin Winter Olympics in 2006 (US$1.4 billion), and the exceptional case of Beijing 2008 (US$6.5 billion); despite the 2007-2009 credit crunch, the security budget of London 2012 (at around US$2.2 billion) is certain to escalate (see *Wall Street Journal,* August 22, 2004; *Foreign Policy*, July 2008; *Daily Telegraph*, December 11, 2007). In terms of personnel, Sydney 2000 had set a new security mark by mobilizing almost 5,000 police officers and up to 7,000 contract and volunteer security officials specifically for the event (Lenskyj, 2002, p. 47). The 2008 Beijing Games—with an estimated 110,000 security personnel, targeted in part at intensive suppression of public protests—are unlikely to be matched in the near future. Yet elsewhere, the London Met Police have asked to treble their numbers through hiring 6,000-7,000 more officers specifically for the 2012 Olympics, whereas thousands more contract security agents will also be operational (*Sunday Times*, June 1, 2008). In addition, the 2010 FIFA World Cup finals in South Africa will see more than 40,000 police officers, up to 50,000 reservists, and thousands more security agents all allocated event-focused duties (*The Star*, March 28, 2007).

These figures for costs and personnel confirm the relevance of SME security for investigation by social scientists. In recent years, an emerging field of SME security research has begun to take shape, primarily in investigating individual events from the specific disciplinary perspectives of human geography/urban studies, political science, or sociology (see, for example, Boyle & Haggerty, 2009; Floridis, 2004; Klauser, 2008a, 2008b; Samatas, 2007; Tulloch, 2000). In this brief article, we seek to advance this emergent research field in substantive and analytical terms.

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First, we examine some of the emerging issues and problems that surround the question of the securitization of future SMEs. Second, we argue that future research should actively explore new forms of interdisciplinary investigation, notably by integrating the epistemological and methodological insights of sociology and urban studies. In broad terms, these arguments set out a research agenda for the social scientific investigation of future SMEs.

Emerging Issues and Problems in Sport Mega-event Research

There are three sets of emerging issues and problems which we discuss here in regard to SMEs: first, the growing number of SMEs in the Global South relative to the Global North; second, event-specific risks and strategies that require investigation; and third, the "security legacies" that follow from SMEs.

SMEs in the Global North and Global South

Throughout the 20th century, there were always opportunities for the largest sport events to be hosted by developing or industrializing societies, including nations located in what we now term the *Global South*. The Olympic Games were staged in the capital cities of Asian societies seeking to establish themselves within international marketplaces (Tokyo in 1964, Seoul in 1988). Latin America too has hosted one summer Olympics (Mexico 1968), and several football World Cup finals, including the inaugural tournament (Uruguay 1930, Brazil 1950, Chile 1962, Mexico 1968 and 1986, and Argentina 1978).

However, since the early 1980s, the context for hosting these events has been radically transformed in two particular ways. First, sports tournaments themselves have expanded into truly global mega-event with associated commercial and cultural significance; since 9/11, these events have security budgets and agendas that reflect this transnational significance. Second, beyond sport, global political and economic transformations have occurred, notably resulting in the intensified urbanization, industrialization, and transnational connectivity of many developing nations.

Within this new context, and following on from the 2008 Olympics in Beijing, several SMEs will take place in emerging nations in the Global South. In football, the 32-nation, 1-month-long World Cup finals will be hosted by South Africa in 2010 and Brazil in 2014. In 2010, New Delhi will host South Asia's biggest-ever multisport SME, the 85-nation Commonwealth Games. The hosting of these 21st century SMEs in the Global South will bring international sports and

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securitization into completely new territory. For social scientists, these SMEs also promise new fields for critical investigation.

In the context of this article, three security-related issues centre on these SMEs. First, research needs to examine the specific perceived "security risks" at SMEs in the Global South. Second, research needs to explore the international security-related transfers that occur between the Global North and Global South, in relationship to knowledge, technology, and capital. Third, research needs to explore how we may develop a detailed comparative analysis of security-related issues and processes at SMEs in the Global North and Global South.

Event-Specific Risks and Security Strategies

It is possible to break event-specific risks and security strategies into three general categories, and these centre on (a) terrorist risks, (b) spectator and political violence, and (3) poverty, social divisions, and urban crime. Importantly, these security risks differ not only in their main causes, forms, and effects but also in their symbolism and indirect consequences. Threats of terrorism and political violence, for example, are often not only seen as to endanger the athletes, spectators, and local population but also as a symbolic and political embarrassment—and hence financial risk—for host nations and organizing institutions. To understand the scope and importance of security strategies at SMEs, both physical and symbolic dimensions of event-specific risks have to be taken into account. At this place, however, it is not possible to give an exhaustive interpretation of the complex and interacting modalities, causes, and effects of the whole panoply of physical and symbolic risks at SMEs; that will be the subject of separate work.

First, *perceived terrorist risks* connected to regional/global politics have become major SME security issues in both the Global North and Global South. As a consequence, for example, the largest security operation in Canadian history will be in action during the Vancouver Winter Olympics in 2010 with the mobilization of thousands of military personnel and equipment. For the South Africa World Cup finals, security measures will include manned aircraft and bomb-squad tools and experts.

For some analysts, these kinds of security strategies in regard to terrorist risk may be more widely contextualized in relationship to the rise of "military urbanism," which describes the spread of militarized definitions and organization of urban space, particularly in the context of the war on terror (Coaffee & Wood, 2006; Eick, Sambale, & Töpfer, 2008; Graham, 2006, 2007, 2009). Major league sports in the United States have had close experience of this process, notably

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through meetings with "Homeland Security" chiefs and the subsequent introduction of intensive security measures at SMEs such as the Super Bowl (Schimmel, 2006, pp. 169-170).

Second, spectator-related violence will continue to be a major security focus at future SMEs, primarily in football contexts. In terms of direct social control measures, major European football SMEs in recent years have been intensively policed, with the commingling of rival fans being closely monitored by officers and surveillance systems, whereas widespread travel bans have been imposed by some nations (for example, more than 3,000 English fans were prevented from traveling to the 2006 World Cup finals in Germany).[1]

An additional security issue at recent tournaments has centered on the hundreds of thousands of ticketless fans who congregate in cities that are hosting major fixtures. At the 2006 World Cup finals and at Euro 2008 (in Austria and Switzerland), the host nations established public "fan zones" where supporters of different nations could drink, party, and watch fixtures on giant television screens. Fan zones may be seen as a public-centered response by host nations to the social exclusion caused by the commodification of football in general and by how the game's authorities and the black market conspire to distribute tickets in particular. However, the Fan zones are themselves subject to intensive monitoring by security agencies and allow for the commercialization of particular spaces through corporate sponsorships and private VIP sections (Hagemann, 2008; Klauser, 2008a).

Third, the interconnected themes of poverty, deep social divisions, and urban crime will continue to be relevant issues in regard to SMEs in the Global North. For example, the London Borough of Newham, where the Olympic Stadium is being built, is one of the United Kingdom's most deprived and ethnically diverse areas; in Vancouver, the Downtown Eastside, location of several event venues for the 2010 Winter Games, has high levels of street crime, drug use, and homelessness (Vancouver Organizing Committee for the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games, 2007, p. 134).

In the Global South, however, these intersecting themes acquire a categorically different scale of significance. In South Africa, for example, intense "racial" divisions continue to bedevil lives and livelihoods: almost 50% of people live in poverty, unemployment is estimated at 26% to 40%, and around 5.6 million are HIV+; these figures apply essentially to the Black South African population. South Africa also has global high records for violent crime, notably rape, hijacking, murder, and robbery; and anti-immigrant riots erupted across the major townships in May 2005. Thus, in preparation for the 2010 World Cup finals, strong security concerns will focus on

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controlling relationships between wealthy international visitors and local populations in urban centers and in "fan parks" where fixtures will be screened on giant television screens.

In the context of this article, therefore, research needs to explore the intersections of these three security dimensions. As more SMEs are hosted in the Global South, the focus on poverty, social divisions, and urban crime will certainly become far more prominent. However, research also needs to explore how these event-specific "risks," and the subsequent strategies of securitization, interrelate with wider processes of commodification and privatization within urban and national contexts.

The Security Legacy of SMEs

A major discourse advanced by bidding committees and governments which are seeking to host SMEs concerns the civic and national "legacies" that will remain long after these brief sporting extravaganzas have left town. Most discussions of SME legacies centre on the economy (such as jobs, businesses, global advertising), infrastructure (such as improved transport routes, regeneration of inner cities), new sports facilities, and increased public participation in sport.

However, little debate has been directed toward what we term here the *security legacy* of SMEs. By security legacy, we are referring to a range of security-related strategies and impacts which continue to have significance beyond the life of the sport event. Here, we identify six kinds of security legacy associated with SMEs:

1. *Security technologies* that are piloted or implemented for the SMEs—for example, new CCTV or other surveillance systems in major urban centers;
2. *New security practices* which are deployed during the SME and then extended into other social fields—for example, the widespread use of contracted security officials to police the SME or involvement in partnership relationships with other national police forces or security companies;
3. *Governmental policies and new legislation* which are introduced to enhance SME security resilience and remain in force afterward—for example, new laws that restrict public association or the movement of specific individuals;
4. *Externally imposed social transformations* that have at least in part a security focus and which take hold before and after the SME—for example, the clearing of specific"undesirable" or "unloved" populations from SME spaces;

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5. *Generalized changes in social and transsocietal relationships* following SME securitization—for example, different relationships between local communities and police officials following particular incidents or security strategies at the SME; and
6. *Urban redevelopment* which has connections or consequences for SME securitization—for example, slum clearance and rebuilding programs that are intended in part to repopulate and commodify specific inner-city localities.

In recent years, the first category—involving new technologies—has provided the most obvious security legacy for SMEs, notably in the case of CCTV. However, we find that all of these security legacies tend to come into play at individual SMEs.

For example, to pick the most striking recent case, for the 2008 Beijing Olympics,

1. most money from the security budget was spent on *new technologies*, particularly extensive CCTV and other monitoring systems that have remained in place after the event (*New York Times*, August 4, 2008);
2. *new security practices* are evidenced in the business relationships that have developed between the Chinese government and major U.S. security and information corporations, enabling the Olympic hosts to acquire high-tech surveillance systems and associated expertise—relevant U.S. corporations include GE, Honeywell, IBM, and United Technologies (*New York Times*, December 28, 2007);
3. it would be difficult for Chinese *governmental policies* to restrict further its already tight hold on major political rights, such as freedom of speech. The government sought to deflect international criticism of its human rights record by pointing to the establishment of "protest zones" during the Olympics; however, protestors were required to take serious personal risks by applying in advance for the right to protest. The Chinese government did, however, introduce tighter visa restrictions prior to the Olympics, and some of these are expected to remain in place;
4. in advance of the Olympics, Beijing police initiated crackdowns on indigenous ethnic minorities, particularly Muslim peoples such as the Uighurs from far-west China. As a result of this harassment, many of these minorities left Beijing to return to their homelands and may not return (*New York Times*, August 14, 2008);
5. in advance of the Olympics, Beijing underwent an estimated US$40 billion *redevelopment* program. Up to 1.5 million people were forced to move, as homes were razed in neighborhoods redeveloped into new commercial zones. Former residents have seen their public protests against

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displacement and low levels of compensation broken up by police officers or local "neighborhood committees" (*CBS*, August 4, 2008);
6. *changes in social relationships* between local communities and police officers will inevitably follow from relocation, redevelopment, and the installation of new security systems.

It would be wrong, of course, to assume that SMEs in the West or other global regions do not generate their own distinctive security legacies. In Europe, in terms of new technology, in late 2006, the United Kingdom was estimated to have around 20% (or 4.2 million) of the world's total number of CCTV cameras, and London already has the world's highest number of cameras per capita. Sport was the catalyst for this extraordinary diffusion of surveillance systems; by the early 1990s, all major UK football stadiums had installed CCTV systems, and the successfully piloted technology was subsequently rolled out to most major urban centers (Giulianotti & Armstrong, 1998). The 2012 Olympics will see further security legacies in technological terms, including microphones attached to CCTV cameras and a massive extension of the national DNA database. At the 2006 World Cup finals in Germany, the host nation temporarily "privatized" public spaces in which fans would gather, thereby enabling more intensive forms of surveillance to be imposed by contracted companies than would otherwise be permitted for use by police forces (Eick & Töpfer, 2008).[2]

In Australia, prior to the 2000 Sydney Olympics, the government passed legislation to intensify controls and prohibitions on public gatherings at various sites across the host city; the new regulations were only subject to review in 2004 (Lenskyj, 2002, pp. 55-56). In 1982, as part of the build-up to the Commonwealth Games, the Queensland Premier, Joh Bjelke-Peterson, had introduced draconian laws primarily to prevent demonstrations by indigenous peoples during the SME. The legislation, which banned assemblies of more than three people throughout the state, and resulted in hundreds of indigenous Australians being arrested, was only repealed in full in 1991 (Foley, 2008, p. 127).

In the United States, the Super Bowl's host cities have sought to squeeze out marginalized groups from festivities, including designated entertainment zones. Around 100 security agencies were in action for the 2006 event in Detroit, with homeless people warned by local officers to stay away from the different event venues (*Michigan Daily*, February 1, 2006; *Seattle Times*, January 26, 2006).

In South Africa, the security legacies of imposed social transformations, generalized changes in social relationships, and urban redevelopment are all set to come together before and beyond the

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2010 World Cup finals. Local and national authorities argue that SME-driven urban redevelopment will facilitate the construction of safer"world-class" cities, but such advances may well come at the expense of the urban poor. For example, in the run-up to the World Cup draw in Durban, street children were rounded up and arrested by police (*Daily News*, November 22, 2007). In 2006, the Supreme Court of Appeal ruled in favor of Johannesburg City council, which sought to evict 300 squatters from inner-city buildings on the grounds of safety and health. The court ruling left tens of thousands of poor inner-city South Africans liable to systematic "social cleansing" strategies. Eviction orders founded on Apartheid-era laws were forcibly served on thousands of residents, sparking strong NGO criticism and resistant riots (*The Independent*, July 30, 2005; *IRIN*, April 16, 2007).

Similar strategies of eviction and exclusion have been evidenced in New Delhi. By late 2006, as part of the build-up to the 2010 Commonwealth Games, more than 250,000 people had their slum housing demolished to enable redevelopment work along the banks of the Yamuna (see http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/south_asia/5325034.stm). The city authorities also began to clear thousands of beggars and stray animals from the city's streets in a move described by one human rights lawyer as a "criminalization of poverty" (*Christian Science Monitor*, March 4, 2008).

Overall, SME security legacies appear to be increasingly substantial and far reaching. Again, research in this field needs to explore in diachronic terms how specific security legacies (such as high-tech surveillance systems, changes in legislation) are established in particular contexts. Research also is required to explore comparatively the SME security legacies in different contexts. And third, research is required to explore how these SME security legacies connect to other processes of commodification and privatization within urban and national contexts.

Toward a Synthetic Theoretical Framework for Researching SME Security Governance

In general terms, for social scientists, the contemporary security processes at SMEs have very strong social, political, and geographical dimensions, as reflected through social relationships, the everyday politics of the "war on terror," and urban redevelopment. It is therefore reasonable to argue that future social scientific investigations of SMEs securitization should seek to engage and to integrate academic disciplines that seek to account most fully for these processes. We are thinking here in particular of sociology (including its hyphenated offspring, notably political sociology and the sociology of sport) and human geography (most obviously, its own subdisciplines of political geography and urban studies). In recent times, the field of urban studies has generated the most conceptually advanced and empirically informed investigations of

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SME securitization. However, these studies would benefit from a full utilization of sociological theory and methods, as hitherto the *social* dimensions of SME securitization have been rather underplayed.

We would argue here that the analytical frameworks for future research into SME securitization should bring together three specific strands. First, the sociological component should enable researchers to theorize SME securitization as a socially contested domain. We may therefore develop the concept of the *security field*, as derived particularly from the sociology of Bourdieu (1990, 1993, pp. 72-76; see Wacquant, 1989), and as adapted and extended by Crossley (2002, p. 674). The concept of the security field refers to a specific, security-defined social space, which contains objective, game-like relationships that are played out between various "players" (or stakeholders). Each player has different volumes and kinds of "capital" or power within the field. Stakeholders within the security field may include local people and residents, visiting spectators, police officers, government officials, local authority officials, local business people, nongovernmental and community-based organizations, sports officials, national and local politicians, private security companies, journalists, and other commentators.

Second, research into SMEs should use *critical urban geographical theory* to analyse the relationship of event securitization to the general social control and transformation of public spaces (Coaffee & Wood, 2006). This form of theoretical framework allows research to concentrate on how security resilience at SMEs connects variously to broader militaristic influences on public geography in the war on terror and to sociospatial techniques for segregating and controlling populations. Critical urban theory also enables analysis to concentrate on how generalized sociospatial control of the SME connects to the contemporary fashioning of a neoliberal, revanchist city (MacLeod, 2002; Smith, 1996).

Third, the broad social scientific field of *risk theory* should be fully mined to examine SME securitization *qua* "risk management." Risk theory in this regard helps to clarify and to explicate a wide range of social processes associated with SME securitization: for example, how specific security risks and "risk groups" are identified by relevant stakeholders at different SMEs; how security institutions (both public and private) implement specific risk-management techniques within particular contexts; and how risk legacies remain in post-SME contexts. Risk theories help to contextualize empirical findings in regard to broad structural processes and transformations. Relevant risk theories here would include the concept of "reflexive modernization" (Beck, 1992; Lash, Szerszynski, & Wynne, 1996), Foucauldian thinking regarding new forms of

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"governmentality" for shaping public actions (O'Malley, 2004), and new perceptions or cultural senses of risk within late-modern societies (Boyne, 2003; Lupton, 1999; Slovic, 2000; Tulloch, 2006).

In broad terms, the three conceptual frameworks—security field, critical urban geographical theory, and risk theories—are complementary and allow for a broad range of social scientific issues and problems surrounding SME security to be investigated and analyzed. These conceptual frameworks, when integrated, are particularly conducive to an inductive and largely qualitative methodological strategy.

Concluding Comments

SMEs have entered a new phase of development and growth, and their securitization provides perhaps the most striking illustration of that transformation. SME security, in itself, is a complex assemblage of social control mechanisms that is undergoing profound change, notably in terms of costs, personnel, the rising influence of private security, the perceived dangers of terrorism, and the focus on indigenous crime. The wider consequences of SME securitization are being manifested in evermore significant ways, particularly in the form of security legacies that include new public surveillance systems, changes in social relationships (notably in communities where major venues are located), urban regeneration, and the commodification and privatization of public spaces.

The research agenda that we have set out here is underpinned by the commitment to investigate critically both the specific properties and diverse effects of SME securitization. This field of research requires a transnational focus, assembling case-studies of single SMEs to provide sustained, comparative studies of security issues, and processes at different events within varying contexts. Given the prior role of sport as a "laboratory" for piloting future public security systems, this research should also illuminate the ways in which new forms of securitization are likely to be manifested across the wider public spheres in both the Global North and Global South. Finally, the type of research agenda that is set out here is interdisciplinary in the full sense of the word, by integrating the cognate disciplines of sociology and human geography/urban studies, with the transdiciplinary field of "risk studies" providing further cohesive benefits. As such, this research agenda has the capacity to advance the academic field, by demonstrating the possibilities of full interdisciplinary collaboration between sociology and human geography.

Notes

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[1] As an intermediary category between terrorism and spectator violence, political crowd violence is often portrayed as a major security concern for host nations, from violent neo-Nazi demonstrations at the 2006 World Cup finals to minority protests at the Beijing Olympics.

[2] New types of relationship are also developing between SME hosts and international police forces, particularly in regard to the transfer of security knowledge and expertise (cf. Klauser, 2008b). For example, at the 2010 World Cup finals in South Africa, foreign police officers in national uniforms will be on patrol (*The Star*, March 28, 2007).

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