# LOOKING THROUGH THE KALEIDOSCOPE: PERSPECTIVES ON THE LIVED EXPERIENCES OF SPORT EVENT VOLUNTEERING

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# ABSTRACT

The staging of many sport events ranging from small to mega-events, increasingly rely on the availability of a workforce of unpaid helpers. Whilst much research has been carried out in the past regarding the reason why people decide to volunteer at sport events, little is known about how this type of volunteering is experienced by the individual. Adopting an experiential focus, this study contributes to the existing body of knowledge and enhances the understanding of this particular form of volunteering by exploring the question "*What it is like to be a sport event volunteer*?" Using different strands of the concept and theory of role to serve as parameters for this study, the lived experiences of volunteers who assisted at the World Firefighters Games 2008 are analysed and discussed.

The research approach that was adopted for this study draws from the work of Hans-Georg Gadamer in form of hermeneutic phenomenology which is an interpretative approach towards collecting and analysing data about a specific phenomenon. Incorporating the hermeneutic circle that advocates the idea that understanding of a phenomenon is co-created by both the researcher and the research participants, hermeneutic phenomenology is concerned with exploring rather than merely describing contextual aspects and structures of lived experiences.

A total of eighteen semi-structured interviews involving volunteers who helped with the World Firefighters Games 2008 in Liverpool, were conducted. The interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim. Using the approach of Van Manen towards analysing the collected data, a number of themes and subthemes emerged which are presented in the thesis in manner that reflects the nature of the hermeneutic circle.

Besides providing a working definition of the term "*sport event volunteering*", the findings of the study critically evaluate the meaning that the volunteers attach to the role and how they make sense of their role as helpers involved in staging large sporting events. The interpretation of the collected data suggests that the enactment of the volunteer role is informed by individuals expectations and needs, e.g. with regards to role allocation, trust, recognition and reciprocity, and the experience of anti-climax and loss after their volunteer engagement has come to an end. Furthermore, the critical synthesis of how the individual manages his/her volunteer role suggests that sport event volunteers can be understood as "*bricoleurs*" who craft rather than merely take and perform this particular role.

Beside contributing to existing research on sport event volunteering  with these findings and by identifying further research avenues relating to sport event volunteering that can be explored in future, the findings of these studies might inform the work of practitioners in the respective research fields.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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# CHAPTER ONE

## Setting the scene

### 1.0 Introduction

Volunteers have become vital for the successful staging of events as without their contribution of their labour and time, researchers agree that many sport events would not take place (Bang, 2009). Whilst previous studies have been preoccupied with establishing why people volunteer for sport events (e.g. Williams *et al.*, 1995; Reeser *et al.*, 2005; Fairley *et al.*, 2007; Bang, *et al.,* 2009a) to date no research has been carried out that thoroughly explores what it is actually like to be a sport event volunteer. This shortcoming is addressed by this study that critically investigates the lived experiences of sport event volunteering by adopting a hermeneutic phenomenological approach. Furthermore, the study is informed by the framework of various strands of role theory that recognises human beings as actors that take on, enact and exit roles during their life course (Zurcher, 1983; Ebaugh, 1988) and which assists the exploration of the lived experiences of sport event volunteers as role theory is concerned with the attitudes and perception of human individuals and is informed by a number of psychological and sociological constructs such as social interaction, the relationship of the individual with his/her social environment, characteristics of human behaviour etc. (Brookes *et al.*, 2007).

The thesis is presented in a linear fashion starting with an introduction of the chosen research area to the reader. This is followed by an overview of the literature that explores the key concepts which inform the research aim and objectives as well as the adopted research strategy. The latter is outlined in greater detail before the research findings are presented and discussed in relation to the wider literature. The thesis closes with an evaluation of the research including a critical assessment of the selected research approach and limitations of the study and an overall conclusion which entails recommendation for further research.

The remainder of Chapter One provides the reader with a background of sport event volunteering. It also explains the approaches that have been employed to identify a research gap and presents the aims and objectives of the thesis. Chapter Two, Three and Four review and discuss the literature on sport event volunteering, lived experience as well as the various theories in relation to the concept of role. Furthermore, they

identify potential implications for the researcher, for example in terms of planning and designing research on sport event volunteering and accessing the research participants lived experiences.

Chapter Five describes the concept of hermeneutic phenomenology which has been adopted for this study and which is informed by the work of Hans-Georg Gadamer. Methods used to collect and analyse data are outlined and discussed. Furthermore, aspects of research quality criteria are explored within the context of this thesis. An overview of the findings in terms of themes and sub-themes and how these are presented is provided in Chapter Six, and the practical application of the hermeneutic circle of understanding and the use of metaphors are elaborated upon. Chapters Seven to Eleven are concerned with the discussion of the findings and are structured according to the pre-event (Chapter Seven), event (Chapter Eight, Nine and Ten) and post-event stage (Chapter Eleven). Chapter Twelve explores the overall encompassing theme of the WFG'08 volunteer as sojourner in the liminal zone and is followed by Chapter Thirteen that summarizes the research project and identifies its contribution to knowledge, the strengths and limitations of the study. Chapter Fourteen revisits the research aims and objectives and outlines the implications of the study and opportunities for further research as well as provides a personal reflection on the research experience.

## 1.1 Background to the research

Volunteer labour has become a critical component of the successful staging of many major and mega-sports events (Williams *et al.*, 1995; Elstad, 2003; Karlis, 2003). This development is reflected in the growing numbers and importance of sport event volunteers which is particularly visible in the case of mega-events such as the Olympic Games, where both Summer and Winter Games require an increasing contingent of volunteer personnel. In contrast to the 1980 Winter Games at Lake Placid where 6,700 individuals helped with staging the event, 32,579 volunteers were engaged in the 1998 Winter Games in Nagano (Chappelet, 2000). Similarly, the volunteer service provided by 2,500 local citizens at the 1972 Summer Games in Sapporo and 4,000 helpers at the 1984 Winter Games in Sarajevo appears modest compared to the 60,422 Olympic volunteers of the 1996 Summer Games in Los Angeles (De Moragas *et al.*, 2000) and the 50,000 individuals who undertook volunteer activities during the 2000 Summer Games in Sydney (Chalip, 2000, Karlis, 2003). The requirement for large numbers of Olympic volunteers is expected to grow in future: an estimated 100,000 volunteers were recruited for the delivery of the 2008 Summer Olympics in Beijing (BOCOG, 2008) and

over 70, 000 volunteers will be needed for staging the 2012 London Games (LOCOG, 2008). Other examples of the vital contribution of sport event volunteers to the staging of mega-events are the Commonwealth Games 2002 in Manchester that involved over 10,500 volunteers who invested a total of 1.2 million hours (Nichols, 2004) and were considered as "*the biggest volunteer work force ever assembled in the UK in peacetime*" (ICRC and UK Sport, 2003:5). Similarly, approximately 15,000 volunteers were recruited for the 2006 Commonwealth Games in Melbourne (Mounsey *et al.*, 2007; Lockstone and Baum, 2009).

In the context of mega-events, sport event volunteering is increasingly used to facilitate and enhance the social event impacts which socially and culturally affect both participants as well as the local and regional community in which it is staged (Bowdin *et al.*, 2011). For example, in the case of the 2002 Commonwealth Games in Manchester, the Pre- and Post-Volunteer Programme were part of the Games Legacy Programme, also referred to as the '2002 Economic and Social Programme for the North West' (Ecotec, 2003). Similarly, volunteering has been integrated into the legacy programme of the 2012 London Olympics which aims at leaving behind a volunteering culture (LOCOG, 2010).

While volunteer labour force involvement in mega-sport events has been well documented, the focus on sport events of smaller scale has been less intense. Nevertheless, the successful staging of major, large and small sporting events also depends on large numbers of volunteers (Cuskelly *et al.*, 2004). For example, 500 sport event volunteers were recruited for the 2007 European Hockey Championships in Manchester (European Hockey Federation, 2007). In the case of the 2007 UCI World Championships in Fort William/Scotland, 200 volunteer staff was required (Fort William World Championship Ltd, 2007). Even though the numbers of volunteers needed to stage events of this scale is very small in comparison to those required hosting mega-sport events, they would not take place without the input from the volunteer workforce (Bang, 2009).

Different models and perspectives that have been developed to understand volunteerism were reviewed in order to identify a suitable model that allowed to me to a) establish which aspects of sport event volunteering have been covered by past research and b) disclose other areas of research within sport event volunteering that lend themselves for a doctoral study. For example, Matsuba *et al.* (2007) provide a

model that identifies a number of different enduring and mediating influences of personal, demographic and social nature that impact on people's commitment to volunteering. Similarly, the model created by Penner (2004) displays how an individual's initial decision to become a volunteer is subject to influence by different variables such as personal attributes and pressure from a person's social surroundings. Focusing on volunteer motivation, research by Clary *et al.* (1998) identifies and assesses the functions of volunteering such as values, learning and personal development, career-related aspects, social interaction and ego-protection and how they serve as motivators. In comparison, Tang (2006) as well as Bussell and Forbes (2003) adopt a pragmatic focus in terms of the development of volunteer recruitment strategies. For example, Tang (2006) applies the life-course perspective of Elder (1994) to the volunteer context. His study explores how peoples' motivation to become a volunteer varies across different life stages and what types of resources are required to recruit and retain volunteers from different age-cohorts. Making use of Gronroos (2000) and the Customer Relationship Life Cycle that is concerned with customer retention and relates to marketing, Bussell and Forbes (2003) developed a volunteer life cycle model. Remaining rooted in a marketing context, their model proposes the relationship between the stages of volunteer behaviour and the business strategies centred around marketing volunteering to people, recruiting and keeping volunteers.

Although these models and perspectives provide new insights into volunteering, they fall short of providing the researcher with a holistic framework in which past studies can be placed and potential research gaps identified by bringing together different perspectives and angles - instead, they focus on specific aspects of volunteering only. In contrast, the conceptual volunteer process model developed by Omoto and Snyder (1990, 1995), based on their empirical research on AIDS volunteerism in the United States encompasses both the multitude of features of volunteering activities and different levels of analysis in which volunteerism is located. It also identifies three sequential and interactive stages which are the antecedents, experiences and consequences of volunteering that can take place at the interpersonal, organizational and broader societal level. Omoto and Snyder (2002) suggest that their conceptual model draws from a range of disciplines and that it is applicable to other forms of volunteering. Rather than understanding the model as a prescriptive theory of volunteerism, they recommend that it is to be perceived as a tool that allows researchers to identify conceptual issues and areas suitable for further studies. Drawing from the characteristics and purpose of the volunteer process model, I chose this model

for a number of reasons: a) it provides researchers with an holistic overview of the levels and stages of the volunteer process in general; b) it allows the placing of studies on sport event volunteering into the framework to identify potential focal points for research and c) it can be applied to the sport event volunteer context not only due to its generic nature but also in view of its stages of the volunteer process, i.e. antecedents, experience and consequences that correspond to the stages of volunteering in the sport event context, namely pre-event, event and post-event stages of sport event volunteering.

A review of past research on sport event volunteering using Omoto's and Snyder's model (Table 1) led to the following observations: firstly, the volunteer as unit of analysis seems to have been the main focus, i.e. studies on sport event volunteering have been predominantly concerned with the individual sport event volunteer. Finding answers to the question why people volunteer appears to have been of particular interest (e.g. Williams *et al.*, 1995; Andrew, 1996; Farell *et al.*, 1998; Kemp, 2002; Reeser, 2005; Grammatikopoulos *et al.*, 2006; Fairley *et al.*, 2007; Khoo and Engelhorn, 2007; Giannoulakis *et al.*, 2008; Bang *et al.*, 2009a and 2009b). Other focal points have included the expectations of sport event volunteers (Ralston *et al.*, 2004), variables which explain and determine volunteers' involvement (Gravelle and Laroque, 2005; Downward *et al.*, 2005) and major factors that influence the behaviour of sport event volunteers (Auld *et al.*, 1999). Furthermore, attention of past research centres on the behavioural dependability of volunteers (Cuskelly *et al.*, 2004) and the influence of the sport event volunteering on the volunteers' interest, participation and decision to volunteer in sport in future (Downward and Ralston, 2006). Secondly, following these past research interests, the emphasis of research has predominantly rested on the antecedent stage of the sport event volunteering followed by focus on post-volunteer research. It may be concluded that the focal points of research interest on sport event volunteering so far seems rather unbalanced. Furthermore, taking into consideration the rather slim number of research articles that focus on sport event volunteering and have been published as early as 1995 (Williams *et al., 1995)*, there appear to be ample

**Table 1: The Volunteer Process Model** (Adapted from Omoto and Snyder, 2002:849)

| | Community | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | *Stages of the Volunteer Process* | | |
| *Level of Analysis* | *Antecedents* | Experiences | Consequences |
| Agency | **Identify volunteers**<br>**Recruit volunteers**<br>**Train volunteers** | **Assign volunteers**<br>**Track volunteers**<br>**Delivery of services** | **Quantity and quality of services**<br>**Retention and reenlistments**<br>**Fulfilment of mission** |
| Individual volunteer | **Demographics**<br>**Prior experiences**<br>**Personality differences**<br>**Resources and skills**<br>*Gravelle and Laroque (2005)*<br><br>**Motivations**<br>*Williams et al. (1995)*<br>*Andrew (1996)*<br>*Farell et al. (1998)*<br>*Kemp (2002)*<br>*Reeser et al. (2005)*<br>*Downward et al. (2005)*<br>*Grammatikopoulos et al. (2006)*<br>*Fairley et al. (2007)*<br>*Khoo and Engelhorn (2007)*<br>*Giannoulakis et al. (2008)*<br>*Bang et al. (2009a)*<br>*Allen and Shaw (2009)*<br><br>**Identity concerns**<br>**Expectation**s<br>*Ralston et al. (2004)*<br><br>**Existing social support** | **Volunteers' performance**<br>*Auld et al. (1999)*<br><br>**Support from agency staff and other volunteers**<br>**Organizational integration**<br>*Allen and Shaw (2009)*<br>*Shaw (2009)*<br><br>**Relationship with client**<br>**Satisfaction**<br>*Costa et al. (2006)*<br>*Elstad (1997)*<br>*Reeser et al. (2005)*<br>**Stigmatization** | **Changes in knowledge, attitude, behaviour, motivation**<br>*Downward and Ralston (2006)*<br>*Cuskelly et al. (2004)*<br><br>**Identity development**<br>**Commitment to volunteering**<br>*Ralston et al. (2005)*<br>*Downward and Ralston (2006)*<br>*Bang et al. (2009b)*<br>**Evaluation of volunteerism**<br>**Commitment to organization**<br><br>**Recruit other volunteers**<br>**Length of service** |
| Social system | **Social climates**<br>**Community resources**<br>**Cultural context** | **Recipients of services**<br>**Volunteer's social network**<br>**Clients' social network** | **Social diffusion**<br>**Public education**<br>Lockstone and Baum (2009)<br>**Systems of service delivery**<br>Ralston *et al.* (2005) |

opportunities for research to be carried on other aspects of this type of volunteering, e.g. the potential of event-based volunteering as a catalyst for regular involvement in event tourism (Ralston *et al.*, 2005) or the public's perception of volunteering at major events (Lockstone and Baum, 2009).

Similarly, Baum and Lockstone (2007) comment on the limited scope of research within the context of volunteering at mega-sporting events. In their journal article, they identify an extensive number of possible research questions that lend themselves for future studies on volunteering at this type of sporting events and which centre around both the volunteers and the organizational aspect of mega sporting events, volunteering within an economic context as well the image of volunteering.

Another noteworthy finding from the literature review on sport event volunteering is that despite the growing reliance of the sport event industry on volunteers, there appears to be a noticeable neglect towards defining this form of volunteering in both academic journals (see Auld *et al.*, 1999; Cuskelly *et al.*, 2004; Farrell *et al.*, 1998; Karlis, 2003; Ralston *et al.*, 2004; Fairley *et al.*, 2007; Khoo and Engelhorn, 2007; Giannoulakis *et al.*, 2008; Bang *et al.*, 2009a and 2009b) as well as within the literature on event management (see Van der Wagen, 2004; Bowdin *et al.*, 2011). This paucity is addressed by Baum and Lockstone (2007) who question the fit of universal definitions of volunteerism to the context of mega sports events and propose a definition of volunteerism in relation to this type of events.

In order to identify additional potential research gaps in the context of volunteering at major and large sporting events, that have not been covered by past studies, including the gaps identified by Baum and Lockstone's research framework (2007), an exploratory case study that may be understood as "*prelude to social research*" (Yin, 2003:6) was carried out at the beginning of the research project. Furthermore it served as a tool to illuminate and address issues of uncertainty related to research design and analysis within in the chosen subject area. The volunteer process model by Omoto and Snyder (1990; 1995) was used as a framework in which the case study could be approached holistically, i.e. the inquiry included questions on how and why people decided to get involved in sport event volunteering, on their experiences whilst working as a volunteer and explored the post-event period, e.g. their interests to volunteer at sporting events in future.

The preparatory stage of conducting a case study raised the questions about the size and location of the sport events on which sport the research focus should rest upon. The choice to research large-scale sport events held in Great Britain was determined by a number of pragmatic issues and assumptions:

a) Conducting research at sport events staged in Great Britain as opposed to sporting events abroad was unlikely to require any translations of the transcripts from a foreign language into English as it was anticipated that most sport event volunteers would be native speakers or in the case of foreigners speak English as a foreign language.

b) Due to the size of large and major sport events, it was anticipated that a larger mix of sport event volunteers would be attracted in comparison to small-scale events that usually take place at a local level (Jago and Shaw, 1998). Another assumption was that the composition of the sport event volunteer workforce in terms of people's motives and decision to get involved in sport event volunteering may vary with the scale of the event.

c) In view of the formal structure of these types of events which usually make a public call for and recruit volunteers via their websites, the access to research samples was expected to be easier at large and major events as the contact with the sport event volunteers could be established via the event volunteer coordinator.

d) In view of the absence of mega- or major sport events in Great Britain during the three-year period in which the thesis was to be written (2006 – 2009), the research had to rely on large-scale sport events in the Great Britain. Thus, the research setting for the exploratory case study was also based on large sporting events.

Between June and September 2007, three large sporting events were selected as potential case studies based on their size and scale and the recruitment. These were a) The Pride Games in Manchester; b) The European Hockey Nations Championship and c) The World Under 23 Rowing Championships in Strathclyde Park near Glasgow. The volunteer coordinators of the respective sporting event were approached electronically and asked for their help with establishing contacts with recruited sport event volunteers. However, only in the case of the World Under 23 Rowing Championships was the negotiation for access to the potential research participant sample successful. Two weeks after the championships, sport event volunteers were contacted at random by e-mail and asked if they were interested in participating in interviews. A sample of twelve sport event volunteers was obtained that agreed to either meet the researcher at a

public location in Glasgow or to be interviewed by phone due to great geographical distances and time constraints. Data was collected through in-depth interviews that were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim. The transcripts were subject to the guidelines of theme analysis whose focus rested on identifying potential research aspects. The findings identified a palette of research opportunities ranging from studying the volunteer recruitment processes, aspects of social interaction and social integration of volunteers to researching sport event volunteering from a consumer behavioural perspective. The exploration of the life-cycle process of volunteering that links sport event volunteering with the life-course concepts and research on the sport event volunteer identity also emerged. These different potential research avenues were unified by the fact that they originated from the experiences of interviewees and the meanings the activity hold for them. Listening and transcribing the accounts provided me with an insider perspective, i.e. they allowed me to view sport event volunteering from the eyes of the research participants and to get insights into people's thoughts and feelings. Furthermore, although volunteers had shared the involvement in sport event volunteering at the same event, their experience of this activity and its meaning varied from person to person. This observation guided my decision to conduct research that is explicitly preoccupied with the lived experiences of sport event volunteering. Furthermore, the finding of the case study encouraged me to adopt a holistic approach that would explore the volunteer experiences throughout the volunteer process, i.e. throughout the pre-event, event and post-event stage of sport event volunteering rather than focusing on one event stage only.

The rationale for focusing on the lived experience of sport event volunteering was further informed by the work of the philosopher Thomas Nagel (1987) that is concerned with finding an answer to the question '*What is it like to be a bat?*'. Nagel argues that although science knows about the anatomy of bats and how they fly, nothing is known about how bats perceive the world around them and what it is like to see the world through their eyes. Similarly, extensive research that has been carried out in the past two decades within the context of the study of sport event volunteering has been predominantly concerned with motivation and satisfaction of sport event volunteers as established earlier. Only recently have scholars started to take studies on sport event volunteering beyond this area of focus and have become more concerned with the experiential dimension of sport event volunteering in particular: for example, Shaw (2009) adopts a critical theory approach using de-naturalisation, anti-performativity and

reflexivity to explore learning and training experiences of both volunteers and volunteer coordinators. In another study, making use of the self-determination theory, Allen and Shaw (2009) examine the sport event volunteers' experiences of the motivational climate at a large sport event. Thus, an extensive study that focuses on the lived experiences of sport event volunteering seems as an opportunity to support this recent research direction and to contribute to the understanding of volunteering by firstly providing an insider perspective of sport event volunteering that encompasses the pre-event, event and post-event stage and secondly identifying additional angles other than training and learning from which this form of volunteering can be approached and perceived. Furthermore, it may enhance interest in future research on sport event volunteering by disclosing potential research opportunities that to date have not been addressed.

Another theme which came to surface during the data analysis of the findings from the exploratory case study was the understanding of sport event volunteering as a role whose performance and experience seems to be influenced by a number of multiple social roles that the sport event volunteers were occupying whilst volunteering at the sport event, e.g. being a referee, a parent or grandparent, an athlete, a widow and/or others. Simultaneously to my growing interest of researching the lived experience of sport event volunteers emerged the anticipation that such a study was likely to generate an enormous richness of information and consequently would require some sort of parameter or at least an angle from which to approach sport event volunteering. This angle was found in both the theme of role that emerged from the exploratory case study and the literature that is concerned with the understanding of human activity as role playing which depicts individuals as actors that take on, enact and exit the roles during their life course (e.g. Zurcher, 1983; Ebaugh, 1988) such as the role of sport event volunteers. Besides reflecting the chronological structure of sport event volunteering in terms of the three event stages, role perspective was perceived as a suitable platform from which lived experiences of the volunteers can be explored, analyzed and discussed.

## 1.2 Aim and objectives of the thesis
The overall aim of this research is therefore:
'*To explore the lived experience of sport event volunteering from a role perspective  in order to contribute to a better understanding of this form of volunteering*'.

The following objectives serve as stepping stones to achieve this aim:

1. To develop a working definition of sport event volunteering;
2. To discover and critically evaluate what meanings sport event volunteers attach to and how they make sense of their role as helpers involved in staging large sporting events;
3. To critically synthesize how this role is managed by the individual volunteer.

# CHAPTER TWO

## Towards a working definition of sport event volunteering

### 2.0 Introduction

As outlined in the previous chapter, there is a noticeable paucity with respect to a definition of sport event volunteering in published research on this form of volunteering. This discovery is similar to the finding by Cnaan and Amrofell (1994) more than a decade ago who reviewed the extensive body of literature on volunteering and concluded that the vast majority of articles and reports fail to define volunteering. They explained this finding with volunteering being a universally agreed upon concept. Thus, one may argue that sport event volunteering is self-explanatory as it falls into the category of volunteering in general and thus requires no separate definition. This latter perspective is apparent in the study on volunteer motivation for special events by Monga (2006). In the paragraph that outlines the dynamics of special event volunteers, he refers to volunteering in general by describing volunteering as "*a discretionary activity… and volunteers offer their time, labour, skills and experience at no wage costs to the employers of volunteer labour*" (p.49). The lack of definition of sport event volunteering may be also reasoned with the relatively young research in the area of event related volunteering and sport event volunteering in particular which seems to have originated in the middle of the 20$^{th}$ century (e.g. Williams *et al.*, 1995; Andrew, 1996). Another explanation for the lack of incorporating the facet of sport event volunteering is explained by Downward (2002 cited by Downward *et al.*, 2005:220) who suggests that sport event volunteering is in fact "*volunteering in the context of sport provision*". This understanding has been adopted in the work of Downward *et al.* (2005) about gender differences in sport event volunteering in which they refer to the definition of sport volunteering provided by the 1997 National Survey of Volunteering and Gratton *et al.* (1997) that describe it as "*individual volunteers helping others in sport, in a formal organization such as clubs or governing bodies, and receiving either no remuneration or only expenses*" (p.i).

Based on these findings, the preliminary conclusion may be drawn that sport event volunteering is either generally seen as volunteering or as an element of sport volunteering. However, in view of the growing reliance on and the contribution of

volunteers towards the staging of sporting events it is argued that this type of volunteering requires a specific definition of its own.

## 2.1 Approaches towards understanding sport event volunteering

Two possible approaches have been identified which would allow a systematic exploration of sport event volunteering: one option is the layer or 'onion-approach' (Figure 1) that commences with the exploration of volunteering in general before the concepts of sport volunteering and subsequently sport event volunteering are addressed. Thus, this method represents a funnelling process across three stages. The onion-model reflects the interpretation that sport event volunteering can be understood as an element of sport volunteering (Downward, 2002 cited by Downward *et al.*, 2005:220).
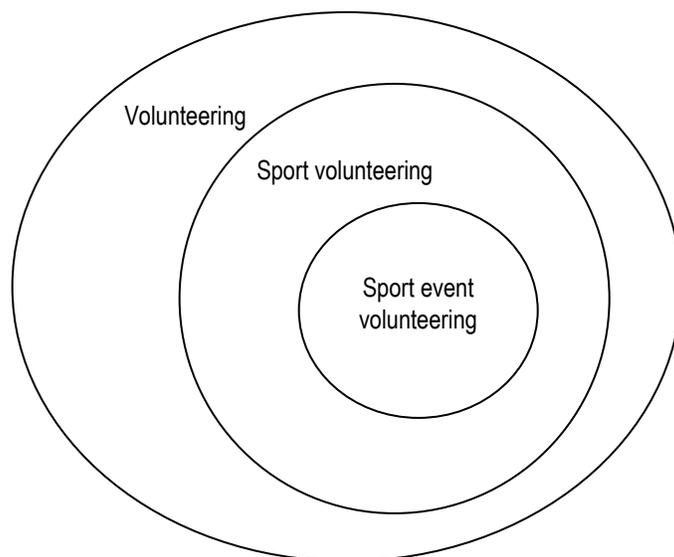


**Figure 1: The onion-model of sport event volunteering**

Whilst this three-level approach may be seen as being sufficient for exploring sport event volunteering as it places it firmly within the arena of volunteering in general and sport volunteering in particular, it may be argued that sport event volunteering is a form of event volunteering. Thus, a different approach is recommended in the form of breaking down sport event volunteering into its constituents, namely 'sport', 'events' and 'volunteering' and to explore these subject areas first in isolation from and subsequently in combination with each other. Such an approach mirrors the idea of 'bricolage' by

Levi-Strauss *(*1966) which is to be understood as a thought process that commences with the bricoleur taking a retrospective, i.e. the bricoleur cross-examines his inventory of tools and materials and considers their usefulness for realizing his or her project before making his choice. This decision is accompanied by a consultation of the bricoleur's wealth of ideas to establish "*what each of them [heterogeneous object] could signify and so contribute to the definition of a set which has yet to materialize but which ultimately differ from the instrumental set only in the internal disposition of its parts*" (1966:18). As a result, a patchwork is produced in which originally autonomous fragments have been joined together into what Ryan (2001) refers to as "*an artefact whose shape and meaning(s) emerge through the linking process*" (p.7). In this case 'sport', 'events' and 'volunteering' as the independent study areas are fitted together. This process is depicted in 'the bricolage-model of sport event volunteering' (Figure 2).
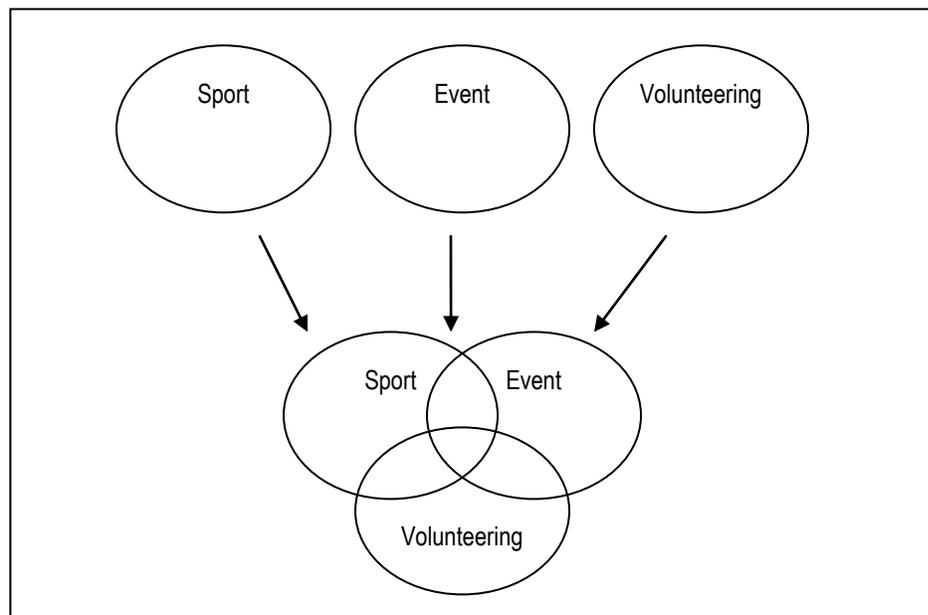


**Figure 2:  The bricolage-model of sport event volunteering**

Linking the individual fragments together in different combinations yields a number of benefits: firstly, it allows me to gain a thorough understanding of sport event volunteering as it takes the researcher to the roots of the autonomous components of sport event volunteering by disclosing their original meaning and features. Secondly, by linking two of the three components together at a time before merging all three of them back to 'sport event volunteering', it provides the opportunity for new meanings to

emerge as result from each new combination, e.g. exploring the term 'sport event' that derives from combining the concept of 'sport' and 'events' together creates an understanding to what extent sport events differ from regular events and the role of the events within the field of sport. Similarly, by first synthesising the concept of volunteering and then to investigate event volunteering might generate new insights such as the difference between event volunteering and general volunteering.

By viewing sport event volunteering as an overlap of the three distinct and independent components in which each of these subject areas is equally infringed upon, the notion of hierarchy that is postulated in the onion-model and which is likely to limit the process and extent of understanding sport event volunteering as the topic is predominantly approached from a volunteering perspective, is removed. Instead, by adopting the second model that preserves a sense of autonomy for each of the three components, the researcher can adopt a more open position.

The following section explores the bricolage-model and commences with a separate analysis of available interpretations of the terms 'sport', 'events' and 'volunteering'. Subsequently, the concepts of sport volunteering and event volunteering are illuminated. This is followed by bringing the various components together resulting in a definition of 'sport event volunteering'. Furthermore, implications and possible avenues for research of sport event volunteering are identified and discussed.

### 2.1.1 Defining sport

As suggested by Cuskelly *et al.* (2004), sport can be understood as a global term whose meaning is universally understood and therefore does not necessarily require to be defined. However, in view of the magnitude and multitude of sport and related cross disciplinary activities such as sport volunteering, these authors recommend efforts to define sport. Similar to the multitude of different interpretations or events, the term '*sport*' appears to be subject to diversity and variability as numerous definitions of sport are available reflecting the idea that "*sport means different things to different people*" (Stewart *et al.*, 2004:17) and that "*sport can be defined in many ways and from different viewpoints or distinctive perspectives*" (Zauhar, 2004:8). This finding is not new: according to Graves (1972) "*there are few words in the English language which have such a multiplicity of divergent meanings as the word sport*" (p.6). Early definitions of sport seem rather broad and ambiguous as they fail to provide a more detail account of

the type of activities that sport encompasses. For example, McIntosh (1970 cited by Meier, 1981:80) perceives sport as "*physical activities which are not necessary for the survival of the individual or the race and which are dominated by a compulsory element*". Other definitional statements describe sport as "*a challenge taken on before the assembled crowd*" (Jeu, 1972:163) which gives the notion of sport being linked to competitions and tournaments, and as "*a systematic effort for the domestication of one's own body" (*p.151) that establishes sport as a personal experience which involves aspects of management of one's body. Jeu (1972) also limits sport to the outdoors by describing it as a "*free open-air activity*" (p.151) which falls in line with Michener (1976) who perceives sport as "*any form of activity carried on out of doors*" (p.10). This raises the question of the definitional fit of physical activities that are carried out indoors such as the gym and sport clubs. A social aspect of sport was raised by Carlton (1975) who defined sport as "*an art form of kinetic play, most frequently developed within a context of the broader-ranging social play forms or 'sociability'*" (p.18). In face of the various efforts to define sport, Guttmann (1978) identified three key dimensions of sport: a) the individual's physical engagement; b) the context of contest and competition which consequently rules out any form of recreational sport such as hiking or recreational cycling and c) the structure of the physical activity in terms of rules and regulations. Thus, sport may be seen as "*a regulated, rule-bound physical activity played in a competitive setting*" (Stewart *et al.*, 2004:17). These three key features are also inherent in the rather elaborate definition of sport provided by the 1993 Council of Europe European Sports Charter that depicts sport as "*all forms of physical activity which, through casual or organized participation, aim at expressing or improving physical fitness and mental wellbeing, forming social relationships or obtaining results in competition in all levels*" (Sport England, 2004:4). This definition takes the concept of structure a step further: whilst individuals can practice sport in a casual way, e.g. the spontaneous decision to have a game of soccer with friends, there is the aspect of sport being organised by various institutions such as sport clubs and sport associations. In their typology of sport practice, Stewart *et al.* (2004) take the concept of sport to another level by identifying the three key categories of sport that exist in the individual's leisure environment (Figure 3).

As suggested by the model, sport may be picked up spontaneously and practiced in the form of a recreational sport such as outdoor adventure and extreme sport, as competitive sport a regional and community level that is exceeded by high performance sport, and exercise sport like fitness activities in the gym or rehabilitation centre. It

needs to be noted that these three categories are not mutually exclusive. In fact, the individual can be involved in any of these three categories. The model indicates a link of events to sport in the form of competitions and tournaments that can take place on local, regional, national and international level. In fact, it appears that events are in fact a key element of sport. This thought will be explored further when the subject of events is examined.
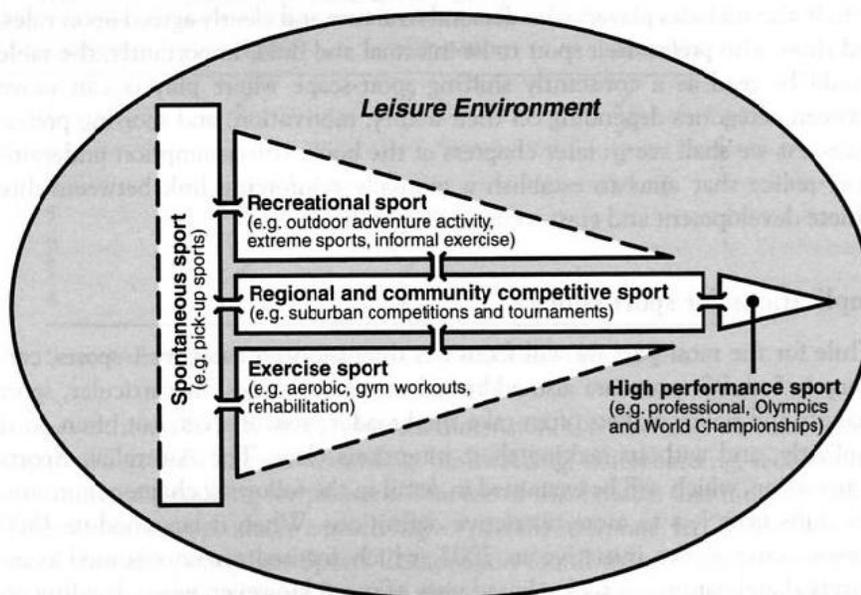


**Figure 3: A typology of sport practice** (Source: Stewart et *al*., 2004:20)

The review of sport definitions suggests that this field of study is broad and complex as well as rather blurry depending on which definition of sport is adopted. Whilst there seems to be a strong connection between sport and the event-context, the link between sport and volunteering has yet to be highlighted.

### 2.1.2 Defining events

A review of the literature on events indicates that the term *'event'* is not easily defined as a plethora of different definitions are available. The most basic and, according to the literature, the earliest definition that discloses the sense of uniqueness as one of the many features of events, also referred to as special events to distinguish events from any other sort of occurrence, and highlights the notion of events being subject to planning (Getz, 2008), stems from Jani (1955 cited by Goldblatt, 2005:6): "*a special*

*event is which is different from a normal day of living.*" Goldblatt (2005) adds the idea of celebration and ritual as well as an aspect of purposes in terms of events fulfilling needs. His perspective depicts a special event as "*a unique moment in time celebrated with ceremony and ritual to satisfy specific needs*" (p.6). Douglas *et al.* (2001) as well as Dimmock and Tiyce (2001) acknowledge the aspect of collectiveness, i.e. events are celebrated and shared by a number of people rather than being the act of a single individual. Events are also defined according to time and frequencies. Thus, they are "*one-time or infrequently occurring*" (Getz, 1991:44; Jago and Shaw, 1998:15), "*of limited time duration; that is they are not continuous*" (Dimmock and Tiyce, 2001:356) and "*short-term*" (Robinson and Noel, 1991:25). Interestingly, the aspect of duration is not specified as such. However, events may range from a couple of hours (e.g. concerts) to a few days (e.g. Paris or Milan Fashion Show, Glastonbury Festival) and weeks (Rio Carnival, Tour de France) to a number of months (e.g. World Expo). Another temporal dimension of events exists that identifies the period of time before, during and after the event has been staged (Torkildsen, 2001). Getz (1991) adds the idea of planning and suggests that events can be both planned and unplanned. In addition, referring back to the early definition of events that highlights the feature of uniqueness, his interpretations of events disclose the emerging implication of events being different from one another as "*each one has a unique ambiance created by the combination of its length, setting, management and those in attendance*" (p.5).

Researching the meaning of event is rendered even more complex by the categorisation of events according to content, size and scale that makes it impossible to unite the various aspects of events in one overall definition (McDonnell *et al.*, 1999). Classifying events by their content results in a multitude of different events types, ranging from cultural, business and recreational to fairs, exhibitions, sports, recreational and personal events (Getz, 2005). With regards to size and scale, events can be local, major, hallmark or mega-event (Bowdin *et al.*, 2011). A slightly different concept is provided by Jago and Shaw (1998) who perceive both hallmark and mega-events to be part of major events. Location is another possible feature of events that may take place in one location or are staged at a number of different places simultaneously, requiring extensive logistics. Besides these general descriptions of special events, Getz (2005) defines special events by context and distinguishes between the perspective of the organizers according to which a special event is "*a one-time or infrequently occurring outside normal programs or activities of the sponsoring or organizing body*" (p.4) and

the consumer's perspective that views special events as "*an opportunity for leisure, social and cultural experience outside the normal range of choices and beyond everyday experience*" (p.4). Whilst the organizers' perspective reflects the one-off nature of events mentioned in earlier definitions of events and implies an extra managerial workload outside the usual day-to-day workload, the consumers' perspective which provides an experiential definition of special events indicates the unique experiential nature of events and their leisure, social and cultural scope including recreational, social and cultural aspects which have not been incorporated in previous definitions. This approach towards defining events may be useful when trying to understand event volunteering in general and sport event volunteering in particular. Furthermore, it could provide this study with the opportunity to narrow the research angle by focus on sport event volunteering from the perspective of either the organisers or the event volunteers. Last but not least, there is the aspect of event stakeholders which beside event participants and spectators, the host organization and community as well as sponsors and the media include volunteers as co-workers, and whose needs, expectations and interests should be maintained in an equilibrium with each other (Bowdin *et al.*, 2011).

In view of linking events to sport, the first conclusion may be drawn that sport events are a type of events which therefore share the general features of event, i.e. uniqueness, level of planning, duration, frequency, size and scale. Furthermore, volunteers as event stakeholders have been identified as another feature of events. It remains to be seen if and to what extent these characteristics influence the concept of event-related volunteering.

### 2.1.3 Defining sport events

As indicated by definitions of sport reviewed earlier, events in the form of competitions appeared as a key feature of sport. This conclusion is supported by the definition of sport events by Getz (2008) who portrays them as "*the actual games or meets during which sport activity occurs*" (p. 42). In view of the variety of event definitions that have been described in the previous section, this definition seems rather meagre. In fact, as it was the case with efforts to outline what events are, there are different formats that allow a further description and classification of events. For example, in reference to the typology of sport practice by Stewart *et al.* (2004) that depicts the evolving of sport as a spontaneous act towards regional and community competitive sport, sport events take

place on a local and regional scale. As sport moves away from being practiced in an amateur way, it is taken to a higher level by becoming professional and taking place in the form of national and international competitions. Consequently, tournaments are subject to growing interest by the public and the media which allows them to be accommodated under the label of major, hallmark and mega-events (Bowdin *et al.*, 2011). This categorization across the continuum of sport practice level is supported by Bloomfield's (1973) 'recreational pyramid' (Figure 4) that was designed in 1973 and was part of the Bloomfield' report which promoted a national recreation programme for elite and community sport by the government in Australia (Stewart *et al.*, 2004).
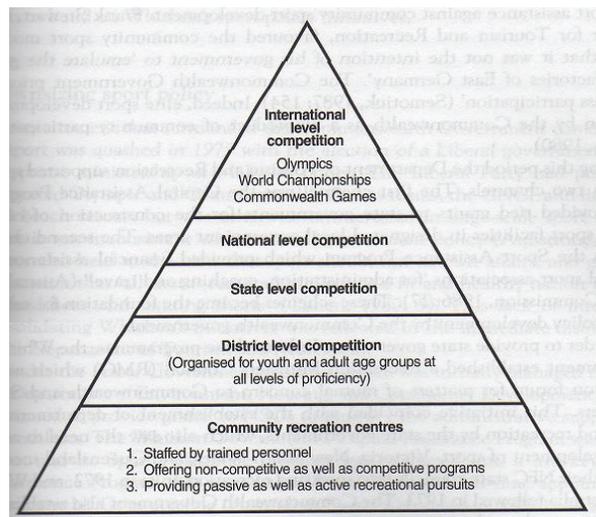


**Figure 4: Bloomfield's recreational pyramid**   (*Source: Bloomfield, 1973 49*)

According to this model, sport competitions range from district and state level to national and international level such as the Olympic Games which have been classified as mega-events (Getz, 2008). As special events, sport events can be classified further according to frequency and location. Thus, there are the tennis championships that take place at Wimbledon every year or the Champions League that is staged annually throughout Europe whilst other events such as the FIFA World Cup, the Commonwealth Games and the Olympic Games take place every four years in a different country, highlighting the sense of uniqueness. Furthermore, sport events can vary according to the number of sports involved. Thus, Getz (2003) differentiates between multi- and single-sport events, the former requiring extensive organisation and manpower. In view of volunteering, this aspect is likely to impact on the number of volunteers required for

the event. In addition, some sport events require specialized indoor facilities whilst others can only take place outdoors due to the nature of the event sport (ibid).

The feature of duration also applies to sport events that may last for a couple of hours, a day, a week or longer. For example, whilst the London Marathon is a one-day event, the FIFA World Cup tends to last for two to three weeks whilst the Olympic Games usually stretch over three to four weeks. The aspect of geographic location and venue site is also noteworthy as these vary from event to event: in the instance of a 'travelling' event such as the Tour de France, the sport event literally moves from place to place. Similarly, major and mega-events like the Commonwealth Games, the Olympic Games, the FIFA World Cup or the European Football Championships move around the world as they are hosted by different countries. However whilst the Olympic Games are staged in one host city only using different sport facilities at the same time, the venues for the FIFA World Cup or the European Football Championships are traditionally spread across the host country/countries.

Having identified the key features of sport events in cross-reference to events, its implications for and link with volunteering are discussed after the general concept of volunteering has been introduced.

### 2.1.4 Defining volunteering

Over the past two decades, volunteering has evolved as a research as well as a managerial area and has become a multidisciplinary subject of discussion among scholars from various fields including sociology, psychology, anthropology economics, tourism and others and practitioners from the industry (Katz and Rosenberg, 2005). Whilst there is an abundance of research on volunteering in terms of studies on the demographics of volunteers, their values, behaviour, motives and commitment (e.g. Dorsch *et al.*, 2002; Matsuba *et al.*, 2007), the act of volunteering is not limited to a specific area. Thus, an initial search of the literature identified volunteers within the context of leisure (e.g. Stebbins, 2001 and 2004; Lockstone-Binney *et al.*, 2010) such as heritage volunteers (Holmes, 2003) as well as sport volunteers (Gratton *et al.*, 1998; Karlis, 2003), event volunteers (Monga, 2006) and volunteer tourists (Wearing, 2004; Holmes and Smith, 2009; Holmes *et al.*, 2010).

An initial review of the literature suggests that there is a notable tendency among researchers and authors to use the terms 'volunteerism', 'voluntarism' and

'volunteering' interchangeably. However, the terms 'volunteerism' and 'voluntarism' hold different meanings. Smith (1990) defines volunteerism as "*the combination of volunteer activity, the management of volunteers and the philosophy behind volunteer services as a social activity*" (p.343). In contrast, he suggests that although 'voluntarism' is used with the understanding of holding the same meaning as 'volunteerism', it represents "*the role of free will in mental processes or in decisions about behaviour in contrast to determinism… and has no direct connection with volunteering*" (Smith, 1990:343). Whilst the boundary between 'volunteerism' and 'voluntarism' has thus be clarified, efforts to understand the term 'volunteering' appear far more challenging as it has been subject to different interpretations. A number of scholars have tried to define volunteering, resulting in a range of different approaches: for example, Wilson (2000) relates volunteering to the aspect of time by describing volunteering as "*any activity in which time is given freely to benefit another person, group, or organization*" (p.215). While Wilson's definition does not further outline his understanding of the term 'freely', the interpretation of Smith (1994) fills this gap by describing volunteering as an activity that "*involves contributions of time without coercion and remuneration*" (p.244). Thus, volunteering can be understood as an act of free will. In addition, the interpretation of volunteering by Wilson indicates the altruistic notion, i.e. volunteering as an unselfish undertaking that serves the purpose of benefiting others.  The notion of altruism is also evident in the definition provided by the Volunteering Unit (1995) that defines volunteering as "*the commitment of time and energy for the benefit of society and the community; the environment; or individuals outside one's own immediate family. It is undertaken freely and by choice, without concern for financial gain*" (p.3). In comparison to earlier definitions, this interpretation links volunteering to commitment which holds the sense of moral dedication and/or of obligation (Allen, 1991). This perspective allows the question if volunteering is indeed undertaken freely. Furthermore, the immediate family as recipient of volunteering activities is omitted which raises the definitional issue about what type of recipient is required for defining an undertaking as a voluntary act. Penner (2002) addresses this matter by arguing that volunteerism is to benefit strangers. The aspect of volunteering as an altruistic behaviour is challenged by Smith (1982) whose efforts to explain volunteering are set within the context of volunteer motivation. He understands volunteering as "*an individual engaging in behaviour that is not bio-socially determined (e.g. eating, sleeping), nor economically necessitated (e.g. paid work, house-work, home repair), nor socio-politically compelled (e.g. paying one's taxes, clothing oneself before appearing in public), but rather it is essentially (primarily)*

*motivated by the expectation of psychic benefits of some kind of activities that have a market value greater than any remuneration received for such activities*" (p.10). Whilst omitting the aspect of volunteering as a free undertaking, this definition depicts volunteering as a premeditated act in which personal engagement is provided in exchange for something money cannot buy for one's own benefit. At the same time, it raises the question if voluntary behaviour in return for psychic benefits can still be considered as voluntary behaviour as not only the recipient of the volunteer activity but also the volunteer himself/herself is benefiting. Ellis and Noyes (1990) offer a slightly different perspective of volunteering. Whilst their definition also encompasses the aspects of choice and absence of remuneration and shares the idea of volunteering as a conscious act, it links volunteering to the individual's sense of moral obligation and prosocial attitudes: "*to volunteer is to choose to act in recognition of a need, with an attitude of social responsibility and without concern for monetary profit, going beyond one's basic obligation"* (p.336).

It is beyond the scope of the thesis to list all available definitions of volunteering. Instead, this first section provides the reader with an overview of the range of different efforts to describe what volunteering is and the challenge that accompanies efforts to define volunteering in the context of major sporting events as there is no universal definition of volunteering. Cnaan and Amrofell (1994) and Cnaan *et al. (*1996) addressed this issue and reviewed over 300 articles and reports on volunteering. Their findings suggest that that existing definitions more or less share the four key dimensions of volunteering, namely free will, availability of rewards, formal organization and proximity of the volunteer to the beneficiaries. However, despite this common characteristic, the definitions vary in content and fail to elaborate on the different types of volunteer activities. This provides ground for the argument by Wilson (2000) who states that the term '*volunteering*' is too generic and does not provide a clear outline of what it actually encompasses. This shortfall has been recognised by other scholars in the past: referring to their research on older volunteers, Fischer *et al.* (1991) argue the need for a classification system for volunteers as a definition of the term '*volunteer'* is too complex and fails to cover its various forms, thus making volunteering a difficult phenomenon to measure. Similarly, Cnaan and Amrofell (1994) criticise definitions of volunteering as being too broad and their failure to differentiate between the voluntary act and the volunteer: drawing from the example of someone who votes, they argue that voting can be understood as volunteering based on these definitions but that in fact

"*one can do a certain voluntary activity, yet should not be viewed as a volunteer*" (p.336). Thus, Cnaan and Amrofell (1994) disapprove of the tendency of existing definitions of volunteering to "*lump all volunteers together*" (p.388). Instead, they urge scholars to move away from perceiving volunteers as "*a unidimensional commodity*" (p.338) and to acknowledge the diverse areas and categories of volunteers' engagement. Wymer (1998) shares the idea of volunteers not being a homogenous group as their ages, experiences and skills vary. However, six years later, this issue is still alive and brought forward by Handy *et al.* (2000) who call for efforts to distinguish between different types of volunteering as the term volunteer is kept too general and fails to allow the accurate measuring of volunteering and the generalization of study findings from one setting to another: "*the literature on volunteers does not differentiate between the volunteer who sits on the board of the orchestra, the one who delivers meals-on-wheels, and the one who organizes a ski trip*" (p.46).

Drawing from these findings the need for develop a definition of sport event volunteering seems justified. At the same time it raises the question which criteria should be used to provide a more narrow definition of volunteering in general and of sport event volunteering in particular. A number of approaches have been undertaken to define volunteering further which at the same time document its scope and variability: a common perspective is the understanding of volunteering as an act of helping. For example, Jackson *et al.* (1995) describe volunteering as a type of non-emergency helping behaviour whilst Clary and Snyder (1991) suggest that volunteering is "*a prototypic form of non-spontaneous, sustained helping behaviour*" (p.143). Whilst these definitions highlight volunteering as a form of helping behaviour, the latter suggest that volunteering is not an impulsive act but carried out in the form of planned helping which often requires "*considerably more planning, sorting out priorities, and matching of person capabilities and interest with type of intervention*" (Benson *et al.*, 1980:89). Day and Devlin (1998) introduce the concept of 'formal volunteering' which depicts the volunteer as "*an individual whose volunteer activities are carried out through a formal organization*" (p.1181), also referred to as 'institutional volunteering' (Katz and Rosenberg, 2005). In contrast, 'informal volunteering' takes place privately and centres on helping family and friends (Nichols, 2004; Burgham and Downward, 2005) and is not structured (Clary *et al.*, 1998). This type of volunteering also harbours spontaneous helping where an individual faces the unexpected need of help (Bar-Tal, 1984; Benson *et al.*, 1980; Piliavin and Charng, 1990) which contradicts the definition of volunteering

provided by Clary and Snyder (1991) outlined before. The categorisation of volunteering into formal and informal helping activities by scholars does not come without criticism: Horton Smith (1997) dismisses the tendency of researchers to focus on the area of formal volunteering as 'flat earth view' as it ignores informal activities, especially within the non-profit sector. Instead, he argues for the need of researchers to adopt a 'round-world view' that would encompass both informal as well as programme-led and associational volunteering.

Volunteering can also be understood as a service act: for example, Omoto *et al.* (2000) suggest that volunteering provides a range of services to others such as health care, counselling, tutoring which may be provided regularly and over a period of time take place at a regular basis. This form of volunteering corresponds to the idea of volunteering as an act of philanthropy, i.e. volunteering is driven by the love of mankind and has been included in the United Nations' (2003 cited by Hodkinson, 2001:38) typology of volunteering based on the content and purpose of activity that volunteering can encompasses: it differentiates between a) volunteering as mutual aid, e.g. in the case of self-help groups or the joint management of resources; b) volunteering as philanthropy or "*service to others or the community as a whole*" (p.38); c) volunteering as campaigning and advocacy, e.g. the voluntary efforts to ban land mines or save the environment and d) volunteering as participation such as helping out in a committee or spokesperson to local governments. The perception of volunteering as an act of help and/or of service is challenged by Butcher (2003). In her study on the volunteer-recipient relationship, she criticizes the tendency of researchers of volunteering and voluntary action to use the terms 'service' and 'helping' undifferentiated and often interchangeably. Taking a humanistic stance to volunteering, she elaborates on the differences between volunteering as helping behaviour and volunteering as an act of serving: the former involves an "*exchange of goods and services*" (p.116) which implies the giving and/or sharing of something that is owned but which does necessarily require reciprocity. Thus, helping may be a one-sided act. In contrast, for Butcher (2003), serving goes beyond helping: whilst it allows both sides to benefit from the encounter, it involves the sharing of both what one owns and what one is, e.g. committed to giving, which requires a sense of selflessness linking volunteering to altruism. This finding underlines the complexity of volunteering as a research area as efforts to define what volunteering is are likely to be influenced by different systems of thought such as humanistics.

A further approach towards understanding volunteering is provided by Cnaan *et al.* (1996): using the net-cost concept in their research on how the public perceives volunteering, Cnaan *et al.* (1996) identified a continuum ranging from 'broad' to 'pure' volunteering in each of the four dimensions - free will, availability of rewards, formal organization and proximity of the volunteer to the beneficiaries - as the net cost of volunteering to the volunteer increases. For example, by applying the dimension of free will, they differentiate between the student who helps the elderly as part of a school mandated service versus a teenager who helps the elderly out of his or her free will (Handy *et al.*, 2000). Whilst the former falls in the category of broad volunteering the latter is referred to as pure volunteering as the net cost to the individual is perceived as outweighing the benefits. A different approach towards the concept of volunteering has placed it in the economic context of work for example by depicting volunteers as the link between the private and the public sector (Gratton *et al.*,1998) and their contribution to economy as unpaid workers (Holmes, 2003). The idea of volunteering as work is explored further by Tilly and Tilly (1994): in their effort to identify the diverse forms of work, they portray volunteer work as *"unpaid work provided to parties to whom the worker owes no contractual, familial or friendship obligations"* (p.291*)*. Focussing on volunteering within the work-related context, Bussell and Forbes (2001) introduce the distinct categories of 'employer-supported volunteering' which is employee-led, i.e. the decision to volunteer is made by the employee and approved by the employer; and 'employer directed volunteering' which is employer-led and engages the employee in voluntary activities that includes "*projects chosen to match the organisation's needs and pursued as a personal development tool*" (p.246). The latter form of volunteering can be linked to 'corporate volunteering' which encompasses varying degrees of volunteering activities such as employee volunteer programmes within organisations (Geroy *et al.*, 2000). In comparison to efforts to link volunteering to a work-related context, Smith (1993) and Cameron (1999) support the idea of distinguishing between volunteers that are engaged in projects that serve the wider public and thus provide a common good from those who volunteer for not-for profit organisation.

In contrast to the work-related and economic concept of volunteering, research has been undertaken that approaches the subject of volunteering as a form of leisure. Recognizing the absence of moral coercion to volunteer as a key feature of the volunteering as leisure concept, Stebbins (2001) distinguishes between volunteering as serious leisure and marginal leisure. He refers to the definition of volunteering by Van

Til (1988) who suggests that "*volunteering may be identified as a helping action of an individual that is valued by him or her and yet is not aimed directly as material gain or mandated or coerced by others. This, in the broadest sense, volunteering is an un-coerced helping activity that is engaged in not primarily for financial gain and not by coercion or mandate. It is thereby different in definition from work, slavery, or conscription*" (p.6). According to Stebbins (2001), volunteering as a leisure activity can be serious or casual as well as marginal. Volunteering as serious leisure, which he describes as "*the systematic pursuit of an amateur, a hobbyist, or a volunteer activity sufficiently substantial and interesting in nature for the participant to find a career there in the acquisition and expression of a combination of its special skills, knowledge and experience*" (1992:3), comes in the form of career volunteering in unpaid activities like for example working as a coach for sport organisations, working with the disabled or being on the committee of a grassroots organization. In contrast, Stebbins (1997) perceives casual leisure as "*the immediately, intrinsically rewarding, relatively short lived pleasurable activity requiring little or no special training to enjoy it*" (p.25) and refers to activities like cooking at a church picnic or collecting tickets at a local theatre performance. Marginal volunteering as a third form of leisure volunteering is linked to the concept of agreeable obligation which is "*both an attitude and a form of behaviour that, together, can constitute a central part of the leisure experience. When felt, agreeable obligation is part of leisure because it accompanies positive attachment to an activity, is associated with pleasant memories and expectations*" (Stebbins, 2001:3). Thus, moral coercion does not necessarily come into play which allows the individual to enjoy the act of volunteering despite the feeling of being obliged to become a volunteer. Stebbins (2001) differentiates six types of marginal volunteering: a) extracurricular activities at work or employment-based volunteering; b) time-money scheme, also referred to as local exchange or employment trading system (LETS); c) exploratory volunteering which serves the purpose of gaining work experience to support the individual's employability; d) assigned volunteering which makes the volunteering act morally coerced; e) helping and f) volunteering for the sake of keeping busy.

A different approach towards categorising volunteering based on the concepts of obligation is offered by Hustinx and Lammertyn (2003) who differentiate between collective and reflexive style of volunteering: collective volunteering derives from "*service ethics and a sense of obligation to the community*" while reflexive volunteering mirrors a volunteer's personal interests and needs and "*takes place on a more*

*sporadic, temporary, and non-committal basis*"(p.168). However, rather than treating these two styles as two exclusive categories, they argue that both collective and reflexive volunteering can be merged, i.e. a person's volunteer act might be informed by the needs and interests of both the community and the individual. Similarly, Eckstein (2001) distinguishes individualistic–grounded volunteerism from collectivistic-based volunteerism which is initiated by groups, thus involving individuals due to their group ties and defined by group norms and networks. As a consequence, collectivistic-rooted volunteerism may generate group effects such as the fostering of solidarity within, between and across groups and communities as well as the promotion of commitment and enhancement of group status.

Volunteering may be categorised further according to the type of frequency. For instance, Harrison (1995) separates traditional long term volunteering opportunities from short-term volunteering including episodic volunteering which Weber (2002) defines as the sporadic and/or one-event act of giving time which does not involve an ongoing commitment and is usually linked to self-contained and time-specific projects. Danson (2003) supports the notion of episodic volunteering which he describes as the movement of volunteers from event to event working for different organisations at a time as opposed to short-term volunteering. In their study on episodic volunteering, Bryden and Madden (2006) introduce the concept of 'bounce-back' volunteers which builds on the idea of the return of episodic volunteers to additional volunteering tasks. The latter understanding of episodic volunteering contradicts the definition by Weber (2002) who includes both infrequent and one-off volunteering activities whilst the interpretation of episodic volunteering provided by Danson (2003) and Bryden and Madden (2006) entails the return of the individual to the volunteer tasks. These conflicting perspectives are addressed by Macduff (2005) who categorizes episodic volunteering further according to the time and the duration of the volunteer activity. She recognizes the following types of episodic volunteering: a) interim volunteering as the giving of time on a regular basis for less than six months and b) occasional volunteering that can be understood as "*the giving of time at regular intervals for short periods of time… which might be a month or two in duration or just an evening*" (p.51). Similarly, Auld (2004) believes that modern volunteers tend to help on a short, one-off basis which may become a regular or repeat activity. The criterion of time reflected in the numbers of hours that an individual volunteers for, has been suggested by Yavas and Riecken (1985) and Schlegelmilch and Tynan (1989) as a further possible volunteer category. Last but not least, Handy (2006) combines the frequency of volunteer

activities throughout the year with the level of commitment and adds three new categories to the existing typologies of volunteering: a) Long-term Committed Volunteers (LTVs); b) Habitual Episodic Volunteers (HEVs) also referred to as 'circuit volunteer' which refers to individuals who get involved in more than three episodic volunteer activities throughout the year and c) Genuine Episodic Volunteers (GEVs) who "*volunteer for two or fewer volunteer episodes in a year*" (p.34) and correspond to Weber's concept of episodic volunteering mentioned earlier.

The different ways in which volunteering can be categorized support statements by researchers (e.g. Cnaan and Amrofell, 1994; Bussell and Forbes, 2001) that volunteering is indeed a multidimensional as well as problematic concept to define (Ellis and Lukka, 2001). At the same time, it raises questions as to whether the different aspects of volunteering can be integrated in an overall definition. Consequently, any effort to define sport event volunteering is likely to be challenged by the complexity of volunteering in general.

### 2.1.5 Defining sport volunteering

In contrast to the abundance of general definitions of volunteering, the provision of definitions of sport volunteering appears scarce as an initial search of the literature suggests that there is a tendency among authors (e.g. Eley and Kirk, 2002; Nichols, 2004, 2006; Doherty, 2005, 2006; Boettger, 2007) to perceive sport volunteering as an universally understood phenomenon which does not require further explanation. Nevertheless, some efforts have been undertaken to define sport volunteering Similar to the findings provided in the first part of this chapter, a comparison of these definitions indicates the multidimensional nature of volunteering that allows it to be interpreted in different ways. A very broad definition is offered by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) (2002:39) that perceives sport volunteers as "*those participating in roles undertaken to support, arrange and/or run organised sport and physical activity*" and encompasses a wide range of roles such as coaches, referees, committee members and others. Whilst the focus of this definition rests on the degree and level of involvement in sport volunteer activities, it omits any of the other dimensions of volunteer definitions discussed earlier such as the issue of free choice, remuneration, structure and intended beneficiaries. These aspects are covered by Gratton *et al.* (1997:i) who describe volunteering as "*individual volunteers helping others in sport, in a formal organisation such as clubs or governing bodies, and receiving either no*

*remuneration or only expenses*". Sport England (2005) provides the most elaborate definition as it encompasses the overall aspects of volunteering whilst emphasizing the difference between formal and informal volunteers. Its interpretation depicts sport volunteers "*as volunteers helping others in sport and receiving either no remuneration or only expenses. This includes those volunteering for organisations (formal volunteers) and those helping others in sport, but not through organisations (informal volunteers). However, it does not include time spent travelling which may represent significant additional time inputs*" (2005:9). Curiously, this definition separates the aspect of time investment prior to the voluntary activity from the overall volunteer activity. This finding raises the question at what point in time a person becomes a sport volunteer. Another matter of inquiry derives from the level of involvement and interest in the sport as a prerequisite for sport volunteering, i.e. does the sport volunteer have to have a background in the sport or be directly attached to the organisation such as a sport club to qualify as a sport volunteer?

Having established earlier, through a review of definitions of sport and sport related models, that events are key components of sport as they take place in the form of sport tournaments, it could be argued that the need for developing a specific definition for sport event volunteering becomes obsolete as it automatically falls under the umbrella of sport volunteering. Furthermore, the term 'sport volunteering' may be interpreted as having addressed the calls for moving away from using volunteering as a 'catchall' expression (Cnaan *et al.*, 1996). However, it may be counter-argued that sport volunteering encompasses a large number of different types of non-salaried activities including sport event volunteering, but that it has not been officially accounted for so far Another argument that provides grounds for justifying the development of a 'sport event volunteering' definition builds on the perspective that sport event volunteering differs from other types of volunteering as it is does not necessarily have to be a subject to repetition but may be a 'one-off' activity (Grammatikopoulos *et al.*, 2006). A specific definition of sport event volunteering could highlight this difference.

### 2.1.6 Defining event volunteering

Whilst measures to define sport event volunteering can draw from a few existing definitions of sport volunteering, they fail to be supported by events-related literature. Despite the recognition of volunteers as key factors of successfully staging events (Elstad, 1997; Hodges, 2000; MacAloon, 2000; Hollway, 2001; Cuskelly *et al.*, 2004;

Costa *et al.,* 2006; Grammatikopoulos *et al.*, 2006; Getz, 2008) there is a noticeable lack of definitions of event volunteering. Instead, it seems that this kind of volunteer activity has also fallen victim to the assumption that event volunteering is self-explanatory as it was the case with volunteering, making efforts to define redundant. Therefore, event volunteering is explained either within the general context of volunteering or not at all. For example, in his study of motivation of special events volunteers, Monga (2006) provides the reader with a general definition: "*volunteers are people who offer their labour, knowledge, skills and experience at no wage cost to the utilizing organisation*"(p.47). A further finding derives from research by Costa *et al.* (2006) who investigated the role of training in event volunteers' satisfaction: whilst their study does not entail a definition of event volunteering, they distinguish between specialist and non-specialist volunteers. The former are depicted as "*often itinerant volunteers who travel from race-to race… they bring their specialist skills to the volunteer role*" (p.170). Thus, they may be absorbed by the category of episodic volunteers as discussed earlier. In contrast, non-specialist volunteers do not have a technical role and according to the authors were found to volunteer only once. Consequently, there is the aspect of skills and frequency to be considered when discussing event volunteering. Another aspect that stems from the temporary nature of events and impacts on event volunteering is the finite period of time of the event. Compared to volunteering for organisations such as charity shops, sport clubs or hospices, the volunteer activity concludes with the end of the event. In combination with the feature of frequency that has appeared as common feature of both volunteering, events and sport events, volunteers may repeatedly be involved in recurring events or be involved in one-off events only.

In view of other characteristics of events that are shared by sport events as an event type as outlined earlier, a number of additional features may be transferred onto the context of sport event volunteering. These and their actual and potential implications for research on sport are discussed in the subsequent section which reunites the three subject areas of sport, events and volunteering.

## 2.2 Towards a definition of sport event volunteering

Having explored the individual components of sport event volunteering and their complexity, the final step remains to link them back together. This measure seems rather daunting due to the multitude of features that have been identified for each of the

three subject areas. However, at the same time, having adopted the bricolage approach has provided me in my role as researcher with a sound understanding of the various meanings that are brought into sport event volunteering. In order to allow a logical approach towards defining sport event volunteering the key features of sport, event and volunteering are depicted in the conceptual framework below (Figure 5).
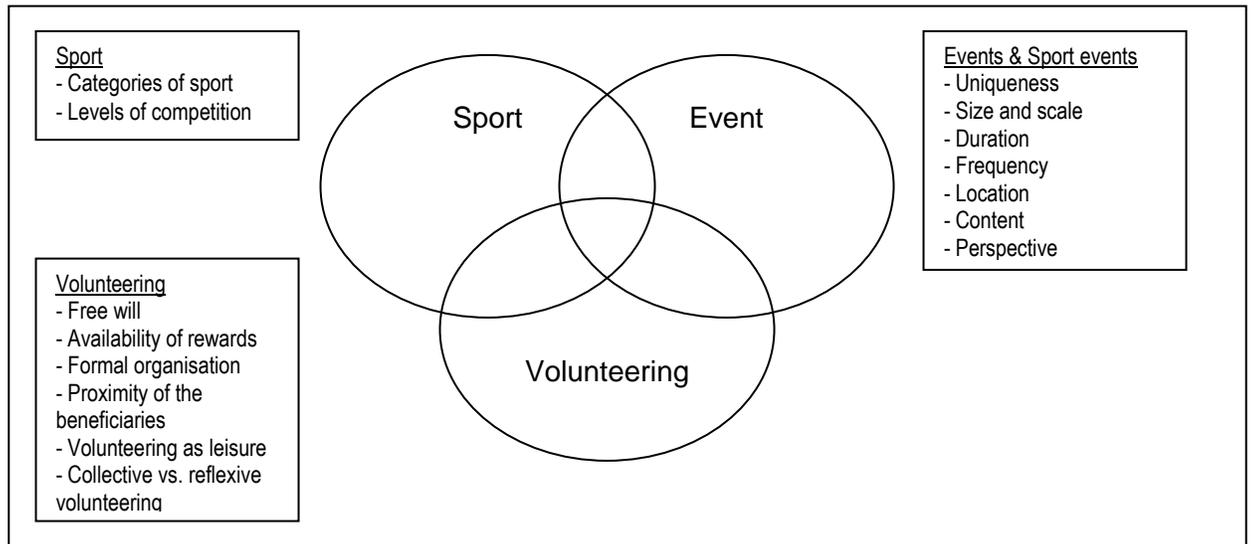


**Figure 5: Key features of sport, event and volunteering**

For the purpose of this thesis, parts of existing definitions of volunteering are combined together to holistically reflect and encompass the various aspects of volunteering. Aspects of sport events are added. Thus, sport event volunteering may be initially conceptualised as "*any activity in which time and energy are given either formally or informally for assisting with staging one-time, infrequently and/or regular sport events of various scale, duration and scope. It is undertaken freely and by choice, without concern for financial gain serving the benefit of the own person, another person, group and/or organisation. Sport event volunteering may be carried out as a marginal and/or as a form of serious and/or casual leisure.*"

The process of articulating a definition was accompanied by a number of decisions on various aspects, predominantly related to volunteering as this was the most complex of all three subject areas. First, the words 'service' and 'help' have been consciously omitted from the definition as their use appears to be subject to personal interpretation. By depicting volunteering as helping which was interpreted by Butcher (2003) as an act that is not necessarily accompanied by a specific attitude towards volunteering or commitment to the cause would have ignored the possibility of perceiving sport event

volunteering as a service to others. In reference to the discussion among authors about favouring formal volunteering over informal volunteering in definitions, the 'round-world' view advocated by Horton-Smith (1997) was adopted. This decision was guided by the aim to provide a holistic definition of sport event volunteering that is, as far as it is possible, free of personal bias and accommodates various perspectives. Also having included the formal and informal aspect of sport event volunteering allows the accommodation of sport event volunteering on Cnaan et al.'s (1996) 'broad' versus 'pure' volunteering continuum. Whilst this may be perceived as a drawback as the definition aims to embrace too many different aspects, an argument of defence is that this was my intention as researcher. The definition of sport event volunteering is to be understood as an effort to create a sound foundation for an understanding of and research on sport event volunteering. Thus, research findings may provide another angle towards defining sport event volunteering. Such an angle could be the different interpretation of the term 'volunteering' across cultures which at this stage are difficult to find in the literature and its influence on perceptions of sport event volunteering. An interesting possibility to enrich the understanding of sport event volunteering further derived from the approach of distinguishing between the event organizer's and sport event volunteer's perspective as it has been practiced by Getz (2005) who defined special events from the perspectives of both the event organisers and the event consumers. An exploration of the understanding and meaning of sport event volunteering from the perspective of the volunteer would be heavily subjective and likely to vary due to the distinctiveness of individual event volunteer experience and the unique nature of the event.  As a result, a range of different perceptions would have to be accommodated in an overall definition of sport event volunteering from the volunteer viewpoint. Nevertheless, such an advance would provide a valuable contribution to the existing body of knowledge on sport event volunteering as it would provide an experiential dimension of sport event volunteering.

### 2.3. Conclusion

Based on the findings from the process of learning about the original meanings of the components sport, event and volunteering a number of potential implications for research on sport event volunteering emerge: for example, in view of the features inherent in events and consequently in sport events, the unique nature of events that makes the sport event volunteer activity and experience extraordinary poses a challenge. Therefore, depending on the research question, a comparison of elements of

sport event volunteering may be difficult to carry out. Linked to the uniqueness of events, their structure, frequency, duration and location, sport event volunteering may be a one-off activity or an episodic undertaking. Consequently, depending on the event type and research methods adopted, studies on sport event volunteering may be rare opportunities that have to be carefully planned. Furthermore, specific issues related to research planning emerge: for example, the question if the research focuses on formal or informal volunteers has to be addressed as it influences sampling measures. Consequently, ways of accessing the sample have to be assessed that may range from negotiating access through the event volunteer coordinator as the gate keeper to trying to contact the volunteers directly or through snow ball sampling. Research decisions may also have to consider the location, e.g. in the case of multi-sport events that are spread across a city (e.g. the Commonwealth Games, Olympic Games) or a country (e.g. FIFA World Cup, Tour de France) and the time and duration of events, e.g. sport events lasting over a longer period of time. In view of the temporal structure of sport events, researchers have to consider if data is to be collected before, during and, or after the event.

This first chapter has established both an understanding of sport, event, volunteering in general and a tentative definition of sport event volunteering in particular and various aspects that should be considered before researching sport event volunteering, have been identified. The next chapter introduces and explores the concepts of lived experiences and role.

# CHAPTER THREE

## The lived experience of sport event volunteering

*"Reality only exists for us in the facts of consciousness
given by inner experience"*

Wilhelm Dilthey (1976 [1914]: 161)

## 3.0 Introduction

Efforts to define the term 'lived experience' are challenged by the paucity of a clear definition and the ambiguity of the meaning that the word 'experience' holds in general: in many research texts, the term 'lived experience' remains undefined: for example, the early studies of people's lived experiences with a particular phenomenon, e.g. by Gullickson (1993) who researched the lived experiences of people with chronic illness, or Diversi (1998) who explored what it is like to be a street-kid in a Brazilian town, do not provide an explanation of what lived experience entails. Similarly, research that followed in later years, e.g. by Papathanassoglou and Patiraki (2003) who investigated the lived experiences of having been critically ill and Mastain (2006) who was concerned with understanding spontaneous altruism, fail to establish the meaning of '*lived experience'*. This shortcoming can also be found in the study by Begley and Quayle (2007) about understanding suicide bereavement, as well as in McCaffrey's work (2008) that studied the lived experiences of older Haitian adults' integration into a rural community in the U.S. Efforts to gain an understanding of lived experiences by exploring definitions of the term 'experience' are equally challenging as there appears to be a tendency to omit definitions of experience in texts. However, this does not seem to be a new phenomenon: in *The Evidence of Experience* that explores the historians' approach towards documenting experience, Scott (1991) critiques the negligence of defining experience. She concludes that "*the absence of definition allows experience to resonate in many ways, but it also allows it to function as a universal category – the undefined work creates a sense of consensus by attributing to it an assumed, stable and shared meaning*" (p.788). Based on findings from the literature review, this 'sense of consensus' seems to have prevailed throughout the past two decades and may provide grounds to question whether terms like 'experience' and 'lived experience' need to be explained at all. In fact, as suggested by Scott (1991), the word 'experience' has

become a ubiquitous term as it has evolved towards being frequently used in everyday language. This observation in itself justifies an analysis of the word 'experience' in order to understand its meaning and to what extent its meaning may have changed from its original conception.

The following section approaches 'lived experience' by exploring the etymology of 'experience' and its meanings through a critical review of the relevant literature. Furthermore, potential methodological implications are identified which will be taken up in more detail in the methodology chapter.

### 3.1 Analysis of the term '*experience*'

In his book *From Ritual to Theatre* (1982), Turner provides an etymology of the English term 'experience' from different linguistic perspectives: for example, from the Indo-European angle per can be understood as 'to attempt, venture, risk'. In association with the Greek term 'perao', experiences may be understood as 'to pass through' which Turner (1982) links to the concept of rite of passage. Furthermore, he argues that the term per can be translated as 'to fare', 'to fear' and 'ferry' which link experience back to the notion of rite of passage in Greek. Whilst these etymological derivations seem logical, Turner's efforts to link 'experience' further to the Latin and Greek word 'peril' and 'experiment' seams rather daunting. In addition, he ignores the change of meaning of 'experience' when translated into the German language. However, it is the German understanding of the term 'experience' which has been the subject of discussion by German philosophers such as Dilthey, Husserl, Heidegger and Gadamer and subsequently in the literature on phenomenology. In contrast to the English language, the term 'experience' holds two different meanings in the German language: these are 'Erfahrung' which is the notion of gaining knowledge and learning the truth and 'Erlebnis' (Weinsheimer and Marshall, 2004). In his work *Truth and Method*, Gadamer (2004 [1975]) explores the origins and meaning of experience as 'Erlebnis' whose usage in the German language was not seen before the 1870s. It derives from the verb 'erleben' that literally means "*to live to see*" (Burch, 1985: 5) or "*to still be alive when something happens*" (Gadamer, 2004 [1975]: 53). Of significance here is the prefix 'er' which stands for "*from out of something according to its own essential measure*" (Burch, 1985: 5) and also forms part of the following two nouns: 'das Erlebte' and 'das Erlebnis'. The former noun 'das (Er-)lebte' which is the past tense of the German verb 'leben' (to live) and thus depicts 'das Erlebte' as something that has been lived through in the past

and therefore represents an outcome. In contrast, '(Er-)lebnis' is understood as "*the process and result of living*" (Burch, 1985: 5) and beholds the literal meaning of "*what unfolds and endures from life by virtue of life itself*" (p.5).

As suggested by Macquarie and Robinson (2007), the link between 'experience' and 'life' has been lost in translation from German to English and is re-established by referring to this type of experience as "*lived experience*" (p.iv). This distinction between the two nouns 'das Erlebte' and 'das Erlebnis' comes into better focus in the work of Wilhelm Dilthey (1976 [1914]) who differentiates between 'mere experience' and 'an experience' that nevertheless shares the feature of experience which "*like its congeners, life and history, includes what men do and suffer, what they strive for, love, believe and endure, and also how men act and are acted upon, the ways in which they do and suffer, desire and enjoy, see, believe, imagine*" (p.210). However, as suggested by Turner (1986) 'mere experience' holds the notion of "*chronological temporality*" (p.34) and a sense of passiveness, i.e. mere experiences are characterized by a beginning and an end and their occurrence in sequential order whilst events are endured and accepted as such. Furthermore, they take place in a sequential manner which allows their accommodation in the flow of the individual's history. In contrast, 'an experience' protrudes from ones passing hours and years due to the individual's response to external events that may have a transforming and/or formative effects. This understanding of experience takes the idea of 'Erlebnis' further. Whilst Dilthey also allocates the concept of temporality and a processual structure to such experiences, he views this type of experience as being subject to "*an initiation and a consummation*" (1976 [1914]:210) which reflects the sense of activeness as opposed to passiveness in 'mere experiences'. This aspect becomes apparent in the individuals active involvement in structuring these experiences through thinking, feeling and the allocation of meaning in distinctive acts and events resulting in a specific experience that stands out "*like a rock in a Zen sand garden*" (Turner, 1986:35). 'An experience' thus represents the individual's responses to an external event that become memorable, i.e. they are recognized in retrospect (Burch, 1985).

Inherent in the descriptions of both 'a mere experience' and 'an experience' is the aspect of experiences belonging to the individual and being part of one's personal life and history which suggests that experiences are in fact idiosyncratic. This link is reflected and elaborated on by Gadamer (1976): "*everything that is experienced is*

*experienced by oneself, and part of its meaning is that it belongs to the unity of this one's self and thus contains an unmistakable and irreplaceable relation to the whole of this one's life…its meaning remains fused with the whole of movement of life and constantly accompanies it*" (p.58). Gadamer's quote holds multiple connotations: firstly, it highlights the close link between meaning and lived experiences. Secondly, it entails the notion of continuity in terms of its enduring presence in a person's sense of self and thus a person's identity; however at the same time it raises the question about one's consciousness as a prerequisite for lived experiences to be perceived as such.

## 3.2 Lived experiences and meaning

The term 'meaning' refers to those linguistic and cognitive categories that serve the purpose of defining, justifying and interpreting aspects of one's view of reality (Krauss, 2005). As such, they are individually constructed. Both Frankl (1963) and Turner (1986) advocate that meaning represents the core of human existence as human beings strive to make sense of and find meanings in their life and experiences. This is partly in reflected in the quotes by Chen (2001) who states that "*life experience generates and enriches meanings, while meanings provide explanation and guidance for experience*" (p. 319) and by Kraus (2005) that suggests that "a *person draws meanings from, or gives meanings to events and experiences*" (p.762). Drawing from the work by Schutz (1967 [1932]), this interrelationship between lived experiences and meanings is not as simple as it seems and needs to be illuminated further by addressing the conditions that have to exist for experiences to bear a meaning. According to Schutz (1967 [1932]), lived experiences as such do not hold any meaning. Instead, they only become meaningful when they are recalled and accessed in retrospect, i.e. it is only through the looking from the present back onto the past and singling out an elapsed lived experience that meaning emerges: *"it is incorrect to say that my lived experiences are meaningful merely in virtue of their being experienced or lived through… Many of my experiences are never reflected upon and remain pre-phenomenal. It is through this act of attention, which is the reflective glance which brings experiences which would otherwise be simply lived through into the intentional gaze…. rendering them bright and sharply defined and as such, meaningful"* (p.70-71).

Another feature that influences the process of attaching meaning to lived experiences is the attitude of the individual towards the object of attention such as his or her lived experience: as one's attitudes undergo changes as he or she proceeds through life, the

meaning of a particular lived experience is equally subject to alterations, also referred to by Husserl (1974 [1931]:90) as "*attentional modifications*", in the form of changes in angles and temporal distance from which a lived experience is retrospectively viewed.

### 3.3 Lived experience, consciousness and memory

Burch (1985) elaborates on the concept of lived experience and identifies its ambiguity in terms of the 'reflexive immediacy' that precedes 'explicit reflection'. The aspect of 'reflexive immediacy' refers to Dilthey's idea of the individual's "*immediate, pre-reflective consciousness of life'* (1983: 223) which infers the notion of self-given awareness of life which however is "*awareness unaware of itself*" (ibid). This paradox becomes clearer in the following quote by Dilthey (1983) which echoes the Descartes' concept of *Res cogitans* ('*I think therefore I am*'): "*a lived experience does not confront me as something perceived or represented; it is not given to me, but the reality of lived experience is there-for-me because I have a reflexive awareness of it, because I possess it immediately as belonging to me in some sense. Only in thought does it become objective*" (p.223). As such, the individual is conscious of his or her existence as well as of occurrences in one's life which is a prerequisite for lived experiences to be reflected on, i.e. before it can be processed, interpreted and allocated a specific meaning it has to be become subject to explicit reflection. The literature on lived experiences leads towards the psychological perspective of self and memory as being interdependent: in reference to the works by Locke (1973 [1690]) and Grice (1941) who advocate that the self is defined by a person's memories of personal experiences, there is the shared understanding that the memories of one's past make up oneself (Bruner, 1994; Tessler & Nelson, 1994; Levine *et al.*, 1998; Pillemer, 1998), whilst at the same time the self is perceived as a prerequisite for the one's ability to remember, i.e. in order for a thought to be a memory rather than an imagination in one's mind, it must be regarded as something that has previously occurred in one's life course and of which one has been aware of in order for it to be recalled at a later point (Howe and Courage, 1997; Wheeler *et al.*, 1997; McCormack and Hoerl, 1999;) or as Klein (2001:26) termed it: "*memory requires more than mere dating a fact in the past. It must be dated in my past*".

The literature on psychology distinguishes between the procedural memory that stores motoric, perceptual and cognitive information and declarative memory that relates to one's world views (Cohen & Eichenbaum, 1993; Parkin, 1993). As suggested by Klein

(2001), this typology of memory reflects the difference between 'knowing how' and 'knowing that'. According to Tulving (1993), the declarative memory can be broken down further into semantic and episodic memory: "*semantic memory is concerned with general knowledge - its basic function is to enable knowing. It allows organism to acquire and internally represent, information about complex states of the world, either in concrete or abstract form. Episodic memory is concerned with experience of events; its basic cognitive function is to enable remembering (conscious recollection) of personal happenings from the past. Episodic memory transcends semantic memory by being self-referential; its contents include a reference to the self in subjective space and time*" (p.36). As highlighted by this definition, the episodic memory appears to be closely linked to the autobiographic memory of a person which refers to the ability of individuals to recall from their personal past those specific events that hold personal significance (Bluck and Habermas, 2001). Hoew and Courage (1997) suggest that the autobiographic memory may be understood as the outcome of the personalisation of episodic memories and the cognitive organisation of event experiences as they happened to people during their life course. Pillemer (1998) includes these personalised episodic memories in his rubric of personal event memories that can vary from being particular vivid and/or relevant to one's self-definition to being rather mundane and less explicit.

Having established the different kinds of memories and applied them to the research context of this thesis, it may be concluded that it is not the semantic but the episodic memory of the sport event volunteers is of concern for this study in terms of the research participants being ask to consciously remember what it was like to be a sport event volunteer. Thus, research participants have to access and retrieve their personal memories of their lived sport event volunteer experience during the data collection.

**3.4 Lived experience and ownership**
Both Gadamer's (see p.37) and Dilthey's (see p.39) quotes underline the aspect of ownership of a person's lived experiences. Equally, Schutz (1967 [1932]) suggests that "*however diverse the lived experiences may be, they are bound together by the fact that they are mine*" (p.75). From this notion of '*mineness*' (ibid:70) emerges the problem of accessibility of lived experiences:  as one is firmly rooted in his or her existence, i.e. individual life, and cannot step out to live someone else' life, experiences are subject to one's own consciousness; as a result, a person has direct access to his or her lived

experiences, but not to those of someone else other than through accounts about what and how he or she has lived through situations or events (Bruner, 1986). However, these accounts that can be understood as the outcome of one's efforts to lift lived experiences out of the stream of consciousness through reflection and the attachment of meaning, are subject to the individual's ability to interpret and to articulate feelings, thoughts and perceptions in words that reflect one's lived experiences accordingly. Therefore, although people talk about their lived experiences with others, it is not possible to fully know the lived experiences of another person (ibid).

**3.5 Lived experiences and understanding**

The literature (e.g. Gadamer, 1976; Burch, 1989; Lindseth and Norberg, 2004; Mapp, 2008) suggests that lived experiences can be perceived as a potential means to enable people to get an insight into our 'being-in-the world', thus widening their understanding of something or someone. Lindberth and Norberg (2004) elaborate on this aspect as follows: "*through lived discourses, we participate in this world – and through narratives we become aware of this participation… it enables us to understand and to become aware*" (p.14). Thus, the overall value of lived experiences rests on allowing us not necessarily to know more but to know differently (Holroyd, 2007). Lindberg and Norberg (2007) add the practical function of lived experiences as a catalyst for change, e.g. alteration or improvements to practice. This aspect relates to the concept of 'sympathetic introspection' that is perceived by Blumer (1969) as the key element and retrospective of the process of understanding in the context of social science. This concept refers to  Mead's idea (1934) of people "*taking the role of the other*" (p.151), i.e. a person steps into the shoes of another's and tries to view the world from the other person's perspective.

Applying these perspectives to the context of the thesis, researching the lived experiences of sport event volunteering aims at providing both scholars and practitioners with the opportunity to widen their understanding of this form of volunteering. This widening of understanding is facilitated by allowing them to view sport event volunteering in the way that the volunteers do and thus see this form of volunteering in a different light.

## 3.6 Research implications

The findings from the literature on lived experience hold a number of implications for those researchers who are concerned with studying lived experiences. For example, the concept of 'attentional modifications' (Husserl, 1974 [1931]), i.e. the idea that the meaning that a lived experience holds for an individual, is subject to change has to be observed. Thus, the meaning that research participants allocate to their lived experiences of volunteering at a particular sporting event during the interview may not be the same that was attached to their experiences at an earlier stage or that they would attach at a later point in time. This aspect seems of particular importance if the study on lived experiences requires the researcher to conduct multiple interviews with a particular research participant over a stretch of time. The process of studying the lived experiences of sport event volunteering may further be challenged by the fallibility of memories in terms of the problems of individuals to access and recall stored data at times even though memory storage is described as being of a permanent nature (Keller, 1999; Spinelli, 2005). In view of the adopted research focus of this thesis that rests on the lived experiences of sport event volunteers, it is the episodic component that the research is concerned with, i.e. it requires sport event volunteers to recall a specific period of time in their lives when they were helping with the staging of a particular sport event and to retrieve specific memories in relation to this activity. In addition, in order to establish what it was like to have been a sport event volunteer at a particular event and to provide the researcher with a personal narrative, the individual person has to have the ability to self-reflect and to be conscious of the past, i.e. the capacity to know about one's mental state that he or she has experienced at a specific moment in the past (Wheeler *et al.*, 1997; McCormack and Hoerl, 1999). These issues relate to the aspect of distortion of memories over time that according to Schacter (1997) is inevitable as memory by nature is "*invariably and inevitably selective*" (p.348) due to the influence of social and psychological factors on information collection, storage and retrieval processes.

Another issue emerges from the idiosyncrasy of lived experience which makes it impossible for researchers to know what the particular moments and activities that have been lived through by the research participant were really like. From the point of view of the researcher who is as an outsider to a sport event volunteer's lived experience, the issues of authenticity emerges (Keller, 1999): as it is the research participant who has lived through being a sport event volunteer and who is required to reflect on what he or

she has lived through and to articulate his or her lived experiences, accounts cannot be verified by the researcher who, consequently, is placed in the position of having to trust that the accounts provided by the research come as close to the original state in which the research participants were at the time. Furthermore, as lived experiences are in fact owned by the person who lived through them, the researcher relies on the research participants' willingness to recall moments of their past and share these with him or her. This finding suggests that research ethics may come into play, for example in terms of how the researcher negotiates the access to data, i.e. the research participants' lived experience. Last but not least, the concepts of 'sympathetic introspection' (Blumer, 1928 cited by Hammersley, 1989:140) and "*taking the role of the other*" (Mead, 1934:151) both hold the following research implications: firstly, research findings have to be presented in such a way that they allow sympathetic introspection to take place. Secondly, the question about the finitude of understanding has to be addressed in terms of the possibility to reach the stage where one has gained a full understanding of sport event volunteers' experiences of 'being-in-the-world'. Holroyd (2007) provides the following answer: "*it is important to recognize that all resulting understanding will never be complete as some experiences will remain undiscovered*!" (p.1)

## 3.7 Conclusion

The chapter has highlighted a number of implications for the research plan: in view of the temporal structure of lived experiences mentioned earlier, they have to be retrieved from the research participants' memory. Another factor derives from the issue of interpretation: as lived experiences are recalled by the individual, they are subject to interpretation and the attachment of meaning by the individual who owns them (Van Manen, 1997) or as Gadamer (2004 [1975]) states "e*verything that is experienced is experienced by oneself, and part of its meaning is that it belongs to the unity of this one's self*" (p.302). At the same time, their account about these lived experiences is subject to interpretation by the researcher. Thus, the researcher has to choose a suitable methodology which mirrors these aspects of subjective interpretation and provides tools which allow both the individual to recall and reflect on their lived experiences and meaning to emerge. These issues are addressed in the methodology chapter.

# CHAPTER FOUR

## The concept of role

*All the world's a stage,*
*And all the men and women merely players:*
*They have their exits and their entrances;*
*And one man in his time plays many parts,*
*His acts being seven ages. At first the infant,*
*Mewling and puking in the nurse's arms.*
*And then the whining school-boy, with his satchel*
*And shining morning face, creeping like snail*
*Unwillingly to school. And then the lover,*
*Sighing like furnace, with a woeful ballad*
*Made to his mistress' eyebrow. Then a soldier,*
*Full of strange oaths and bearded like the pard,*
*Jealous in honour, sudden and quick in quarrel,*
*Seeking the bubble reputation*
*Even in the cannon's mouth. And then the justice,*
*In fair round belly with good capon lined,*
*With eyes severe and beard of formal cut,*
*Full of wise saws and modern instances;*
*And so he plays his part. The sixth age shifts*
*Into the lean and slipper'd pantaloon,*
*With spectacles on nose and pouch on side,*
*His youthful hose, well saved, a world too wide*
*For his shrunk shank; and his big manly voice,*
*Turning again toward childish treble, pipes*
*And whistles in his sound. Last scene of all,*
*That ends this strange eventful history,*
*Is second childishness and mere oblivion,*
*Sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything.*

*(William Shakespeare - All the world's a stage (from As You Like It, 2007 [1623] 2/7)*

## 4.0 Introduction

As indicated in the first chapter of the thesis, the concept of role was used as a parameter within which lived experiences of sport event volunteering is researched.

The original concept of role which is inherent to role theory is described as "*a group of concepts, based on socio-cultural and anthropological investigations, which pertain to the way people are influenced in their behaviours by the variety of social positions they hold and the expectations that accompany those positions*" (Barker,1999:8). Due to different perspectives derived from anthropology, sociology and psychology, role theory can be approached from multiple angles each holding its own interpretations and definitions of role (Biddle, 1986).

The concept of role or social role relates to the idea of the everyday life of the individual being constructed and guided by both formal and informal roles that helps to define the sense of self (Ashforth, 2000) and the thought that individuals participate throughout their life-course in different roles (Yamaguchi and Kandel, 1985). With reference to these literature findings, it may be argued that sport event volunteering can be seen as a role that the individual decides to play, either just once, occasionally or regularly, as they progress through life and that it contributes to the self-concept of the individual.

Previous studies that researched role in the context of volunteering have focused on the degree of commitment to the volunteer role (Reich, 2000), the problem of role ambiguity (Merrell, 2000; Schulz and Auld, 2006), role dedication (Laverie and MacDonald, 2007), role meaning (Bradley, 2003), role identity (Grube and Piliavin, 2000) and role identity and motives (Finkelstein *et al.*, 2005; Finkelstein and Brannick, 2007). However, each of these studies has focused on different types of volunteering other than sport event volunteering and have been concerned with various aspects which to date have not included lived experiences. Researching sport event volunteering from a role-perspective with the focus resting on lived experiences of the individual sport event volunteer therefore appears as an opportunity to contribute to the event-management related body of knowledge. A similar approach was adopted by Brookes *et al.* (2007) who used three theoretical perspectives of role theory - social structuralism, symbolic interactionism and the dramaturgical perspective - as a conceptual framework to explore the perceptions of nurses of their role in contemporary health care systems.

The subsequent section of this chapter examines the various understandings of role from different perspectives by drawing from role-related literature and leading schools of thoughts on role theory which will allow a general understanding of role and related issues to emerge. This is followed by a discussion about which perspective lends itself best to serve as platform from which the lived experiences of sport event volunteering may be explored.

**4.1 The dramaturgical perspective of role**

The origin of the term 'role' lies in theatre where it refers to a character or part performed by an actor whose performance is guided by a script (Thomas and Biddle, 1966). Consequently, by taking on a role, individuals are seen as being transformed into "*dramatis personae*" (Dahrendorf, 1968) i.e. "*characters of the play whose role the actor plays*" (p.26). Applying this theatrical meaning of role to the context of social behaviour, the individual is consequently perceived as a social actor within a social system whose behaviour consists of playing parts and following the relevant screenplay (Goffman, 1969) which informs the dramaturgical perspective of role.

As suggested by Wilshire (1982), the general features of a role within the realm of theatre derive from prerequisites for a theatrical event to be named as such: firstly, theatre is mimetic art, i.e. a character whose behaviour is set out and prescribed by a script is imitated by an individual which is the actor. Secondly, a performance has to be repeatable over time. Thus, a role can be understood as a rehearsed, i.e. practiced behaviour that can be re-enacted by various individuals in different moments of time. Thirdly, the theatre event lasts for a certain stretch of time, starting with the raising and finishing with falling of the curtain. Consequently, the enactment of a role during which the actor is immersed in a prescribed behaviour outlined by the script, is only temporary. Last but not least, a theatre event requires both actors and the presence of an audience.

The dramaturgical perspective of role is embedded in a number of different theories that perceive the individual as actors, e.g. performance theory informs the work of Schechner (1977; 1985; 2002) who applies elements of theatre performance to the context of art, economics and politics; the model of 'social drama' by Turner (1957) employs theatre to study and understand the use of language, ritual, and interactions in

everyday life and Goffman's (1963) concept of people fostering and managing their impressions that reflect themselves on others.

## 4.2 The structural perspective of role

The structural perspective of role theory has evolved from the functional role theory based on the work of anthropologists Linton and Parsons (Biddle, 1979). Linton (1936) perceived role as a cultural element and emphasized the function of roles and consequently people as role-bearers as a pre-requisite for social order (Crothers, 1996). Linton links role to status that is described as entailing "*all culturally prescribed rights and duties inherent in social positions*" (Coser and Rosenberg, 1969:339). The concept of role reflects the dynamics of a status as the rights and duties are exercised through an individual's role performance. Thus "*there are no roles without statuses and no statuses without roles*" (1936:10). Linton (1936) extends this definition by depicting the status as the link between the individual and society. He gives the example of "Mr Jones" who "*as a member of his community derives from a combination of all the statuses which he holds as a citizen, as an attorney, as a Mason, as a Methodist, as Mrs. Jones's husband and so on*" (p.347). The aspect of rights and duties that are inherent in the status implies that relationship between the individual and groups of individuals and society at large is of a reciprocal nature, i.e. each individual has to give something and can expect something back in return.

This viewpoint was consolidated and elaborated further by Parsons (1961) who maintained that these actions are shaped and guided by the individuals' mutual expectations which are the product of social norms and values of a society's social system. As such, role as the collection of rights and duties associated with status is in fact "*the basic unit of social systems*" (p.573). Parsons (1961) gives the example of the physician-client relationship where the doctor is expected to make use of his medical expertise and cure the patient whilst the patient in the counter-position is expected to take an interest in his/her well-being and to follow the doctor's instructions. Whilst structuralists such as Merton (1957) and Goode (1960) share the idea of roles fulfilling functions, their concerns rests less on the individuals than on their social environment and its social structures. These are defined as "*stable organizations of sets of persons (called 'social positions') that share the same roles, i.e. patterned behaviours that are directed towards other sets of persons in the structure*" (Biddle, 1986:73). Within this setting, a specific behaviour pattern based on a bundle of rights and duties is

prescribed to particular social positions whose existence is independent of the person occupying it, i.e. anyone can fill the position, and generate socially based expectations which constitute the role (Sieber, 1974). Thus, roles are understood as "*sets of behavioural expectations associated with given positions in the social structure*" (Ebaugh, 1988:18). A major criticism of this approach is the sense of determinism that this school of thought holds: rather than being guided by the role occupant's agency, role behaviour appears as prescribed and steered by a set role script. As such, the individual's behaviour becomes 'role playing' (Callero *et al.*, 1987) which leads back to the *theatrum mundi* metaphor that depicts the world as play (Dahrendorf, 1968). This idea of the individual as mere role-bearer has been subject to criticism in the past: for example, the concept of alienation of the individual in relation to social role emerged as a major concern from the work of both Karl Marx and Dahrendorf. In his essay *Roles, masks and characters: a contribution to Marx's idea of the social role*', Urbánek (1967) explores the references made by Marx to role, mask and social character that he perceived as a source for "*alienation and reification of persons*" (p.532). Marx's idea of alienation in relation to role refers to his vision of men's loss of individualities and their transformation into "*accidental, dehumanized, uniform individuals*" (Urbánek, 1967:533) who collectively share a social character that is not their own, thus alien, by becoming actors of certain roles. The idea of the loss of a person's individuality as a result taking up a social role is shared by Dahrendorf (1968) whose criticism of the *theatrum mundi* metaphor derived from the understanding of man as 'homo sociologicus' (Dahrendorf, 1958) that depicts the individual as serving the purpose of fulfilling social roles for the sake of society rather than pursuing personal goals and interests, turning "*the real man of our everyday life into an artificial man*" (Dahrendorf, 1968:25). In his work *Homo economicus, homo sociologicus,* Weale (1992) elaborates this model in more detail the behaviour of a person is formed and shaped throughout his or her life-course and personal freedom limited as a result of conforming to norms that are encoded by social roles. Consequently, "*we become who society tells us to become through socialization*" (Weale, 1992:65).

**4.3 The symbolic interactionist perspective of role**

In contrast, symbolic interactionist role theory places emphasis on the agency of the individual as well as on the development of roles through social interactions and social construction which makes role a social object. Based on these ideas, Mead (1934) suggests that the role is defined and validated by shared understanding in a given

social world or community and involves a degree of creativity on behalf of the actors. Another elementary aspect of the symbolic interactionist approach is the understanding of roles being perspectives "*that filter perception and help frame and structure the social world… [and] operate at both the community and individual levels*" (Callero *et al.*, 1998:249). Callero (1985) elaborates this viewpoint suggesting that perspectives on the community level are the product of the ability of the individual to step into and perform the role whilst the perspective on the individual level allows for the differentiation of actors to emerge through their individual style which defines them and for the role to become individually meaningful. In comparison to the structural role theory which depicts the role occupants as passive 'role-players' whose scripts have already been written and thus only requires the actor to engage in "*role-taking*" (Lopata, 1995:5), the concept of roles as social objects and perspectives reflect what Hewitt (1979:55) terms "*role-making*": "*roles are made anew each time people assemble and orient their conduct toward one anothe*r." This depiction illustrates human behaviour as greatly dynamic and being in a constant state of flux. Consequently, it has come under attack for being too unrealistic as it ignores roles with rigid boundaries (Heiss, 1981). In fact, Turner (1962) who classified himself a symbolic interactionist suggests that role making is limited, referring to the roles within the military and relating to bureaucracy. Hewitt (1979) expands on the idea of role-making by adding the aspect of transferring knowledge from past role situations through memory recall: "*actors have ideas about how the script should be written as they go along, and they derive these ideas (in part) from remembering previous such situations*" (p.61). Distantly related to the idea of drawing from learnt scripts when enacting a new role is the concept of role-merger (Turner, 1978). This concept refers to a person's assimilation of attitudes and behaviours developed during the occupation of a particular role to such an extent that they are carried over and applied to another role even though when they may be not appropriate and do not fit into the new situation which may lead to role conflict. Working from the symbolic interactionist perspective, Lopata (1995) adds the idea of social space of the individual actor within the role and his/her relations with others. She suggests that "*the individual brings to a social role those aspect of self which are deemed necessary for the performance of duties and the receipt of rights, negotiating with the social circle those aspects which differ from the cultural base on both sides*" (p.5). Rosenberg (1979) defined self as "*the totality of the individual's thoughts and feelings having reference to himself as an object*" (p.7). Thus, in view of Lopata's conceptualization of role, the actor brings his/her individual psychological, emotional

and cognitive fabrics into the role that is to be enacted, thus giving the role a personal touch and sense of individuality. Furthermore, in case of having to enter into negotiations with other role-related others, the actor undergoes the process of anticipatory socialization which echoes Mead's concept (1934) of 'taking the role of the other': "*the individual becomes an object to himself only by taking the attitude of other individuals within a social environment or context of experience and behaviour in which both he and they are involved*" (p.151). As part of the negotiating process with others linked to the role, the actor "*is required to take the role of several others and to understand their perspectives*" (Lopata, 1995:5). This aspect moves the understanding of role-making beyond the mere notion of the actor's autonomy and individuation as role-making also involves to some extent cooperative activity (Coser, 1975).

**4.4 The adoption of a role perspective**

This overview of different approaches towards role theory suggests that the structuralist and the symbolic interactionist role theory form the opposing ends of a continuum. In search for an angle from which a role-related perspective on sport event volunteering could be adopted and taking into account the various features and arguments of each perspective as well as their limitations, e.g. the boundaries of role-making on one hand and the questions about the extent of prescribing role behaviour through norms associated with social positions on the other, I originally decided to adopt a middle-range position as advocated by Epstein (1989) and Ashforth (2000) who perceive an interposition between the symbolic interactionist and structural dichotomies of role as a more realistic approach towards understanding social roles. This viewpoint was thought to allow me to move away from using "*one tool to build a house*" (Callero, 1994:231) to promote a better understanding to roles and to merge elements of different approaches towards role theory have been promoted by a number of authors:  for example as early as the 1950s, Yablonsky (1953) argued that it is not enough to know the content and purpose of a role, i.e. what has to be accomplished and how an individual has to perform a role. Instead, he encouraged researchers to start considering the actual operation and dynamics of a role as it is enacted by the individual *en situ*. Other examples include the work of Schuler *et al.* (1977), Marks and MacDermid (1996) and Graham *et al.* (2004).

In the context of sport event volunteering, a middle-position between the structuralist and symbolic interactionist approach may be understood as follows: sport event

volunteering at large-scale events is a formal activity that is set up and informed by duties, legal requirements and guidelines set out by the event organisations and co-organising bodies, e.g. the police or the council. These are likely to generate expectations linked to the performance of the sport event volunteer role, e.g. based on the compulsory health and safety training, sport event volunteers are expected to react appropriately in a case of emergency, sport event volunteering can be perceived as being socially structured. At the same time, following the symbolic interactionist perspective, the enactment and lived experience of the sport event volunteer role and the meanings this role holds to the individual sport event volunteer varies from individual to individual. The decision to adopt a role perspective was initially led by my concerns that an exploration of lived experiences of sport event volunteers would leave me with an abundance of data with no boundaries as there was no angle from which to start the analysis from. The focus of the thesis rests on making sense of lived experiences by approaching them from a role perspective, with the former representing the core focus and the latter the platform from which to view the lived experiences, i.e. the role perspective serves as orientation angle. However, embedding myself explicitly between the structuralist and symbolic interactionist perspective of role theory as a starting point resulted in a blurring of focus, i.e. the research emphasis that initially rested on exploring lived experiences of sport event volunteers shifted towards role theory and led to the questions '*What comes first?*', '*What is to be researched – lived experience or the sport event volunteer role?*'

Furthermore, by adopting a specific role perspective, there was the danger of me following the approach of Procrustes: according to Greek mythology, Procrustes who was the son of Poseidon, made his guests fit into the iron bed of his by either stretching them if they were too small or by cutting them into the right size if they were too tall (Graves, 1990). Applying this measure to the research context, the researcher may be tempted to force research findings into existing concepts and models. In the case of this thesis, this process may entail collected qualitative data being cut out and made to fit by using existing role related theories and models as a template not leaving and throwing away those bits and pieces that do not fit, thus ignoring the potential diversity of the individual's experiences. Instead, I decided to return to the original understanding of role and to loosely apply the theatrical meaning of role that is inherent in the different perspectives of role theory (Biddle, 1986) to the context of sport event volunteering, i.e. the individual person is an actor who enters, occupies and leaves the role as a sport

event volunteer in a large sporting event which represents the setting of the stage. The benefits that emerged from this measure are threefold: first, it provides me as researcher with a broad perspective on one hand from which to explore and view sport event volunteering. Secondly, it provides the interviewee on the other hand with some sense of structure as the interviewee questions broadly follow the concept of role entry, role enactment and role exit. Thirdly, the data is generated within widely set parameters and different perspectives of role theory can be employed to make sense of the data in order to understand what it is like to be sport event volunteer and how this position is managed whilst the data analysis and sense making process is not limited by specific school of thought on role theory. Thus, in addition to drawing from role-related research and theories including sub-concepts of the structuralist and symbolic interactionist perspectives that have developed from the original theatrical concept of role, wider concepts and literature can be used for the analysis of the research findings in this study and their presentation to the reader. As lived experiences are likely to vary from individual to individual, adopting this measure allows the diversity of differences in findings to be respected. Furthermore, it addresses the criticism of Jackson (1998) who argues that role theory alone fails to provide "*an authentic account of human agency and more specifically, the subjective experience of an individual's engagement*" (p.52). As the work of sport event volunteering is only temporary and finishes when the sport event has been staged, sport event volunteering can be understood as a "*short-term role enactment*" (Ashforth, 2000:42) or "*ephemeral role*" (Zurcher, 1983:174). To what extent the role is rehearsed and 'mimetic', i.e. to what extent the sport event volunteer follows a set script is expected to emerge as a research finding from this thesis. Equally, the relationship between the sport event volunteers and members of social surroundings is anticipated to come to light during the interviews.

## 4.5 Conclusion

The way how of this chapter was presented to the reader in terms of first exploring the concept of role and different role theory perspectives and the subsequent adoption of a middle-position between structuralist and symbolic interactionist approach which was then to be rejected in favour of a broader understanding of role, may be subject to criticism as it may be argued why this wasn't done from the start.

Drawing from the viewpoint that the writing of a PhD thesis is a research journey (Philips and Pugh, 1987), this chapter reflects the thought process that accompanied the literature review in search for a suitable research angle from which to explore the

lived experiences of sport event volunteering. Rather than providing the reader with a polished version of thought processes, it has given an insight into my moving between decisions whilst looking for a feasible research focus.

# CHAPTER FIVE

## Methodology

### 5.0 Introduction

This chapter serves the purpose of presenting the qualitative research approach that has been adopted for this thesis. It commences with an overview of the research process which is structured according to six levels of inquiry that the researcher employed to systematically outline, critically discuss and justify the adopted research approach. Furthermore, it entails a critical assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the adopted research method, the question of sampling, the role of the researcher in this process as well as the relevant issues related to research ethics and research quality criteria.

### 5.1 Overview of the research process

Research can be understood as a systematic investigation or inquiry (Burns, 2000) that encompasses the collection, analysis and interpretation of data in order to "*understand, describe, predict or control an educational or psychological phenomenon or to empower individuals in such contexts*" (Mertens, 2005:2). While this perspective depicts research as a clear process, efforts to define research are more and more challenged by its increasing complexity, particularly within social science (O'Leary, 2004). For example qualitative research has been described by Denzin and Lincoln (2005) as a "*field of inquiry in its own right*" that encompasses a large number of different approaches and perspectives and thus no set formula of how to undertake research" (p.3). While some research texts, e.g. Willis (2007), Mackenzie and Knipe (2006), Denzin and Lincoln (2005), Ritchie and Lewis (2003) guide the researcher step by step through the process of qualitative research design, starting off with the discussion of research paradigms which is seen as the foundation for the researcher's approach to knowledge and the decision which methodology to adopt, others approach the undertaking of social research differently by omitting the issue of paradigm or referring back to it at a later stage, e.g. Bryman (1988), Mason (2002) and Cassell and Symon (2004). In other instances, the types of paradigms or research methods or the use of terms such as 'research design', 'research strategy' and 'methodology' vary from text to texts.

In view of the variety of research design approaches and the need for a research structure to study the lived experience of sport event volunteers, the "*model of*

*disciplined inquiry*" by Hiles (2008:3) was combined with the five phase-model of the research process suggested by Denzin and Lincoln (2005). Whilst Hiles' model that accommodates the aspects of the research process, namely (1) research paradigm, (2) strategy (3) method and (4) analysis seems useful for setting out the key areas of research design, it falls short of outlining the position of the researcher and his/her relationship with the research participants and related issues such as research ethics, validity and reliability. Furthermore, Hiles' model omits practices of interpretation and evaluation of the collected data. These gaps are bridged by merging the model by Hiles with Denzin and Lincoln's five phase model that entails a) the situation of the researcher; b) theoretical paradigms and perspectives; c) research strategies; d) methods of collection and analysis and e) the art, practices and politics of interpretation and evaluation. In order to provide a better overview, methods of data collection and data analysis are treated as two separate levels resulting in six levels of inquiry (Table 2).

**Table 2: Six-level model of inquiry** *(adapted from Hiles, 2008:3 and Denzin and Lincoln, 2005:23)*

| Level 1 | **Position of the researcher**<br>→ *Researcher as Explorer* |
|---------|-----------------------------------------------|
| Level 2 | **Paradigms and perspectives**<br>→*Interpretative constructionism* |
| Level 3 | **Research approach**<br>→*Hermeneutic phenomenology* |
| Level 4 | **Method of data collection**<br>→*Semi-structured interviews* |
| Level 5 | **Method of data analysis**<br>→ *Six step approach by Van Manen* |
| Level 6 | **Practice of data interpretation and evaluation**<br>→ *Researcher as interpreter* |

Rather than treating these levels of inquiry in isolation of the overall research programme, they were in fact the outcome of initial research that commenced with a preliminary set of aims and objectives and an early search of the literature on sport

event volunteering. This was followed by exploratory field work in which interviews with sport event volunteers were carried out and served the purposes to identify a research gap that can be addressed by the thesis. Based on findings that emerged from the analysis of these first interviews, research aim and objectives were amended and refined and the literature was reviewed once again. This process was preceded by the development of the model of inquiry to structure the remainder of the research process and to identify the position of myself as the researcher. The following section outlines and discusses the six levels of this model.

## 5.2 The perspective of the researcher

Within the literature on social research, a number of different metaphors have emerged that depict the state of mind and orientation of the qualitative researcher towards his or her research. One of such metaphors is the illustration of the researcher as an explorer. Literature findings suggest that this theory is not new: for example, Boulding (1958) mentioned the need for researchers to "*travel over a field of study* "in order to expand "*the reader's field of acquaintance with the complex cases of the real world*" (p.5). In the 1960s, the idea of research as exploration is taken up again by Blumer (1969) who criticized the negligence of this perspective by fellow researchers. Since the late 1990s, more and more contemporary research methodology textbooks (e.g. Palys, 1997, Adler and Clark, 1999, Vogt, 1999; Saunders *et al.*, 2007) encompass an explanation of exploration as a research approach. For example, Vogt (1999) defines exploration in the context of social science as follows: *"social science exploration is a broad-ranging, purposive, systematic, pre-arranged undertaking designed to maximize the discovery of generalizations leading to description and understanding of an area of social or psychological life. Such exploration is, depending on the standpoint taken, a distinctive way of conducting science – a scientific process- special methodological approach (as contrasted with confirmation), and a pervasive personal orientation of the explorer"* (p.105). Despite this development, Stebbins (2001) argues that there is still an insufficient understanding of the concept of exploration within the context of research: for example, he criticises that the conceptualisation of as "*investigative exploration*" (p. 2) is too general and in fact self-explanatory as all acts of exploration aim to investigate. In comparison, the notion of research as "*innovative exploration*" (p. 2) is more specific referring to research measures that centre around testing and experimenting – thus, the process of exploring is likely to come to an end once the desired outcome has been achieved. While Stebbins (2001) suggests that this type of exploration is less extensive

and tends to be more focused, he suggests that "*exploration for discovery*" (p.3) is far broader and more thorough as it "*is not finished until everything of importance for describing and understanding the area under study has been discovered*" (p.3). The idea of research as exploration for discovery is supported by Brown (2006) who depicts research as the "*entry into unknown territory*" (p.9). Like an explorer that has discovered something new, the researcher records his/her findings and returns home with information about things that until their discovery through the researcher, have been unknown and thus unheard of. A fourth understanding of research as explorative activity is research as "*limited exploration*" in which the researcher knows what to look for and systematically searches for something specific (ibid). Despite these differences, the four types of exploration have one thing in common: they all aim at the generation of theory from data. At this stage the question arises as to whether all qualitative research is in fact exploratory by nature. For example, as suggested by Filstead (1979) qualitative research is "*marked by a concern with the discovery of theory rather than the verification of theory*" (p.38). In contrast, Stebbins (2001) warns that exploration and qualitative research are not one and the same as the former aims at the theory generation from data whilst the latter concentrates on the methodology and the collection of data that allow theory generation to be achieved. Thus, exploration can be understood as both a process and a goal that are supported by the tools and methods provided by qualitative research. As highlighted by both Stebbins (2001) and Brown (2006), the starting point of the decision to carry out an exploratory study is the researcher's recognition that they have little or no knowledge about a specific phenomenon, process, or group of people. This has been the case of this thesis that aims to find out about the lived experiences of sport event volunteering, i.e. what is it like to be a volunteer and the meaning this activity holds for the individual, thus placing the researcher in the role of the explorer who sets out to discover. With regards to the skills and tools required to undertake this journey into the unknown, Stebbins (2001) suggests that a key feature of exploratory research is its detachment from prescribed research procedures based on traditional research theories and fixed methodologies. As a result, the exploring researcher is required to maintain an open-mind and a high level of flexibility to creatively use methods available to him/her.

## 5.3 Research paradigm

The research process is shaped by the researcher's worldview or paradigm that is defined as "*a basic set of beliefs that guide action*" (Guba, 1990:179). As such, it influences the researchers' perception of the world and his/her action in terms of the ontological and epistemological perspective as well as the methodological approach adopted (Mason, 2002). Depending on the literature that is consulted consulted the number and types of qualitative research paradigms available to the researcher vary: e.g. the work by Creswell (2007) covers post-positivism, constructionism, advocacy/participatory or pragmatism, whilst Denzin and Lincoln (2005) add the paradigms of queer, feminist, Marxist, cultural studies and ethnic theory.

A key feature of qualitative research is its lack of ownership over a distinctive paradigm, instead it makes use of different worldviews (Creswell, 2007) either by adopting one worldview at a time or by combing multiple compatible paradigm worldviews such as constructionist and participatory worldviews (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005). Last but not least paradigms can be understood, as suggested by Guba and Lincoln (1998), as human constructions, i.e. they derive from ideas, arguments and subjective interpretation and thus are disputable as they fail to establish ultimate truthfulness, or as O'Leary (2004) words it: "*what might be the truth for one person or cultural group may not be the truth" for another*" (p.6). Building on this perspective, it is my understanding as researcher that rather than viewing paradigms as radical postures that have to be defended at all costs requiring the researcher to deliver proof, they may be understood as frameworks that informs the researcher's journey of exploratory discovery. The worldview that I adopted for this thesis centres around the thoughts of interpretivism which combines the concept of rationalism, i.e. the theory that one learns about reality by thinking about it, and relativism which builds on the idea that one's reality is subject to perception and as such as always influenced and shaped by culture, history and experiences (Willis, 2007). The interpretivist paradigm has been heavily shaped by the philosophy of Edmund Husserl's phenomenology and the work by Wilhelm Dilthey who questioned the application of objectivism, a key feature of positivism (ibid). Both stressed the importance of understanding (or 'Verstehen' in German) and researching the lived experience of people within its interconnected cultural, historical and social contexts. Thus, from these perspectives, research can be understood as a "*holistic rather than atomic process*" (Willis, 2006:53) which can only take place within the context (Dilthey, 1983). Cutting across interpretivism, the world view of constructionism builds on the concept of reality being a social construct which

cannot be understood when stripped of its context (Charmaz, 2006; Willis, 2007). Depending on which text is read, this paradigm has been given various names such as 'naturalistic inquiry' (Kuzel, 1986) or "*interpretative thinking or interpretative inquiry* (Gadamer, 1986:15; Guba and Lincoln, 1989:48).

Crabtree and Miller (1999) recommend to distinguish between constructionism and interpretivism rather than to marry them as both approaches hold different positions towards truth: while constructionists believe that truth is not an objective but a relative construct as it is the result of individual perspective, interpretivists do not completely dismiss the notion of objectivity and stress the existence of multiple realties (Crabtree and Miller, 1999). On the other hand, Denzin and Lincoln (2005) argue that all research is interpretative as it is influenced by the worldview adopted by the researcher; as result, they describe paradigms including constructionism in qualitative research as 'interpretative paradigms'. Similarly, Gephard (1999) unites the genres of interpretivism and constructionism under the shared tenet of subjective meaning, i.e. "*how individuals understand and make sense of social events and settings*" (p.4). To complicate the issue further, the terms 'constructionism' and 'constructivism' tend to be interchangeably used (e.g. Crabtree and Miller, 1992, Schwandt, 1994, Mackenzie and Knipe, 2006; Creswell, 2007). In fact these two terms hold different meanings and therefore have to be distinguished. Compared to 'constructionism' as a worldview, 'constructivism' appears in the literature as a philosophy within the realm of learning: as suggested by Rorty (1991) it stems from the belief that individuals construct their knowledge of the world and that they understand their experiences through unique set of rules and mental models that they develop for this purpose and adjust when encountering new experiences. Schwandt (1994) distinguishes between two types of constructionism: 'radical constructionism' with the focus resting on the individual and the way he/she interpret their world in social and historical contexts, and 'social constructionism' that centres around social processes and interaction. The latter is closely linked with theories of symbolic interactionism and ethno-methodology that "*emphasize the actor's definition of the situation, that seek to understand how social actors recognize, produce and reproduce social actions, and how they come to share an intersubjective understanding of specific life circumstances*" (p. 19).

Being aware of the varying terminology and different constructionist genres, I adopted the general term 'interpretivist constructionism' for the chosen research paradigm which shares the interpretitivist assumption that knowledge and meaning are subject to interpretation (Gephart, 2007) and the constructivist perspective, i.e. to understand how

meaning and knowledge is created within a particular social, cultural or historical context (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005; Creswell, 2007). For example, in view of the research of lived experiences of sport event volunteers, interviewees' accounts that are subject to my interpretation as researcher and thus may be differ from somebody else's interpretation, have to take into account the personal circumstances of the research participants when exploring what volunteering at a specific sporting event was like for the individual.

The ontological position of the researcher within an adopted paradigm refers to questions about the form and nature of reality of the chosen world view (Snape and Spencer, 2003). In the case of constructionism, the researcher adopts a relativist approach that apprehends the multitude of realities that are cognitively and subjectively constructed, shaped by the social, historical and cultural contexts in which they occur and their content individually or collectively generated (Guba and Lincoln, 1998). Thus, there is no ultimate truth or objective reality as realities are constructs and context-bound (Robson, 2002). In view of this thesis, which explores the lived experience of sport event volunteering and the meaning this activity hold for the individual, I consequently encountered a range of different realities constructed by the individual sport event volunteers.

Epistemology is concerned with the process of learning about the reality (Willis, 2007) and how knowledge and explanations about the components of the reality researched are generated and demonstrated (Mason, 2002). In the case of interpretative constructivism, knowledge is the product of the interpretation and interaction between the researcher and the research participants, in other words research findings are literally created and interpreted throughout the shared primary data collection research process (Guba and Lincoln, 1998). Furthermore, the issue of the relationship between the researcher and the respondent come into play which, in the case of interpretative constructivism, becomes interactive and draws the researcher away from his/her objective view point (Snape and Spencer, 2003) which may affect the position of the researcher. Following the epistemological outline of interpretative constructionism, Denzin and Lincoln (2005) advocate a hermeneutical/interpretative and dialectical methodology that promote the interaction and dialogue between the researcher and the responden, e.g. in the form of semi-structured interviews involving both parties to provide questions and answers, in order to allow the co-production of understanding of

a particular phenomenon. Creswell (2007) is more prescriptive: he suggests that the constructionist viewpoint is anchored in phenomenological studies as well as in the grounded theory perspective of Charmaz (2006).

## 5.4 Towards an interpretative phenomenological research approach

Efforts to understand what phenomenology is about and how it is located within social science are challenged by the multitude of research texts that depict phenomenology as being (a) the trinity of a philosophy, an approach and a research method (Ray, 1994; Oiler, 1986; Omery, 1983) or (b) both a philosophical discipline and a research method (Lopez & Willis, 2004; Geanellos, 1998; LeVasseur, 2003). This duality is summed up in the definition by Georgi *et al.* (1983): "*phenomenology is the study of the phenomenon of the world as experienced by conscious beings and it is a method for studying such phenomenon*" (p. 146).

Coming to terms with phenomenology within social science is further complicated by its evolving rather than static nature which is apparent in the myriad of various perspectives of phenomenology ranging from descriptive (transcendental constitutive) and naturalistic constitutive phenomenology over existential and generative historicist phenomenology to hermeneutic (interpretative) phenomenology and realistic phenomenology (Embree, 1997). Nevertheless, while the perspectives of phenomenology are numerous, phenomenology may be broadly understood as an approach to understand the lived world of individuals who establish reality from their perspective (Sadala and Adorno, 2002). Other authors extend this description by adding that phenomenology has to focus on context and the manner in which an individual's experiences of a phenomenon are described (Spiegelberg, 1982; Burch, 1989; Hammond *et al.*, 1991).

In opposition to the empirical-analytical science that has been described by Van Manen (1997) as falling short of promoting understanding (or 'Verstehen') of the world, phenomenology provides knowledge through the understanding of shared meaning of the world as it is experienced and lived in by the individual. Thus, rather than developing an abstract theory, the focus of phenomenology rests on building up knowledge by revealing meanings (Van der Zalm and Bergum, 2000).

Within phenomenological research, the descriptive and hermeneutic approaches appear to be the most commonly used. Most research papers and text books (e.g.

Wojnar and Swanson, 2007; Willis, 2007; Benoist, 2003; LaVasseur, 2003; Draucker, 1999) trace descriptive phenomenology back to the work by Edmund Husserl (1859-1938) whose focus rested on the experience of individuals of a phenomenon as a starting point of all scientific research (Bryman, 1988). In order to understand the subjective experience of a phenomenon in its purest form and to produce an exact, authentic description of the universal essence or, as Van Manen (1997) words it, "*a grasp of the very nature of things*" (p.177), Husserl advocated a scientific attitude towards phenomenology in that he supported the idea of the researcher remaining detached from the human phenomenon under study (Reed, 1994). This was to be achieved through the rigor of phenomenological reduction in the form of 'bracketing' or 'epoche' which requires the researcher to suspend all existing beliefs and assumptions before undertaking the phenomenological inquiry. Having been stripped of preconceptions, the researcher is left with "*a field of primordial phenomena or consciousness*" (Kockelmans, 1994:20) that Husserl (1974 [1931]) refers to as "*going back to the things themselves*" (p.25). This stage was followed by the description of the experiences themselves which has to remain unspoilt by interpretation and the meaning they hold for the individual (Jasper, 1993).

The reductionist approach towards understanding reflects the Cartesian tradition that views mind as a thing in isolation to the rest of the world and has been termed "*the Cartesian subject-object cleavage*" (Jaspers, 1956:56). It is widely perceived as a key feature of Husserl's phenomenology (e.g. Reed, 1994; Seymour, 2006) and serves a source of criticism among its opponents such as Martin Heidegger who has espoused phenomenology of everyday experiences with hermeneutic interpretations (Seymour, 2006) thus creating 'interpretative phenomenology'. Although Heidegger (2007 [1962]), shares Husserl's concern with the experience of phenomena and his emphasis of 'going back to the things themselves', he rejects the sole focus on description and perceives 'pure' phenomenology through the removal of the researcher's bias and preconceptions as something that is impossible to be achieved. Rather than being a thinking thing that can be abstracted of its surroundings and is perceived as a subject in the world of objects, Heidegger (1962) argues that the individual is situated in and is part of the world. This idea became the tenet of his concept of 'Sein' or 'being-in-the-world' which implies that individuals cannot detach themselves from historical, political, social or cultural contexts that are part of their existence and background, also referred

to by Heidegger (2007 [1962]) as historicality and that "*influence their choices and give meanings to lived experiences*" (Wojnar and Swanson, 2007:174).

Heidegger (2007 [1962]) advocates that any encounter with a phenomenon is subject to interpretation by the individual in his/her effort to understand. Thus, the act of interpretation may be perceived as a critical, omnipresent element of the process of understanding. However, as humans are 'being-in-the-world', the process of understanding is not free of influences. Instead, the individual possesses a pre-understanding or fore-structure of understanding that consists of a) fore-having, i.e. individuals bring with them some existing knowledge or assumptions that allow them to interpret; b) fore-sight, i.e. individuals possess a perspective that has been shaped by their socio-cultural and serves as a starting point for interpretation; and c) fore-conception, i.e. due to this background, individuals develop assumptions or notions about likely research findings (Benner, 1994). According to Heidegger (2007 [1962]), the concept of interpretation is closely linked to this fore-structure as it influences the way one perceives and understands the world which subsequently affects one's interpretation of reality, resulting in the hermeneutic circle of understanding: instead of being of linear nature, the interpretative process is cyclic as it moves from the investigator's presuppositions to the new insights gained from the engagement with the individual. These are subsequently absorbed and added to the existing fore-structure and thus extend the foundation to understand and interpret new findings. A key feature of the hermeneutic circle is the notion of co-construction based on the concept of reciprocity which becomes evident in the explanation provided by Racher and Robinson (2003:473): "*the present may only be understood in terms of the past and the past in terms of the present.*" In the context of research, primary data is co-constructed by both the research participants and their contextualized, lived experiences of a certain phenomenon and the researcher whose perspective is influenced by his/her background (Koch, 1996).

In their exploration of phenomenology, Wojnar and Swanson (2007) provide a discussion on the challenge that researchers face when having to select among these two different perspectives of phenomenology and recommend that researchers reflect on their own ontological and epistemological beliefs and to make their choice accordingly. Applying this advice to my own research situation, led me towards analyzing my own understanding of truth and knowledge. In view of this thesis, I

personally share the interpretative perspective of Heidegger and his understanding of how individuals make sense of the world and how they, including myself in the position as researcher, are subject to their own historicality from which they cannot separate myself when collecting and interpreting data. Besides this personal belief, hermeneutic phenomenology fits well within the interpretative constructionist paradigm. First, as outlined earlier in the discussion of the research paradigm, the hermeneutical (interpretative) approach towards phenomenology is said to be located within the interpretive constructionism paradigm as suggested by Guba and Lincoln (1998). Scholars such as Clark (1998) and Annells (1999) support this allocation while Paley (1998) argues that this approach falls into the realm of realism. Drawing from arguments from proponents of the notion that Heidegger's hermeneutic phenomenology can indeed be accommodated within the interpretative constructionist paradigm, it is argued that, understanding of the lived experience and reality is co-constructed through the interaction between the researcher and the respondent within the hermeneutical circle. Thus, the fit of the hermeneutic phenomenology with the chosen paradigm seems valid. Secondly, the focus of this thesis rests on the sport event volunteers and their lived experiences which leads the research questions to centre around the 'how' rather than the 'why': how do people experience sport event volunteering throughout the pre-event, event and post event stages and what meaning does the activity hold for them?

While descriptive phenomenology is recommended by Lopez and Willis (2004) and Beck (1992) for studies that lack theory and prior research, Parse (1995) as well as Koch (1995) and Draucker (1999) perceive interpretive phenomenology as a mean to explore contextual aspects and structures of lived experiences. Dissimilar to the recommendations by fellow scholars, Wojnar and Swanson (2007) recommend descriptive phenomenology for studies which aim at exploring patterns and similarities among differences and eventually seek to provide a solution for a specific problem. On the other hand, they perceive hermeneutic phenomenology more suitable for research that "*tends to relish nuances, appreciate differences, embrace ambiguity, and seek uniqueness in contextualized lived experiences*" (p.178).

The hermeneutic phenomenology as advocated by Heidegger and Gadamer is perceived as a suitable philosophical and consequently methodological setting for the doctoral study on sport event volunteering as it takes the research beyond the level of

description as advocated by Husserl's phenomenology. It is not the aim of the study to merely describe the experience of sport event volunteering but to advance the understanding of this form of volunteering from a role perspective by uncovering the meaning of sport event volunteer role as it has been experienced by the individual in a specific context - i.e. the context of volunteering a large-scale event that lasts over a couple of days - and how individuals manage and accommodate this temporary role in their overall role repertoire. Furthermore, the philosophical underpinning of this type of phenomenology allows a realistic approach towards managing the involvement of the researcher as a co-producer of the research findings. However in view of the application of interpretative phenomenology to the context of the doctoral thesis following Heidegger's concept of understanding fell short of an in-depth approach towards understanding. As a result, the work by Hans-Georg Gadamer (1900-2002) who refined and built on the philosophical work and hermeneutic phenomenological position of Heidegger of whom he was a student (Flynn, 2006) was adopted.

### 5.4.1 Gadamer's approach towards hermeneutic phenomenology

Gadamer conceptualized understanding as "*a movement between the interpreter's past and present in which understanding and creation of meaning emerge incrementally as the back and forth process take space between parts and the whole*" (Dahlberg *et al.*, 2001:83) which reflects the following concepts by Gadamer and which allowed Heideggers' work on hermeneutic phenomenology to progress further and provides the philosophical foundation of the thesis. For example, the aspect of prejudice reflects the notion of pre-judgment and fore-meaning inherent in Heidegger's work. Like Heidegger, Gadamer links prejudices which are to be understood as pre-understanding (Fleming, 2003) to not only the past but also to the present as tradition in terms of the social and cultural environment that shapes the individual's world of understanding, and pre-judices emerge in a person's understanding of new things. As a consequence, "*prejudices nail us to the past as well as to the future, as understanding includes memories and anticipations*" (Dahlberg *et al.*, 2001:83). In the context of this research, the aspect of prejudice, i.e. pre-understanding of sport event volunteering, applies to the interpretation of data. This limitation to complete openness and to grasp the full meaning of a thing or text as the meaning of something is anticipated before it is fully understood is reflected in Gadamer's (2004 [1975]) referral to understanding as 'horizon' which is "*the range of vision that includes everything that can be seen from a particular vantage point*" (p.301). This horizon that is the outcome of the coexistence of

an individual's experience of something new and one's personal historical tradition in the form of prejudices has to be challenged if something is to understood in a new way: "*applying this [horizon] to the thinking mind, we speak of narrowness of horizon, of the possible expansion of horizon, of the opening up of new horizons, and so forth... A person who has no horizon does not see far enough and hence over-values what is nearest to him. On the other hand to have a horizon means not being limited to what is nearby*" (p. 302). However, by going beyond what is visible requires the horizon to be expanded which is achieved by re-examining, testing and shaping existing viewpoints through new insights. As meaning of new insights derived from and influenced by what we think we know or do not know, past and new horizons merge thus leading to a *'fusion of horizons'*. This metaphor implies that understanding can never be achieved on its own but builds on prior knowledge, one's experiences and historicity. Thus, understanding is in fact an ongoing fusion of horizons (ibid). In view of my engagement as researcher with both the research participants during the data collection process and the interview transcripts during data analysis, my understanding of sport-event volunteering was to be influenced by my own sport event volunteer experience  as well as by insights provided by the interviewee. However in order to allow these insights to emerge in full, van Manen (1997) recommends that the researcher has to venture out and try to look for the hidden rather than the obvious. Furthermore, Gadamer (2004 [1975]) recommends researchers to revisit their pre-understandings in relation to the research topic in order to "*bring before me something that otherwise 'happens behind my back*'" (p.xxix) through a process of self-reflection. Taking this advice to heart, the process of the researcher's fusion of horizons was documented through a reflective journal.

In reference to the hermeneutic circle that was introduced by Heidegger (2007 [1962]), Gadamer (2004 [1975]) elaborates on the understanding of the hermeneutic circle, in terms of the context of text: "*the circular movement of understanding runs backward and forward along the text, and ceases when the text is perfectly understood*" (p.293). With regards to the interview transcript as text, the need to understand what it is like to enact the role of a sport event volunteer thus required me as researcher to enter and engage in the hermeneutic circle both in the text and during the interview to allow a rich text to be generated. This was likely to be achieved by paying close attention to and exploring the accounts of the research participant through further inquiry in the dialogue which inevitably raises the question when to terminate the research process. This

matter is further complicated by the warning of Gadamer about the "*fore-conception of completeness*" (p.294) which builds on the idea that not only "*a text should be completely express its meaning – but also what it says should be the complete truth*" (p.294). In view of these arguments, researchers have to accept that the discovery of meaning is an infinitive process as the one's viewpoint on things is continuously formed through new fusions of horizons and take the courage to decide when sufficient information has been generated to provide a satisfactory answer to the research question. A more tangible idea is provided by Bollnow (1982) who suggests halting inquiries the way "*good conversations tend to end: they finally fall into silence*" (p. 97).

In reference to the choice of a suitable research method, the question arose if there were any predetermined sets of fixed procedures and techniques of conducting hermeneutic phenomenology and to what extent they would have to be adhered to. Again there seems to be a divide among scholars: for example, both Seymour (2006) and Van Manen (1997) do not advocate any particular methods or methodologies for hermeneutic phenomenology. In comparison, Jasper (1994) recommends methods that allow the research participants to provide an account of their lived experiences in a spontaneous way such as audio-taped interviews, group discussion or diaries. Merleau-Ponty (1956) who is a follower of existentialist phenomenology that combines phenomenological description, reduction and interpretation, adds more artistic methods such as poetry, art or photography through which the meanings of experiences may be accessed. In consideration of the analysis of the collected data, Diekelmann *et al.* (1989) and Benner (1994) have developed a step-by-step set of procedures for hermeneutic analysis following Heideggerian beliefs.

Building on the concept of the researcher as explorer, the thesis adopts the perspective of Van Manen (1997) who has devised a discovery-oriented approach that is free of any pre-described method for investigating lived experiences as such. He refers to the metaphor by Heidegger who perceived the phenomenological reflection as the researcher's journey on unmarked paths and tracks through a forest that eventually lead to a clearing where one may find something revealed in its essential nature. Like those paths, methods "*need to be discovered or invented as a response to the question at hand*" (Van Manen, 1997:29). Gadamer (2004 [1975]) takes the issue a step further by suggesting that the "*method of phenomenology and hermeneutics is that there is no method!*" (p.296). In reference of the contrasting viewpoint of using a strictly pre-described set of analysis steps on one hand and Gadamer's generic argument that

there is in fact no specific method as such, Van Manen (1997) provides the researcher with a bridge between these two sides by concluding that "*the broad field of phenomenological scholarship can be considered as a set of guides and recommendations for a principles form of inquiry that neither simply rejects or ignores tradition, no slavishly follows or kneels in front of it*!" (p.85). Thus, the set of procedures for analyzing hermeneutic phenomenological data provided by different authors, e.g. Diekelmann *et al*., (1989) and Benner (1994) are to be perceived as helpful tools rather than obligatory activities.

## 5.5 Sampling of events and research participants

Sampling has been subject to different interpretation: for example Burns and Grove (2005) describe sampling in a few words as "*the process of selecting subjects for research*" (p. 49). Similarly, Jupp (2006) broadly describes sampling as "*techniques used to select groups from a wider population*" (p.270). Other definitions are more elaborate and may include an outline of the purpose of sampling: according to Byrne (1999), "*sampling is the process of selecting units (e.g. people, organisations) from a population of interest so that by studying the sample, the research may fairly generalize the results back to the population from which they are chosen*" (p.25). In comparison, the approach by Ploeg (1999) towards defining sampling is more concerned with the issue of the researcher's preconception towards choosing the sample that could negatively impact on its representativeness. She perceives sampling within the context of social science as "*the randomization technique to pick respondents from a larger population with the purpose of removing selection and other biases*" (p. 36). Whilst these definitions have approached sampling from a generic angle, Silverman (1997) suggests that sample selection in qualitative research should not be driven by questions of representativeness. Instead, it should be concerned with questions about the depth of data such as experiences resulting in information richness. As a consequence, the number of research participants may be significantly less in qualitative research compared to quantitative research and may even consist of a single case only (Patton, 1990). Rather than approaching the debate on sampling as an independent point of discussion, Brady (2006) stresses the need to link the debate about the understanding of sampling to the epistemological foundation of the research, which in the case of this thesis is the idea of knowledge being generated through interaction and interpretation between the researcher and the research participants. In view of the research focus of this thesis that is concerned with exploring and understanding the lived experiences of

sport event volunteers, an extensive engagement of the researcher with the data collection and interpretation process that take place simultaneously and involving a smaller rather than a large number of research participants was anticipated.

The literature on sampling offers researchers a number of different sampling techniques that can be divided into two groups: a) *probability and representative sampling* which includes, for example, random, systematic, cluster and multi-stage sampling and widely used in quantitative research using surveys and using simple and b*) non-probability or judgemental sampling* (Saunders *et al.*, 2007). The latter encompasses a large number of sampling strategies used in qualitative inquiry including quota sampling, purposive sampling, snowball sampling and convenience sampling (Hussey and Hussey, 1997; Silverman, 2006; Saunders *et al.*, 2007). Rather than having to choose one specific sampling strategy, researchers may use a combination of sampling strategies in their research (Creswell, 2007; Saunders *et al.*, 2007). Furthermore, Creswell (2007) warns that researchers have to be ready to accept that sampling techniques may change in the process of research requiring the researcher to be flexible and willing to adapt. This has been the case in this study and will be discussed in the following section. Last but not least the question remains about what has to be sampled. Since the focus of this thesis centres on sport event volunteering, the sampling process was not limited to the volunteers as respondents but also encompassed the selection from sporting events that took place between the second half of 2007 and mid-2008 in Great Britain. Thus, the debate about the sampling techniques adopted in this research made use of the conceptualization framework of Marshall and Rossman (2006) that outlines four aspects or levels of sampling: events, setting, actors and artefacts.

In view of the absence of mega- or major sport events in Great Britain during the three-year period in which the thesis was to be written (2006 – 2009), large-scale sport events in the Great Britain were chosen as research settings for a number of pragmatic reasons: due to the unique nature of these events and that the fact they were hosted in different countries or regions and their size, it was anticipated that they were likely to attract a larger mix of sport event volunteers in comparison to small-scale events that take place at a local level. Consequently, it was anticipated that there was a greater chance to obtain a suitable research sample. In view of the formal structure of these events which usually make a public call for and recruit volunteers via their websites, the access to the samples was expected to be easier as contact with the sport event

volunteers could be established via the event volunteer coordinator. Furthermore, conducting research in Great Britain does not require any translation of the transcripts. This would have been more likely the case if data was to be collected from volunteers helping with sport events that take place abroad.

In view of the sampling process, all large sporting events that took place in Great Britain between mid- 2007 and  mid-2008 were sourced through the internet and researched whether they required volunteers or not. From those who called for volunteers, the contact details of the respective event coordinator were established and an enquiry for permission to access the volunteer labour force was made. With regards to the research participant sampling, the research relied on purposive sampling as this allows the researcher access to information rich cases and to accomplish the research aim (Denzin and Lincoln, 1998; Patton, 2001). A relevant criterion for individuals to qualify as potential research participants was the shared characteristic of their past engagement in sport event volunteering at a large scale-event in Great Britain. In the context of this research, different recruitment strategies were employed for the exploratory and the main field research stage. The first strategy involved negotiating access to sport event volunteers through the event volunteer coordinator. Similar to the formal sign-on of helpers for mega-sporting events like the Olympic Games or the FIFA World Cup through the event organisers, volunteers for large and major sporting events are usually recruited through and formally managed by the organising body which is represented by the event volunteer coordinator. Throughout the sample recruitment process within the context of the thesis, this position emerged as a gatekeeper of the event labour pool and represented a vital channel through which to get into contact with sport event volunteers. Negotiation for access through the event volunteer coordinators was challenged further by the Data Protection Act which prohibited the event volunteer coordinator to forward me event volunteers' contact details without the volunteers' consent. Consequently, I was dependent on the goodwill of the volunteer coordinator to forward letters and emails informing the volunteers about the research and inviting them to participate. The strategy of accessing sport event volunteers through their coordinator proved to be particularly successful when recruiting a research sample from the 2008 World Under 23 Rowing Championship (Strathclyde) where I was issued with a list of contacts by the respective event coordinator. In contrast, this strategy failed in the context of the 2007 European Hockey Championship (Manchester), the 2007 UCI Mountainbike World Championships (Fort Williams), the 2007 UK Ironman contest

(Sherborne) and the 2008 FINA World Swimming Championship (Manchester) where the event coordinator either did not respond to emails or were unresponsive despite their initial offer to help. This might have been due to the intense work load of volunteer coordinators and increasing time pressure as the event draws near. In order to overcome this recurring gatekeeper issue, direct contact with sport event volunteers at the 2008 Paralympic World Cup in Manchester was sought by distributing letters at the sport event myself which introduced myself and my study and invited volunteers to participate in the research and to get in touch with me to arrange for an interview. Besides the fact that I could only approach event volunteers that were within reach of the event audience but not those working 'behind the scenes', this strategy of distributing research invitations among event volunteers failed in the first instance as I was turned away upon arrival by the event manager in charge as I had no official authorisation from the respective event volunteer coordinator to approach the event volunteers.

In view of these difficulties of recruiting research participants and the time constraints posed by the timeframe of the thesis, the third recruitment strategy involved becoming a sport event volunteer myself in order to gain access to sport event volunteers and to recruit a research sample. Therefore, I applied and was accepted as a volunteer at the World Firefighters Games 2008 (WFG'08) which is a biannual international multi-sport event that took place in Liverpool from 24th August to 03rd September 2008. Over 2800 competitors participated in the Games that included 70 sports and involved approximately 1000 volunteers. During my engagement as sport event volunteer, I distributed 253 research invitations which generated a response rate of 28 event volunteers of which 18 participated in interviews at the beginning of October 2008.

Transparency appeared as a dominant ethical consideration throughout the sampling process. For example, the question emerged if I should make my reasons for becoming a sport event volunteer at the World Firefighters Games 2008 (WFG'08) and my intention to use the event as setting for recruiting a sample known to the volunteer coordinator. In view of the requirement of good research practice, I informed the volunteer coordinator about my motives and the overall purpose of my involvement in the event and asked for permission prior to the event to hand out information letters to the event volunteers during and after my daily volunteer work. The Data Protection Act emerged as another key issue with regards to the process of recruiting research

participants: for example, the list with the email contacts for the volunteers of the WU23 Rowing Championship was provided by the event volunteer with the understanding that the contact details served the purpose of the study only and were not to be shared with third parties. In reference to approaching sport event volunteers at the WFG'08 in Liverpool, the event volunteer coordinator authorized the handing out of information letters to event volunteers under the condition that volunteers were not be asked for their names and contact details. Instead, they had to refer themselves to me if they wanted to participate in my research.

## 5.6 Data collection method

With reference to Gadamer's quote "*the method of phenomenology and hermeneutics is that there is no method*!" (2004 [1975]:285), Gadamer is sceptical of valuing any specific research method to guarantee true understanding and is defiant of advocating a particular tool to undertake the process of understanding. This view point is shared by Van Manen (1997) who has devised a discover-oriented approach that is free of any pre-described method for investigating lived experiences. In view of the particular features of lived experience, e.g. the retrospective nature of reflection of lived experience as experiences which can only be studied after they have occurred (Van Manen, 1997, Kahn, 2000) and the intrinsic nature or privacy of lived experience, i.e. the experience of a situation or activity differs from individual to individual (Sprigge, 1969) and can only be shared through the individual's own words (Kahn, 2000; Gadamer, 2004 [1975]; Ajjawi and Higgs, 2007) the decision was made to collect data through interviews. Also, in view of the hermeneutic circle in which understanding is co-constructed with the research participant and experiential accounts are generated through dialogue between the researcher and the respondent, this data collection method seemed most suitable. In view of the focus on the individual's lived experiences and  the participation of both the researcher and the participant in the research process, focus groups were perceived as less appropriate although the contribution of group members to the conversation could potentially assist specific experiences to unfold and meanings to emerge (Sorrell and Redmond, 1995).

In line with the understanding that lived experience is always something past (Gadamer, 2004 [1975]; Van Manen, 1997), interviews took place after the event had been staged and the volunteer involvement had come to an end. In line with the hermeneutic phenomenological nature of the study, interviews were focused around

'*grand-tour questions'* (Sorrell and Redmond, 1995:1119) as an initial starting point such as '*What was it like to be an event volunteer?*' which allowed "*the opening up, and keeping open, of possibilitie*s" (Gadamer, 2004 [1975]:226). These questions evolved into semi-structured questions as they were informed by the stages of the event volunteer engagement, i.e. the time before the event took place, during the event and after it had finished. For example, having started off with the general question '*What was it like to be a volunteer at the World Firefighters Games 2008?*' that served as an icebreaker and to allow researchers to access their episodic memory related to their volunteer experience, questions relating to the pre-event stage included '*How did you get involved in the Games?*', '*Which jobs did you apply for?*', '*What was training day like?*', '*Can you remember your first day as event volunteer? What was it like?*' Other than that the interview content was shaped by the responses and narratives of the interviewee who was encouraged by unstructured, open-ended questions, e.g. '*What do you mean by that*?', '*How did this make you feel*?' to elaborate further on specific information provided. This reflected the concept of the hermeneutic circle in the form of ongoing interaction and mutual engagement in the research process by both the interviewee and myself as researcher. As a result, the interview evolved into to conversation, a dialogue.

The interviews took place in Liverpool at the beginning of October 2008 which was one month after the WFG'08 had finished. They were predominantly conducted in the Merseyside Fire and Rescue Headquarters where I was allowed as a courtesy by the event organizer to use one of the meeting rooms depending on availability. At other times interviews were carried out in hotel lobbies in the city centre. Research participants were asked prior to the interview to provide written informed consent to participate and for the interview to be audio-recorded. Furthermore, they were informed that they could request for the voice recorder to be switched off and decide to withdraw from the study at any time. Finally, they were confirmed that their names and those of the person they named and/or referred to during the interview would be replaced with fictitious ones in the transcript as well as in the thesis in order to guarantee the anonymity of research participants and the confidentiality regarding the management of the information shared with the researcher.

In view of the need to access the episodic memory of the research participants involved as sport event volunteers at the WFG'08, they were encouraged to bring external memory aids in the form of memorabilia from this event to the interview, such as

photos, newspaper clippings, the volunteer T-Shirt and/or other types of souvenirs to the interview in order to facilitate the recall of particular situations, thoughts and feelings. Van den Hoven and Eggen (2008) refer to these types of external memory aids as "*memory cues*" (p.439) and "*physical artefacts*" (p.439) that "*serve as a memory landscape*" (p.439). Referring to the findings of their study on how souvenirs can cue memories, they conclude that souvenirs are powerful memory cues as they are linked to memories and can assist with recalling and restructuring specific moments that occurred in a person's past. Similarly, Glos and Umaschi (1997) and Hodges *et al.* (2006) suggest that souvenirs should be seen as a useful research tool as their usage facilitates storytelling or the sharing of recollected memories with others. Their arguments are supported by the successful use of photos to stimulate people's memories in past research: for example, the study of Bourgeois (1990) established how the quality of the conversation with interviewees improved through the use of photographs. Similar findings were produced by Kapur *et al.* (2002) who confirm that reviewing photographs as part of the interview process improve the research respondents' ability to remember past experiences. Hodges *et al.* (2006) explain the success of photographs as memory stimulant by referring to the work of Brewer (1986; 1986) who established the important role of visual images in memory functioning.

The interviews were recorded verbatim and transcribed. After each meeting with former event volunteers, I wrote an initial summary of my interpretation of the information provided during the interview, including specific characteristics of each interviewee and what I had learnt from myself during the encounter. This allowed me to keep a mental picture of each research participant and a record of my own change of perceptions. These were to be revisited later to assess to what extent my understanding of sport event volunteering had changed as a result of writing this thesis.

### 5.7 Data analysis

In view of the rich qualitative data that emerged from the interviews, a suitable approach towards data analysis was required that accommodated the recommendation by Gadamer (2004 [1975]) who believes that the analysis of texts should adhere to and reflect the concept of the hermeneutic circle which entails the movement from the whole to part and from the part back to whole to ensure a systematic process of understanding to occur. At the same time the notion that there is no true method (Gadamer 2004 [1975]) had to be considered which rejects the idea of following

prescribed data analysis methods. Instead, my approach towards data analysis was informed but not dominated by the work of Van Manen (1997) who provides ideas how data can be analysed within the context of hermeneutic phenomenology. In order to uncover the structure of lived experiences and their meaning, he recommends the identification and isolation of themes which he describes as a tool "*to give shape to the shapeless*" (p.89). At the same time he warns of the assumption that the full meaning of a particular lived experiences can be established through theme formulation as lived experiences are intrinsic phenomena belonging to their 'owner', i.e. the research participants. Instead, by identifying thematic aspects of a particular experience, the researcher merely gets an idea of the notion what the experience was like. In view of this thesis, isolating themes from individual accounts of the lived experiences of sport event volunteering at a particular event therefore aims at unpicking these experiences in order to better understand what it is like to be a sport event volunteering using the role-perspective as a platform.

Van Manen (1997) suggests that researchers can make use of any or all of the following three approaches towards identifying and isolating themes from a phenomenon in the text namely the holistic or sententious approach, the selective or highlighting approach and the detailed or line-by-line approach. The first approach refers to the reading of the text as a whole in which the reader tries to identify the overall meaning and significance of the individual research participant's account by articulating it in a sententious phrase. The second approach looks for different statements and phrases that standout thus highlighting or reveal particular aspects of the experience which are then underlined. The third and last approach is concerned with the individual sentences and sentence clusters, again looking for particular information that aims to reveal the nature of the phenomenon experienced.

In view of the hermeneutic circle principle, applying these three approaches to the context of the thesis seemed fitting as it allowed me to systematically break down interviewee accounts into parts in the form of phrases and keywords. These were sorted into various themes and subthemes resulting in a vast amount of segmented data which had to be re-organised to allow re-contextualisation to occur thus making 'parts' into a 'whole' again. Upon reflection on this process I found it very challenging not to get lost in the data and to establish clear linkages between themes and subthemes as at times themes seem to overlap. Approaching the lived experiences

from a temporal perspective linked to a role-related viewpoint, allowed me to structure the 'whole' of the data into pre-event/role entry stage, event/role enactment stage and post-event/role-exit stage. This way, the different themes and subthemes could be arranged more systematically. At this stage the question arose if computer software should be used to facilitate the analysis process. Although I had attended an NVivo-workshop to familiarise myself with computer-assisted qualitative analysis of data, I decided to analyse the data collected in the process of this study manually. This decision derived from the need of researchers undertaking hermeneutic phenomenological studies to maintain a strong orientation towards the phenomenon and to connect with data that which is subject to their interpretation (Van Manen, 1997). However, as suggested by Denzin and Lincoln (1998), the researcher's closeness to the data is potentially at risk when the software programmes are used as researchers may become detached from their data (Denzin and Lincoln, 1998). Furthermore, Fielding and Lee (1998) warn of the danger of researchers losing sight of context and meaning when using data analysis software.

Another challenge to the analysis of my data was the interviewees' narrations of specific occurrences in the form of anecdotes which raised the questions how to analyse these. Anecdotes are generally defined as "*short narratives of a particular incident or occurrence of an interesting nature*" (Allen, 1991:40). Thus, particular events and situation that form the core of anecdotes are recalled and retold in the form of a story. Bell (1994) values anecdotes as a device that facilitates both the teller and the listener with making sense of an event or a particular situation under discussion: "t*elling anecdotes is an everyday way to make sense of our experience to ourselves or to add sense to things that have happened to us*" (p.360). Having used the collection of anecdotes as a research method to study communication in Ghanaian communities, Kwansah-Aidoo (2001:360) acknowledges the value of anecdotes in terms of their ability "*to capture contextual subtleties*" that tend to go amiss when conventional research methods are employed. Similarly, Van Manen (1997) perceives anecdotes as a methodological tool that makes "*some notion that easily eludes as comprehensible*" (p.116). These observations relate back to the Greek meaning of anecdotes as 'things not given out' or 'things unpublished' which when related to people's lives depicts anecdotes as "*a bibliographical incident, a minute passage of private life which are hard to capture in any other manner*" (Fadiman, 1985:xxi).

These findings highlight the importance of anecdotes that emerged from the sport event volunteers' accounts during the interview as they hold hidden meanings and information that may provide new insights into the lived experiences of sport event volunteering. With regards to the analysis of anecdotes, Van Manen (1997) stresses the need to recognizes the 'point or cogency' that is inherent in an anecdote: "*without this point an anecdote is merely loose sand in a hand that disperses upon gathering it*" (p.68). Thus anecdotes move beyond being a mere story that is recalled and retold to a narrative with an underlying meaning which the researcher has to uncover by removing irrelevant aspects of the particular story. However rather than approaching and presenting anecdotes in isolation to the 'parts' of the text, it can be argued that anecdotes have to be contextualized by relating them to the specific context that trigger the recall and the telling of a particular situation in the first place by linking them to relevant themes.

Once themes that emerged from the application of these approaches had been identified, they had to be explored further by discussing them in the wake of literature findings and communicated to the reader. At this stage, Van Manen (1997) calls for the need of phenomenological writing that presents findings in such a way that the text allows the reader to "*see that which shines through*" (p.130) - in other words, the presentation of research findings has to capture the notion of lived experiences in such a way that their meaning can be grasped by the reader. Furthermore he highlights the fact that lived experiences are recalled by the research participants resulting in recollective thinking that is interpreted by both the participant and the researcher and which has to be brought to light through writing through reflective writing. This form of writing has been referred to by Cassell *et al.* (2005) as "*the researcher's writing herself/himself in thus adopting a subjective rather than an objective role in the research*" (p.33). Taking into consideration that the researcher becomes a research participant in his/her own right in hermeneutic phenomenology through the interpretation of data his/her voice is as important as the voice of the research participant. In contrast to Husserl's phenomenology where researchers are required to bracket their existing thoughts and understanding of the research subject as mentioned earlier, the concept of 'being-in-the-world' applies to the researcher who is expected to acknowledge existing influences in the form of a) fore-havings which are his/her knowledge and assumptions; b) fore-sights that entail his/her socio-cultural perspectives of things and c) fore-ceptions that derive from notions about possible research findings (Benner, 1994). As the researcher undergoes the research process,

his/her perception and knowledge of the research subject and related aspects is destined to change as the researcher becomes himself/herself subject to the 'fusion of horizon', i.e. the researcher's presuppositions change as new insights are gained providing him with a new viewpoint (Van Manen, 1997). It is through reflexive writing that this process of change is made evident and has been applied to this particular research by presenting the reader at the end of the thesis with an account of how my perception of and attitude towards sport event volunteering has changed including thoughts and feelings that I encountered whilst collecting and analysing the data. Integrating my voice and my interpretation of the information provided by the research participants into the text proved challenging as there was the risk of stifling the voice of the research participants by focusing too much on my interpretation and ignoring the need to present the data to the reader in such a way that he/she can develop their own understanding of what it is like to be a sport event volunteer by letting data speak for themselves (Van Manen, 1997) and to empower him/her to draw their own conclusions. Having read journal articles and theses that have adopted a hermeneutic phenomenological approach, e.g. Williamson's hermeneutical phenomenological study of women's experiences of postnatal depression and health professional interventions (2005), I was aware of the difficulty keeping this balance between the relationship in this eternal triangle between the research question, the interviewees and my position as researcher.

As advocated by Van Manen (1997), there are various ways in which working and presenting the findings can be approached, either individually or in combination. I decided to combine various approaches which I feel provide a deeper insight into the lived experiences of sport event volunteering and the meaning it held for the individual research participants. The first approach is the thematic approach in which themes and subthemes are developed and the finding chapter is divided into sub-chapters and sections that explore specific aspects of interviewee's account of sport event volunteering. The analytical approach in which data is reconstructed into stories and examined for anecdotes which are then used to highlight the relevant themes, was adopted. A further approach that has been employed is of exegetical nature as it entails integration of the work and perspective of other authors. Whilst Van Manen (1997) suggests that this approach explores and relates to "*available phenomenological human science literature*" (p.172), I extended this approach by making of use of secondary findings that may not be of phenomenological nature but were helpful to

explore the different themes in greater detail as only little research on the lived experiences of volunteers has been carried out in the past. Furthermore, the phenomenological descriptions of the lived experiences of sport event volunteers were analysed for what Van Manen (1997:172) refers to as the "*existentials of temporality*" which are temporality, i.e. lived time which has been subdivided into pre, event, event and post-event, spatiality (lived space, e.g. the experience of space within the Echo arena and other event venues), corporeality (lived body) and sociality (lived relationships to others). The latter aspect relates well to the role-concept mentioned in Chapter 1 wherein the actor a) temporarily occupies a specific space; b) performs a specific act which may require him to dress up thus physically becoming someone else and c) establishes a relationships with other their actors and their roles, the director who manages the play and the audience. Last but not least, I allocate the sport volunteer a specific role based on their accounts, feelings and emotions by comparing them to a character that holds a specific function. The rationale for this approach refers back to the perspective of sport event volunteering as a role and the need to provide new insights into what it is like to be a sport event volunteer. Comparing the sport event volunteers to a specific character allowed me to provide my own interpretation which is supported by academic underpinning and an understanding of sport event volunteering. Furthermore, it provides the reader with a more tangible perspective of sport event volunteering. However, as these personal interpretations are exclusively mine, they will be briefly introduced at the beginning and explored in more detail at the end of the finding chapters in order to provide the reader with the opportunity to develop their own initial understanding of sport event volunteering based on the discussion of themes and quotes of the interviewees.

## 5.8 Research assessment through qualitative criteria of rigour

Verification in research based on evaluation criteria such as reliability and validity in order to assess the quality of research originally stems from a positivist tradition. Whilst the former entails the notion of replicability of a study and the likelihood of generating the same results using similar research methods the latter relates to the accurate and truthful measures used to meet set research objectives (Joppe, 2000). Although efforts to transfer and apply the concepts of reliability and validity from the positivist paradigm to the realm of qualitative researchers finds supporters such as Patton (2001) who believes that qualitative research design and analysis should be guided by the concepts of both reliability and validity to ensure research quality, others have criticized such

undertakings as inadequate. For example, Ely *et al.* (1991) argue that "*the language of positivist research is not congruent with or adequate to qualitative work*" (p.95). Similarly Stenbecka (2000) rejects the idea of reliability being relevant to qualitative research and states that "*in a qualitative study if discussed as a criterion, the consequence is rather that the study is not good*" (p.552). Instead, he calls for qualitative research to have quality concepts of its own.  His call has been answered by a range of alternative approaches towards the verification of qualitative research, such as the evaluation of research quality according to the paradigm that has been adopted for a study.  Advocates for such an advance are Healy and Peery (2000) as well as Denzin and Lincoln (2005) who allocate different sets of criteria to specific paradigms: for example objectivity and reliability as well as internal and external validity of the positivist and postpositivist paradigm are traded for a) *trustworthines*s which relates to the 'auditability' of the research in terms of the ability of the reader to monitor the actions of the researcher in the form of the clarification his/her theoretical, philosophical and methodological decisions in the text (Koch, 1996); b) credibility in the form of the truthfulness of the research findings (Patton 2001); c) transferability that refers to the ability of the research findings to be applied by the reader to contexts outside the specific study and relate to the readers own experiences (Sandelowski, 1986) as well as ability of the reader to relate the researcher's interpretation of the data (Guba and Lincoln, 1985); and d.) confirmability which derives from the certification of the data from which the researcher's interpretations were developed and from the consistent interpretation of that data (Halpern, 1983 cited by Akkerman *et al.*, 2008:261) within the constructivist paradigm.

Further research quality criteria are advocated by a number of authors upon which qualitative research should stand and withhold critical appraisal: for example Guba and Lincoln (1989) propose dependability to which Koch (1994) and Whitehead (2004) add 'leaving of decision trail'. Other criteria include believability and plausibility (Koch and Harrington, 1998), transparency during data analysis (Crist and Tanner, 2003), and accountability (Maggs-Rapport, 2001). Possible techniques to enhance the credibility of qualitative research may include triangulation of data to confirm or challenge the interpretation of the researcher (Eisner, 1991) or an extended stay in the field (Denzin and Lincoln, 2003). However, the measures of verification may also vary amongst qualitative research approaches within the same paradigms. In the case of ethnography, Glaser and Strauss (1967) cite the empirical fit of the research, its

workability and relevance in terms of the research addressing existing issues and the modifiability of theory allowing its refinement over time as evaluation criteria. In his work on interpretative biography, Denzin (1989) cites interpretation as a criterion to assess the quality of a biography in the form of the researcher's ability to highlight his or her prior understanding about the context and integrating it in his work whilst providing a rich and contextualized description. This perspective is supported by Plummer (1983) who highlights the need of the researcher to outline existing ideas and fore-knowledge in order to prevent unaccounted bias and viewpoints to emerge. In addition, Plummer (1983) calls for validity in the form of comparing elements of the narrator's account with official records and possibly narratives provided by other research participants. Other authors approach validity within qualitative research by developing different types of validity. For example, Kvale (1996) distinguishes between a) validity as quality of *craftsmanship* that includes "*checking, questioning and theorizing knowledge*" (p.36) and involves the scrutiny of  not only how research was carried out, i.e. which research methods were used, but also to assess the content and the purpose of the of the research;  b) communicative validity that is centres around the knowledge that evolves and is generated from the dialogues between the researcher and the respondent;  and c) pragmatic validity that trades the justification of the research question, the design of the study and mode of data analysis for the applicability of the knowledge gained, i.e. to what extent do the results of the study allow actions or changes to take place or interventions to develop. According to Kvale (1996) these various types of validity of a study may be achieved through the transparency of research decisions, the delivery of clear research results and a convincing conclusion thus making further demands for validity obsolete. In their article on validity and qualitative research, Cho and Trent (2006) refer to transactional and transformational validity as two other forms of validity that have evolved in qualitative research in the past years. 'Transactional validity' applies to the interaction between the researcher and the informant and may be obtained through member checking, bracketing or triangulation and serves the purpose of making interpretations credible. At the same time, they warn of the danger of blindly relying on the application of set validity tools as research is eventually subject to the researcher's interpretation of data that results in the subjective construction of reality. In comparison, Cho and Trent (2006) suggest that 'transformational validity' assesses research according to its potential to "*achieve an eventual ideal*" (p.320) and distinguish various approaches such as a) '*crystallization*' that marries different research approaches and serves the purpose of "*changing one's relationship to one's work"*

(Richardson, 1997:251); b) 'catalytic validity' that is informed by the idea of the research participants' empowerment (Scheurich, 1996) and c) Kvale's 'pragmatic validity' mentioned earlier.

Whilst this palette of research quality criteria seems rather daunting as it leads to the question which criteria is in fact applicable to this thesis, the review of the different appraisal criteria for rigour used in past hermeneutic phenomenological studies by De Witt and Ploeg (2006) puts this question into perspective: they argue that most of these criteria are of generic nature and inappropriate for studies that are informed by hermeneutic phenomenology as they do not comply with its philosophical underpinning. Instead, based on the work by Madison (1988), Van Manen (1997) and contemporary literature on the use of hermeneutic phenomenology in nursing (e.g. Sandelowski, 1986; Annells, 1996; Draucker, 1999; Kahn, 2000; Fleming, 2003) they propose an alternative framework of expression of rigour which was applied to the study. These are divided into criteria that reflect the research process and standards that attend to both the research process and the research outcome (De Witt and Ploeg, 2006): the research outcome is addressed by a) balanced integration that is achieved through the fit of the overall philosophical theme with the research question and the researcher and b) openness. The latter is established through the sustained researcher's orientation and attunement to the phenomenon of the study and maintaining a systematic account of the decisions made throughout the study in the form of a reflexive journal. Criteria that aim at evaluating the research outcome include c) concreteness/contextuality that is generated by presenting the study findings in such a way that the reader is able to place him or herself in the context of the phenomenon, i.e. the reader can imagine what it is like to be in the specific situation, and may possibly refer to similar experiences and d) resonance that refers to the impact of written study findings on the reader in the form of a striking, moving experience as the meaning of the text is understood. Last but not least, the potential of the phenomenological interpretation to be recognized after the text has been read, i.e. actualisation, is the fifth criteria to assess the quality of the research outcome.

I decided to use this framework by De Witt and Ploeg (2006) to assess the quality of my research as it seems fitting to the context of hermeneutic inquiry into the lived experiences of sport event volunteering.

**5.9 Conclusion**

In this chapter, the research design including research perspectives and research approach, the method of sampling, data collection and data analysis were described and discussed and links to the chosen research context were established. The chapter was furthermore underpinned by my reflections on choices and decisions made and my experiences with the sampling and research participant recruitment processes. The following chapter provides an overview of the themes and subthemes that emerged from the data and highlights the application of the hermeneutic circle during the data analysis process. This is followed by the individual finding chapters that present the research findings and are structured according to role entry reflecting the pre-event stage, role enactment during the event and role exit as a feature of the post-event period.

# CHAPTER SIX

## Understanding the lived experience of being a sport event volunteer

### 6.0 Introduction

This chapter is concerned with the presentation and discussion of the findings and presents the themes and subthemes that explicate the interpretative dimensions of the meaning of being a sport event volunteer using the World Firefighters Games 2008 (WFG'08) as research context. The interpretation of the lived experiences of sport event volunteers derived from my immersion in the accounts of eighteen interviewees who were working as volunteers at the WFG'08. Therefore, the understanding of what it is like to be a sport event volunteer is a co-production of both the research participants that provided me with their stories and viewpoints, and myself as researcher whose comprehension of the content of the dialogue with the research participants is reflected in the analysis and interpretation of this content.

### 6.1 The hermeneutic circle approach towards interpretation

As the phenomenological approach of this study is informed by the hermeneutic circle, the presentation of the interpretation in this study is concerned with reflecting the ongoing movement between 'the 'whole' and 'the parts' (Dahlberg *et al.*, 2001). As the circle is perceived as a closed shape, the question emerged where and how to begin with the interpretation of data – should the interpretation of the data begin with the smallest element, i.e. the sub-themes and build towards the overarching theme or should this process be reversed, i.e. first discussing the themes and then exploring the sub-themes? Both these approaches which are commonly used in hermeneutic phenomenological studies are in fact linear in nature and do not reflect the loop of the hermeneutic circle. In order for the latter to be achieved, the interpretations of the lived experiences of the WFG'08 volunteers are presented as follows: first, the overarching themes representing 'the whole' are introduced and briefly described. This is followed by an exploration of the sub-themes – 'the parts' - from which the core meanings emerge before concluding by returning to the overarching themes. In view of the division of this chapter into three main sub-chapters reflecting the three stages of role-performance - role entry, role enactment and role exit – it may be argued that three separate hermeneutic circles occur. In order to fully adhere to the concept of hermeneutic circle, these have to be integrated into and perceived as another set of

'parts' that constitute the whole. Consequently, this chapter presents the 'double-loop' of the hermeneutic circle in the form of two levels on which movement between the whole and the parts occur: representing the first loop, 'the whole' in the form of an overall interpretation of the '*WFG'08 volunteer as sojourner in the liminal zone'* is presented who moves through three phases which are the role entry, the role enactment and the role exit stage resulting in five subthemes which represent 'the parts' of 'the whole' in this first loop. These sub-themes are a) *role entry: the adventure tourist* b) *role enactment: the care-taker, care-giver & care-seeker; the changeling; the bricoleur* and c) *role exit: the bereaved*. In the second loop, these 'parts' then function as 'the whole' that links to another set of 'parts' in the form of respective sub-subthemes. For example, the theme '*the adventure tourist*' that is a feature of the role entry stage represents a 'whole' and consists of the respective sub-themes which are a) *receiving the role script and role cues* b) *sense of role (un) preparedness* c) *role accommodation – making volunteering fit* d) *expectation of structure* e) *role ambiguity* f) *un-everydaynes*s, and make up 'the parts'.

The second loop leads back to the first loop, i.e. the overarching theme '*the WFG'08 volunteer as sojourner in the liminal zone*', in order to demonstrate the ongoing nature of the hermeneutic circle as depicted in Figure 6.

| Loop 2: the 'Parts' | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Role Entry:** | **Role enactment:** | **Role enactment:** | **Role enactment:** | **Role exit:** |
| - Receiving the role script and role-cues<br>- Sense of role (un)preparedness,<br>- Role accommodation making volunteering fit<br>- Expectation of structure<br>- Un-everydayness | - Empathy<br>- Reciprocity: give and take<br>- Trust | - The temporary fugitive<br>- Meeting the "remembered-being back in the past<br>- Becoming and un-becoming | - Application of own standards<br>- Following the script<br>- Keeping a role balance<br>- Making use of different types of skills<br>- Being creative<br>- Self-empowerment | - The experience of vacuum<br>- Feeling of sadness and loss<br>- Feeling lonely<br>- Return to everydayness<br>- Mixed emotions<br>- Timing of role exit<br>- Nature of role exit: Voluntary versus un-voluntary role exit<br>- Getting closure<br>- Coping |

**Loop 1: The 'Whole'**

The Sojourner in the liminal zone

**Loop 1: the 'Parts'**

**Role Entry:**

The adventure tourist

**Role enactment**:

a.) The care-taker, care-giver & care-seeker & care-receiver

b.) The changeling

c.) The bricoleur

**Role exit:**

The bereaved

↓

**Loop 2: The "Whole"**

**Figure 6: Application of the two loops of the hermeneutic circle to the study**

**6.2 The use of metaphors**

The overarching theme as well as the sub-themes of the second loop are derived from the metaphorical interpretation of the findings. The decision was informed by the work of a number of scholars such as Elgin (1993) and Jensen (2006) who describe metaphors as links between the known and the unknown: reflecting Schoen's (1983) understanding that metaphors act as processes that produce new angles from which to perceive and view the world, Jensen (2006) describes the metaphor as a means to express complex concepts by "*enabling the connection of information about a familiar concept to another familiar concept, leading to a new understanding where the process of comparison between the two concepts acts as generators for meaning*" (p.5). In contrast, Greene (1994) perceives metaphors as facilitators of sense-making and enhancing understanding as a metaphor allows us to "*make creative sense of what is around us and what we carry in our memories*" (p. 456). This perspective on metaphors is shared by Gadamer (1976) who, in relation to the hermeneutic circle that is based on "*a polarity between familiarity and strangeness*" (p.295), argues that metaphorical language allows access to and understanding of insights that are generated through the hermeneutic circle. In view of this study, the viewpoints of Jensen, Greene and Gadamer are reflected: comparing and linking two familiar concepts together, e.g. the concept of adventure tourism and individual themes like the sense of uncertainty which by themselves are familiar constructs, the new understanding of sport event volunteers in terms of the volunteers being depicted as adventure tourists, is created. At the same time, the underpinning of this study by the hermeneutic phenomenological approach and thus by the hermeneutic circle, allows the use of metaphors to link pre-existing knowledge with new insights. Thus, the use of metaphors allowed me to make the newly gained insights into what it is like to be a sport event volunteer more visible and to promote my own understanding and that of the outside world of the volunteers' lived experiences or 'being' – or in reference to the work of Gadamer (1976), the metaphorical use of language in this study gave me access to the volunteers' experience of 'being'.

Drulák (2004) distinguishes between three types of metaphors: sedimented, conventional and unconventional. He suggests that sedimented metaphors are usually presented in the form of statements and derive from common background knowledge, thus they do not require further explanation. Similarly, conventional metaphors are "*automatic, effortless and generally established as a mode of thought among members*

*of a linguistic community*" (Turner, 1989:55), thus no clarification is needed. In contrast, the unconventional metaphor challenges the common sense as it brings together two areas of experience that are not congruent, in a novel and creative way (Drulák, 2004). By linking two familiar concepts in a new and unfamiliar way, unconventional metaphors allow the learning of new knowledge and gaining new insights (ibid; Petrie and Oshlag, 1993; Lakoff, 1993; Sticht, 1993) which is in line with the description by Jensen (2006) outlined earlier. In relation to this study, the overarching and sub-themes that are provided in the subsequent chapters, appear as unconventional metaphors which at first challenge the common sense of the reader, e.g. how can the WFG'08 be perceived as sojourner, adventure tourist, bricoleur etc.? Each of these metaphors are the product of the unusual combination of familiar concepts which provide myself and the reader with a new perspective or - keeping the vocabulary in the context of Gadamer's hermeneutic phenomenology – a 'fusion of horizon'.

For example in view of the first loop, the idea of the WFG'08 volunteer sojourner in a liminal zone can be briefly explained as follows: originating from the Latin word 'subdiunare' which means 'to spend the day somewhere', its principle meaning is "a *person that stays temporarily in a place*" (Fowler and Fowler, 1991:1156). Early usage of this term can be traced back to the Bible: *"for we are strangers before thee, and sojourners, as were all our fathers: our days on the earth are a shadow, and there is none abiding"* (Chronicle I, The Holy Bible, 1999, 29:15). In this early description, sojourners are depicted as temporary rather than permanent residents in a place: the sojourner comes to a place, stays for certain stretch of time and leaves again to return home or to move on. The metaphor of the sojourner is applicable to the context of sport event volunteer role for the following reasons: similar to the sojourner who leaves to stay somewhere else for a while before returning to the place he/she has come from or moving on to another location, the sport event volunteer temporarily enters the role of a helper at sporting events which themselves are of "*limited time duration; that is they are not continuous*" (Dimmock and Tiyce, 2001:356). Once the role has been enacted, he/she leaves it and moves on to another role or returns to existing roles - thus the sport event volunteer as sojourner can be perceived as being temporally and spatially displaced. The latter perspective relates to the concepts of the 'liminal/liminoid zone' that that is defined by Getz (2008) as "*a zone that must be delineated in both spatial and temporal terms*" (p.178). In the case of the research respondents the liminal zone refers to the sport event environment including the volunteer role that the individual has to temporarily perform and which take him/her to the specific geographical areas in

which he/she enacts the volunteer role. Consequently, the sport event volunteer can be seen as being temporarily suspended from his/her everyday-reality.

The development of other unconventional metaphors that are used in the thesis is explained in each of the following finding chapters that outline the two levels of subthemes that form both 'the whole' and the 'parts' before revisiting and exploring the overarching theme '*the WFG'08 volunteer as sojourner in a liminal zone*' in more depths.

## 6.3 Conclusion

This chapter has outlined how the hermeneutic has been applied to the interpretation and presentation of the data by developing the 'double-loop' of the hermeneutic circle. Furthermore, it has provided a brief overview of the overarching theme and two levels of sub-themes and has highlighted the use of metaphors for the interpretation of the findings.

# CHAPTER SEVEN

## Role Entry – Entering the WFG'08 volunteer role

"*The adventure in its specific nature and charm, is a form of experiencing*"

George Simmel (1971 [1911]:197)

"*The traveler, then, was working at something; the tourist was*
*a pleasure seeker. The traveler was active; he went*
*strenuously in search of people, of adventure, of experience.*
*The tourist is passive; he expects interesting things to happen*
*to him. He goes 'sight-seeing', he expects everything to be done to him and for him.*
*Thus foreign travel ceased to be an activity—an experience,*
*an undertaking—and became instead a commodity*"

Dan Boorstin, *The Lost Art of Travel* (1967)

### 7.0 Introduction

This section explores the lived experience of entry to volunteering by helpers involved with staging the World Firefighters Games 2008 (WFG'08) into their role as sport event volunteers. During the data analysis process, the following questions emerged which centred around the point of time of role entry: when does role entry commence? Is role entry the moment when the individual learns that he or she has been accepted as sport event volunteer by the event organiser, i.e. does role entry entail the pre-event period? Or does role entry begin with the start of the event when the actual volunteer work takes place? Referring to the work on socialisation by Bauer *et al.* (1998), Ashforth (2000) distinguishes between a) *role preparatory stage* where individuals prepare themselves for the role entry and b) *role encounter* which refers to the moment when the individual comes into touch with role reality, i.e. the genuine nature, content and demands of the role, and that is accommodated through role management techniques. Applying these concepts to the context of the WFG'08, the role preparatory stage is perceived as being equivalent to the pre-event stage which entails volunteer training once the volunteers had been recruited. In contrast, the role encounter of the individual

and his/her confrontation with the reality of the 'Games' world' may be understood as the time period in which the actual event takes place and volunteer work is carried out. Having described the two role entry stages of the WFG'08 volunteer role, the following section introduces and discusses the WFG'08 volunteers' lived experiences of the role preparatory and initial role encounter stage, starting with a brief outline of the overall theme of the WFG'08 volunteer as '*the adventure tourist'*. This is followed by the exploration of the subthemes that encompass a) *receiving the role script and role-cues*; b) *sense of role (un)preparedness*; c) *role accommodation - making volunteering fit*; d) *expectation of structure* and e) *un-everydayness.*

## 7.1 The WFG'08 volunteer as adventure tourist

The accounts of people's entry into the sport event volunteer role unveiled an imbalance in expectations and feelings of anxiety that resulted from uncertainty in general and in relation to role ambiguity in particular. These findings led to the initial interpretation of volunteering at the WFG'08 as an adventure and the volunteers as adventurers. The term 'adventure*'* holds multiple meanings that range from being "*an unusual and exciting experience, a daring enterprise and/or a hazardous activity, a commercial speculation*" (Allen, 1991:17) to "*an experience that involves uncertainty of outcome*" (Hopkins and Putnam, 1993: 6). Swarbrooke *et al.* (2003) enhance the multiple meanings of the term adventure by concurring that it holds more than one characteristic. They summarize the key qualities of adventure as being "*uncertain outcomes, danger and risk, challenge, anticipated rewards, novelty, stimulation and excitement, escapism and separation, exploration and discovery, absorption and focus, contrasting emotions*" (p.9). Some of these qualities are reflected in the interviewees' accounts and subthemes that are explored in this chapter supporting the notion of the WFG'08 volunteer as adventurer. However at the same time, from the analysis of the data emerged the volunteers' experience of being prepared or unprepared and their need and expectation of structure in terms of role allocation and role clarity. These findings shaped the adventure-metaphor further by merging it with the idea of the WFG'08 volunteer stepping into the role of a tourist whose journey is planned out and structured through information, itineraries and activity schedules which consequently shapes the expectations with regards to the tourist experience (MacCannell, 2001; Buckley, 2006). The interpretation of the volunteer as adventure tourist will be revisited and explored in more detail at the end of this chapter after the sub-themes have been presented and discussed.

**7.2 The role preparatory stage: volunteer recruitment and training**

The recruitment of volunteers for the WFG'08 was predominantly undertaken via the Games website where people could apply online indicating which sport tournaments and type of activities they would like to get involved in and what skills they had. Subsequently, the actual period of role preparation may be perceived as having commenced for the volunteers with the notification by the volunteer coordinator that one's application to become a WFG'08 volunteer had been accepted and must therefore be considered as the starting point of the experiential dimensions of sport event volunteering. This aspect is supported by the following quote from an interviewee who recalled feeling excitement and a sense of achievement at this early stage of role entry after he was contacted by the respective sport event volunteer coordinator and invited to attend the volunteer training session:

> "*It [knowing that he was to work as a sport event volunteer at the WFG ] was good. It really was fantastic like... I mean, as soon as I knew I was in I was so happy!*" *(Andrew, p. 2, l. 97-98)*

Depending on the tasks, the WFG'08 volunteers were categorised as either a) general volunteers that provided a wide range of services during the event; b) sport specific volunteers who supported athletes and officials and required some sport-related knowledge; c) transport volunteers that were involved in organising and running transport services and d) special event volunteers who supported the opening and closing ceremony and parade as well as helping with handing out the medals and with a number of social events that took place during the Games (WFG 2008 Volunteer Information Handbook (VIH)). These volunteer categories reflect the classification of sport event volunteers in the literature, e.g. by Costa *et al.* (2004) who differentiate between specialist and non-specialist volunteers. Depending on the nature and requirement of their allocated jobs, the training sessions of the WFG'08 volunteers differed in terms of content. For example, whilst all volunteers had to attend the first generic training session at the Merseyside Fire and Rescue Headquarters in the second half of July 2008, others were required to undergo additional 'specialist' training which prepared them for specific tasks or for a particular tournament such as the '*Toughest Firefighter Alive'* (TFA) competition that involved a number of firefighting and people rescue activities and required helpers to be familiar with the procedures, rules and regulations in advance. In the case of the generic pre-event training session for the

WFG'08 volunteers, the participants were first of all familiarised with the features and purpose of the WFG'08 in general and the importance of the event for the city of Liverpool. A presentation that informed the volunteers about the history of the WFG was conducted which was followed by a film on Liverpool as the Capital of Culture 2008 even though the WFG were not part of the official Capital of Culture '08 event calendar. Afterwards, volunteers received and were guided through the WFG'08 Volunteer Information Handbook by the leader of the training session who highlighted general guidelines about the basic do's and don'ts of the volunteers including uniform guidelines, personal hygiene requirements, helpfulness and friendliness as desired behaviour as well as various procedures such as the handling of lost children and lost property. Furthermore, volunteers were advised of the types of tournaments and/or activities they would be involved with as well as of dates and times of their volunteer work.

### 7.2.1 Receiving the role script and role cues

In reference to the dramaturgical perspective of volunteering, the volunteering training provided the individual sport event volunteer with a 'role script'. In contrast to the 'event script' that "*guides sequential behaviours in well-known situation, such as how to behave in a restaurant*" (Halpern, 1997:840), the role script is "*a set of structurally given demands as they are interpreted by the individual*" (Anderson *et al.*, 1998:168). Some of these demands were provided in writing in the form of the Volunteer Information Handbook mentioned earlier that served the function to "*better equip [the volunteers] for [their] role as a volunteer for the Games*" (VIH, 2008:9). Furthermore, it allowed volunteers to learn what the organisers expected from them in terms of their behaviour and appearances through information provided in the 'ready-to-work' checklist, information about the Games, behavioural guidelines and requirements including commitment to the work, time availability and enthusiasm. The notion of expectations is viewed by Kumar and Andersen (2000) as an inherent function of the role script as it represents "*the sum of expectations from other actors*" (p.241). Applying this interpretation to the context of the WFG'08 volunteers, role script in the form of the Volunteer handbook and other information provided during the volunteer training articulates to the volunteer what other actors including the event organisers and event coordinators expected from him or her. However, at this stage the question emerges to what extent the role script has influenced the volunteers' expectations with regards to the behaviour and managerial measures that are to be taken by the event organisers

and volunteer coordinators. The Volunteer Information Handbook for the WFG'08 volunteers included a section with the title 'rights and responsibilities' which outlined the various commitment of the WFG'08 to the volunteers, such as" *the provision of a safe and enjoyable environment*", "*provide training and supervision*", "*recognition of the status of the volunteers including meals and uniform*" (VIH, 2008:31) and that indicates that the relationship between the volunteers and the event organisers is of reciprocal nature and that the event volunteers can expect from the event organisers something in return for their volunteer engagement. This aspect suggests that the Volunteer Information Handbook as a role script is an important element if not even a facilitator or tool of the psychological contract between the event volunteer and the event organiser. Cashman and Stroll (1988) add another perspective to what a role-script is by describing it as an outline of " *the behaviour of the role, such as what a person playing the role can or cannot do, what other roles the player can interact with and in what manner*" (p.141). During this training session, the volunteers were introduced to these "other roles" that they were very likely to encounter during their involvement in the event, such as members of the public as potential event attendees and the firefighters competing in the World Firefighters Games. The idea that the WFG'08 volunteers were representatives of the Games as well as of the city was stressed and the term 'WFG'08 Ambassador' that was also manifested in the Volunteer Information Handbook was repeatedly used. Here, the focus rested predominantly on the firefighters as event participants in general and the international event competitors in particular. The importance of the sport event volunteers for staging this sporting event, in terms of the vital contribution of the volunteer to the experience of the international competitors, was emphasised during the training:

> *"On our training, on the very first day, the first training thing I went on, uhm, someone… one of the guys got up and said. This is the one thing I remember. This someone said 'the foreign visitors, when they come here, will not remember what you said, they will not remember what you've done for them, but they will remember how they felt afterwards.. what you made them feel like'." (Bernard, l. 10, l. 483-189)*

Drawing from the work of Halpern (1997) that describes role script as "*a hypothesized cognitive structure that guides behaviour, the process and at times, the outcome of a transaction*" (p.836), the above quote indicates one of the desired outcome of the

WFG'08 that was stressed during the training session: to positively interact with the event visitors which included both members of the audience and the event competitors, and thus to create a positive event experience. The guidelines around the volunteers' position as WFG'08 ambassador and WFG'08 representative and the information on how to interact with other role occupants or actors were integrated into the role script to achieve this outcome which consequently stresses the significance of the role script as behavioural guidance tool.

Besides receiving their role script during their generic pre-event volunteer training, the volunteers were also provided with what Turner (1978) refers to as "*role cues*" (p.10), i.e. role signs that makes the volunteer visible to his/her surroundings including the competitors and general public attending the WFG'08. This volunteer kit consisted of a WFG'08 volunteer Polo-Shirt, a rain-jacket of the same colour and logo and a lanyard that displayed the volunteers' name and passport photo which had to be brought to the training session. As outlined in the Volunteer Information Handbook, volunteers were expected to "*wear their WFG'08 uniform provided at all times while on duty in addition to maintaining a neat and clean appearance*"(p.28). Not supplied were dark (black or blue) trousers which did not include jeans, and dark shoes that the volunteers had to provide themselves. Whilst most interviewees did not comment on the role cues other than that they did not like the yellow colour of the T-Shirts and rain jackets as it was too bright, one research participant recalled his feelings when he saw his uniform:

> *"When I saw my uniform there when I went to the training, I thought 'I can't believe this. I can't believe I made it.' I knew I was part of the team now." (Andrew, p. 2, l. 97-99)*

Although this is an isolated quote, it seems noteworthy as it moves the value of the uniform as role cue beyond being just a tool to identify the individual in his/her role as volunteer to others towards being an symbol of personal achievement and of self-identification with the group of role-bearer, i.e. being part of the volunteer group.

### 7.2.2 Sense of role (un)preparedness

The perceived value of the volunteer training and the volunteers' satisfaction with the pre-event training differed between the 'specialist' and 'non-specialist' volunteers that were interviewed. One of the interviewees who had undergone such a specialist training

for the "*Toughest Firefighter Alive*" (TFA) competition recalled her lived experience of the training as follows:

"*We had to go to this first training at Mersey Headquarters … and then we did a separate morning with the man who ran the event. He wanted to meet all his volunteers instead of just being told "Oh you've got fifty that will turn up on Thursday". He wanted to meet everyone. He went through everything. He went through what the different activities were in the TFA and he asked us what we would like to do… 'would you be a Marshall?' 'Would you like to do this?' 'What would you like to do?'. And he explained everything. So we did know our jobs before we even went to the event. And I was very, very impressed because of the order. I felt prepared for the TFA event. And I felt I was being looked after. Yeah, definitely, yeah. It was... I just thought it was too important to be left at chance. We need to be looked after so that we are confident, that we were doing it right rather than just thinking 'Well maybe we are, maybe we are not'. I felt that it was important to know that this is what's happening and this is what we do. And if we follow that, everything will go fine." (Karen, p. 23, l. 1119-1132)*

Karen's account reflects her appreciation of the specialist volunteer training which made her feel prepared for her role at the TFA competition, not only by learning what she was required to do on the day but also confident in terms of feeling capable of performing her role. Furthermore, it seems as if the way she was prepared for her work has positively influenced her perceived relationship with the event organisation in terms of feeling looked after, which suggests that providing effective volunteer training is an important relationship management tool. In contrast, the generic pre-event volunteer training was noticeably subject to criticism by general volunteer in terms of volunteers not feeling prepared for their duties:

"*The information we were given at the Firefighters Headquarters, it was... they showed us that film which was basically…. It was about the capital of culture year really… it was not about the Games or Liverpool and Merseyside as such... Yeah, I think it was specific to the Capital of Culture Year. And then we had a little... we were given a little notebook and I think they run through a few little sections of that. But apart from that there was no specific training at all. I had expected more, for example I thought they would tell me what my duty is*

*about… what I have to do and how. I was quite disappointed that this was not the case. I wanted to know more about my tasks and what exactly I was meant to do.*" (*Sara, p. 4, l. 166-17*)

"*We came in for that training. But was a bit of a waste of time. I expected some practical issues to be addressed. I expected something with hands and feet and that it would prepare me for my task in accreditation… like "all right this is this*"… *Somehow I felt let down and that I was not prepared for my job as volunteer.*" *(Katherine, p.13, l. 620-22)*

Whilst these findings reflect the experience of a very small number WFG'08 volunteers only, they indicate the link between volunteer training and role preparedness which refers to the level of readiness of an individual to perform in a role (Tsai *et al.*, 2008), i.e. how ready the individual is for the task and challenges related to the volunteer work. In reference to the accounts of Sara and Katherine, both their expectation of being prepared for their role in the form of information what their specific duties would entail and how these would have to be carried out, were not met. On the one hand, it may be questioned to what extent general volunteers can be prepared as the tasks they are allocated are often varied and generic in nature. On the other hand, just providing a generic role-script and role cues may not be sufficient. The mismatch between general volunteer training expectations and actual training content may originate from opposing ideas about the purpose of training. As suggested by Costa *et al.* (2004), training serves the purpose to "*familiarise the volunteers with the event's organisation and expectations regarding their performance*" (p.170). Furthermore, they argue that it may entail information about how the event organization is structured including details on reporting systems and supervision; event policies, the requirement of the volunteers roles, the handling of complaints, questions and particular problems. In case of the general training that the WFG'08 volunteers received, the small number of interview findings indicates that training sessions seem to have been tailored around the expectations and requirements the organisers had of the volunteers in terms of appearance and behaviour rather than on providing detailed information about the volunteer roles. Whilst it can be argued that the training session fulfilled its purpose by providing the volunteers with a general role script and their role cues and thus role preparedness to carry out their role, the doubt remains if other functions of training were met which are to make volunteers feel more confident with their tasks (Cuskelly *et al.*,

2004) and to influence their ability to perform their actual task and to work more effectively (Claxton-Oldfield *et al.*, 2007) also referred to as *"role competency"* by Shaw (2009:27).

Although the findings about the lived experience of the role preparatory stage are limited to a few volunteer voices only, they highlight the influencing role of the training on the initial experiences of sport event volunteering. In view of past research that suggest that volunteers dissatisfaction with the pre-event communication and training can become a reason for people to withdraw from their engagement as volunteer (Auld *et al.*, 1999; Elstad, 2003; Cuskelly *et al.*, 2004; Green and Chalip, 2004; Reeser *et al.* (2004), the conclusion might be drawn that  development of tailored WFG'08 volunteer training that is structured around the needs and wants of both volunteers and event organisers, and prior communication of the content of the training to the WFG'08 volunteer influenced the initial volunteer experience in a positive manner.

### 7.2.3 Role accommodation - making volunteering fit

The role preparatory stage also included the process of "*role-accommodation*" (Miller, 1986:47), i.e. the volunteers had to temporarily accommodate the WFG'08 volunteer role in their life in terms of making volunteering at the WFG'08 fit around other roles which they occupied and enacted in their everyday life. In the case of Dan who is both semi-retired and self-employed, he found himself allocating one week for his WFG'08 volunteer role:

> *"I set a week aside. You can actually sort of plan out the week so I didn't have any conflicts. So it worked well." (Dan, p.4, l. 151-153)*

Dan's account reflects the concept of planning on one hand and role salience on the other in terms of prioritizing the WFG'08 role by putting duties related to other roles, also referred to as "*role repertoire*" (Turner, 1962: 27) i.e. the role of a semi-pensioner and self-employed person. This measure was also undertaken by Karen who made her WFG'08 volunteer work fit around her regular job:

> *"I just said which day I theoretically could volunteer. I mean, Wednesday and Thursdays were out 'coz those are the days I work." (Karen, p.15, l.702-703)*

In other interviewee accounts the fit of the WFG'08 role within one's role repertoire refers to the context of planning and taking holidays.

For example, Bernard, who had had bought an old farmhouse with his wife and was in the process of restoring it, found himself in a position where he had to accommodate both his volunteering duties and restoration work:

> *"We've given ourselves two years to do this house. And when the WFG was on, we'd been going for about ten months and we've broken the back of it and we're now probably… when this was on, we probably had eighty percent, seventy percent of it done. I decided to take a break from doing up the house during the Games. I planned it [the volunteering at the WFG] and it was like… uhm.. for me it was like going on a holiday." <u>(Bernard, p.18, l. 872-876)</u>*

Similarly, Jane and Wendy both took a week off work in order to be able to work as WFG'08 volunteer:

> *"I wasn't going to work. I had taken leave for the whole period of the Games. "I took about seven days at work… yes, about seven days. Oh no, six, one was the bank-holiday, sorry. Yeah, I took six days leave." <u>(Jane, p. 3, l. 143-144 and p12, l. 570-571)</u>*

> *"… I had actually taken the fortnight off as annual leave." <u>(Wendy, p.5, l.197-198)</u>*

Consequently, the role preparatory stage involves planning requirements for the event organisers who have to plan and organise training sessions and availability of training staff, role script and role cues, but also for the volunteers in the form of blocking off time for their WFG'08 role enactment.

### 7.3 The role encounter stage: coming into touch with role reality

As indicated earlier, the WFG'08 entailed tournaments from over seventy sports. Depending on the personal preferences of the sport event volunteers allocation of volunteers and the matching of these with the needs of the particular sporting event, i.e. how many volunteers and which skills were required, the individual volunteer found himself/herself allocated to one particular activity for the duration of the Games or to

several sport tournaments, the latter resulting in carrying out different tasks at different locations. For example, some interviewees had solely been working at Accreditations in the Echo Arena or the transport hub only which involved transporting people and equipment, whilst others like myself had been involved with a number of different activities such as Accreditation as well as assisting with the swimming and dragon boat racings tournament. Due to the 'unknowness' of how many volunteers would turn up on the day, the event managers who were in charge of the particular sport events were at times faced with having to deal with either an excess of volunteers or a shortage of volunteers, resulting in volunteers being placed on an 'on-call' shift or redirected to other tasks or events at a short notice. For instance, during my first day as a WFG'08 volunteer when I was working at Accreditations in the Echo Arena, I was approached by my volunteer coordinator who asked if I wanted to help out at the beach rugby tournament which was held on the Wirral, i.e. on the other side of town the following day as the event manager in charge of the event was low on volunteers

In case of an overhang of volunteers at a specific event, volunteer coordinators were contacted by the respective event managers and asked to re-allocate volunteers. Thus, some sport event volunteers who had been previously advised that they were assisting with activity X at event venue Y found themselves in the position where they were sent to help out at a different event than originally planned. This was the case with the Toughest Firefighter Alive tournament which represents the highlight of the WFG and for which there was a very high turnout of volunteers on the two days of the competition. As a result, there was not enough work for everyone and volunteers were sent away to help with other events. Depending on circumstances, i.e. if they had been allocated multiple activities in advance or were subject to surprise in the form of being reallocated to a specific sport event/ task at an ad hoc basis, the volunteers were required to undergo more than one role encounter, thus facing new people, a new physical environment and new tasks throughout their role performance as WFG'08 volunteer.

### 7.3.1. Expectation of structure – volunteer role allocation and supervision

Analysis of the data collected from the interviews with WFG'08 volunteers identified a number of expectations that centred around the notion of structure about how they would be managed during the WFG'08. These expectations seem to have been shaped by pre-event communication from event organisation via the volunteer coordinator as well as by the pre-event volunteer training session. Referring to the work of Gronroos

(1982) and Zeithaml *et al.* (1988) whose research has contributed significantly to the knowledge and understanding of what expectations are, Ralston *et al.* (2004) who explored the expectations of volunteers involved in the 2002 Commonwealth Games, define the expectations of event volunteers as "*estimations or predictions of that working at an event will be like based on the experiences of recruitment, training, and communication prior to the event*" (p.14). It may be argued that this outline of expectations fails to acknowledge other potential factors that can influence volunteers' expectations such as past experiences of volunteering in general and event volunteering in particular. Nevertheless, within the context of the WFG'08, this definition implies how expectations of the volunteers were shaped. For example, in reference to the uniform requirements outlined in the pre-event information pack including the WFG'08 Volunteer Information Handbook and to the training during which volunteers were informed of the requirement to wear dark pants and shoes which were not provided by the event organisers, one research participant recalled how she felt when she found out that these guidelines were not adhered to by other volunteers:

> *"In the handbook and during the training, they seemed to be quite strict about what you had to wear. You know you had to wear dark pants and all that and then some of them didn't. I was actually rather annoyed because I went to buy a dark pair of trousers and then people were walking around with different coloured pants… and they got away with it. "* (*Wendy, p.14, l. 685-688)*

The fact that she made the effort to meet the set requirements by purchasing the required uniform garments in comparison to other volunteers and that these others, i.e. 'them', were not reprimanded for not meeting uniform standards indicates Wendy's expectation of structure in terms of control that set uniform standards were observed by the volunteers and that there would be consequences for those who did not comply. Wendy elaborates further on her expectation of structure that was established from her perception of how volunteers were set to be managed and her perception of the event organisers, the Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service:

> "*I was looking at the handbook, reading it and in the way it was presented, it was…you could see. It was almost like a military operation, you know. Even down to telling us what kind of shoes and trousers we had to wear, the conduct that was expected, you know and all this sort of thing. It was quite specific what*

*you could do and what you couldn't do. And… to me, I mean I felt comfortable with it but it was quite clearly that it was done by an organisation that is in uniform.. that is a uniformed service, you know and it is culturally quite different to the organisation of the Capital of Culture '08 Company. It was very orderly, very organised and orderly. It was very, very well organised… in theory, on paper, in the build-up and the website and everything. It really looked as though as if every single aspect had been looked into.. that things had been planned with military precision… but then on the day, in practice things didn't go according to plan. I was quite surprised… and disappointed to be honest."* (*Wendy, p.23, l. 1111-1124*)

Again, the notion of expectation of structure emerges that seems to have been predominantly nurtured by the respondent's experience of how the event and the volunteers were organised during the pre-event stage and her perception of the event organisation. The latter was partially influenced from her experience with working with the Capital of Culture '08 Company. From the quote, it may be interpreted that Wendy expected a sort of 'clockwork' event that where everything would go smoothly and in case of any mishaps, things would be managed accordingly. From a dramaturgical perspective, one could even say that she expected things to go according to the script, i.e. that the play would be performed and managed in the manner in which it had been planned and set out.

The expectation of structure also emerges from the account of Katherine. As mentioned earlier, the volunteer training was also used to confirm the allocation of volunteer duties as well as day and times of the volunteer engagement. However, in the case of Katherine who initially had been told that she would be involved in transportation duties confirmed, there were last-minute changes to her volunteer role:

*"I expected something with hands and feet and to be told ... like 'All right this is what you will be doing'. I mean up until the last minute I'd been told I was in transportation. And suddenly I was told that I would be doing something else… I was told to contact somebody else and this is why … sort of I had no contact with X before because then all of a sudden I was in accreditations. And I thought they had enough time. You put your name down all this time ago, then you were told where you would be working that you would do something else. Somebody*

*somewhere along the line should have had an idea where they want to put you.*
*…I wanted to know what I would be doing.*" (*Katherine, p.13, l. 620-629*)

With regards to the expectation of structure, Katherine anticipated that during the pre-event planning stage, the organiser would have worked out in good time how many volunteers were needed for which jobs and allocated roles accordingly. However, in her case, a change of role content occurred which she did not expect. This change of plan made her feel angry and uncertain as she did not know until coming to the Echo Arena on her first day of work which sub-role within her role as WFG'08 volunteer she would eventually perform and what her script would entail.

The expectation of structure is reflected further by Katherine's account of feeling uncertain and lost as she had no information about who to report to or what the chain of command was prior to starting her work as WFG'08 volunteer:

"*It was just a question of not knowing. I didn't know exactly who was in charge or, but… just sort of, you know, who you are supposed to either report to or who are you supposed to answer to. I was not impressed. I expected more communication and guidance from above. I felt a bit lost, especially on that first day.. I didn't even have a name. I was just told to report to the registration desk in the Arena.*" (*Katherine, p.8, l. 347-349*)

Whilst Katherine's first quote allows the reference to the need of clear role allocation, the latter highlights the expectation of sufficient communication and guidance from the event organisers with the volunteers to allow a positive role encounter.

Another expectation in relation to structure surfaced from an interviewee's anticipation of a system that monitors the coming or going of the volunteers, e.g. by having to sign-in and sign-out as outlined during the training session and according to the Volunteer Information Handbook:

"*I had expected... some kind of control… I was quite surprised that when I arrived at the Arena, there was no way of checking that I was there. Now, I think sort of health and safety again or even if there had been a fire drill or anything, I don't think there was anybody that would actually have known exactly who was in the building. And that was a little bit disconcerting. I thought at the very least*

*there should have been a list where you either sign in or where somebody sort of knows that you're here." (Karen, p 6, l. 288-295)*

In the case of Karen, the perceived lack of structure in terms of the absence of a volunteer monitoring system resulted initially in a feeling of surprise followed by a sense of unease.

From my own experience as WFG'08 volunteer I could sympathise with her surprise and disapproval of the lack of control of volunteer presence and movements. Whenever I had arrived at my particular volunteer work place, be it inside the Echo Arena, the Salthouse Docks, the Watersport Centre or the Riverside Police Club, I expected to be ticked off a list or at least having to officially sign and out. It needs to be noted that one exception was the event volunteer coordinator who was in charge of accreditation in the Arena and who seemed to know who was supposed to be on duty.

Besides the aspect of Health and Safety in case of an emergency that requires the person in charge to establish who was in the area or building, the perceived lack of control over volunteer coming and going was seen also impacting on the coordination of volunteers during the course of the day in terms of allocating break-times:

> *"It's the same as far as breaks and that concerned me somehow. It was a question of, you know, being structured. That wasn't very well organised either. Uhm, and I did not know whether it was up to me to say 'I'm bit tired now, I've gotta go for a break' or whether there should have been a rota or someway that it was again a bit more structured to know about breaktimes. You would think that the volunteer coordinator had it all worked out. The rota could have been on the sheet, you know, for that day. That might have made things a bit easier to run."* *(Katherine, p 6, l. 295-301)*

Katherine's experience of the lack of structure with regards to organising break-times is underpinned by the sense of uncertainty in terms of whose decision it was to go on a break and the need to know what is going on. This links again back to the role of the role script which outlines what the actors does when during the role performance. As suggested by Kumar and Andersen (2000), role scripts *"influence the individual's interpretation of their expected behaviour"* (p.241). In the case of Katherine, the role script failed to outline how to she was expected to react to unanticipated situations,

such as the absence of a volunteer rota, resulting in a sense of confusion and disorientation. The expectation of a structure in terms of control of what was going on and with regards to volunteer management also emerged in the account of Sara who had been helping with Accreditations at the Echo Arena. In her interview she mentions her observation that there was confusion among those volunteers whose duties it was to hand out backpacks to the event competitors after they had registered, due to the lack of instruction. One of the problems that she came across was that when volunteers started at different shifts and took over from others, no one of her colleagues seemed to known how many of these backpacks were left in stock and in which other rooms they were kept once the supply in one room had been depleted. Depending on the person in charge of Accreditations, this information was at hand or not. In the case of the latter, the volunteers had to track down the remaining stock of bags themselves. Furthermore, there seemed to be no system in place to ensure that a daily stock-take was carried out on the bag-packs whose numbers were dwindling quickly over the first two days of the Games. At some stage it was not clear if there were any more bags left in the Arena at all:

> "*I was working with a lady called X at the time and I think… we both basically thought that it would be awful or embarrassing if we'd run out of the bags. The bags were one of the simple things that people should be getting. And I think part of the reason that they were.. they were sometimes missing… was because there were so many change-over of staff that they weren't…that maybe people didn't have time to actually.. at the beginning of the day or at the end of the day stand back and say "Where are we?" and maybe reassess the situation. And I think because so many of the volunteers were coming in and out, they couldn't be a hundred percent be in control of the … situation. You know what I mean by that? There was a feeling that it did flow but there were hiccups. I expected someone from the Fire Service to be there and be in charge…someone who was kind of like an admin person or maybe just somebody who knew exactly what was going on… and it was their role to take a total control. But this was not the case..… and at the end of the day it was us who had to worry about the bags… if there were enough bags and where they were kept.*" *(Sara, p. 4, l. 187-193)*

Sara's account highlights the emotional engagement of the volunteers in this matter in terms of having to worry about the issue with and the management of the backpacks which raises the question to what extent volunteers have identified with their role as helpers. It also depicts once again the importance of a clear control structure that supports volunteers in their role performance and prevents them from experiencing negative emotional reactions such as the feeling of embarrassment and uncertainty related to not being able to hand out back-bags. Although this occurrence may seem trivial to the outsider, it represented a stressor for the volunteers at the time. Having been involved in handing out the bags on the first two days during my volunteer involvement, listening to and reading the interview transcript of Sara reminded of my own feeling of dissatisfaction with how the situation with the bags was handled the organisation of the bags and the worry that we would run out having to leave competitors empty-handed. Another issue that became rather irritating with time were the on-going enquiries from non-competitors such as fellow volunteers, contractors and members of event organisation if they could obtain such a bag as souvenir, and the subsequent justification why this was not possible. The official guideline on this issue was that the backpack was to be given to WFG'08 competitors only, however depending how strict this guideline was followed by other volunteers and the volunteer coordinator in charge some bags were given out resulting in occasional complaints by those who followed suit and were turned away.

### 7.3.2 Expectation of structure – specific task allocation

An experience that was lived through by a number of research participants referred to their anticipation that they would be allocated a particular task when they arrived for their duties and be told what and how to do things. However, for some research participants this had was not the case:

> "*I thought there would be some assigned roles, not for the whole six, seven hours. I just thought, you know, like 'We'll need X number of volunteers to do this. We will need x to do that.' But it didn't happen. I expected a bit more organisation.*" (*Ivy, p. 5, l. 208-211*)

> "*I expected to... come to something a lot more organised, know exactly where we [volunteers] would be going, give us duties to do. That didn't happen. Instead we had to sort ourselves out.*" (*Maureen, p.1, l. 28-29*)

Whilst some research participants expected to be allocated a particular task, the concern of others rested on being allocated duties that corresponded to their skills and preferences:

> "... *as long it was something that I felt I could do.. I mean, I did say to the coordinator that, you know, uhm.. 'I'm not too keen perhaps, you know, using the computer" because I thought we might be part of the registration but.. she said "Oh no. You won't have to do that.' And I said I would be happy to do the meet and greet. I suppose that's because I felt that's perhaps where my skills lie. You know, I was looking for something that I would feel comfortable with."* (Sandra, p. 2, l. 59-65)

In the case of Sandra, the need to 'feel comfortable', i.e. to be at ease with her volunteer duty because she felt she had the skills to carry out a particular task might be interpreted as the volunteer's need for a comfort zone by matching the task with people's skills. It may be argued that inherent in Sandra's recall of her informing the volunteer coordinator that she wasn't eager of doing the computer work as part of the registration but would rather do the 'meet and greet' is the expectation that therefore she would be listened to and allocated the latter task. These expectations of being allocated a preferred and/or do-able task might have been enhanced by the volunteer recruitment process at required volunteers to indicate their job skills and preferences, when they applied for the WFG'08. For example, on his volunteer application, Bernard had stated his interest in helping out with a particular sport event which consequently resulted in the following anticipation:

> *"I expected to see some of the action. They asked me... what events was I interested in and so on and so on. And I specifically put down cycling. That is one of the things that I am interested in. It is something that I do in my free time. And since they asked me I … I somehow expected to work on a cycling event… and to see some of the action."* (Bernard, p.2, l. 72-75)

Whilst his preferences for a specific sport had been met and he was asked to help out at indoor and outdoor cycling events, Bernard was frustrated with the way the information about his skills had been handled. He had anticipated that the details that he sent to the event volunteer coordinators when he applied for the WFG'08 volunteer role would be forwarded to the individual manager who was in charge of a particular

sport tournament and used to allocate a particular job that matched his skills and knowledge:

> "*When I went to the arena for the indoor cycling or spinning event. the guy said.. the guy in charge, a very good guy, he had done a lot of preparation beforehand but he said to me 'what would you like to do?' As if he didn't know. I mean we were specifically asked beforehand in an email. Something like 'what can you offer?' 'What have you got? Have you got any of the following skills or experience?' And it was things like… IT, the minibus driving, time-keeping… have you cycling experience or something like that. And I put down 'I can offer this, this and this'. So I thought 'Great', you know. 'I've been asked all this. I told them when I applied for this. And now look, they don't seem to know!'. …there was no structure... it was quite frustrating having to tell him what I put down in the application." (Bernard, p. 17, l.825-836)*

A few days later, he found himself in a similar position at another cycling event where rather than being told what to do he was asked what he would like to do:

> "*And I found that… when I did the cycling event up at Aintree… it was the same thing. The coordinator asked "well what would you like to do?". And I had expected to be told "You're doing this and you're doing that", you know. I mean, I told them in my application what I can do and would like to do. But he said "What do you want to do?". So I said "What's available?". And he said "Registering the competitors when they are coming in". So I did that, but I was frustrated with the lack of organisation." (Bernard, p.2, l. 88-92)*

From these two accounts the expectation of structure in terms of specific role allocation based on the information that the volunteers provided in their application, repeatedly emerges. In a way, one could say Bernard expected 'to be heard' by managing his application details accordingly and to be consequently given a task tailored around his knowledge and skills – instead, he was asked again and again "*What do you want to do*?". On the other hand, it appears as if Bernard expected from the respective event manager with and for whom he would be working to 'know' him in terms of his knowledge and skills which in view of the hundreds of volunteers that were recruited was not possible. Whilst these findings raise the question how the personal information

that volunteers provided in the application were processed and used to plan the use of human resources during the WFG' 08, they also provided food for thought to what extent event organisers need to manage volunteer expectations at the pre-event level, e.g. through appropriate pre-event communication with volunteers about their allocation of generic or specialist task. Last but not least, these findings raise questions about the appropriate management style and their influence on volunteer satisfaction during the event, i.e. should volunteers be given the opportunity to 'pick and choose' or be told what to do. Another factor that seems to have built up expectation of structure was the communication between the respective event manager and the volunteers prior to the Games. The volunteers were provided information sheets about the particular activity or sporting event they would be helping out with, in advance including details of meeting, briefing and finishing  time, information about volunteer duties and items that volunteers should wear and/or bring along, e.g. waterproof jacket, sun screen etc. These details seemed to have shaped the anticipation among some volunteers that things would take place as planned and communicated by the respective event manager and/or volunteer coordinator:

> "*The organisation I thought, uhm, for the volunteers, was raising questions. … we were given... the guy, the event organiser [in charge of the cycling road race],  beforehand.. he had done a lot of preparation and he had emailed out, uhm, a plan of  the track... of the course, the roads where the race was going to be and said that I'd be going to Point A or something like that on the day when we turned up. And like everyone else, on the day when we turned up, that was out of the window. It all was different from what were initially told.. our jobs, the layout of the course….It was a real mess!" (Bernard, p.2-3, l. 88-92)*

> "*The idea about volunteering was that the time that they wanted me to arrive was the time that the organisation of the event started, so that they didn't get me there an hour or two hours before hand. When I turned up at for the swimming tournament, I was the only one. Later…I was told later that I had been too early but that was the time I was told – in writing - to arrive at the Salt House! The whole tournament was just a mess! There was no clarity about what was expected from the volunteers on that day." (Ivy, p.9, l. 436-442)*

Drawing from my own experience as a WFG'08 volunteer, I could identify with the respondents' lived experience of unmet expectations as I also had experienced similar situations, for example in the morning of the open water swimming tournament where volunteers were subject to miscommunication from the side of the event organisation resulting in volunteers reporting for duty an hour too early - at 0700hrs - as they had been instructed to. Furthermore, the meeting point where the volunteers were asked to assemble turned out to be not the correct one. As a result, those who were waiting at the 'wrong' meeting point eventually missed breakfast that was provided by the event organisers. This resulted in dissonance among volunteers once they met with other volunteer groups who had received the updated information about the meeting point, in the course of the morning. Furthermore, having been part of the group of volunteers that were involved with the open water swimming competition, there was a lack of guidance which did not match my expectation of structure which arose from the organised manner in which I had been informed about what this event entailed and what activities had to be undertaken by the volunteers. For example, the event manager did not introduce herself which led to confusion about who of those present at the venue not wearing volunteer uniform, was in charge of the volunteers. For a while we all stood around not knowing what we were meant to do. A few volunteers were then briefly told what the registration of the swimmers entailed and it was left to them to communicate this information to others. In addition, it was left to the volunteers to arrange the registration, the venue layout and to allocate tasks of the registration process among each other.

### 7.3.3 Role ambiguity

The literature on role theory suggests that the lack of role allocation and role clarity which emerged from the research findings about the volunteers' lived experience of their role encounter during the event, results in what has been termed by Kahn *et al.* (1964) as 'role ambiguity'. This concept refers to the individual's lack of understanding about the actions that are to be performed in a particular role and according to Kahn et al. (1964) may entail uncertainty about a) what one is expected to do and b) how one is expected to enact the role; c) the evaluation of one's role performance; d) the priority of expectations and e) the consequences of one's completion or non-completion of tasks set by the role. Based on the following respondents' accounts, role ambiguity seemed to have been a feature of the role encounter stage of some volunteers in terms of them not knowing what were expected to do and how to perform their role other than

following the generic behaviour guidelines communicated during the general pre-event training and outlined in the Volunteer Information Handbook.

> "*I had no idea what I was going to be doing…so it was like 'Let's go there and see what happens…very much so. See how it goes…' (Ivy, p.2, l. 77-79)*

> "*I didn't really know what to expect because I didn't actually know what they wanted volunteers to do. I didn't know how much authority, I don't mean power, but I didn't whether we were going to be so much as road marshals, you know, keeping crowds back or if we would have any active part such as recording times…" (Katherine, p. 4, l. 156-160)*

> "*I didn't sign up for any particular sort of team and I ended up with S.'s accreditation team. And I really didn't know what that would entail initially. It was totally unknown and they did not tell explain our duties during the training day." (Sara, p.1, l. 33-35)*

A concomitant feature of the volunteers' lived experience of role ambiguity was the experience of negative emotions, e.g. some interviewees outline a sense of uncertainty they felt at that time about their role whilst others recalled their emotional reaction such as anxiety and apprehension to the experience of role ambiguity:

> "*I felt anxious…. because when you first volunteered, you don't know what's gonna be involved…I was a bit apprehensive to start with 'coz I wasn't quite sure what they were asking me to do." And they said "Go and speak with the firefighter in charge", you know. There was a firefighter in charge and he said "Oh, could you go and work that machine there." And I thought "Heck, what do I have to do". (Jane, p. 2, l. 86-88 & p. 5, l. 216-217)*

> "*Well, when I first got there, I was a bit apprehensive, going there by myself, you know. I applied very late and did not do the training. They sent me the volunteer handbook by mail. I didn't have a clue what exactly I would be doing. I just had the name of the coordinator. So yes… I felt apprehensive." (Bernard, p. 7, l. 319-320)*

A link between what can be interpreted to be role ambiguity and the lack of role allocation and role clarity was established be one of the interviewees:

> *"At first yeah. At first I was a little bit anxious not knowing what I would have to do and what was expected of me… because I liked to be ordered. I like order, structure. I don't like to be told "Oh, just turn up and we see what happens". I like to know what my role is. I hate wishy-washy, you know.. like "We'll see, just get on with it". So I was a bit anxious that we wouldn't know what our jobs were, what our role was. I am happier where I know exactly what I am doing, when I'm doing. I don't like to be faced with "make it up as you go along." (Katherine, p. 4, l. 173-182)*

This account furthermore suggests that role anxiety did not last long but was a feature of the early stage of the role encounter and that it was likely to disappear once volunteers were given a task and knew what they were doing and how they were to carry the task out. It was also noticeable that some interviewees felt more uncomfortable with the lack of role clarity and role allocation than others who did not elaborate on their feelings in great depth and who seemed less troubled with the situation. This might be explained with findings from the study by Kahn *et al.* (1964) who suggest that role ambiguity varies according to people's level of need for clarity, i.e. some people require more role clarity than others.

In view of the findings so far it might be argued that event volunteers should be flexible to some extent and be pro-active towards addressing their experience of role ambiguity. However from a dramaturgical perspective the question arises to what extent the framework for the play, in this case managing the various sport events during the WFG'08 with help of the volunteers, needs to be prepared and supported by an adequate role script. These findings also indicate the expectations of the volunteers' fellow actors in related roles to respect and follow their role script, e.g. Bernard expected the volunteer coordinator to perform their role and to follow their script by matching him with an appropriate task based on the information about his skills and knowledge communicated by him during the volunteer recruitment stage. In the case of the open water swimming tournament, there was the expectation that the event manager in charge would keep the volunteers informed about any changes about meeting time and place and to manage the volunteers. However, the finding that it was left to the volunteers to organise themselves and allocate and share tasks among

themselves suggest that the volunteers and the respective event manager had a different perception about what the event manager role entails.

### 7.3.4 Un-everydayness

The theme 'un-everdayness' emerged as underlying theme from accounts in which the sense of uncertainty was of more generic relating to the Games in general and what it would be like to work there:

> "*I had no idea what it was going to be like…so it was like 'Let's go there and see what happens'... very much so. 'And see how it goes'.*" ( *Ivy, p.2, l. 77-79*)

> "*I think I just didn't really know what to expect. It was just something completely new. I was looking forward to it but... I didn't really know what to expect...no.*" (*Katherine, p.5, l. 212-214*)

One of the interviewees made sense of this general experience of uncertainty by attaching the meaning of novelty and 'unknowness' that he experienced when going on vacation to new places:

> "*In the morning of my first volunteer day at the Games, I felt like… it's like when you go to anywhere new…uhm, like if you go on holiday to a new destination. It's all unknown. So there is excitement in the fact that you're discovering somewhere new and there is a lot of discovering potential. There are anxieties like has the booking come okay, will the apartment be there when we arrive. Uhm, what will the journey be like so there are certain elements of anxiety. It was like this for me when I reported for duty at the Arena.*" *(Dan, p. 8, l. 374-378)*

The concept of 'un-everydayness' is the counterpart to 'everydayness' that according to Lefebvre and Levich (1987) is defined by cycle and repetition and: "*the days follow one after another and resemble one another … the character of everyday implies repetitive gestures of work and consumption*" (p.10). McCabe (2002) adds the aspect of mundaneness that makes up "*social life for ordinary members of society*" (p.66). McKay (1997) elaborates on the concept of everydayness by identifying its components which include not only work and leisure domains but also "*people and places*" (p.75).

Drawing from the interviewees' accounts, the experience of 'un-everydayness' in the form of everyday life can be related to 'not knowing' and 'newness' as opposed to 'knowing', e.g. knowing what to expect, and 'familiarity': the interviewees found themselves in a situation that was different, in fact unknown from what the volunteers knew from and regularly experience in their everyday live. The account of Dan enhances the 'unknowness' of 'un-everdayness' by making the link to the context of going to holidays to a new destination which is seen by McCabe (2002) as distinct and separate from the everyday life. The relationship between everydayness and 'knowness' is supported by Heidegger's work *Being and Time* (2007 [1962]) in which he relates the everdayness to "*the comfortableness of the accustomed*" (p.422), i.e. being doing, seeing and being surrounded by things one is used to. In reference to the link between everydayness and monotony made by Heidegger who states that in everydayness in which "*everything is all the one and the same*" (p.422) and by Lefebre and Levich (1987) that explain that the latter is established through repetitiveness, it can be argued that the everydayness of the WFG'08 volunteers' life was temporarily interrupted as their volunteer role exposed them to something unknown, something unaccustomed resulting in feelings of both excitement and uncertainty.

**7.4 Revisited: the WFG'08 volunteer as adventure tourist**

Following the outline and discussion of the subthemes relating to the WFG'08 volunteers lived experience of the role preparatory and role encounter stage, the following section revisits and explores the metaphor of the WFG'08 volunteers as adventure tourist further thus closing the hermeneutic circle for the first time.

In view of the findings that the chapter on role entry has so far disclosed, some of the qualities of adventure cited by Swarbrook *et al.* (2003) earlier are applicable to sport event volunteering, e.g. the aspect of uncertainty emerges from people's comments about not knowing what to expect and what is expected from them in the form of role ambiguity. Furthermore, they did not know in advance about the outcome, i.e. if if their expectations of their volunteer role would be met. Nevertheless, they were bold enough to face this challenge of 'unknowness' and 'un-everydayness' of the sport event volunteer role and with it the risk of this activity not being to their liking or not meeting their expectation. This last aspect links to the notion of speculation mentioned in the first definition of '*adventure*', i.e. the investment of people's energy and time that is accompanied by the probability of risk of not gaining the anticipated rewards reflected in

people's expectation of the role, e.g. the reward of enjoyment, work experience etc. With regards to the interpretation of the risks related to WFG'08 volunteering, the risk is perceived to be not of physical but of psychological nature, in terms of the uncertainty what one will experience whilst enacting the role of the volunteer. Drawing from the literature on adventure by Ewert (1989) and Walle (1997) risk is an integral part of the adventure experience and reflected in the individual's search for challenges. Weber (2001) adds the idea that adventures are to be understood as the search for insights and knowledge. As the research on the lived experiences of the WFG'08 volunteers did not focus on motivation, the concept of volunteers as seekers for risk and new insights is not subject to interpretation. Instead, based on the findings from the interviews about the volunteers' experience of their role entry, the original association of adventure with the exploration of unknown land (Weber, 2001) in the form of physical travel through time and places, e.g. by Marco Polo, Christopher Columbus or Pizzaro, comes into play and with it the understanding of adventure as both the process and outcome of "*discovery and unveiling of the hidden and unknown*" (p.363).

Within the context of volunteering at the WFG'08, this sense of discovery of something new is implied through the volunteers' account of not knowing what to initially expect of their engagement with the event through volunteering and of the event itself. This aspect relates to the idea of novelty, i.e. doing something new and unfamiliar, that has been cited by Swarbrooke *et al.* (2003) as being another core characteristic of adventure. Whilst the notion of discovery and excitement were elements inherent in one or the other interviewee account, the concept of novelty emerges from the concept of separation which is a further quality of adventure (ibid) and is reflected in the subtheme of un-everydayness, i.e. the WFG'08 allowed the volunteers to temporarily break away from their mundane everyday life. Addison (1999) suggests that the process of exploration and discovery may also refer to one's 'inner journey' involving "*mental, emotional and spiritual progress*" (p.418). This viewpoint is supported by Hopkins and Putnam (1993) who propose that "*adventure can be of mind and spirit as much as physical challenge*" (p.5) reflecting the concept of both physical and psychological risk mentioned earlier. As the interpretation of the volunteering at the WFG'08 as an adventure is limited to the role entry stage, it cannot establish to what extent the concept of 'inner journey' is applicable to the research. In view of these parallels with the features of adventures and the fact that that WFG'08 volunteering was a new experience all the interviewees, the interpretation of volunteering as an adventure seems once again fitting. However, the depiction of the WFG'08 volunteer as

adventurer is challenged by the volunteers' accommodation of the role, their sense of role unpreparedness and expectations of structure and which led to towards the metaphor of the WFG'08 volunteer as adventure tourist. Interestingly, a review of the literature suggests that the tourist shares some similarities with the adventurer: like the adventurer who leaves home in search of new horizons and the adventure tourist breaks away from the everydayness of their lives to engage in "*an outdoor leisure activity that takes place in unusual, exotic, remote or wilderness destination"* (Bentley et al., 1998). Furthermore, like the adventurer the tourist is taking risks "*as by definition the holidaymaker is 'out of context*" (Ryan, 2003:56) by being spatially, temporarily psychologically and in some cases even socially displaced as a result of being away from their home milieu (ibid). However unlike the adventurer who by definition embarks on a journey whose progress and outcome is uncertain and who anticipates that the travel involves unknown challenges (Kane and Tucker, 2004; Foley *et al*., 2003), the journey of the adventure tourist and his/her expectation of journey is planned out and structured through information about the destination, travel itineraries including a outlined of planned activities, the company of guides who manage the adventure experience, logistic support etc. (MacCannell, 2001; Buckley, 2006). Furthermore, the risks that emerge from its an unfamiliar and remote setting environment and which accompany the activities undertaken, e.g. white-water-rafting, rock-climbing etc. are monitored and reduced by the tour operator (Kane and Tucker, 2004). Applying the adventure tourist concept to the context of the WFG'08 volunteering, the WFG'08 volunteers expected structure in terms of role preparedness, task allocation and role clarity. These expectations were shaped and influenced by pre-event communication with the event organisers/coordinator information material including the Volunteer Information Handbook (VIH) and training, i.e. the WFG'08 volunteers approached the reality of their volunteer role at the role entry stage with pre-conceived images. Whilst, the adventurer who can plan the journey in terms of travel preparations but no further due to the 'unknowness' surrounding the journey and who thus accepts a limited sense of preparedness (Foley *et al.,* 2003), the WFG'08 volunteers' account indicate that they expected the event organisers to effectively plan and manage the volunteer roles before and during the event. Thus, in contrast to the adventurer who seeks and accepts his/her exposure to risk and uncertainty (Ewert, 1989), it can be argued that WFG'08 volunteers seek what Foley *et al.* (2003) refer to as "*rough comfort*" (p.156) in the form of being looked after by the event organisers who properly prepare them for their role and a managed environment in which they can perform. In contrast to the traditional

meaning of adventure tourist that depict the tourist as actively seeking the challenge (Beedie, 2003), the metaphor of the WFG'08 volunteer as adventure tourist is therefore underpinned by the notion of adventure not being sought but being done to the volunteers: expecting structure, a sense of preparedness and role clarity, the volunteers who like tourist break temporarily away from their everyday life encountering Un-everydayness, they involuntarily find themselves in the position of an adventurer.

## 7.5 Conclusion

This chapter has provided insights into the WFG'08 volunteers' lived experiences of the role preparatory and initial role encounter stage. The researcher's interpretation of interviewees' accounts established that these experiences were subject of influence by pre-event volunteer management measures such as pre-event communication from the volunteer coordinator and/or event manager, volunteer training and the content of the VIH, which shaped the volunteers' expectation with regards to role allocation and content. Furthermore, the experience of the volunteer role at these early stages of the WFG'08 was accompanied by negative emotions in terms of feeling of anxiety that derived from role ambiguity and role uncertainty. Drawing from the dramaturgical perspective, these findings raise the question to what extent the content of the volunteer role can be prescribed in advance as due to the unique nature of events in general (Getz, 2005) and within the context of the WFG'08 in particular that is hosted every two years in another country and by different event organiser, there seems to be no specific recipe that prescribes how WFG volunteers are to be managed best. Whilst these research findings suggest that volunteers have to be flexible to some extent when taking the volunteer role, the shortfalls in the preparation and management of the volunteers at the role encounter staged experienced by the volunteers highlight the need of effective role performance by volunteer coordinators and event managers as fellow actors as it influences the quality of the role experience of the WFG volunteers. Drawing from the findings of the lived experiences of the role entry stage, the interpretation of the WFG'08 volunteer as both an adventure tourist who simultaneously experiences being an adventurer and a tourist has been established and explored.

In view of the absence of research on the lived experience of sport event volunteering this chapter contributes to the existing body of knowledge by providing insights about what it is like to be a sport event volunteer at the entry stage of their volunteer engagement and implications for event organisers and their management staff. Viewing

this issue from a role-related perspective as well as the adventure tourist metaphor facilitates the understanding of these lived experiences from the position as an outsider as certain experiences could be compared with and explored by relevant concepts.

# CHAPTER EIGHT

## Role enactment: the social world of the WFG'08 volunteers

### 8.0 Introduction

The following chapter is concerned with depicting the social context of sport event volunteering during the role enactment stage by providing a general background of the social world and exploring the nature of the relationships between the World Firefighters Games 2008 (WFG'08) volunteers and other groups involved and/or affected by the Games. Commencing with a brief outline of the interpretation of the WFG'08 volunteer as 'care-giver', 'care-taker', 'care-seeker' and 'care-receiver', the chapter introduces the concept of role-set which depicts the location of the sport event volunteers within their social environmental from a role perspective. This is followed by the discussion of the socioscape of the WFG'08 that accommodates the social environment of the volunteers and which serves as scene for the presentation and discussion of the research findings. Last but not least, the chapter introduces and discusses the subthemes a) empathy; b) reciprocity and c) trust that emerged from the analysis of the data and which inform the over-arching theme relating the WFG'08 volunteering to the concept of care/caring.

### 8.1 The WFG'08 volunteer as care-giver, care-taker, care-seeker and care-receiver

The over-arching theme that emerged from interviews about how WFG'08 volunteers experienced the role enactment stage in relation to the social world of volunteering centres around the concept of care in terms of WFG'08 volunteers looking after and being looked after by others. Researchers in the field of nursing such as McFarlane (1988), Swanson (1991), Thomas (1993), Wolf (2002) and Roach (2002) have commented on the problem of conceptualizing 'care' and 'caring' due to the absence of a universal definition. This observation is highlighted by Morse *et al.* (1991) whose efforts to clarify what caring is resulted in the identification of over thirty-five definitions and five conceptualisations of the term: a) caring as human trait; b) caring as a moral imperative; c) caring as an affect; d) caring as an interpersonal interaction; and e) caring as a therapeutic intervention. The fact that most of these definitions identified by Morse *et al.* (1991) have emerged from the nursing literature supports the suggestion by Kyle (1995) that care is commonly perceived as either being an extension of or the same as nursing. However, in view of approaching sport event volunteering from the perspective of care/caring, a definition that relates to a wider context is needed. For

example McDaniel (1990) describes care as "*the investment of one's personal resources in another in order to promote wellbeing*" (p.1). A more narrow definition is provided by McFarlane (1976) who summarizes caring as "*all helping activities*" (p.12). Linking this interpretation of caring to the context of volunteering raises the question if volunteering is in fact caring as volunteering is tends to be commonly understood as an act of helping (Clary and Snyder, 1991; Jackson *et al.*, 1995). Providing help as an imminent feature of caring is echoed and extended further by Leininger (1981) who describes care/caring as "*those assistive, supportive or facilitative acts towards or for another individual or group with evident or anticipated needs to ameliorate or improve human condition or lifeway*" (p.4). The depiction of care/caring as acts of help by McFarlane and Leininger is reflected in the function of the WFG'08 volunteers to assist the event organisers with the staging of the event. Furthermore, in relation to the latter definition the volunteers can be seen as facilitators who serve as the link between the competitors and both the Games and event organization on one hand and between the competitors and the host city on the other. This 'linking' function was visualized through the yellow T-shirts and jackets that signalled their official function as helper to the actors in their socioscape. As a result, volunteers found themselves being 'the port of call' for competitors, fellow volunteers, event managers, volunteer coordinators and members of the public whenever a helping hand was required. For example, in his account, Dan remembers providing WFG'08 competitors who were interested in watching a football match during their stay in Liverpool, with relevant information:

> "*And they wanted to see a football match too. And I said that there is the opportunity to see Everton-Portsmouth playing. ... I told them where to get tickets from. I think it is nice for them to go and watch a local football game on a Saturday afternoon. And these competitors seemed to be a very much into football. It was a whole group. They all wanted to go and watch* "(*Dan, p.6, l. 280-284*)

The provision of information was also a feature of the performance of Kara and Ivy in their role as facilitator:

> "*There were mainly just tourist information like questions like… obviously people just got off the train and they were kind of like… 'Can you tell me where such and such and such is?' or 'We need to get to the Albert Dock. How do we get*

*there?' A lot of it were very practical… questions like how to get from A to B or 'Can you tell me where the bus is to get to the airport?' and you had to explain them which bus to take and which bus stop is was…"* <u>(Kara, p. 8-9, l. 388-393)</u>

*"It was… Like to try and be there, and to try to answer questions. Like for example with the German guy who as looking for an address. The other young woman that I was with, was German speaking. She was German. So that was great. I said to him 'You better talk to her. I can't assist you'. And she was able to do the necessary and then off he went."* (<u>Ivy, p.9, l. 406-409?)</u>

The focus on understanding care/caring as an activity has been criticized by Griffin (1980; 1983) who argues that care/caring is more than a mere act and stresses the attitude and feelings that inform acts of care/caring. Consequently, care/caring can be understood as both "*carrying out caring work*" and "*caring about someone*" (Thomas, 1993:649). Watson (1979) adds the interpersonal aspect of care/caring by stating that "*caring can be effectively demonstrated and practiced only interpersonally*" (p.53) which is usually reflected in the nurse-patient relationship. In the case of the context of WFG'08 volunteering, it can be argued that care/caring was practiced and experienced through the volunteers' interaction and their relationship with the event participants, fellow volunteers, event organizers and volunteer coordinators and that it was informed by the volunteers' interest to make to help make the WFG'08 a success. In view of the data the idea that the interviewees genuinely cared about the event going smoothly and about the competitors having an enjoyable time emerged from their accounts resulting in care/caring been perceived as an one-dimensional construct in the form of the sport event volunteer looking after and being concerned of the welfare of others. However, further analysis of the research findings highlighted the mutual dimension of the caring concepts reflected by the research interviewees expressing their expectation and need of being the subject to caring behaviour as well as their experience of being looked after for by those around them during their work at the WFG'08. This research finding resulted in the extension of the interpretation of the WFG'08 volunteer as 'care-giver' and 'care-taker' towards the volunteer as 'care-seeker' and 'care-receiver'. With regards to finding definitions to explain these four terms proved to be a thorny undertaking as 'care-giver' and 'care-taker' are interchangeably used by some researchers (Mui, 1992, 1995; Kahn, 1993;  Usita *et al.* (2004) for people helping and caring about others whilst some scholar (e.g. Biddle, 2009; Slade and Molloy, 2009) use 'care-seeker' as a

synonym for 'care-receiver'. For the purpose of the study, the four terms 'care-giver', 'care-taker', 'care-seeker' and 'care-receiver' within the context of the WFG'08 are understood as follows: The volunteer as 'care-giver' is seen as generally providing help as part of his/her role which is informed by the volunteer's interest and concern with the success of the event and the welfare of those involved. the understanding of the volunteer as 'care-taker' goes a step further: besides occupying a role that centres around providing help and being concerned with the welfare of others, the term draws from the separate meaning of components which are 'to take' and 'care'; thus it depicts the volunteer as acquiring and executing concern for others in terms of consciously deciding to act in given situations and to accept responsibility for the wellbeing of the recipient of his/her caring behaviour. With regards to the volunteer as 'care-seeker', the volunteer looks for other people's concern and interest in his/her well-being. Last but not least the interpretation of the volunteer as 'care-receiver' refers to the volunteer being subject to helping behaviour and to being looked after by others. This overarching theme will be revisited and investigated in greater depth towards the end of the chapter. Before the relevant sub-themes are explored, the next sections introduces the context of the WFG'08 volunteers' relationship with other groups of actors and discusses the social environment in which the WFG'08 volunteers enacted their role.

## 8.2 The sport event volunteer and the role-set

Interviewees' accounts of their lived experiences highlight the social context in which the enactment of the sport event volunteer role at the WFG'08 took place and which was enhanced by the social interaction between the volunteers and other group of actors, e.g. the athletes and fellow volunteers:

> *"I was working in the internet café that was up on the first level, so you could see the whole Arena, you could see what was going on. And you got to meet… obviously a lot of people from different countries came in…. So you got to meet a lot of different people. There were a couple of guys from Germany who were really nice. They came in, chatted and they showed me their website they got about. They were trainers themselves within the fire brigade. And there was a huge contingency from Venezuela. Some of the Venezuelans taught me a few Spanish phrases which I think I have forgotten now." (Dan, p.4, 162-169)*

*"You did get the chance to chat to other volunteers because like I said, we weren't constantly out with jobs. And there was the chance if you were sent out as a pair and quite often you were, because if you were taking heavy equipment, it needed two to do that. So you had a chance then while you were doing the drive to get to know the other person." (Ann, p.4, l. 188-192)*

The social interactions between the WFG'08 volunteers and other people occurred both whilst volunteers were working as well as when they were moving around the venue:

*"With the Firefighters Games… I met a lot of friendly people… not only when I was working. I also met people in passing and people said "hello" and "good-bye."* (Sara, p. 9, l. 405-409)

Whilst these social interactions were of fleeting nature for some volunteers, e.g. for Sara, for others it was the origin for social network expansion:

"*And it broadens my circle of people. I've met some really nice people that I am still in contact with and we've been out and we're going out again. Because I don't work, I don't have interactions with people that work... so this sort of things is where I do meet people. My social network is expanding this way but in a nice way.*" (Katherine, p. 3, l. 102-106)

Viewed from a role perspective, these findings relate to the concept of role-set theory (Merton, 1996) that depicts the inter-relationship of members within a specific sphere of the social structure based on their social statutes or position, i.e. the particular position that a person occupies in society brings with it a number of associated roles that links the individual role player to other people within the social system. Merton (1996) gives the examples of a medical student and a teacher. In the case of the former, the position of a medical student entails a role-set that links him to others within his institutional sphere who may be his teachers, fellow students, hospital staff and patients. With regards to the latter, the role-set of teachers relate them not only to their pupils and/or students and their parents but also to other people they work with such as colleagues and superintendants as well as to committees, e.g. assessment or programme validation boards and associations they may belong to such as the union for teaching staff. Applying the concept of role-set to the world of theatre, role-set can be understood

as the array of sub-roles that emerge from the script of a particular role within a play thus linking the performing actor with other actors in a play, also referred to by Wilshire (1982) as counter-roles. Relating this concept to the context of the sport event volunteers, the sport event volunteer performs in a number of sub-roles as he/she engage with those in counter-roles such as the event attendees incl. the competitors, superiors, members of the public and fellow volunteers.

Applying Merton's role-set theory to the context of this research allowed the identification of relationships between the WFG'08 volunteers and groups of people that they came into touch with as a result of occupying the sport event volunteer role. For example, the Merseyside Fire and Rescue Brigade in its position as the organizers of the WFG'08 in cooperation with Liverpool City Council were mentioned in the interviews. Following the analysis of the interviews, the event organisers were imagined and referred to as 'they' by research participants. They were represented by both the event staff including the a large numbers of event managers who were each in charge of a respective sport tournament or activity, and the event volunteer coordinators who beside recruiting, selecting, training and coordinating the volunteers, were in charge of a particular tournament activity. Findings suggest that depending on the scope of engagement, the level of contact between WFG'08 volunteers and the event managers varied. For example, some interviewees were involved in different sport events thus coming across more than one event manager who had established contact with them prior to the event by sending out an information sheet about the event and volunteer activities involved. In cases where interviewees were newly assigned to events on the day or re-assigned at short notice, volunteers had no prior contact. However, all WFG'08 interviewees had been in touch with one of the event volunteer coordinators who were in charge of the WFG'08 volunteer workforce and who consequently could be perceived as the interface between the event organizers and the volunteers.

During the WFG'08, all interviewees came in touch with the competitors and in some case the relatives of these as event participants. Depending on the activities that they had been assigned to, the extent of contact between volunteers and the competitors varied. Similarly, the level of contact between members of the public that attended the WFG'08, and thus represent another counter-role of the volunteer's role-set, differed from one research participant to the other. As highlighted in Ann's account, the WFG'08 volunteer role was also linked to other sport event volunteers. Whilst some interviewees

worked with people they were familiar with e.g. people from work, friends or family members, other did not know the volunteers they would work with or come across during the Games. Last but not least, contractors such as photographers and computer technicians were mentioned in the interviewees as well as members of the public. The latter group entailed people that either attended the event as spectator or came in touch with the event in another way, e.g. through the volunteers or the competitors, as well as the imagined community of the city of Liverpool who some of the interviewees referred to as 'the people of Liverpool'. Consequently, the role-set of the WFG'08 volunteer can be seen as being of complex nature as the volunteer role is linked to a number of counter-roles as depicted in figure 7.
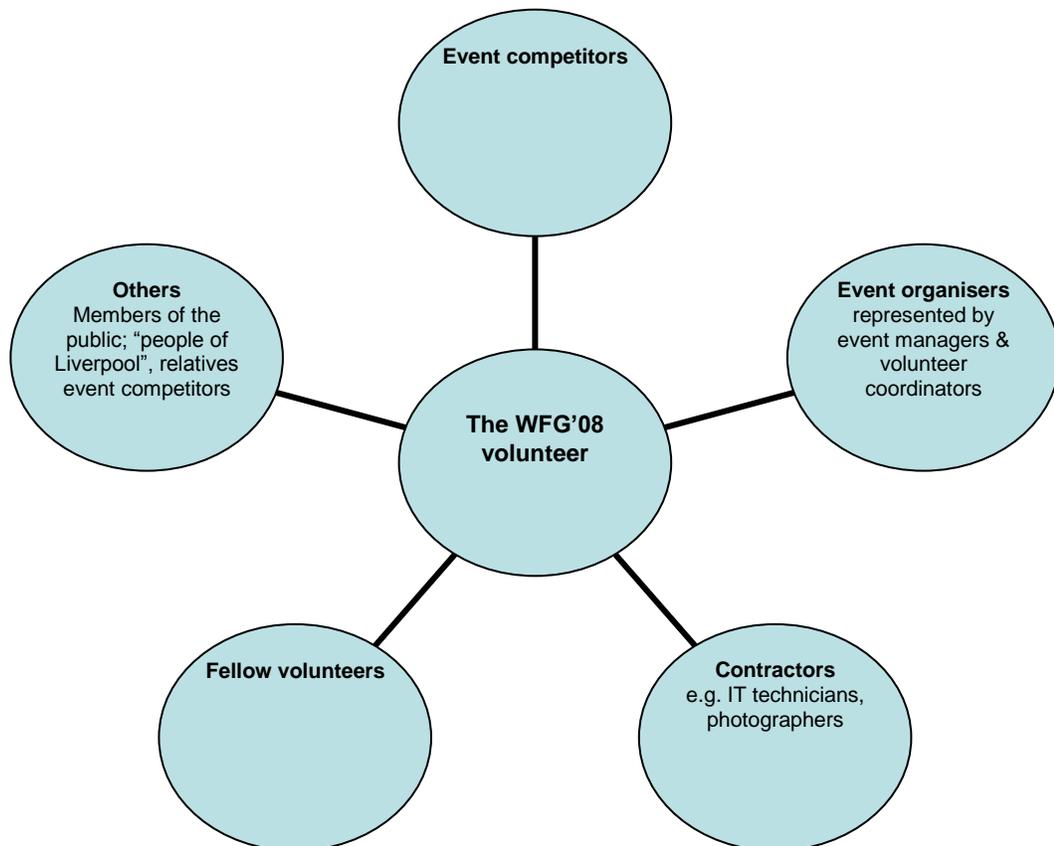


**Figure 7: The role-set of the WFG'08 volunteer**

**8.3 The socioscape of sport event volunteering**

Following on from the discussion of the role-set of the WFG'08 volunteer, the environment in which sport event volunteering occurs can consequently be described as a social space where the interaction between the WFG'08 volunteer and the event managers, event coordinator, other volunteers, event competitors, contractors and members of the public takes place. The large scale of the WFG'08 that involved over 70 sporting tournaments across the Northwest of England, attracted over 2800 athletes from all over the world and required the help of approximately 1000 volunteers, informed the anonymous nature of relatedness between the sport event volunteers and their counter-roles: in comparison to small community events where the event organisers and event attendees and participants might know each other, most of members of the large WFG'08 volunteer workforce did not know the volunteer coordinators, other volunteers and the event competitors prior to the event. Instead, they came together for a certain period of time and for shared purposes in terms of participating in the Games in different forms, i.e. as workers, as members of the audience, as competitors. Consequently referring to this social space as community seems inappropriate: the concept of community advocated by De Toqueville (2004 [1838]), Toennies (2001 [1887]) and Durkheim (1974 [1893]) has been described by Bell and Newby (1971) as being in favour of depicting communities as stable systems of kinship entailing the aspect of familiarity among its members. Instead, the concept of '*socioscape*' seems more applicable (Albrow, 1997): Albrow's idea of 'socioscape' (1997) derives from the work '*Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy*' by Appadurai (1990) in which he identified five dimensions of global cultural flow that impact on the cohesion between global economy, culture and politics. The latter describes these dimensions as "*perspectival set of landscapes*" (p.297) and distinguishes between "*ethnoscapes, mediascapes, technoscapes, financescapes and ideoscape*" (Appadurai, 1990:297) which, paying reference to Anderson (1983), are understood as "*building blocks of 'imagined worlds'*" (p.6) in which people around the globe live. These worlds are imagined because "*members . . . will never know most of their fellow members . . . yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion*" (p.6). Appadurai (1990) justifies the usage of the suffix 'scape' as it accommodates the idea of multiple imagined worlds and entails the notion of constant changes or 'fluidity' of these worlds and the processes that take place inside of them and move across them. In view of the 'ethnoscape' which is defined as "*the landscape of persons who constitute the shifting world in which we live: tourists, immigrants, refugees, exiles,*

*guest workers, and other moving groups and persons constitute an essential feature of the world, and appear to affect the politics of and between nations to a hitherto unprecedented degree*" (Appadurai, 1990:297), Albrow (1997) advocates for an additional 'scape' that entails the idea of social formations, i.e. 'socioscape', which is understood as a network of social relations which can vary in intensity, territorial extent, and points of contacts. Albrow (1997) illuminates the concept of socioscape in his examination of residents living in Tooting, London. He concludes that within a locality, individuals live in their own sociosphere or social world which consists of the individuals' social ties with other people or groups as well as social activities. However within a specific locality, different sociospheres may not necessarily touch each other at all or just briefly intersect. Thus, although people may share the same locality, they do not establish a sense of community. According to Albrow (1997), it is through the intersection of sociospheres that a socioscape emerges in which "*the locality is criss-crossed by networks of social relations whose scope and extent range from neighbouring houses over a few weeks, to religious and kin relations spanning generations and continents*" (1997:53). Whilst the Albrow's concept of socioscape seems to be predominantly related to the context of globalisation, it has been applied to the tourism context by Jansson (2002) who depicts socioscape, together with land and mediascapes as "*different realms of experience, which individuals encounter not only as tourists, but in everyday life in general*" (p.432). Taking into consideration the idea of landscapes as physical worlds, he suggests that socioscapes are "*basically neutral material spaces turned into places for particular forms of social interaction… like shops, beaches, train stations and so on.*" (p.432). Based on Jansson's understanding of socioscapes, the socioscape of WFG'08 volunteers can consequently be perceived as including all spaces where the volunteers encountered social interaction with members of their role set who perform in counter-roles, i.e. the event managers, volunteer coordinators, contractors, competitors, other volunteers and members of the public. As the WFG'08 took place at different venues across Liverpool, Merseyside and regions in England's Northwest, depending on volunteers' location of their activities, the spatial nature of their socioscape was subject to change. For the purpose of this research it is challenged by the large scope of the lived of experiences of WFG'08 volunteers whose volunteer work varies from interviewee to interviewee, the perception of the WFG'08 volunteers socioscape is overall generic rather than tied to a specific venue or place. Furthermore this perception is informed by Albrow's (1997) interpretation of the socioscape which entails an indication about the nature of the relationships between

individuals: in contrast to the traditional concept of community that features the aspect of familiarity and stability (Bell and Newby, 1971) as mentioned earlier, socioscape brings with it the notion of anonymity. Thus, although different groups of individuals are brought together through an event, such as the WFG'08, their sociosphere may not necessarily intersect with everyone who attends and/or is involved with the Games. Instead, the idea of being part of a group and feeling a sense of collective identity, e.g. being part of the large sport event volunteer workforce, may be perceived as imagined.

## 8.4 The nature of the relationships within the WFG'08 socioscape

The following section is concerned with the outline and discussion of the sub-themes that emerged from interviewees' accounts and which inform the theme of the WFG'08 volunteer as 'care-giver', 'care-taker', 'care-seeker' and 'care-receiver'. The volunteers' experience of their interaction with their counter-roles and the features that accompanied and defined the relationships between the WFG'08 volunteers and the actors in these roles are explored.

## 8.4.1 Empathy

Empathy emerged as a sub-theme from the interaction between the WFG'08 volunteers and occupants of their counter-roles, e.g. the event participants, event organisers and volunteer coordinators. As suggested by Paiva *et al.* (2005), the term 'empathy' originates from the Greek word 'empathaia' meaning "*passion*", "*passionate affection*" or "*to be much affected*" (p.236) and seems to relate little to Titchener's (1924) understanding of empathy as 'feeling into' which he translated from the German expression 'Einfühlung' where one person perceives and 'feels into' the other person. The latter interpretation of the term 'empathy' reflects today's general understanding of today's general understanding of empathy as "*the power of identifying oneself with and so fully comprehending a person*" (Allen, 1991:383). Nevertheless, empathy has been subject to academic research in various fields such as psychology, organisational behaviour and nursing. Morse *et al.* (1992), Sutherland (1993) and Reynolds (2006) argue that empathy is a multi-dimensional concept which can be viewed from different angles thus allowing more than one definition. This is supported by Kunyk and Olson (2001) who provide an overview of the five conceptualisations of the term which include the understanding of empathy as a) a trait that is reflected in the one's natural ability to perceive the feeling of others; b) caring which emerges from the feeling of empathy and leads to one's decision to undertake action; c) a special relationship that is of reciprocal

nature as people share of information and over time professional distance is overcome; d) a professional state that is developed by one's learning of how to be empathic and to use empathy as a tool to establish and manage the communication with others and e) a communication process.

The first two concepts in terms of being perceptive of the feeling of others and the link between caring and empathy emerged a number of times from the interviews. For example, in view of feeling empathy for the competitors, Bernard recalled the following situation where early in the morning he had to pick up a group of Swedish firefighters who had been out partying the night before and drive them to a soccer tournament as part of the WFG'08:

> "*I had to pick them up at eight o'clock in the morning or something like that. They had been partying the night before… and they were half asleep and hung-over and so on. When we got to the place, I dropped them off and… when I got back into the minibus, it stank like a brewery. They must have a good night. They were going to play Brazil, I think, in the first game. I just felt for them. I know what is like to be hung-over and I was wondering how they would cope.*" (Bernard, p. 8, l. 382-394).

Inherent in Bernard's account is the notion of concern for the athletes and his understanding for their situation by trying to see things from their perspective. The latter becomes more visible in the account of Dan:

> "*You have to put yourself in the shoes of the athletes, you know. Yeah, because they are visiting the city you're doing volunteering in. So I try to think how would you'd feel if you were say in Dusseldorf or something. You wouldn't know where to… so yes, you're there, you try to help and I think that's part of what you do when you deal with people who are new to the city or area.*" (Dan, p.5, l. 232-239).

Dan provides a further elaboration of the need to try and understand the athletes in terms of the impact that their interaction with the WFG'08 volunteers has on their well-being:

*"So that they feel that you are maybe making the effort to get to know them a little bit. Even if it's only for eight days. And that must be a positive thing for them because they are, in some cases, thousands of miles away from home, and in a place they would perhaps never ever had visited. So how are they going to feel? Maybe a bit homesick. And just someone smiling and being nice helps a lot."* (Dan, p. 284-289)

Similarly, Katherine reflected on her understanding of how the athletes' felt. She recalled the disappointments of the athletes in view of the absence of a 'Games Village' which had originally been a key element of the athletes' services plan but had been scrapped by the event organisers. Following her conversations with WFG veterans who talked to her about their experience of past Games, e.g. in Hong Kong and Sheffield where the firefighters had been accommodated in a Games Village and their disappointment that was not case at the WFG'08 in Liverpool, she explains the firefighters' needs which she identified by looking at the situation from the firefighters' point of view:

*"The one thing that they were disappointed about as well was the fact there wasn't really a Games Village. The competitors were really disappointed with that. And I can see why because it seems like an awful shame but that had fallen through, that didn't happen. In a sense for the older ones that didn't really want to go out to Matthew Street, who didn't really go to bars late at night but they still wanted to be able to go to a beer tent and sit and have some beers with other people, you know. And they couldn't do that because they were just in their hotels and everyone else were in their hotels. They wanted to meet other people from other countries. I mean, for them, for the Australians, it was just as much as about meeting people from, the Czech Republic and from everywhere. That's what they wanted to do, that was one of the reason they had come to Liverpool. So, it was a shame really that, they couldn't do that through a Games Village. They had been to other World Firefighters Games… they had a Games Village when they had been to Hong Kong and to Sheffield and they'd been to the ones before that and so they were expecting to stay in a Games Village in Liverpool. They actually had an expectations going to be there and so they were disappointed. And we were just honest with them really, we said "Oh, that is a shame. That would have been really good. It's an awful shame for you that*

*hasn't happened", you know. I think people do actually maybe appreciate that rather than make up a reason why it doesn't matter or make up a reason why hadn't happened."* (<u>*Katherine, p. 24, l. 1163-1197*</u>)

However, the empathy of the WFG'08 volunteers was not reserved for the event competitors only. Interview findings suggest that some of the research participants felt empathetic towards both the event organisers and event managers. For instance, Bernard's account indicates the feeling of understanding for the Merseyside Fire Brigade that were in charge of the event and who had come under fire for the lack of effective volunteer management:

"*But I mean nothing is perfect. At the end of the day, these guys are fire-personal first and like myself they volunteered to run the World Firefighters Games… they were dealing with seventy sport events, five thousand competitors and one thousand volunteers over ten day. You're bound to get glitches."* (<u>*Bernard, p. 2, l. 96-98 & p. 18, l. 862-863*</u>)

Similar feelings of empathy emerged from the accounts of Kara and Jane who recognised that the Merseyside Fire Brigade is not an event organization and who took their perspective defending them when things did not go so well:

*"I said to the other volunteers 'well, to be fair, the fire services aren't the event organisers'. I mean, they do organize events but not that sort of events, so I was saying to them 'Well, you know, it's to be expected really. They're not Games organiser. It will not be perfect.' For example the first day was a bit of a battle. Well, they had all the contestants lined up behind the flags, they paraded around and then they [the event organisers] let them go and the contestants went off and did the singing, the Hey-Jude sing-along. Then we had to try to get them all back into the arena and make them sit in their country-group... they wanted to have an seating order according to countries. It was a battle. Some volunteers got a bit angry about said to me "They had them all lined up, why did they let them go? They should have done the contest, the Hey-Jude contest, first, line them up behind the flags, parade them around and led them straight to their seats. Then they would have had them all there, ready, sitting in their groups. First, I agreed but then I thought, well to be honest, as I say the fire service*

*aren't a sports event organiser so why should they get it right? I think they've all done absolutely brilliantly in what they've done. But it is not their purpose in life – they are not there to organise sports events or whatever. So… I think they did brilliantly considering the size, the overall size of the task. I mean you would expect like the normal Olympics to be better organised but that's what they do, you know. That's what the Olympic Committee is paid for. That's their job whereas obviously here they were doing their job and organise an event of this scale.*" (*Jane, p. 3, l. 123-126; p. 8, l. 339-347 & 362-378*).

Jane's empathy for the position of the Merseyside Fire brigade and their shortfalls in managing the event is echoed by Kara who elaborates on the position of the Merseyside firefighters who were actively involved in the WFG'08 besides their daily work:

"*Many of the Merseyside firefighters put in their working hours as part of the Fire Service, you know, like people who are driving mini-buses and stuff, they work for the Fire Service nine to five normally and they kind of had been drafted in to do this and I thought 'Well, you know, this is not their normal job, you know. They're all doing this outside the work they know.' Okay, at the very top there' are people who had been paid to just concentrate on the Games but for a lot of them, they were doing this alongside their normal job. It's not like having an event organiser that has lots of experience and can take this responsibility. So, I could understand that some things went wrong.*" (*Kara, p. 23, l. 1078-1088)*

During her interview she remembered the two firefighters who had been in charge of managing the treasure hunt that took place in Liverpool city centre and where she helped out as part of her WFG'08 volunteer role:

"*Plus I was worried about the guys who had organized the treasure hunt. They had done so well and they were really nice guys and it obviously mattered to them that it went really smoothly and they put a lot of time and efforts into it. Again, you feel sorry for them because you think 'They probably have been worrying about this for weeks and it's going to be over like that' you know. It's just all the hard work, it's just gonna… now matter how well it goes, it's gonna be over so quickly.  After two years of preparations. And you just think*

*"Oh…that's awful really!" I hope they have had lots planned to keep them all busy afterwards or, you know, to compensate for the time when things have calmed down again. It's like an anticlimax and then you just think "well, it's quite depressing really." (Kara, p. 27, l. 1274-1285)*

These accounts highlight the sense of empathy that the research respondents felt for the athletes reflecting the idea of the sport event volunteer as 'care-giver' in terms of volunteers being concerned with the well-being, feelings of enjoyment etc. of those actors performing the counter-roles. In other instances, the feeling of empathy resulted in the volunteers taking action supporting the conceptualization of empathy as caring which emerges from the initial feeling of empathy and leads to one's decision to undertake action as suggested by Kunyk and Olson (2001). For example, Bernard recalls the situation when he returned from the Aintree racecourse where he had dropped off equipment and passed by three competitors on his way back to the Echo Arena in town:

*"They were still about one or two kilometres away from the race course and I thought that was quite a long walk for them. So I picked them up… I was a bit disappointed for them, because it wasn't very clear from the instructions beforehand that you had to meet at one place and the event was somewhere else. It was okay for the cyclists. They could cycle from the headquarters and it was a good warm up for them as well but I think for the spectators and so on… you know, it was a bit wrong. But it wasn't my decision. And I just gave them a lift anyway and chatted." (Bernard, p. 14, l. 663-668)*

Wendy found herself in a similar but more urgent situation when she helped an athlete during the indoor cycling competition after he had collapsed. Rather than waiting for the first-aiders to arrive, she took the decision to cool him down:

*"But one person, he was a Spanish guy, he really went mad. A young guy. And he was in terrible trouble when he came off. He collapsed on the floor, rolling around and that… I was waiting for the first-aiders... he was really in a lot of distress. I felt very sorry for him. So I just got water to wash his forehead and the back of his neck to cool him down and all that." (Wendy, p.5, l. 225-235)*

The decision to act following feeling empathetic towards another person emerged again during the interview with Wendy who recalled who she met the woman from the Korean delegation that represented Korea that was the host country for the next WFG:

*"...because you are wearing a uniform, people don't differentiate between… they see that you are wearing a uniform, so they approach you. And some of the questions they were asking me, I couldn't possibly answer. Oh, I tell you what… there was a Korean woman who came up to me. And this is on the opening day, before the parade. And she said that they had a load of fans. She spoke English but with a very thick Korean accent. She was difficult to understand...but I got at the bottom of it in the end. They had a delivery. 'Did you see the fans that the Korean delegation had?' And apparently they had a consignment of them delivered to the Arena… you know, underneath somewhere..somewhere in there. And she needed to get them because they needed them for the parade. And the people who were on the doors wouldn't allow her in. She looked so lost and struggled to explain to me what she was looking for. And I thought that it must be really difficult to be foreigner ... to make yourself understood. So I just got this idea that anyone who looks like they're working and they're wearing a suit is more important. There was a fellow there, an older fellow, yellow suit and I've been chatting away to him. And I spotted him. And I said 'Hang on a second'. I took the Korean woman and went over to him and said 'There are some fans that this lady needs for the Korean delegation. They are somewhere in the Arena. She knows where they are but she isn't being allowed to go in and get them'. And he said to the woman 'Come with me, I will take you in personally.' (Wendy, p.12, l. 562-584 & p.18, l. 830-840)*

In view of the volunteers' multiple interrelationships, i.e. their relationship with the competitors, volunteer coordinators, event organisers etc., the following quote by Jane shows that the volunteers' feeling empathy and deciding to act accordingly extended to people other than volunteers. Recalling the situation where fellow-volunteers complained about just standing around and feeling not needed, Jane described her reaction as follows:

"*There were moments where I felt I have to defend the organisers. And I told the others "Yes, you have to be patient.  Sometimes there are times where you may*

*not be needed, just at that moment, but look at the overall picture. Yes, you do make a contribution, you are needed."* (*Jane, p. 3, l. 134)*

Kara found herself in a similar position where there was not enough work for all the volunteers resulting in the event organisers being blamed:

*"Yeah, it was a bit of a…. It was a bit of a shame, really.  But I didn't mind 'coz I it's not their [the organisers'] fault. They wanted to be on the safe side and made sure that they had plenty of people. But other volunteers blamed them for not having enough to do. I told the other volunteers that we can't blame them 'coz they haven't necessarily organized such a large event before, have they! So you'd rather have too many people than too few, wouldn't you really."* (*Kara, p. 9, l. 442-447)*

Whilst these accounts reflect how empathy led the some of the WFG'08 volunteers to actively respond to the encountered situation, Jane experienced a missed opportunity to help a South African firefighter who was competing in the Games and who had lost the souvenirs that he had bought on that day:

*"There was something I really, really regretted. We had a contestant who was in on Saturday who bought some T-shirts. And he was doing the tug-of-war and the darts. And somewhere between the two events he lost the T-shirts. And we said 'Well, they might get handed in. Maybe someone handed them in by mistake and will bring them back.' The next day I didn't go in, I wasn't working on the Sunday. And I when I went in on the Monday, I asked 'Did this guy find the T-shirts?' And apparently he hadn't and I really wished I had seen him again because he was from South Africa and what he paid, he said was a lot of money in South Africa. For me, personally it wasn't that much money, so I would really have loved to have gone and bought him some more so he didn't go home with a bad experience. He bought souvenirs. He bought a T-Shirt for himself and his girl-friend. And he lost them and I would have loved to see him to replace them for him because, you know, I think, quite possible his only memory with the Games is going to be, he spent a lot of money and lost the items. You know, for me, it wasn't such a great deal of money. I am so really annoyed that I never saw him again to do that for him… If only I had seen him or if I had reacted*

*immediately, I could have done something for him. So he could go home with wonderful memories of the city. Oh yes, I'm so annoyed." (Jane, p. 7, l. 195-326)*

The idea of mindfulness in relation to empathy that emerged from the interviews with Jane and Sara and which might be perceived as a concomitant feature of empathy and as antecedent of the decision to act: For example, in the case of Jane, her mindfulness concentrated on fellow volunteers commitments that might have made it difficult to work longer than anticipated:

*"And also I felt, uhm, there were other people there where one might… they wanted somebody to stay till the end. And I said to the others 'Obviously, you've got family to back to' or some of them are back on again early the next morning or something. I said '"You go, I'm not starting early tomorrow and I don't have nobody to go home to, so I'll stay.'" (Jane, p. 4, l. 149-153)*

In contrast, Sara was aware of the fellow volunteers being shy and not feeling included in the work team:

*"I am also mindful of people that might be a bit shy or quiet…  I'm mindful of volunteers who are sort of… stood in the background while I make the effort to say to them 'Oh hi', you know, 'What's your name' or 'Where are you from?' or, you know 'I'm S.'. I wanted to make sure that people were included, that they feel comfortable, that's right. No, I'm very mindful of people's feelings and about not being left out. I do remember being in a situation where … somebody wasn't sort of, I am not saying they weren't talking but I felt that they looked a little bit shy. So I did do that. I did involve them in, you know. Sometimes it's easier for them if you talk about yourself. If I say 'Hi', you know. 'I'm Sara…bla, bla, bla'. Not sort of putting them on the spot by asking them 'Who are you? What are you doing?' you know. So I like to sort of chat to people to make them feel ok."* (Sara, p. 8, l. 383-387 &  p.9, l. 395-410)

An interesting research finding emerged from the interview with Karen whose decisions and actions to 'take care' of the event competitors were informed by feeling responsible:

*"I felt in a way responsible for the wellbeing of the firefighters. I wanted, not to protect because I can't protect thousands of people, but to make sure that they understood and had a good time… that it wasn't spoiled by one small bad experience and to do our bits helping to make it, the Games, a success."* (<u>*Karen, p. 10, l. 461-470*</u>)

In addition to the previous account that depict the WFG'08 volunteers as feeling into and trying to understand the actors of their counter-roles, their decision to act and to provide help that is informed by the volunteer's feeling responsible adds another facet to the interpretation of the WFG'08 as being a 'care-taker'.

### 8.4.2. Reciprocity – give and take

The previous section has outlined the concept of empathy and how it resulted in the volunteers' decision to help those people within the socioscape of the WFG'08 and related to their role-set. Whilst the findings suggest that caring within the context of WFG'08 volunteering was unilateral and expressed by the volunteers only, in fact, caring emerged as being of mutual nature: for example, Sara and Edward recalled how the volunteers looked after each other:

*"If there was a task to be done, you find that those that you really got on well with, you know, you would both be saying 'No, go on… go and have a rest' or 'I'll do that' or 'No, you've just done that'. We were like helping each other. So we were not volunteering helping the competitors, we were helping other volunteers. So there was this sense of mutual care and respect."* <u>*(Sara, p. 4, l. 183-189)*</u>

*"We were helping each other. If you help each other, the job is easier and gets done quickly. And you still can have a laugh... Yeah, that's true. And with some things you really needed help. The judo mats for example, they were heavy. I helped with unloading them from the van. They were not light...a whole stack was very heavy. But we helped each other getting the mats out of the van and into the Arena. There was this feeling of togetherness. In general there was a great feeling of comradeship, friendship. The people I was working with were mostly very friendly and helpful… ready to help each other."* <u>*(Edward, p.7, l. 291-298)*</u>

Sara remembered another occasion where she felt that she was "looked after" by a fellow volunteer:

> *"I remember sharing a journey to… not actually on the bus but to the bus station and there were two of us waiting for different buses 'coz sometimes I got the bus, sometimes the train. It depended… uhm. I did, I shared the journey with a different person on one occasion. Yeah. that was quite nice, really because…. We both knew…. We both knew similar places but this person was not going to… not exactly my route but I knew where he was going and he was just a young man and… we just had a nice chat and it was for us to get to be able, you know, it was dark and walking to the bus station with another person. Having that company… and the feeling of safety. And then, he actually came with me. We were looking at the boards to see which bus was mine and … so that was nice. It was kind of.. uhm, it was almost like someone being protected. And it felt as if I was being cared for then. So that was quite nice. That was nice… because it wasn't like I needed that. 'Coz I knew had he not had been there I still would have done it, you know but it was nice to think that somebody else did care and was making sure that, you know, you get on the bus and that you're safe. Yeah, that was quite nice."* (*Sara, p. 10, l. 479-493*)

In the account of Dan, the concept of mutual care was extended to include a group of free-lance photographers who took photos of the various tournaments and who had a stall in the Echo Arena:

> *"And then on the last day, they had a company called 'Events Photography' who had free lance photographers who come in and take photographs and these sort of things. They had a little corner. So it was quite a busy corner in the end. Uhm, and it was great to actually have to work with those because they often had to go off and leave all their equipment to take photographs. And they asked "Can you keep an eye on that". So…I was there all the time. I kept an eye on their gear. Very nice gear as well and nice computers. Uhm, and then the lady who was doing the arts and crafts. You know, you' go for lunch and she'd keep an eye on things. So there was very much the feeling of everybody sort of working together and looking out for each other which was nice."* (*Dan, p. 4, l.182-191*)

These accounts reflect the experience of care/caring as a product of reciprocity. The concepts of reciprocity has been subject to extensive research within the field of economics as Bewley (1995) and Campbell and Kamlani (1997) and sociology including the early work by Gouldner (1960), Parsons (1961) and Durkheim (1974 [1893]) and and has been recognised for a long time by numerous scholars as being of central importance for social stabilities within societies (Becker, 1956; Simmel, 1971 [1907]; Gottlieb, 1981). Reciprocity is subjective to different conceptualisation and definitions: for example Gouldner (1960) refers to reciprocity as a one of the rules of exchange in the form of repayment. Providing an interdisciplinary review of the norm of reciprocity he distinguishes between a) reciprocity as a pattern of exchange between two people which is of interdependent nature echoing Simmel's idea of reciprocity as "*scheme of giving and return*" (1950:387) and b) reciprocity as moral norm that directs human behaviour. As suggested by Gergen (1969) the 'give and return' aspect of reciprocity links to general exchange theory in terms of the person that receives something in return for something else that the other person wants or needs. This aspect is reflecting in the definition offered by Falk and Fischbacher (1999) who define reciprocity as "*a behavioural response to perceived kindness and unkindness*" (p.2). Whilst their definition relate to the exchange of (un)kindness, the idea that reciprocity is a response assumes that something has been given to someone in the first instance.

Within the context of the WFG'08, reciprocity emerged in terms of the exchange of caring behaviour between the sport event volunteers and their fellow actors in the WFG'08 socioscape in terms of the WFG'08 volunteers looking after and being looked after. For example, Gloria who is wheelchair bound and applied as a helper at the event recalled how her volunteer job was matched to her physical condition:

> "*I was worried that they [the event organisers] would not recruit me for the Games... because I'm disabled. But they did. And when I explained to X [the event coordinator] that I was in wheelchair, she just said 'That's fine It will be then a sit-down job for you'. I was so happy when she said that.*" (<u>Gloria, p. 19, l. 888-889</u>)

Similarly, Sara trusted her allocated volunteer coordinator to look after her in terms of job allocation:

*"So I left it very open for X as it turned out for X, the coordinator, to say to me 'Well, you know, we've got space here or we have the need… the need is greater here'. So I was happy to fill the gap where the need was. So I didn't know that it's going to be accreditation, uhm... although on reflection she did mention that but I didn't know how certain, how definite that was gonna be. And she was very good in terms of saying 'We wouldn't expect you to do something you weren't comfortable with'. So it was very much give and take." (Sara, p. 2, l. 95-97 & 101-103)*

In contrast, Ivy experienced a lack of exchange of care/caring leaving her angry and drawing consequences from having been let down by the respective event manager who was in charge of managing the allocated volunteers:

*"I was really cross on the first day. Because they got me there at the crack of dawn. It said in the email to be there at six thirty. For me to wake up so early and to having to make my way to the city centre from where I live… it was early. And I caught the first bus down there, down the road. And when I arrived in town I was told 'Oh you should have been emailed to say that you weren't needed'. But I stayed anyway. But as the day went, it was so evident that there were far too many volunteers. And I thought 'Oh, sod this. I am not getting up at six o'clock tomorrow or whatever to hang around here, doing nothing'." (Ivy p.2, l.92-117)*

Besides 'receiving care' from the event organiser represented by the event managers and the volunteer coordinators in the form of task/job allocation, being/feeling recognised emerged from the interviewees another element of caring behaviour of others. The signs of recognition included being thanked by the volunteer coordinators:

*"All the event managers and... volunteer coordinators... kept underlining the facts how important we were and thanking us all the time. It is not… you don't do it for the thanks. You don't expect thanks but when people say it all the time, it makes a difference. It is like if you husband never told you that he loved you but you knew that he did, it is not enough. You still like to hear it. It was like…you know, after people have been married for twenty years and they don't tell each other. They know that they love each other but you still like to hear it.*

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*And it is the same, you know. They might as well have been saying 'I love you, I love you'. They were saying 'Thank you, thank you' but it was like somebody saying 'I love you'. It made us, it made me feel appreciated. And it sounded genuine, you know that it came from the heart and all that and it wasn't just tokenism. So that was really good." (Wendy, p.20, l. 929-945)*

and being issued free tickets to watch some of the events:

*"I was only working as a volunteer but I was also a spectator. That was like… I felt like … I felt like it was almost as a 'thank-you'. It was like…. You know, 'You've all volunteered for the morning and you know, we've got tickets for all of you for the ceremony'… like… it was like to say 'You won't be overlooked', you know ... That was nice, you know. There is no need for them to that you but they did, you know. And we were all had tickets and came along and watched. That was really nice." (Kara, p. 6, l. 263-268)*

However, the return of caring behaviour in the form of recognition was not limited to those in charge of the volunteers but included event competitors:

*"We were also recognised… by the organisers, the coordinators, the competitors. A handshake was not important, just people noticing you, saying 'Hello, how are you?' (Edward, p.12, l. 563-565)*

*"They [the competitors] were very appreciative. They were saying what a good time they've had and how everybody had looked after them well…. I felt they… they were really showing their appreciating of what has been done in Liverpool for them which made me feel quite happy." (Ann, p.3, l.126-135)*

Dan recalled how he had helped a firefighter from New Zealand who was competing at the WFG'08 to get onto the right bus and to operate her mobile phone:

*"Yeah, I mean she had to get from the Arena another part of Liverpool... and she didn't know which bus to get. And as I said, I'm not a bus person at all. So it took a bit of while and we actually worked it out in the end... uhm, using good old Google maps. It took a while to find out but then having found out the*

*information. I had to make that sure that she actually understood it. And the other thing I helped with was …. A lot of them bought phones when they came over here so that they could use it in the UK. And she'd bought an O2 phone. And it's never an easy job to get your phone registered and up and running. So I was trying to help her with that and we went on website and in the end we finally managed to get this working. So there were a couple of things I helped her with and she came to say 'thank you' and that was nice, you know.*" (*Dan, p. 17, l. 794-809*)

Whilst in these accounts caring behaviour towards the volunteers was conveyed through recognition in the form of verbal acknowledgment of the volunteers, i.e. noticing and thanking them, some of the interviewees also received some gifts:

"*And at the end then, the German guys that I had given a lift to the Aintree Arena earlier that week came up to me and gave me a key ring and said 'thank-you'. It was just a little souvenir but it made feel appreciated.*" (*Bernard p. 14, l. 671-679*)

"*There was the basketball event where I met and talked to one of the competitors. He couldn't speak very good English. This was the night before they were going back. And he gave me his shirt, his firefighter shirt. It was a surprise because you know, we weren't… I wasn't expecting it. All I did was taking to him while he was waiting for his turn at the basketball event. He just sort of rushed back and gave me this and said 'Muchas gracias'. Uhm… I felt recognised and appreciated…and then I received I had only taken the time to talk.*" (*Gloria, p. 13, l. 580-599*)

"*And you know, the competitors were so grateful. One of them was so grateful, he gave me one of the little patches. I felt really good about that. I wouldn't have cared what he had given me, you know. I mean it was lovely because it was one of their badges, you know. But he appreciated the efforts that we had gone through.*" (*Jane, p. 11, l. 531-536*)

In the case of Wendy, recognition of her caring behaviour was expressed by the member of the South Korean delegation who she had assisted by putting her in touch with a person in charge to help her find the delivery of fans:

> *"I never gave it another thought. And then about an hour or two later, somebody popped up in front of me and my friend. And it was that woman and she gave us fans. She said 'Thank you for helping'. And it was just totally unexpected. I never gave her another thought. I thought 'Right, job done, move on to the next thing!'. I never expected to see her again and the next thing she found us. She took the trouble to find me and gave me a Korean fan to say 'thank you'. It was totally unexpected." (Wendy, p.12, l. 562-584 & p.18, l. 830-84)*

Drawing from the literature on reciprocity, these gestures from the actors in the WFG'08 volunteers' counter-roles can be interpreted as a response to the caring behaviour of the volunteers: in return for helping the event organisers in staging a successful event and looking after the competitors and supporting the event, in most cases the interviewees the volunteers were looked after in return by the event coordinators, the event competitors, fellow volunteers and others. This findings relates to the work by Noddings (1984) who argues that caring is a process that "*involves two parties: the one-caring and the cared-for*" (p.26) and that the process of caring is only complete when the person that is cared for responds to the one who is caring. Furthermore, he argues that unless a reciprocal response to the care provided by the other person is issued, care is "*not only fruitless, but logically and literally non-existent*" (p.27). Govier (1992) supports this viewpoint by stating that a caring act only has a meaning if the person that is cared for-responds accordingly. This was not the case in the accounts Ivy who was let down and failed to be informed that she was no longer needed at one of the tournaments as well as Wendy who had helped a Spanish competitor who had overheated during completion as described in an earlier section:

> *"And he actually won a medal. And his friends pulled him to his feet to go and collect his medal. And he was wobbling, his legs were like spaghetti. And you know what, afterwards he came back and just went. And I thought "Hey!" (Laughter). He got the medal and I didn't get a "thank-you" off him. That wasn't right. Next time it will be a bucket of water. I expected some feedback from him.*

*But he didn't acknowledge me at all, you know. He didn't even look at me as he walked past.*" (*Wendy, p.5, l. 235-240*)

Furthermore, Ivy and Wendy's accounts relate to the perspective of reciprocity as norm in terms reciprocity being a universal principle that is recognised and practiced by others (Gouldner, 1960; Tsui and Wang, 2002; Wang *et al.,* (2003) which is "(1) *people should help those who helped them, and (2) people should not injure those who have helped them"* (Gouldner, 1960:171). However as argued by Rousseau and Schalke (2000), Shore and Coyle-Shapiro (2003) and Copranzano and Mitchell (2005), the value of reciprocity varies due to cultural and individual differences. Their work support findings from older studies, e.g. by Eisenberger *et al.* (1986) who argue that a person's exchange orientation is subject to their level of exchange of ideology. Thus, the lack of reciprocity that Ivy and Wendy experienced during their enactment of the WFG'08 role might be due to low orientation of the event mangers and the Spanish athlete towards responding to volunteers caring attitude towards the volunteer role and the welfare of the WFG'08 competitors. Interestingly, the reaction of these two interviewees' reflect a further perspective of reciprocity which emerged from research undertaken by Malinowski (1932 cited by Copranzano and Mitchell 2005:876) whose findings suggest that transactions between people are accompanied the individual's expectation that the lack of response to benevolent acts will result in punishment. Both Wendy and Ivy reacted with punishing the recipient of their caring behaviour: Ivy by refusing to get up again at six thirty to volunteer at the respective WFG'08 tournament and Wendy by implying that next time the competitor would have been cooled by throwing a bucket of water at him.

These research findings suggest that reciprocity is a vital feature of the WFG'08 volunteer's relationship with members of their role set which should not be ignored by event organisers. This argument is supported by Merrell (2000) whose research on volunteers in women clinics suggests that volunteers view the relationships with the organisations that they are working for as being of a reciprocal nature. Referring to equity theory she argues that a balance between giving and taking is required as inequitable relationships in which the volunteers gives more than he/she receives in return, negatively affects the volunteer experience. However, in contrast to previous research participants' accounts, one interviewee described a sense of recognition

overkill which raises the question to what extent reciprocity responses from behalf of the event organisers and representatives need to be paced:

> "*Before you'd even started till well after you've had finished, you were getting all these 'thank-you's' to the point, when you thought 'That is enough. Don't thank me so much. I hardly do anything'. Considering there were so many volunteers, you just always felt like… they were always saying 'Thank you' and, you know, at the beginning of the day of the treasure hunt, before we've even started the guy who was organising it, he was like 'I just want to thank you all in advance; it's great that you've all turned up!' And… then getting the… uhm...emails that we had afterwards... when they said 'Thank you' to us all afterwards, I thought it is nice to be appreciated but it was just too much… Too many 'thank-you's' too often. It started to sound ...fake."* (*Kara, p. 7, l. 304-312 & 314-316*)

### 8.4.3 Trust

Another theme that emerged from the interviewees' account on their lived experience with regards to their encounter with actors from the volunteer's role-set and that relates to care is trust. The concept of trust has been subject research in various disciplines such as marketing (Sirdeshmukh *et al.*, 2002; Coulter and Coulter, 2003), sociology (Sztompka, 1999); information science (Marsh and Dibben, 2003) and economics (Bromley and Cummings, 1995) which has resulted in the development of different interpretations of trust. For example, trust is described as "*belief in the integrity of other people*" (Ross *et al.*, 2001:569) and "*belief in the goodwill of the other*" (Seligman, 1997: 43; Yamagishi and Yamagishi, 1994:131) whilst Moorman *et al.* (1993) define trust as "*a willingness to rely on an exchange partner in whom on has confidence*" (p.82). Although both definitions reflect the notion of confidence and reliability, the latter implies that trust is not subject to coercion but is the choice of the individual. This finding relates to the idea put forward by Lynch *et al.* (2007) who point out the link between trust and freedom as "*people are free to choose who they interact with*" (p.52). Rousseau *et al.* (1998) conclude that trust is not behaviour but "*a psychological condition that can cause or result from action*" (p.395).

The early work of Deutsch (1958) on trust outlines risk as a central tenet of trust: As an individual is uncertain if the other person will act and behave as expected or as it is deemed appropriate, the individual develops a sense of trust in the other person's ability to do so. However he/she cannot be sure and consequently takes a risk that the

expected/appropriate behaviour will not be displayed. On the other hand, risk-taking supports the development of trust when the other person acts as expected (Coleman, 1990; Das and Teng, 1998). The idea of risk in relation to trust is also inherent in the concept of moralistic trust which according to Uslaner (2004) is based on "*the trust in strangers, not in the people we know... but who nevertheless are part of our "moral communities.*" (p.502). The notion of risk in relation to strangers is underlying in the interview with Ivy who recalled the situation where she was approached in Aigburth, a suburb in South Liverpool, on her way home by a German and American firefighter who recognised her as a WFG'08 volunteer by the yellow volunteer T-Shirt. They were trying to make their way to their accommodation in Childwall which is one of the suburbs of South Liverpool, but did not know how to get there. Not knowing how to travel to Childwall by public transport and not wanting to leave the two stranded, she suggested to the two firefighters that either they could travel to Childwall from Aigburth by taxi or they could come home with Ivy who would then drive them to their accommodation. The firefighters chose the latter option and Ivy took them home where they were introduced to her husband and had lunch before Ivy drove them to their final destination. She explained her decision to take the two strangers to her home as follows:

> *"I just thought 'You can't have these two guys stranded in the bottom of Aigburth with no direction of how to get to Childwall'. I knew they were associated with the World Firefighters Games and therefore for me, they had some credence. I trusted them... very much so. Yeah. ... I mean I didn't know them. They were strangers but I knew that they were firefighters and part of the event in which I was involved." (Ivy, p.4, l.166-172)*

Drawing from the link between trust and risk-taking, it might be argued that Ivy took a risk by bring two strangers to her home, not knowing for certain if they would not do her any harm. On the other hand, in view of the fact that her husband was home, Ivy's account raises the question if she would have taken the risk of bringing two strangers home if she hadn't know  that she would not be alone with them.

Interdependence emerges from the literature as another condition of trust as "*the interests of one party cannot be achieved without reliance upon another*" (Rousseau *et al.*, 1998:395). For example, with regards to the relationship between with the WFG'08

volunteers and the event organisers the event organisers' were perceived as trustors in the form of trusting and relying on the volunteers to do their job:

> *"They trusted you. I mean you had to bring people from A to B. They would say to us that this and this person has to be there. They trusted you to do the job."* (*Edward, p.3, l. 140)*

Whilst this quote suggests that trust is the concern of the event organisers only, the dual nature of trust emerged during the course of the interview with Kara:

> "*The organisers trusted us to just kind of muck in and get involved and we trusted them that if anything had gone wrong or you known if you had been involved in a situation where there was a problem of any type, you would have been okay. They would have looked out for you, they… there was definitely that aura that you were their volunteers that...you didn't just belong to them in the sense of to do jobs for them, you belonged to them in a sense that they look after you and make sure you're okay. Down to the simplest things like making sure you or everybody had some lunch or making sure that you didn't need a bottle of water.*" (*Kara, p. 33, l. 1600-1612)*

Whilst the account by Kara reflects the notion of reciprocity with regards to the mutual nature of trust in the event organiser-volunteer relationship, it highlights the link between trust and caring that is advocated by Govier (1992) who suggests that trust is another prerequisite for the giving and receiving of care: whilst the one caring trusts the other person to respond accordingly to the acts of caring behaviour, the recipient of care has to have trust in the care-giver believing him/her to be trustworthy, e.g. that they are not exploited. As suggested by Kara's and Edward's accounts, the event organisers as care-givers trusted that in exchange of giving the individual the chance to be a involved as helper in the WFG'08, the volunteer would respond accordingly by performing their allocated role. On the other hand, the volunteers as care-receivers had trust, that they were not 'used and abused' or 'taken for granted' as free labour but that they were looked after in return for their role performance. However, it can be argued that the risk of exploitation is not only limited to the volunteer but also addresses the event organisers who besides of 'giving care' to the volunteers are directly or indirectly also the recipient of care by the volunteers who are trusted to perform their WFG'08

volunteer role as required and not to exploit their status and the benefits that accompany the job, e.g. prestige of having been involved in the event, to watch tournaments free of charge and receiving a volunteer kit.

Research into trust within organisations has been the tenet of early studies by Blau (1964), Zand (1972) and Rempel *et al.* (1985) whose findings suggest that trust is subject to development over time starting off with a low level of initial trust when people meet or interact with each other for the first time, that gradually increases as actors learn about each other through on-going interaction. This knowledge-based trust theory that is advocated by Holmes (1991) and Lewicki and Bunker (1995) raises the question how the trust between the WFG volunteers and the event organisers, athletes and fellow volunteers can be explained as their interaction was limited to a few days only and more or less brief in nature. Also, the fact that the event organisers were "imagined" as the volunteers were coming in touch with these in the form of then volunteer coordinators raises the question how this sense of trust could have been developed. As suggested by Berg *et al.* (1995), initial trust occurs when people or parties that have not worked together in the past, meet for the first time, and is consequently a prerequisite for collaboration and cooperation between people (Bromiley and Cummings, 1995; Meyerson *et al.*, 1996). According to Johnson-George and Swap (1982), a facilitator of the development of trust in situations where people who have not known each other before meet, is one's disposition to trust as it influences ones' "*trusting behaviour when parties are new to each other in highly ambiguous, novel or unstructured situations, where one's generalised expectancy is all one can rely on*" (p.1307). A parallel to the WFG'08 can be drawn here where the volunteers find themselves in a new working environment and are encountering strangers either initially or on an ongoing basis depending on their duties, e.g. when they are helping out at different locations and working in new teams. McKnight and Cummings (1998) explain this trusting behaviour with the absence of clear roles and relationship in such novel situations. In comparison, early work by Rotter (1967; 1971) and Erikson (1968) suggest that the willingness of people to rely on other in the form of trust is influenced by personality construct resulting in two types of disposition to trust: a) "*faith in humanity*" (Kramer, 1994:201) that refers to one's belief in trustworthiness of others and b) "*trusting stance*" (Riker, 1971:67) that refers to one's conviction that "*regardless of whether people are reliable or not, one will obtain better interpersonal outcomes by dealing with people as though as they are well-meaning and reliable*"

(McKnight *et al.*, 1998:477). In the case of Ivy, her decision to help the two athletes by driving them to their destination after taking them to her home and giving them something to eat could be explained by her belief in the trustworthiness of the competitors. However, the fact that the origin of this trustworthiness seems to have been based on their affiliation with the Games that gave them "*...some credence"* (see quote by Ivy on p.144) relates to the link between trust and categorisation processes such as reputation categorisation and stereotyping: in the case of reputation categorisation, trusting beliefs about a person originate from an individual's professional competence (Powell, 1996), membership of a group that is perceived as being competent (Dasgupta, 1988) or behaviour (McKnight *et al.,* 1998). In view of the Ivy's experience the fact that the two men were WFG'08 participants could have triggered her trusting beliefs in them. With regards to positive stereotyping, Ivy's trust in the two firefighters might have emerged from their occupation which by nature is that of helping those that are in difficulties; i.e. "*from prejudice for occupational groups*" (McKnight *et al.,* 1998: 481).

In contrast, Sara's lived experience of a sense of trust between WFG'08 volunteers allows a link to research on the development of trusting beliefs through unit grouping that refers to the process of "*putting the other person in the same category as oneself*" (McKnight, 1998:480), e.g. the category of volunteers:

> *"I also felt… uhm… during break time there was one occasion when I was talking to one of the volunteers. I felt it was nice that we shared something more personal, that they shared their own family life with me. And I mean, I don't have to disclose anything but it was just something personal about the others' lives and you know, his relationship and what he perhaps wanted from that. It was nice because I felt as if there was a level of trust between us. I mean, it wasn't anything, uhm, bad or derogatory but it was nice to think that it was a personal thing and she shared that with me… which made me feel good like, she knew I wasn't gonna go and say 'Oh, you know what so-and-so said?' …Yeah, there was this really nice level of trust considering it was, uhm… well when I say earlier on, it was probably a few days into the volunteering."* (*Sara, p. 11, l. 522-533*)

According to Kramer *et al.* (1996) people that share the same category of self including similar values and goals have a positive perception of each other which facilitates the development of high trusting beliefs (Brewer and Silver, 1978; Zucker *et al.*, 1996; McKnight *et al.*, 1998). This seems to be supported by Sara's experience of trust between volunteers, however this finding restricted to one interviewee account only. An in-depth analysis of the trust between the WFG'08 volunteers and other parties is beyond the scope of this research. However, in view of the little research on trust within the context of events that to date is dominated by Lynch *et al.*'s (2007) exploration of trust between event organisers and event participants using a recreational cycling event in New Zealand as example, these findings the findings of this section allow the conclusion that the relationship between the WFG'08 volunteers and members of their role-set is complex as it goes beyond mere social interaction and is informed by trust on one hand. On the other hand it highlights the dual nature of trust in the form of the WFG'08 as trustor and trustee and indicates the influence of trust on the quality of the volunteers' role experience, e.g.in terms of personal well-being.

## 8.5 Revisited: the WFG'08 volunteer as care-giver, care-taker, care-seeker and care-receiver

As outlined in the first section of this chapter, the term 'care' and 'caring'' has been subject to various definitions which in view of the research findings that explored the enactment of the volunteer role within the socioscape of the WFG'08 all seem relevant. For example, in reference to the definition of care provided by McDaniel (1990) describing care as "*the investment of one's personal resources in another in order to promote wellbeing*" (p.1), several interview accounts highlighted the volunteers investing their time, emotions, thoughts and physical resources into their behaviour of looking after the people that represent their counter-roles, e.g. the event competitors. In contrast to the more simplistic definition of caring by McFarlane (1976) who summarizes caring as "*all helping activities*" (p.12), the former conceptualisation of care highlights that the volunteers as care-givers provide more than just acts of helping – instead their role enactment is informed by feelings and an caring attitude. With regards to concomitant features of the interviewees' lived experience of the WFG'08 socioscape in terms of the interpersonal nature of care (Watson, 1979), which are empathy, reciprocity and trust, it can be argued that the interpretation of the WFG'08 volunteer as 'care-giver', 'care-taker', 'care-seeker' and 'care-receiver' is valid. With regards to empathy, having 'felt into' other actors, e.g. the event competitors, the event organisers,

fellow volunteers etc., resulted in cognitive outcomes (Paiva *et al.*, 2005) in the form of the volunteers realising the situation the other person and the options how to respond which informed the decision to act and help. Thus, the WFG'08 volunteer was not just performing his/her role in a 'care-giving' manner but literally 'took care' of the other person allowing the reference to the volunteer as 'care-taker'. However, reflecting the interpersonal aspect of care/caring, the research findings highlighted situations of role reversal, where it was not the volunteers giving and taking but seeking and receiving care from those performing the counter-roles. As a result, the nature of the inter-relationship between the WFG'08 volunteers and the members of their role-set can be described as very complex and multi-dimensional involving empathy, trust and reciprocal behaviour.

**8.6 Conclusion**

This chapter provided insights into sport event volunteers' lived experience of their role enactment in terms of the socioscape of the WFG'08 and the nature of the volunteers' relationship with actors in their role-set performing the volunteers' counter-roles. Besides providing new knowledge and understanding about the volunteer role and how it is enacted and experienced by the actor, these research findings apply the concept of care/caring which to date seems to be firmly rooted in the field of nursing, to the context of sport events where to date only a loose link between the idea of caring and sport event volunteering has been established in relation to the recruitment, training and retention of volunteers (Coyne and Coyne, 2001). Furthermore, the research findings contribute to the existing body of knowledge by providing new insights with regards to the nature of the sport event volunteer's relationship to those whose share the volunteer's social environment at the event. However, they also raised the questions to what extent the role experience of the volunteers within events' socioscape can be enhanced and managed by event organisers.

# CHAPTER NINE

## Role enactment: The WFG'08 volunteer as changeling

*The Caterpillar and Alice looked at each other*
*for a some time in silence: at last the Caterpillar*
*took the hookah out its mouth, and adressed*
*her in a languid, sleepy voice.*
*"Who are you?" said the Caterpillar.*
*This was not an encouraging opening for a*
*conversation. Alice replied, rather shyly, „I-I*
*hardly know, Sir, just at present – at least I know*
*who I was when I got up this morning, but I*
*think I must have changed several times since then".*

Lewis Carrol, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (1992 [1865]: 35)

### 9.0 Introduction

This chapter investigates how World Firefighters Games 2008 (WFG'08) volunteers experienced their 'self' during the enactment of their volunteer role. The first section of the chapter introduces the overarching theme which describes the WFG'08 volunteer as changeling followed by the presentation and analysis of subthemes that supported this depiction of the volunteer and encompass a) *the tempory fugitive*; b) *meeting the 'remembered' self* and c) *becoming and unbecoming*. The interpretation the WFG'08 volunteer as changeling is revisited and discussed at the end of the chapter.

### 9.1 The WFG'08 volunteer as changeling

The term '*changeling*' refers to the idea of a child having been replaced by another one (Allen, 1991). Pasternak-Slater (1983) refers to the English literature which depicts the switch of children as the work of fairies. Inherent in the concept of 'changeling' is the idea of the child not being the same, but being different, being transformed into someone else. In contrast to transmogrification which is understood as the change of something/someone into something/someone grotesque such as a monster (Sullivan, 2006), the idea of transformation seems more neutral in terms of the outcome, i.e. the outcome can both negative and positive. This latter term has consequently been

adopted for the interpretaton of the WFG'08 volunteer as 'changeling'. This interpretation originates from the interviewees' accounts of feeling temporarily different, of being someone else whilst enacting their role. Whilst some interviewees experienced a new sense of self, for others certain moments of their role enactment allowed them to revisit and re-experience a former or 'old' sense of self. Whilst their experiences of self in relation to the enactment of role varies, the experience of feeling different is the result of the individual gaining a new self-definition through transformation (Wade, 1998). The various experiences of the WFG'08 volunters feeling different and/or transformed will be highlighted and explored in the following sections.

### 9.1.1 The temporary fugitive

As the following accounts will demonstrate, being involved in the World Firefigheter Games 2008 was experienced by some interviewees as an escape from their routine and everyday life. For example, Katherine had just moved house and was in the process of having her kitchen renovated when she joined as a volunteer at the World Firefighters Games. She described her perception of the volunteer experience as follows:

> *"It [Volunteering at the World Firefighters Games] was an escape from the building site at home. It was just horrible, it was just chaos. It was just not home, I just didn't want to be there….. I left all of that behind when I went to the Arena in the morning and returned to it in the evening when I tried to tidy up the mess before the workmen came back in the morning. When I entered the Arena in the morning, I just stepped into that 'Reich', realm. It was a completely different world there and it took my mind off things for a while. It was like a sanctuary."* (*Katherine, p.10, l.446-448 & 456-457*)

This account indicates that sport event volunteering world allowed the individual to step into enter a space that was free of the ordinary every-day living, e.g. in Katherine's case it was a zone that allowed her to switch off and to leave the noise and dust of building work behind. As opposed to the 'chaos' at home, her involvement in sport event volunteering during the WFG'08 was for her a form of refuge symbolised by the Arena as the entrance to a space that allowed her to mentally disengage from her reality at home. The term 'sanctuary' holds a specific historical meaning as it referred in medieval times to a location that was owned by the Church and where subsequently

those who were subject to arrest or violence found themselves protected by Church law (Allen, 1991). Thus, one may arrive at the interpretation that sport event volunteering at the WFG'08 provided Katherine with a sense of protection from what she had to face at home. Spinning this idea further, Katherine can in fact be seen as a temporary fugitive that tries to escape chaos as well as a refugee who temporary lost her own social space that she refers to as home.

A similar perspective on the sense of freedom as the result of 'escape' is provided by the account of Gloria who is suffering from multiple illnesses including spina bifida and arthritis and consequently has been confined to a wheelchair for over fifteen years:

> *"It [being a volunteer at the Games] was just… brilliant…. brilliant to be meet the other volunteers and the competitors. It was a relief from boredom from everyday life. In fact, it was like being alive again. A lot of the times I feel like I am buried. It's so claustrophobic… meaning that in a bad sense. Being stuck at home this is. I spend most of the time inside because I can hardly walk and am depending on help from my mother and my husband. And it was great to escape and to be with and amongst people." (Gloria, p. 11, l. 504-510)*

Inherent in Gloria's account is the link to death: in her general day life in which her state of health restricts her to being inside most of the time and relying on the company of her husband and mother, she feels 'buried alive' whilst the enactment of the WFG'08 volunteer role to return to 'the world of the living'. The sense of death also emerges from the lived experience of the role enactment of Ann who experiences the reality of her home as a slow death in the form of suffocation which relates to Gloria who feels buried alive which from a medical perspective results in death through the lack of air. Like Gloria, being a WFG'08 allowed Ann to 'breathe again''', to 'be free':

> *"I felt as if I could breathe again… at home I feel sometimes as if I am suffocating. Because at home the needs of my family comes first and I am number two. But when I volunteer, it is like I can be myself again... there are no constraints." (Ann, p. 19, l. 911-913)*

From the stories of both Gloria and Ann arises the depiction of WFG'08 volunteering as a liberating force that allows individual to be temporarily released from the confinement of their everyday-life, from their shackles which for Ann derive from prioritizing the

requirements of looking after her family and for Gloria emerge from her state of health and disability which has resulted in her social isolation. Like Katherine, they appear as temporary fugitives. In comparison, Jane experienced sport even volunteering at the Games as a liberating force from work:

*"It was an escape for me doing the Games. Because as I'm normally stuck behind a desk all day, and it was nice to be active, more mobile. As I am saying, I am not doing co-work, so it was an escape from the ordinary… you still had tasks to do but the demands weren't there that you normally have in working life. And you know, I really enjoyed that. It was a bit of freedom. I just really enjoyed it. Not having to go to work that I don't like and also the freedom of mind. Yeah, that was it. It seemed that the worries and problems of everyday life were gone for a while. .. And I think, with work there is so much more stress involved. You know, obviously with the Games, you were given a task to do. With the best will in the world, it wasn't that taxing, you know. Yes, you were needed and you did it and that was great. Yes, you didn't have the stresses of, well I'm doing this job now but I know something else has got to be done and something else more urgent will come in and you are thinking 'Oh what!' You are getting really stressed at work. But during the Games, I felt free …I suppose in a way." (Jane, p. 464-471 and p.11, l. 503-508 and p. 11, l. 485-492)*

Interestingly, Jane experienced what she refers to as 'freedom of mind', i.e. having the liberty to focus on what she wanted to focus on rather than having to be concerned with solving problems and being concerned about every-day issues. This sense of 'freedom of mind' is shared by Kara:

*"It [volunteering at the WFG'08] was like being somewhere else, away from every day issues, the routine…and I could just be a different person, just chat to people you see and make use of myself in a kind of a really basic fundamental way, you know. I'd turn up, I'd help out and I'd go away... you know, it cuts it right down to the most basic level really. Nothing to worry about - no presentations or making sure you're getting your work deadlines in on time or you know, things that might kind of stress you out 'coz you're thinking in advance about what jobs you've got to do next week when you're in work. This*

*week you're thinking about next week …and all that is just… far away from you... or last it was for me."* (Kara, p.13, l. 619-622)

Similar to Jane's experience, Kara mentions the aspect of not having had to worry about what happens next or what needs to be done after a task had been completed which appears to be a feature in both their working lives. Instead, their experience suggest that sport event volunteering provided with the opportunity to focus on and enjoy one activity at a time, one day at a time which reflects the idea of 'carpe diem' which advocates  the 'one thing at a time' approach (Bluedorn, 2002).

The common feature that unites these interviewees' accounts is the theme of 'temporary fugitive' mentioned earlier. Drawing from the work by Cohen and Taylor (1997), volunteering at the WFG'08 can be perceived as prison break: The volunteers who are confined by the confinement of everyday life to which Cohen and Taylor (1992) refer to as "*paramount reality*" (p.114), physically and psychologically escape from their 'prison' for a limited amount of time. However, as the WFG'08 is of temporary nature and eventually come to an end, the interviewees' prison-break fails as each of them has to return to their everydayness of life: Katherine has to return to the chaos in her kitchen, Ann has to look after her family again, Gloria is back at home coping with her illnesses and disability, relying on the company of her mother whilst Jane and Kara return to the routine and stress of their 'world of work'.

The idea of sport event volunteering as an experience of escapism is also inherent in the accounts of other interviewees, however they placed the experiences of breaking away from everyday life into the context of going and being on holiday: for instance, Bernard and his wife had bought an old farm house which they were in the process of renovating and redecorating when the WFG'08 were staged in Liverpool. Similarly to Katherine who had her kitchen redone and refitted and who experienced the world of sport event volunteering as a sanctuary, being a WFG'08 volunteer provided Bernard with the sense of being away from the every-day life of renovating work. However his experience is in fact holiday-related:

> *"… for me it was like going on a holiday. It was like having a break from painting, decorating, building, because it's been hard work. And I remember thinking "I am not working now for a week or two". During the Games I did something like six to two or three… it would have been three o'clock, four o'clock before I got*

*home and then, you know, I just wanted to relax. And that's what I did."*
*(Bernard, p.19, l. 882-884 & 891-893)*

Likewise, Ann compared being a sport event volunteer at the Games with being on holiday:

*"Well, it was intense. It's been like.. .although it was busy and you were doing stuff, it felt like a holiday. I've only been abroad on holiday in the past two years since my Mum died. I haven't been away since. Uhm, so it was like having my holiday here, this was my holiday. Although I was busy all the time, it was a chance to meet people from other culture, to see what was going on in other places across the city and Merseyside. It's an escape. It's really.  A whole week I felt like as if I am on holiday. I went to bed early which I normally couldn't d because I always tidy the house in the evening when I come home from work. I just took a drink back up to bed and sit there and read for a little while. It was pure bliss… usually I don't have the time or the energy to read because I'm too tired in the evening." (Ann, p. 11, l. 570-576 & 20, l. 943-945)*

Although her conception of what being on holiday in the context of sport event volunteering means for her differs from the one of Bernard, both accounts share the notion of going or being on holiday in terms of doing something different, something unusual that they cannot do in their everyday-life. In Bernard's case this something was a break from renovating and for Ann the opportunity to have early nights, enjoy a good-night cap and time to read. Interestingly, Ann's account addresses the paradox between feeling like being on holiday and working as a volunteer. By definition, holiday is understood as both "*an extended period of recreation, especially away from home or in travelling*" (Allen, 1991:562) or "*a break from work*" (ibid). Drawing from the findings that have been presented in this chapter so far, sport event volunteering appears to potentially hold both a recreative and escapivist dimension. As displayed in Ann's account, the holiday-analogy within the context of sport event volunteering holds the idea of her going to other event venues in Liverpool where competitions took place. This relates to the concept of holiday-making as going to and seeing different places (Cohen and Taylor, 1992). Furthermore, the cultural and social element of holiday-making emerges as sport event volunteers met and interacted  with people from other cultures which relates to international nature of the Games as firefighters from all over

the World participated in the event. This part of the holiday-analogy was made implicit by Kara:

> *"I think it was like something around Matthew Street. Uhm, and on Sunday nights for the Toughest Firefighter Awards and on the Monday evening we went to the... uhm.. Combats Sport Final. So as well as doing the volunteering in the day, we went to the night time events as well. So, that week was a total week out of our normal lives because in the day time we were doing the volunteering and in the night time we were going to these events. And it felt like you weren't in Liverpool, you know… like you were in a sort of holiday resort. You know, I said to my friend…when we were in that bar on the Friday night, I said 'We might as well be on holiday. I feel like we are on holiday…. because there is like… foreign people everywhere and you can speak to people from all over the world everywhere'. And she said the same. She said 'Yeah, you don't feel like we're in our town, it doesn't feel like we are in Liverpool. It's great!' We were just chatting to people from all over the world and in the same way that you would if went to some holiday somewhere and you meet people from all over the world." (Kara, p. 5, l.590-599)*

Drawing from the literature on tourism experiences and the sociological theories of tourism that deal with the traveller's self, the concept of going on holiday or being on holiday as cited in these quotes links to the idea of tourism as a mean for what Ryan (2002:4) refers to as "*displacement away from normality*" i.e. to get away, to temporarily escape from the stresses, routine and constraints of every-day life (Cohen and Taylor, 1992; Wearing, 2002, Swarbrooke *et al.*, 2003) and to enjoy "*a kind of total experience*" (MacCannell, 2001:381) in the form of "*a sense of absolute freedom, utter relaxation, a release from ordinary social constraints and a near loss of self*" (ibid). In the case of the Bernard and Ann sport event volunteering was similarly experienced like a break from ordinary life and consequently work and routine. Once their engagement as helper at the WFG'08 was over, they had to return to 'normality' which seems like a parallel to the prison-break metaphor mentioned earlier. This link is strengthened by Cohen and Taylor (1992) who describes holiday as "*a small-scale replica of the great escape*" (p.114) that can be perceived as "*the archetypal free area and the institutionalized setting for temporary excursions away from the domain of paramount reality*" (ibid, p.114).

In reference to the prison-break metaphor, the holiday-analogy can be challenged as the sport event volunteer returned each evening to their home similar the tourist who stays for a stretch of time in a tourist destination before returning home (MacCannell, 2001). In response, it needs to be emphasized that it was not aspect of physical getting away from everyday life that constitutes the metaphor of going or being on holiday - it is the understanding of breaking away of every-day practices related to the working world and domesticity of life such as renovating or having to do household chores in the evening after work; i.e. each of the lived experience of WFG'08 volunteering escapism holds the prospect of dissociation of the paramount reality (Cohen and Taylor, 1992). Also, the individual volunteer's decision to make time for the opportunity to become a WFG'08 volunteer might have enhanced if not facilitated the experience of sport event volunteering as going or being on holiday: those interviewees that were still engaged in working life took days off work, e.g. in order to be involved with the WFG'08 Ann took her annual leave. In the case of those volunteers that are retired such as Bernard or Edward wanting to be involved in the Games resulted in them committing themselves for the chosen stretch of time.

### 9.1.2 Meeting the 'remembered' self – being back in the past

Other comparative accounts link the sport event volunteer experience to past memorable moments, i.e. interviewees describe their feeling by recalling similar moments that occurred in their younger years and which bring them back into the past like a time-traveller. For example, Ann recalled feeling like a little girl again on the evening of the final combat competition to which she had invited her father and his partner:

> *"I managed to get tickets for my Dad and his lady-friend. So they came and it was like…being a little girl again. When he stood outside the Arena and we were waiting to go in and all the rest of it, I was asked to do something while I was there. So I left him and he was talking to some other people. And I felt that he was proud of me that I happened to be involved. And I felt like a little girl again. It was like… there I am, his little girl that managed to get involved in these Games and managed the role despite my walking difficulties. You just suddenly come back to being ... like as if I am at school again and I show off something that I've done myself. I managed to cope, I've done it. And they can see the result of it. And they give you their approval, their credit. And later I was on the*

*Arena floor, wearing my uniform and I knew they couldn't possible see me. I didn't know where they were sitting. So it was like 'I am here, on the floor in a big building… Look at me! I've actually done that, I've coped, I have managed. I felt great!'" <u>(Ann, p. 16, l. 800-809)</u>*

Using the analogy of being a little girl again that seeks her parents' approval for having achieved something, Ann reflects on her feeling of achievement. No further details were provided during the interview that could establish or shed light why getting her father's approval meant so much for her. The findings that she compared this specific moment during the Games with how she felt as a child that achieved something in school reflects the Goffman's (1969) idea of the past being linked to 'future presents': as one cannot experience the future but only the present, memories serve as frame, i.e. layers of meaning that assist the individual with making sense of the world. Sara's account is of the same temporal nature as she refers back to a moment of time in her childhood to explain how she felt on the first day of her work as sport event volunteer at the WFG'08:

*"It's was like starting school again. Because when you start school and you wonder who do you play with at play time, it's kind of that at adult places. It really did feel like I had my first day at school. Yeah, you know…. Whom am I gonna meet? And with whom will I go on breaks with? You tempt to go on breaks with people who you feel most attached to. You want to spent that time…that quality time, that break time with somebody you gonna enjoy time with. So you hope to meet somebody who is friendly and with whom you'd get on well. It's natural, I think…." <u>(Sara, p. 4, l. 163-169)</u>*

This account of lived experience highlights the sense of uncertainty that accompanied Sara's role entry in terms of the first encounter with the sport event volunteer world. However, rather than feeling anxious about the type of activities she was suppose to carry out and the unfamiliar environment of the Echo Arena, it appears that Sara's main concern laid with the social dimensions of sport event volunteering in terms of meeting and working with strangers and finding the 'the right person'. Relating to one's own lived experience of the first day of school the reader is likely to empathize with Sara as he/she recalls how nervous he/she was on that day, maybe clinging onto a parent's hand, wondering which desk to one should choose or which would be 'the right person'

to sit with, hoping to make friends on that first day of school or at least to find 'someone who is friendly' and with whom one would 'get on well'.

A social dimension of a different kind was experienced by Kara who compares the sense of novelty of being at a new place and meeting new people and establishing a social network with her memories of Fresher's Week which is a common feature at university to allow first year students to acclimatize in their new surroundings:

> *"I said, to someone…. I said 'It feels like when I first started university', you know, Fresher's week where you've got all those different events going on and you're meeting new people and chatting to new people all the time… and sort of keeping in touch with afterwards or whatever. And I thought, the only thing that's different is we're not going to get the chance to kind of… follow up on the relationships, you know…the friends that you've made, you know. You won't be with them as much… so… it's like... I was feeling a bit sad when it finished. It was like "Ahh!" (Kara, p. 13, l. 611-618)*

In contrast to the other interviewees, she used the analogy not only to depict how she experienced sport event volunteering  but also to identify how she makes sense of the social loss that derived from the not keeping in touch with the people that she met during her work as volunteer at the WFG'08.

The notion of going back into the past in relation to the socioscape of the WFG'08 volunteers also emerged from Gloria's account that compares her WFG'08 lived experience to the time when her illnesses did not constrain her from going to work and to university:

> *"I felt different during the Games. It [being a WFG'08 volunteer] reminded me of the time when I was healthy enough to work and to go to uni." (Gloria, p.6, l. 277-278)*

Gloria's account reflects the duality of her reality in terms of her past in which she was 'healthy enough' and the present in which she perceives herself as disable person. Her account suggests that the being a WFG'08 volunteer provided her with a memory of the time before her illness deteriorated resulting in her physical disability and when she was

not being different from but like 'everybody else'. Thus, like it was the case for Sara and Kara, the experience of enacting the WFG'08 volunteer role was enhanced and derived by Gloria from comparing 'before and after' requiring her to revisit equivalent  moments of her past.


### 9.1.3 Becoming and unbecoming

'*Becoming and unbecoming*' which according to Gould (1978) is the result of transformation, emerged as a third sub-theme from the interviews with the WFG'08 volunteers in terms of the volunteers feeling like someone or something or shifting between being a visible entity or 'gestalt' and non-entity. For example, during her interview, Karen recalled the last evening of her WFG'08 volunteer role when she and some other volunteers had been scheduled to help to meet and greet the competitors who had been invited for a gala dinner at the Echo Arena, to collect and register their entry tickets and to direct them to their tables. However not all of the invited guests attended the evening function and the volunteers were invited to stay for dinner and the fill the empty tables. Dinner was followed by live music and dancing. In her account, Karen describes her transformation from being a 'small fat ugly old woman' into the 'belle of the evening' that wooed all the French firefighters and became the centre of attention with her knowledge of ballroom-dancing:

> *"So there was a table of all yellow shirts (laughter), all having dinner and joining in with everything. And then the dancing started… the French were dancing modern jive. They were asking some of the English girls if they could dance and they couldn't… but I could. .. luckily I can dance. I do dancing for a hobby. I am a volunteer teacher at the dance club as well. I go every week to a dance club. I've been going for ten years. So that was great because no one else could dance except me (laughter). So I danced with every French bloke. I had finished with one and the next would ask. I felt like the belle of the ball. My friend who volunteering with me that night just said 'I hate you so much!'. She said 'I hate you! Take me to your club. Can you take me. I want to be able to dance like that. It's marvellous. It's fantastic'.  I felt so privileged. Because there were only about two French women dancing with these blokes. There were about twenty of them. So I was just watching to make sure it was my dance. I was watching all the steps and I thought 'Yep. That's okay. I can do that'. And I thought 'Actually it is called French Modern Jive. So yes, the French will do it'. So I just*

*asked one the French guys… he had asked a few of the English girls. They were getting into a right mess because it is all hands and swopping and turning. So I went to him and asked 'Like that?' And he said 'Yes, like that…can you do that?' and I said 'Yes'. So were dancing and the song finished and the next started. So I danced with him again and the next one. And then I changed partners. I danced for ages with them. And I was so tired. I was in my yellow T-Shirt and black jeans and all these lovely ladies and their ball gowns were sitting there looking disappointed because they couldn't dance with all the handsome French and I could. So that was my special moment. Because I just said 'Oh my god! I am the belle of the ball. I'm the small fat ugly old woman but I can dance and the other can't!' All these young girls in their strappy dresses and high heels. I could just feel them staring at me thinking 'Oh, who is this woman taking over the dance floor!' I am not a brilliant dancer but I've learned the steps, I can do it. If nothing else has happened on these last ten days, this is my moment. I do a lot of dancing and it is very, very friendly and social and it really doesn't matter who you are or what you are. If you can dance, it's great. But the men...you know, we don't care how horrible, ugly, old or whatever they are. If they can dance, it's great. And I presume that's what they (the French) thought… not who she is and what she is but there is a dancer! I'll dance with her. Just for the pure enjoyment of having a dance. Especially being so obvious in my yellow T-shirt in the middle of the dance floor amongst all these ball gowns. was in black jeans .I thought "Oh god, look at the state of me. Why didn't I think to put a top or something in my bag but we didn't know we were going into the dinner. We thought were just helping on the door and then we'd go home. Maybe have a cup of coffee and go home. We didn't know that we were fully integrated. And I felt like I had become the belle of the ball...One moment I was collecting tickets and tick people off on my clip board… and saying 'You're table is this, you're table is that' and suddenly there was people queuing to dance with me, going 'No, I'm next'. 'Yes, you're next'. It was a really nice experience that I didn't anticipate, I didn't expect. And it was really, really good. And I am not a 'Shall we look at me' type of person. I love to be involved in things but I don't normally like to be the number one. I don't normally like in the centre. I like to be on the periphery. And suddenly you found yourself in the limelight but I could cope with it because I knew I could dance. I was twirled*

*around the room. People were sort of stepping back to give us room… so we were like on display".* (<u>*Karen, p. 19, l. 891-930*</u>)

An initial interpretation of this lived experience of Karen was comparing her with the transformation of the ugly duckling into a swan in Andersen's fairytale. However as Karen pointed out it was not that she changed in physical appearance and suddenly became beautiful: throughout the evening she remained who she was - the 'small fat ugly old woman'. Instead, she found herself being 'in the limelight'; by showcasing her dancing skills she became the centre of attention. Consequently, the comparison with Grimm's Cinderella seems more fitting: like Cinderella who stood in the shadow of her step-sisters and was working in the kitchen, Karen was working 'behind the scenes' as one of many WFG'08 volunteers. However, on that evening she became 'the 'belle of the ball', similar to Cinderella who transforms from kitchen maid into what attendees at the Prince's Ball imagined to be a foreign princess and drew everyone's attention: "*many thousand lights shone upon her and she was so beautiful that everyone there was amazed*" (Grimm, 1996 [1823]:168). Similar to the context of the Andersen's Ugly Duckling, the emphasis of using the story of Cinderella as a metaphor does not rest on beauty but on skill, i.e. the dancing skills of Karen. Like the prince in the Grimm's fairytale, the French firefighters only wanted to dance with her as she knew to dance allowing her to feel special that evening. However, unlike the Ugly Duckling whose transformation is final as he becomes a swan, Cinderella 'un-becomes': at the stroke of midnight, the magic that enwrapped her ceases and she transforms back into being a kitchen maid. In the case of Karen, the moment of 'unbecoming', the end of her experience of being the 'Belle of the Ball' arrives with the end of the evening, when the music stopped playing and people went home. As it was the last day of her WFG'08 volunteer role enactment, Karen did not step back into the anonymity of this role but returned to her roles that she enacts in her everyday-life. A further interpretation that is inherent Karen's narrative relates to the aspect of her becoming visible in terms of being noticed. Although it can be argued that the WFG'08 volunteers were visible on a daily basis wearing their bright yellow volunteer T-Shirts, becoming visible relates to the idea of the volunteers being consciously noticed by members of their role-set. In her case, she was noticed by the French firefighters as a suitable dancer. The idea of volunteers becoming visible to others through transformation can be more prominently drawn from Jane's account that highlights the change of the individual to move from

being an anonymous member of the WFG'08 volunteer workforce, being a part of the masses, towards becoming a clear and identifiable entity:

> *"Generally, I think yes, you were just somebody in the yellow shirt (laughter). Anybody would do. When they say 'I need whatever, can you help me with whatever'…. then it could have been anyone in the yellow shirt. But there were occasions when you realized, 'Yes, I have spoken to them before' and you spoke to them again. And they recognized me as well. So that was nice. I felt slightly like being an individual instead of one of the mass. One of the guys… one day we went to the arena and the event we were supposed to be doing had been cancelled. So the event manager said 'I will try to find something else for you to do'. Uhm, and she found that they were a bit short on volunteers at the Iron Dog out at Croxteth Park. So they arranged transport for us. There was me and another lady. And we went out to Croxteth Park to see the Irondog contest. And one of the firefighters who was there then came down to the Arena for the last night, for the gala dinner on the last night and I was at the bottom of the escalator doing the meet and greet. And, I thought 'Uh, I remember you from the Iron Dog' and he recognized me as well. That was very nice. He said 'I remember you from yesterday'. And we talked about the Irondog and...how great it was to watch the dogs."* (Jane, p. 5, l. 197-203 & l. 213-215)

This experience of moving between disappearing in the anonymity of the WFG'08 volunteering and being visible is shared by other research respondents such as Edward and Sara:

> *"…I had to drive up to Lake Lochlan with a group of German firefighters. They had their own team …it was a mixed team and they came fifth in canoeing. And I had to pick some members of their team up on the way…. they were Spanish. I saw them again on the last day, somewhere near Woolton. We had to pick up some stuff. And I recognised them and asked them 'How did you get on?' And they said 'Oh, hello. You were the one who drove us to the lake. We won silver and bronze'. They were very happy. And it felt good that they recognised me… It made me feel less anonymous."* (Edward, p.8, l. 346-354)

*"Some competitors you'd see over the days. You see the same ones again, and you're like 'Oh hello!' and sometimes have a chat with them. It was lovely. It was lovely to see them again and to be recognized." (Sara, p.4, l. 188-193)*

Whilst the previous accounts both highlight and describe the process of the volunteer emerging from 'this mass of yellow bodies' i.e. the anonymous group of WFG'08 volunteers, Karen's experience further holds the notion of individualisation as opposed to de-individualisation in terms of her being called by the athletes that she was looking after by her first name:

*"In a way I became visible... you know we all had this yellow T-Shirt and were all part of this... mass of yellow bodies….we definitely did [become visible] with the TFA because we were allocated a person rather than a group or a team. And our job was to carry their stuff, give them their water, record their times so were almost like a little team ourselves. We were a pair. We went around the course and then went. So if you then met this person again, because you spent an hour or so just in their company, allocated to them, they always remembered you. Yeah, at these times you were an individual because you were there… court-marshal… you were their partner, their marshal and whatever it was they'd done, they would come and look for you because they wanted to see the time. They wanted their water. So if you wouldn't get through to them fast enough, they'd go 'Oh, Karen' and come across like that. So they knew you. And when we met them again, like at the gala dinner or at the social events, like the prize giving event and that, they would remember us, they would remember me and come across and say 'Hello'." (Karen, p. 11, l. 534-546)*

In comparison, Katherine was individualised from the rest of the WFG'08 volunteers by her German language skills:

*"So that [meeting German competitors] was very, very enjoyable. Especially, as I said, meeting them again at the opening ceremony and sort of around town and wherever… that was nice. They recognised me. 'Ah, she's the one who speaks German. So if we have a problem we know who we can ask.' So that was quite satisfying to know that. So, having this acknowledgement…this recognition… that was good." (Katherine, p.5, l.192-193 and 197-200)*

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All research respondents who recalled the fact they were recognized as individuals by members of their role-set such as the event competitors share the feel-good factor that resulted from that process. However, in comparison to others, Sandra enjoyed being invisible which relates to not making any mistakes:

> *"I was just a non-entity in the background. At the events it wasn't about me, you know. It was ok for me to be in the background. I mean I think that's possibly kind of the best way to be with the volunteer. You do your best as if as almost not to be seen. You're doing a good job if you're not seen kind of thing. You know what I mean. If you are being noticed you are possibly not doing the right thing. Oh, I am not saying this very well. So… I felt really… I was… it was better that I was not being seen because I was doing ok." (<u>Sandra, p. 15, l. 683-694</u>)*

The experience of 'becoming and unbecoming' in terms of the research respondents' experience of regaining and/or losing their individuality in the process of enacting their volunteer role relates to different role-related perspectives of mask: the use of mask in the dramaturgical context dates back to the Ancient Greece where it was a concomitant feature of theatrical plays (Janzing,1998).  Various researchers have commented on the effect of mask-bearing on the actor. For example, Lecoq (1987) suggests that due to the actor's face being hidden behind the mask *"one risks doing what one has never done in life"* (p.115). Another conclusion is drawn by Turner (1981) who argues that the covering of the face by a mask results in actors "*to be more conscious of their body*" (p.38). In contrast, Janzing (1998) perceives the changes that actors experience by wearing a mask during their role enactment as the result of transformation as the mask within the context of theatre acts as a "*mediator... that crates creates contact with an inaccessible world*" (p.151) and for the duration of the play provide the actors "*the strength of that which it represents and allows them [the wearers] to transcend their everyday identity*" (p.151). Relating these findings to the lived experience of "*becoming and unbecoming*" of the WFG'08 volunteers, it may be argued that the yellow WFG'08 volunteer T-Shirt represents the mask. Similar to actors placing a mask onto their faces before going on stage, the volunteers put on the T-Shirt everyday as part of the daily role-preparation process which allowed them to officially access the WFG'08 volunteer world and to leave their "*everyday-identity*" behind. Thus, like a mask used in a play the yellow T-shirt which was a feature that all the WFG'08 volunteers can be perceived as "*instrument of metamorphosis*" (p.151). However, rather than the volunteers standing

out as individuals whilst enacting their volunteer role they are "*a presence in a mask indwelling a presence without a face" (*Wilshire, 1982:100), i.e. they become "faceless" as they merge into what Karen refers in her accounts as "*mass of yellow bodies"* (p. 11, l. 534-546). In fact, the 'yellow mass' of volunteers becomes "*the face of the corporate body*" (Wilshire, 1982:100), the face of the WFG'08 and its organisers resulting in what Wilshire describes as the "*de-centeredness of the individual*" (p.101): the volunteers do no longer experience their identity, instead, they experience what Rimbaud (1871[1986]) expresses as "*The I is an other*" (6). This idea of 'being faceless', no longer being an individual who no longer stands out of the crowd as a result of playing and fulfilling a role and wearing a mask relates back to Marx's (1988 [1844]) concept of alienation and Dahrendorf's (1968) idea of the individual's transformation into "*an artificial man*" (p.25) outlined in chapter Four.

Whilst these interviewee accounts are dominated by the experience of being becoming visible or invisible, a more complex experience is provided by Gloria whose interpretation of being anonymous relates to not being recognized and perceived as a person who is sitting in a wheelchair:

> "*I enjoyed being a volunteer. At the beginning…it was the anonymity. People weren't looking at me as a disabled person. They were looking at me as a volunteer, not as a disabled volunteer."* (Gloria, p.6, l. *277-278)*

In relation to her performance as WFG'08 volunteer she differentiates between 'the volunteer' and the 'disabled volunteer' which indicates the binary structure of non-disabled or normal /disabled and not normal: in this context 'the volunteer' stands for 'being normal' and is associated by Gloria with anonymity, i.e. being one of many, and the 'disabled volunteer' as being the 'other' who stands out from the crowd, who is stigmatized, e.g. by being wheelchair bound and thus different from the other volunteers due to the person's physical features and abilities. Relating her experience to alienation advocated by Marx (1988 [1844]), it may be argued that the collective sharing of the volunteer role and thus a temporary social character that lasted for the duration of the WFG'08 only, had a therapeutic rather than a detrimental effect on her.

For Gloria, the value of this particular lived experience rests on her not being seen as being different from all the other volunteers, from not being 'disabled' even though she was wheelchair bound during her role enactment which implies the negative social

meaning of disability (Kuppers, 2003). Her experience relates to Grosz (1994) who argues that people's experiences of their body and its social meaning impact on the person's perception of fittingness within social frameworks such as groups, society etc and the use of language as well as how a person experience their 'self-hood': "*the body cannot be simply and unequivocally identified with sensations provided by a purely anatomical body. The body image is as much as a function of the subject's psychology and socio-historical context as its anatomy*" (p.79). However, at the same time, Gloria appreciated that people's perception of her were not defined by her wheelchair:

*"You do accept the fact you are disabled it but a lot of the time you do get angry because people don't see you. They see the disability before they see you. And that's what the Games didn't, you know what I mean. The competitors, all of them, just saw and treated me as an able-bodied person. They saw me rather than the wheelchair…. whereas in this country particularly, people tend to see the wheelchair before they see me. In a way I didn't feel like a ghost. People saw me and acknowledged me. Because when I am out in the wheelchair and my Mum is pushing me, people will come to her and say 'How is she?'. Say ask her… they are not asking me. And I am there, right beside her. You know, in certain situations, I feel I am not there even though I am physically there…. that I disappear… but at the firefighter Games.., no, I was visible then. And not only once but more or less all the time."* (Gloria, p.12, l. 531-543)

Drawing from the experience in her every-day reality of people ignoring her by talking to her mother and not to her, her account brings to life the meaning that the WFG'08 and her volunteer role holds for her. Like a ghost who roams around but is invisible to others most of the time, Gloria does exist, however she tends to be overlooked as people's vision is dominated by taking in her wheelchair and not of the person sitting in it. Staying with the ghost-metaphor, the WFG'08 can be seen as a Gloria's witching-hour, in which - for the duration of her role enactment - she becomes visible to others as an equal being. This relates to idea of corporealisation and de-corporealisation, the latter describing the process of treating people as if they are ghosts (Harris, 2005), and consequently to the concept of embodiment and disembodiment by Merlau-Ponty (1956): In his work he advocates that a person's experience of 'being-in the world' emerges from "*the inextricability of the body and spatiality*" (p. 298), i.e. the individual experiences and perceives the world that he/she lives in through his/her body. In

contrast to embodiment that allows the sense of unity between a person's self and the body (ibid), disembodiment refers to this unity being disrupted resulting in the experience of self as "*not residing within the limits of the body*" (De Ridder *et al.*, 2007:1829), as "*not feeling connected with one's body*" (Wilde, 2003:170). It may be argued that Gloria's lived experience of feeling visible during the Games relates to the concept of embodiment as opposed to being a ghost that is separated from the body even though she is physically present. On the other hand, recalling to her experience of people seeing her but not the wheelchair suggest the experience of disembodiment in terms of Gloria feeling temporarily separated from her wheelchair. Similarly a parallel to the concept of disembodiment can be seen in reference to her earlier account in which described people at the WFG'08 looked at her as being "*a volunteer, not as a disabled volunteer"* which suggests that again the unity between her 'self' and her disabled body was temporarily severed.

Her lived experience of being seen and not seen exemplifies what Goffman (1963) refers to as "*being subjected to 'nonperson' treatment*" (p.84) in the form of the wheelchair being ignored or overlooked by others. In their study on how wheelchair users manage their emotions in public, Cahill and Eggleston (1994) describe the experiences of research respondents who repeatedly found themselves in situations where services workers fail to acknowledge the person in the wheelchair and instead "*treat a wheelchair user's walking companions as his or her spokes-persons and caretakers*" (p.304) which was the case in the example given by Gloria. Her positive experiences of being a wheelchair-bound WFG'08 volunteer that are in contrast to her general experience of being disabled raise the question why Gloria felt that she was not subject to nonperson treatment at the WFG'08 but felt '*seen*' during her enactment of the volunteer role. At present, the literature on volunteering seems to be void of research into volunteering carried out by disabled person and/or wheelchair-users resulting in a lack of material to analyse and discuss Gloria's lived experience further. Similarly, to what extent the wearing of a collective mask in the form of the WFG'08 T-Shirt has contributed to Gloria's lived experience is unknown. Nevertheless, the conclusion can be drawn that the experience of 'unbecoming' a ghost and 'becoming' visible acted as a feel-good factor making her feel 'real'. Relating her experience to the metaphor used earlier that depicts the WFG'08 volunteer as temporary fugitive, it could be argued that Gloria's enactment of the WFG'08 volunteer role temporarily allowed her to escape the image of being disabled.

Last but not least the sub-theme '*becoming/unbecoming*' is inherent in Jane's experience of role reversal during the tug-of-war tournament which took place in the Echo Arena where for a brief moment, she was taking on the role of being an authority instead of being in the 'do what you're told' role*:*

> *"And also there was a beautiful moment in the tug of war where…. Now why the police had a team there I don't know, not quite sure because these were the firefighter games but anyway, they did. And they hadn't left the arena floor and the lady who was calling the teams was saying 'If you are not in the next round, can you please leave the floor' looking at the police. And they didn't move. She said again 'And if you not actually in the next round can you please leave the floor please' (voice is getting louder) looking at the police and still nothing. And I thought 'Yes, here is my opportunity'. I never in my will be getting the opportunity to go and tell some policemen to move. So I went down there 'Sorry guys, you have to move! Now!' And they said 'Oh, yes.. sorry'. They just had not been listening. They had done their pull, they had gone to one side to have a natter about it and they just hadn't hear her saying 'Can you move off the arena floor'. And I thought 'I'll never get this opportunity again to tell a bunch of policemen to move!' That was a highly enjoyable moment. Well, I had my yellow shirt on, I was the one in authority. I was empowered, I was in charge…so I went over to them and asked them to go." (Jane, p. 12, l. 538-553)*

### 9.2 Revisited: the WFG'08 volunteer as changeling

Drawing from the exploration of the sub-themes in the previous sections, the interpretation of the WFG'08 volunteer as changeling is supported by the research participants experiences of 'feeling different', of temporarily being someone else. Cohen and Taylor (1992) relate the experience of change in the form of transformation to the "*transition between realities*" (p.83): referring to the dramaturgical context in which this transitions is characterised by the "*rising and falling of the curtain*" (p.83), they describe how with the rising of the curtain that marks the beginning of the role performance the actor is "*transported into another world with its own meanings and an order that may or may not have to do with the order of the everyday*" (p.83). With the falling of the curtain that signals the end of the performance, the actors return to the reality of their everyday life. The use of the changeling-metaphor within the context of theatre raises the

questions regarding the ontology of role enactment: to what extent can role playing be real to the actor? According to Butler (1990) "*in the theatre one can say 'this is just an act' and de-realise the act, making acting into something quite distinct from what is real…the various conventions which announce that 'this is only a play' allows strict lines to be drawn between performance and life*" (p.278). In view of the research findings outlined in this chapter, applying Butler's quote to sport event volunteering this ontology cannot be supported as the separation between role-playing and the volunteer as actors being themselves cannot be upheld. Instead, the volunteers bring into their roles their "offstage" identities, their sense of self, that do not only influence the way they enact the role as discussed in the chapter on role management earlier, but that are conversely shaped and impacted on by the role and their experience of this role. This argument is supported by Loxley (2007) who questions theorists approach towards separating on-stage from offstage identities by perceiving "*the role as an act that can be put on or put off at will without ever calling the underlying identity of the performer into question*" (p.142); instead he argues for a dramaturgical approach towards role-theory to acknowledge that whatever happens on-stage may impact or influence the actor's real-life. Relating to this aspect, depicting the volunteers as changelings that temporarily experience themselves in a new or 'remembered' way seems justified.

**9.3 Conclusion**

This chapter has explored the lived experiences of the WFG'08 volunteers from the perspective of self-hood in terms of how the role-enactment has influenced the sense of self of the volunteers. A palette of different experiences has been presented which highlight the link between sport event volunteering and the experience of selfhood which to this date seems to be have been omitted from researchers' focus. Furthermore, it has challenged the notion that role-playing occurs in isolation from the actor's reality and has highlighted the influence of the WFG'08 experience on the volunteer's sense of well-being and consequently the value of volunteering as therapeutic tool.

**Role enactment: the WFG'08 volunteer as bricoleur**

*"For the actor, it is not the question of performing certain gestures on command, of obeying a set of rules. The text is not a schema for assembling gestures or words but must be given life, made to live in itself: the actor who creates a role is justified in calling himself an artist"*

Dufrenne (1973 [1953]:21)

## 10.0 Introduction

This chapter is concerned with the exploration of how the World Firefighters Games 2008 (WFG'08) volunteers managed the enactment of their volunteer role. The first section of the chapter provides an introduction of the overarching theme which depicts the WFG'08 volunteer as bricoleur. It is followed by the outline and discussion of the various sub-themes that emerged during the analysis and interpretation of the data encompassing a) *application of own standards;* b) *making use of different types of skills;* c) *making use of life experience*; d) *self-empowerment* and e) *improvisation*. The chapter closes with revisiting and elaborating the idea of the WFG'08 volunteer as bricoleur further.

## 10.1 The WFG'08 volunteer as bricoleur

The way how the WFG'08 volunteers managed their sport event volunteer role reminded me of a particular concept that I came across at the early stage of the PhD when I was in search for both a mode of inquiry for my research and a metaphor that described my position as a researcher. What I discovered and decided to borrow in order to describe my interpretation of how WFG'08 volunteers managed their role was the concept of 'bricolage' which has been briefly introduced and employed in the literature review dealing with the development of a definition of sport event volunteering (see chapter 2). The term 'bricolage' derives from the French language and refers to handiwork or do-it-yourself as well as make-shift work (Allen, 1991). The idea of bricolage is reflected in the theory of 'bricolage' which has been popularized by the work '*the savage mind* by Levi-Strauss (1966) in which he explores the structure of thought of early civilization. He characterizes the bricoleur as a manual worker who

uses "*devious means compared to those of a craftsman*" (p.17) and can be seen as a "*Jack of all trades, a kind of professional do-it-yourself*" (p.17). In *The Savage Mind* (1966), Levi-Strauss outlines the systematic production of knowledge that has been developed from the days of early civilizations e.g. the know-how of pottery, agriculture and the use of animals, and has been passed on from one antecedent generation to another in the form of a 'memory bank' of myths and rites, which has been expanded and enriched with new knowledge in this process. This growth of knowledge has been facilitated through both natural science as well as 'bricolage' in which the individual creatively uses a finite set of tools and materials which is heterogeneous because "*it bears no relation to the current project or indeed to any particular project, but is the contingent result of all the occasions there have to renew or enrich the stock or to maintain it with the remains of previous constructions or destructions*" (p.17). Consequently, the term 'bricolage' implies the idea of creating something new out of resources that are available (Aagard, 2009). The interpretation of the WFG'08 volunteer as bricoleur arose from the interviewees' accounts about how they managed their role. Due to the lack of specific training and the lack of guidance that many of them experienced, the research participants described how they managed to deal with their task and unforeseen situations. Like a bricoleur, the interviewees created their own measures and tools by making use of their 'personal resources' in the form of their knowledge, skills, life experience and common sense. In other cases, the management role was informed by acts of self-empowerment and improvisation. The interpretation of the volunteer as bricoleur will be revisited and explored further at the end of this chapter after the sub-themes have been presented and discussed.

**10.2 The management of the WFG'08 volunteer role**

The analysis and interpretation of the research findings highlight a number of different measures that the interviewees employed to manage their roles. Unlike an actor whose performance is predominantly informed by the script, the WFG'08 volunteers found themselves in situations for which they were not prepared for and which they had to master themselves. One of the themes that reflects how volunteers mastered their role was the application of own standards

**10.2.1 Application of own standards**

The first sub-theme that is structured around the idea of the WFG'08 volunteers working towards their own standards. This measure was informed by interviewees' values,

work-ethos and own needs and wants as customers. For example, Sandra explained that she fulfilled her volunteer duties by going by her own standards:

> *"I go by my own standards. I like to do it right. I am not a nitty-gritty person but no, if I do, I might as well do it right."* <u>*(Sandra, p. 6, l. 291-292)*</u>

Working towards self-standards of performance was also an influencing factor Sara's approach towards managing the interaction with members of WFG'08 counter-roles:

> *"I think that's very important [to go the extra mile] because that's what I want somebody to do for me. If I went in through a shop and I was looking for something, I don't like it when somebody just says 'No, no, we haven't got any'. I much prefer them to say 'Oh we haven't any but I'll just go and check when they're next coming in' or 'Would you like to order them?' or 'maybe another shop, another branch may have it. Shall I ring for you?'"*<u>*(Sara, p. 18, l. 830-834)*</u>

Furthermore, her self-standard of performance impacted on her role-commitment in terms of attendance:

> *"I wouldn't dream of just one day thinking 'Oh, I couldn't bother going in today'. I mean if can go in, you go in. I've got a very good record in work. I'm not showing off, I mean I haven't been off sick and in this job... I've stayed just over three years. Even in all my other jobs... I'm not the kind of person that would let anyone down and I'm very lucky that I'm healthy. I mean I was sick, I would be off, of course I would. But I wouldn't be off just for nothing."* <u>*(Sara, p. 21, l. 1005-1012)*</u>

Early research has recognized self-generated personal standards as a powerful mechanism of performance management (e.g. Bandura; 1977; Thoreson and Mahoney, 1974; Manz and Sims, 1980). As such one's personal self-standards act as a self-influence system that is informed by one's own values and belief systems and vision and steers, regulates and controls one's actions (Manz, 1986; Ewen, 2003). Furthermore, self-standards have been closely linked to the management of discrepant behaviour: Following the Self-Standards Model (SSM) by Shone and Cooper (2001), people interpret and understand the meaning of their behaviour by evaluating their

actions with their own standards of judgment which are shaped by their attitudes, beliefs and experience. In the case of discrepant behaviour that is the outcome of the incongruence of one's behaviour with one's personal standards, the model suggests that the individual is likely to experience discomfort and are consequently motivated to decrease it, either by adjusting their attitude or behaviour (ibid; Olson and Stone, 2005). From an organizational behaviour perspective the role of self-influence systems is deemed a significant one as it drives performance quality as well as self-efficacy which is defined as "*a person's estimate of his or her capacity to orchestrate performance on a specific task*" (Gist and Mitchell, 1992: 95) and is influenced by self-motivation and self-direction (Prussia *et al.*, 1998; Bandura, 2000). As a result, employees' self-management behaviour in general and self-efficacy in particular is increasingly valued rather than over-reliance on external controls which is deemed to facilitate rigid bureaucratic behaviour (Olson and Stone, 2005). In view of the context of the WFG'08 volunteering the interviewees' accounts the conclusion might be drawn that the self-management of volunteering behaviour is desirable by event organizers as 'high' self-standards, also referred to as "*reference value*" (Boldero and Francis, 2002: 232) are likely to lead to satisfying work performance for those involved. However, this aspect raises the question of consistency in terms of all volunteers working towards the same set of standards. Similarly, whilst the self-management through self-efficacy of event volunteers such as the WFG'08 volunteers is desirable as the quality of an employee's performance improves with an increasing level of his/her self-efficacy in a particular task (Barling and Beattie, 1983) and self-efficacy impacts on employees' level of persistence in case of a problem (Lent *et al.*, 1987), the issue of consistency emerges as each person is different and consequently the level of self-efficacy varies from individual to individual (Gist and Mitchell, 1992). This also raises the question to what extent the event organizations can shape the volunteers' judgement about their capabilities to perform their tasks. In view of self-standards which inform ones' self-efficacy, this question can be extended to include the aspect of an organisation's influence on volunteers' attitudes, beliefs and values, especially in view of the temporal nature of the event-organizer and volunteer-relationship that unless is ongoing or episodic, only last for the duration of the event. On the other hand the aspect of control comes in, e.g. who establishes and controls that one's self-standards are relevant to the organizational goals. Another issue emerges from the influence and availability as well as the need for normative standards set by the organization. In view of the nature of events which are unique (Getz, 2005) and with regards to the WFG in particular that is

hosted by different event organizations in different countries every two years, it can be argued that normative standards with regards to volunteer management is likely to vary from WFG to WFG. Also, as volunteers consist of people outside the host organization and are members of the public, the normative standards and organizational goals that exist in the host organizations which in the case of the WFG'08 is the Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service, are not applicable as such. Instead, an independent set of normative standards and goals for the WFG volunteerscape has to be developed and communicated through the module handbook and training session.

**10.2.2 Following the script**

Another sub-theme which seems to be in contrast to the volunteers performing in accordance to their self-standards is the WFG'08 volunteer's adherence to the role-script. For example, Jane recalled how she would consult the team-leader regarding her duties prior to starting her shift as she had been instructed to during training:

> *"I was doing the day-shift. I always checked with my team-leader before I went as I was told to do during the training... it also said in the volunteer handbook to see the event manager before starting work. I said "Is there anything else you need me to do before I go".* (*Jane, p. 3, l. 137)*

Similarly, Sandra followed the instruction provided by the Volunteer Information Handbook when she did not know the answer to question or was at loss of how to address a specific issue:

> *"And as a volunteer obviously, the instruction in that booklet said that there is no such thing as a 'Don't know'. You couldn't say 'I don't know'. You had to go and find out, get in touch with the event organiser of that event to say that there was a problem."* (*Sandra, p. 6, l. 268-271)*

As discussed in the literature review, a source for major criticism of the use of role script is the sense of determinism that is informed by the prescription of role behaviour through the script and according to Derrida (1978) turns actors into "*interpretative slaves who faithfully execute the providential design of the 'master'*" (p.235), i.e. by following the role script, actors are enslaved to the text. Alternatively, the role script might be seen as *"a source of inspiration"* (Hornby, 2002:356) that encourages the actor

to improvise around his role. However it might be argued, that the WFG'08 volunteers were in fact without a classic role-script as by nature sport events like the WFG'08 are unique and cannot be rehearsed in advance in contrast to the theatre play for which the actors can prepare themselves through regular role rehearsal (ibid) and can think of alternatives in terms of how the allocated role is performed (McVea, 2007). Instead, the volunteers such as Jane and Sandra depended on the event managers to tell them what to do on a daily basis.

### 10.2.3 Keeping a role balance

In contrast to making the volunteering fit around other roles some volunteers recalled how it was the other way around and how they had to structure other roles around their volunteer role. For example, in order to be able to accommodate their WF'08 role in their daily life, one interviewee described how they had to pre-plan their housework in advance in order to meet their commitments of being a housewife:

> *"Well, I did all the shopping before I went because I knew I wouldn't be there Friday, Saturday and Sunday and I knew I was I out for the whole day Friday, Saturday, Sunday. So prior to that all the shopping was done. I also made sure that all the bills were paid, that all my ironing because I was back at work on Monday. So all my ironing and washing had been done before. The house was tidied up because I knew I wouldn't be in... so yes, there was a lot of planning before I became a volunteer. So that I came home, if I was really tired, I didn't really have to think about anything. Anything was done. Shopping was done, the menu was ordered, the clothes had washed and dried...." (Maureen, p.3, l. 134-142)*

Whilst the account of Maureen refers to structuring her housework around her volunteering role, Edward had to manage and reschedule his duties related to his role as a grandfather:

> *"I had to see... like the Wednesday I was off but on the other days I was working as volunteer. And I had to see my daughter-in-law and tell her that she had to have the kids on the days when I was working as volunteer. Because my wife had five small strokes and she cannot cope with two kids. So I asked my*

*daughter-in-law to make different arrangements for the days I wasn't at home."*
(*Edward, p.4, l. 181-188*)

Similarly, Karen who is divorced and has two children of the age of seven and twelve found herself fitting her role as a mother around the WFG'08 role which she managed by taking the children with her when she was working as a volunteer:

*"The kids had summer holidays… and I knew I couldn't leave them at home for ten days …. that's not possible. So I had the children with me nearly every day which wasn't a problem. Being with me at the Games….that gave them things to do, things to look at, things to learn and ... it gave them a big experience. Not just me but it gave them a good experience as well… sometimes I could get them involved as well… to help with the volunteer duties. My only worry was that somebody would say 'Get these kids out of here. It's adults only'. But it never came to that which was a relief because I couldn't leave them at home on their own. And the kids were great. I was a bit concerned about my son. He is only eleven and …that immaturity would come through because he is only little. They were taking their own lead and helping and joining and basically not being a nuisance. And the event managers didn't mind. They were all very kind to them and let them help out and one of them just said 'Don't even tell me how old he is. I am not interested. If he's been a good boy and help give out the apples, then that's fine'. As longs as they behaved there wasn't a problem. And with the Toughest Firefighter Alive... the event was outdoors. So there was no worry about needing a ticket to get in or that you had to pass somebody on a desk, you know. It was open to the public, anybody could go. So the kids could be there, just watching. But they ended up getting involved… again…which was great."* (Karen, p. 5, l. 233—250, *p.31, l. 1491-1503*)

In the situation where Karen was helping at a sport event closer to home, like the beach rugby match in Hoylake where she lives, she did not need to bring the children along but could check on her children during the event:

*"With the rugby, the beach rugby with it being at Hoylake. That was like five minutes to my house sort of thing. So I knew that I didn't have to travel and I knew that I could be there and that I could nip home to see if my kids were*

*comfortable or if they wanted to come down and watch or whatever. So I had planned stuff around the family". (Karen, p. 31, l. 1507-1511)*

In addition to creating a balance between being a mother and being a WFG'08 volunteer, Karen had to fit in her housework which can be seen as being part of her role of a mother as it entails doing the housework. During her interview she recalled how she stopped herself from committing for another day as she realized that she needed a day to catch up with her housework:

*"Once I realized that the Toughest Firefighter Alive event was Thursday, Friday and Sunday, I thought 'Oh, shall I do something on Saturday?' And then I thought 'No, no. I need to catch up with my housework'. We had long days and I'll use that constructively to catch up with things in the house… like doing the ironing". (Karen, p. 32, l. 1517-1520)*

In contrast to Karen achieving a role balance, Sara had to leave her volunteer role during the Games due to the death in the family:

*"I did the weekends and then there were a few days as well when I was working in the Arena... Uhm, but a family member passed away so I had to cut short the time. These family circumstances had priority but I did feel 'Ohh!', you know, I've committed all those hours and now look I can't fulfill them. I felt… I felt I was letting people down. I felt disappointed that I wasn't able to fully commit the time that I said I would." (Sara, p.14, l. 680-685)*

Structuring other roles around the WFG'08 volunteer role relates to the concept of managing multiple roles. Multiple roles have been associated by some researchers with psychological distress such as role strain in terms of the difficulty of the actor or role occupant to fulfil role demands and obligations (Voydanoff and Donnelly, 1999; Tsai et al., 2008) resulting in role incompatibility, i.e. the demands of one role is not congruent with the demands of another (Cottrell, 1942; Goode, 1960). The psychological well-being of a role performer may also be affected by role overload and role conflict due to demands of multiple roles (Goode, 1960; Burr et al., 1979; Coverman, 1989). In contrast, other scholars such as Sieber (1974), Marks (1979) and Marks *et al.* (2001) advocate a role-enhancement approach by arguing that a person's performance of

multiple roles provides rewards and privileges and consequently to not promote psychological distress. Thoits (1986) and Baruch and Barnett (1986) support this latter perspective by stating that a person's sense of being meaning is increased through one's involvement in multiple roles enhancing one's psychological well-being. Similarly, multiple role engagement is seen as a positive influence on people's physical health (Verbrugge, 1986). With regards to the interviewee's account, the concept of multiple role performance emerges from the account of Edward and Karen. In the case of Edward, besides being a WFG'08 volunteer, his role repertoire included the role of being a husband who had to look after the well-being of his wife, of being a father-in-law that had to accommodate the needs and wants of his daughter-in-law, and a grandfather who regularly looks after the grandchildren. During the Games, he had provide a holistic role fit or 'role balance' which Mark and McDermid (1996) define as "*cognitive-affective orientation or internal working model that reflects the tendency's to become fully engaged in the performance of every role in ones' total role systems, to approach every typical role and role partner with an attitude of attentiveness and care*" (p.421). In the case of Karen, her repertoire was smaller as she was performing the roles of a single-mother and a WFG'08 volunteers, however besides having to fulfil her volunteer role, she had to manage her role of being mother at the same time. Luckily, trying to perform both roles at the same time seemed to not have been a problem due to the friendliness of the event managers who allowed her children to stay with her and help whilst enacting her volunteer role as well as due to her children's behaviour which did not complicate things. To what extent Karen's and Edwards performance of multiple roles impacted on their psychological and physical well-being is not known, however in view of the findings it can be argued that they seemed to have achieved a role balance. In the case of Sara whose WFG'08 volunteer role performance came to an abrupt end due to a family bereavement which required her attention and presence at home, it may be argued that her balance between the volunteer role and the role she performed within her family could not be maintained due to the incompatible demands of the two set of roles which briefly led to a short intra-role conflict and ended in a 'trade-off' (Milkie and Peltola, 1999), i.e. she had to sacrifice her WFG'08 role for the benefit of being able to fully perform her family-related role.

### 10.2.4 Making use of different types of skills

The sub-theme '*making use of different types of skills*' was developed from the findings that the WFG'08 volunteers tapped into their skill repertoire that consists of different

types of skills, such as communication and people skills as well as skills that emerged from life experience. For example, some research participants referred to their communication skills which they developed in the course of their regular work, for example as a teacher:

*"I used my communication skills. When you are a teacher, you do develop those skills over the years, being able to talk to people." (Ann, p.4, l. 164-165)*

 or as member of the training team:

*"I work in the training department in a hospital. There is a lot of communication between ourselves and the facilitators and ourselves and the staff. So I am communicating a lot during the day. So I am used to talking to people." (Jane, p. 14, l. 638-640)*

In contrast, Bernard referred to his foreign language skills that allowed him to converse with the event participants:

*"There were the French firefighters…the 'pompiers' came along and they didn't speak a word of English. I had my four-years of school-boy French. Uhm… and I thought 'Okay'. There were no French interpreters and I answered their questions… like 'How long is it to so-and-so?'." (Bernard, p. 7, l. 330-334)*

Whilst Dan includes the aspect of "being polite" when communicating with others:

*"Like a couple of times when the network actually went down, I'd call the Telent Engineers out and they'd come up to fix it. It's common courtesy. You say 'Thanks for that', 'thanks for coming up' because they are doing a job as well, and you know, they need to feel appreciated but that's something again, you know, is common courtesy to say, isn't it? To say 'Thank you' to the people." (Dan, p. 16, l. 777-782)*

Another set of skills that the interviewees applied to the context of their volunteer role were their organisational skills. Whilst Sara explained that she used her organisational

skills, she explains the importance of the volunteer as independent thinkers that take on the responsibility of helping to organize the event:

> *"I was using my organisational skills because you're part of organizing something and you know obviously I wasn't the event organizer but I think you're part of having to think as well and think for yourself and say 'We've got all this people, so what shall we do with them?'." (Sandra, p. 5, l. 242-246)*

She further explains how these organisational skills helped her to deal with unexpected problem that needed solving remembering the particular situation where her and other volunteers had to register the athletes on the first day of the WFG'08 in the Echo Arena:

> *"It was on the first day when it was extremely busy, uhm… and we had to change the lay-out because where we had, shall we say lanes, A and B, and you know, whoever went in A had the documentation and in B if they didn't. But as it turned out this was not appropriate for the volume of people that were there and we had to think about 'Well, how do we organize the physical environment?' and also because of that many people waiting in the queue... 'How do we keep them happy?' The volunteer coordinator wasn't around. She was helping out on the other side of the Arena. So I suggested that we changed the layout of the registration areal… and to put up a sort of barrier between the lanes as people started to spill out and that some of us volunteers walk around chatting to those waiting to keep them happy. So we did that. And we kept people informed about what was happening… so they understood reasons why they had to wait there."* (*Sandra, p. 6, l. 250-267*)

A different perspective on organisational skills was provided by Karen who recalled how she used her organizational skills during the WFG'08; however, she elaborates on how these skills are a feature of her role as a mother which highlights the use of skills across different roles:

> *"The fact that I have three children and play the role of a mother helped me in these moments…. the organisational skills of having to get to places on time promptly and to coax people rather than shout at them and say 'You will do this'.*

*You know, just gently coaxing and say 'Come on. You will be in trouble, let's go'.*
*To keep it on a nice level."* <u>(Karen, p.13, l. 604 – 608)</u>

Making use of life-experiences was another measure that the interviewees used to manage their role. For example, Dan's experience with computers allowed to him to solve basic IT-related problems during his volunteer work in the Internet Café in the Echo Arena.

*"Sometimes, people couldn't go to a certain website or suddenly this password thing came up and they couldn't do anything on the computer at all. So those are the things which again I pulled out of my life experience. And I could help them because you know how to fix the problem."* <u>(Dan, p. 13, l. 613-624)</u>

The use of life experience in the form of having participated in cycling races in the past also helped Bernard to manage a situation where he and two other volunteers were dropped off at a junction at the dual carriage way where they were to marshal the open-road cycling race.

*"It was quite hairy, It was quite a dangerous, uhm... spot, both for them and for us. Our own safety was a paramount. That was the first thing because we had to stand on the edge of the road and kind of wave at traffic to slow down. And that we had to direct the cyclists. …the cyclists themselves weren't slowing down. They were kind of…. they were so serious about it and I noticed they swayed across… on all of the events… that they were just 'Booom' out of this. They were cutting corners, blind corners, they were … it was terrifying, literally terrifying…. There was no paramedic or first aider with us…. you know, if something would have happened then. We were just not enough volunteers to do the job. I phoned the event manager and asked for more volunteers but never got any. So I thought 'Well, we have to get on with it!' I have cycled and have seen cycling and knew what it was like but the other two girls helping me, hadn't. So based on my experience with cycle races.. I just took control at this place. I said 'I think we should have someone there and someone there' and between the three of us we worked it out."* <u>(Bernard, p 4, l. 178- 192)</u>

### 10.2.5 Being creative

Being creative was a further measure that was used to manage the volunteer role. For example Ann who was involved in the Liverpool '08 City of culture programme whilst being a WFG'08 volunteer found herself entertaining some of the athletes by making use of an international language phrase book that she was issued as part of her Liverpool '08 volunteer:

> *"I was at the tennis... uhm, really it was meet and greet and just lead them through to the tables. There was very little to do there. That was at Wavertree. So... but I had great fun because even in the `08 I had my... I've done another part where it was me... doing the languages. So I had a little phrase book and I ended up having a group around me and they couldn't speak South Korean. Some of them could speak Chinese and some could speak Japanese. So I had my book out and they were pointing words out and I was saying it with them. The Italians joined in and a few of the Germans and we were sitting there and everyone was trying each person's language. It was just comedy! It was great! So while they were waiting for their turn to play tennis, I mixed the athletes all up because they thought it was so funny... they had to try somebody else' language. To actually sit down and do something that wasn't actually scheduled was just good." (Ann, p. 4, l. 150-159)*

Creativity is a multi-dimensional concept resulting in a variety of definitions, e.g. Amabile (1988) understand creativity as both a personal characteristic as well as a process whilst others, e.g. Woodman *et al.* (1993) and Shalley (1995) perceive creativity as an outcome of a product development process. In view of the Ann's creative behaviour, the term 'creative performance' is borrowed from the work by Oldham's and Cummings (1996) who define it as "*products, ideas, and procedures that satisfy two conditions : 1) they are novel and original and 2) they are potentially relevant for, or useful to, an organization*" (p.608). Elaborating on the condition of novelty, Oldham and Cummings argue that novelty emerges from the blending existing material or combining these with new materials. In the case of Ann, her role performance was creative as the multilingual phrasebook that she had with her and which can be seen as an existing tool from her Liverpool'08 volunteer role, became a new 'tool' within the context of the WFG'08 volunteers. It can be argued that the employment of this 'tool' proved useful to the event organization as it allowed her to creatively interact with and

entertain the WFG'08 event competitors and consequently to enhance their event experience.

### 10.2.6 Self-empowerment - taking the initiative

A further sub-theme is self-empowerment which is understood as the authorizing or gives power to one-self (Allen, 1991) or the "*transfer of power from one individual or group to another*" (Rodwell, 1996:306). Inherent in the notion of empowerment is what Byham (1992) describes as "*a feeling of job ownership and commitment brought about through the ability to make decisions and be responsible*" (p.11). During the interviews numerous situations were recalled by the research participants where they took ownerships of their WFG'08 volunteer role and related tasks by making decisions rather than asking or depending on the event manager in charge. A trivial example was provided by Wanda who decided to exchange her boots for less practical footwear which was not in alignment with guidelines set out by the event organization that had requested volunteers to wear 'proper' shoes like boots.

> *"Yeah, my legs were killing me the first day because I had boots on. You know because they said in the handbook that you had to wear proper shoes, proper trousers and all that. So I had boots and my feet were killing me because the soles were so hard. And after that I thought "No ,sorry!" and I put more comfortable but less practical shoes on. I thought "I don't care because they are comfy."* (*Wendy, p.14, l. 677-688)*

A more drastic example of self-empowerment was provided by Ann who had decided to walk around in the Echo Arena to see what needed doing and to arrange breaks for the volunteer which was the responsibility of the event manager in charge:

> *"I came back from the... uhm... volleyball ,coz there were too many of us there. Uhm... so I came back to the arena because I wasn't expected at home till evening anyway so I thought I0 might be needed there. I stood on the sidelines talking to somebody, keep watching out ... I realized people didn't get breaks to go the toilet or anything. So I went around organised it all and said 'You tell me what you job is and stand here then'. I just came and just sort of took over. I generally would have preferred if we had been told, you know, what to do. But*

*because I've gone over as an extra and I then just took over the role myself and saw what needed doing and got on with it."* <u>*(Ann, p. 6, l. 249-281)*</u>

The following day, she decided to empower herself again to walk around and to look where help was needed:

*"I did the... uhm... Monday. We were there really early and the job I was on to do, I didn't require doing till two o'clock. So when there was nothing left to do I just again… just took it in my own hands, and wandered off, you know, wandered off the area, asking around what needed doing. First I was put in charge of a few people that I was asked to guide around the venue. But that was it. So, I wandered around again and checked that people didn't need a break from wherever they were, So, I... I just went off and organised myself. I thought 'I might myself make sure others got their break time as well'. So that's how it started."* (<u>*Ann, p. 7, l. 325-342*</u>)

Similar to Ann, Sara whose task it was to meet and greet the event competitors upon arrival at the Echo Arena, looked to enhance her work by deciding to leave her assigned station and to approach the event competitors outside the building:

"*And also, as part of the 'meet and greet', I remember going outside onto the piazza and just mingling, rather than just be stood there waiting for people to come through because there wasn't many people coming through at that point. So I remember going out and mingling at the tables and chatting to people from Australia and New Zealand.*" (<u>*Sara, p. 6, l. 275-279*</u>)

In the case of Wendy, self-empowerment occurred by re-assigning herself to another task. Although she was originally scheduled to assist with the combat final event, she decided to help with the fencing event instead where she found herself interacting with fellow- countrymen for whom she acted as interpreter:

*"And then it was the combat finals night. Now, during the day I was supposed to do wrestling or something but I ended up… well, I appointed myself to the fencing. There was a young girl, a volunteer. She must have been twenty maybe. And she knew that she was going to be doing the fencing. The fencing*

*was on the stage. And she says 'Oh, I am not going to be the only one doing the fencing! I am the only one!' And I thought 'She doesn't want to do because she is by herself. I'll just join her'. Anyway, when I had a look, I thought 'Hang on! This man is Polish.' And there were two of them talking. So I went up to them and I just say in Polish 'Oh, can I introduce myself...blablabla'. And I became their interpreter. I don't know what happened. I don't know what happened to that girl but then nobody said to me 'No, you shouldn't be here'." (Wendy, p.8, l. 351-361)*

Inherent in these accounts of self-empowerment is the idea of the volunteers taking the initiative, i.e. they took measures in their own hand rather than waiting to be told and being "*a pair of hands doing what others say*" (Lin, 1998:225). The concept of taking action independently also emerged in the stories of Katherine and Sandra who found themselves in situation of 'not knowing': due to their interaction with the event competitors, they were asked many questions to which they did not know the answer. Rather than to wait for someone to come and tell them what to say or to respond "I don't know", they behaved in a pro-active manner by trying to find the requested information themselves:

*"I also, I don't feel we sort of had as much information as we actually could have done with, for example where they [the competitor] were staying. I had a vague idea that they'd be in student accommodation but where exactly that was, I didn't know. So it was a question really of picking up the leaflets that they [the organisers] provided and reading them for myself to find out things that then, you know, you could answer questions about." (Katherine, p.3, .l. 120-126)*

*"Sometimes you looked around and there was no one to ask. So you just had to wander off and ask questions yourself and find things... For example... I think it was on the second day of registration ... ...we were about to run out of rucksacks. I was working with X at the time and I think... we both basically thought "this will be awful or embarrassing if we'd run out of the bags". The bags were one of the simple things that people should be getting. So I asked somebody "Do you think there were any" and somebody said "Oh, there might be some in the loading bay". So I just basically ended up bringing trolleys from the loading bay, full of rucksacks that I found." (Sandra, p. 4, l. 179-187)*

Dan experienced a similar situation where a solution had to be found for a particular issue. Dan was put in charge of the Internet Café that could be used by the competitors. Due to the limited number of PCs that were available for thousands of WFG'08 participants, he decided to introduce the guideline that PCs should be used for 20-minutes in order to meet the demand:

> *"I mean, if you are looking after something, you've got to … you've got to take a hold. You've got manage it. Uhm, because if you don't manage it, and you are always running back 'What shall I do now?'... you are more trouble then you are worth. You've got to manage it, so if you are given a certain level of responsibility, you have to accept that and on the basis of that using maybe your life skills, you know you have to make certain decisions. You make an executive decision every now and again…. I was in charge of the internet café. There were only eight computers for thousands of competitors and at times people were queuing. Some got upset because they sometimes had to wait over half an hour before a computer was available. So I came up with the 'the twenty-minutes rule' and put up the signs. They were up there all the week and it helped because people could come in and see that... well, if there is a whole queue of people waiting and if someone was on a computer for a long time, you were then able to go up to them and say 'It's getting a bit busy, you know, could you just finish'. And if there was an argument, which there never was, you could say, 'Well, we are trying to keep the twenty-minutes rule'. So it's not simply an information notice, it is also a tool which you can use to help to manage the situation. Uhm… never had to really use it in that way because people could read the notice. Uhm.. so again, that's just a management tool. But I think from experience, I thought this is something that had to be done.  Otherwise, why shouldn't somebody be on there for three hours with a queue waiting… especially since it's free." (Dan, p. 16, l. 736-756)*

In contrast to the other volunteers accounts of self-empowerment, the behaviour by Sandra and Dan seemed to have been driven by a particular issue that needed solving. Relating to self-empowerment, the general concept of empowerment has received the attention of researchers such as Zerwekh (1992), Spreitzer (1995), Lin (1998) and Rodwell (1998) within the field of organizational behaviour and has been related to self-leadership by Prussia *et al.* (1998) which involves "*the influence people exert over*

*themselves to achieve self-motivation and self-direction to behave in a desirable way*"
(Manz, 1992:10). As suggested by Rodwell (1998) the concept of empowerment that
entails the meaning "*being able to enact*" (Chandler, 1991:22) includes elements of
power, authority, choice and permission which derive from the etymological analysis of
the term 'power'. Whilst the link between power and authority has been established by
Bookman and Morgan (1988) and Mason *et al.* (1991), Labonte (1989) draws from the
Latin origin of the word power which is 'potere' meaning 'the ability to choose' and
established an association of empowerment with choice. This approach is advocated by
Zerwekh (1992) who argues that by empowering themselves or others, people make a
deliberate choice and consequently decision-making. With regards to the context of the
WFG'08, the relationship between empowerment and choice is applicable in terms of
the volunteer to choose from available options and thus deciding to take actions. For
example Ann had the choice to stay at the volleyball tournament regardless of the fact
that there were too many volunteers, to go home or to return to the Arena to see what
was happening and if help was needed there, and took the decision to choose option
two. Once she arrived at the Arena, she made another choice with regards to her
volunteer task. Rather than asking the respective event manager in-charge what she
could do, she was self-led in her behaviour as the other interviewees whose behaviour
was subject to self-empowerment. The aspect of choice is inherent in the behaviour of
the other interviewee who could have decided one or the other way in terms of their
action taking. Manthey (1992) elaborates on the link with another element relevant to
empowerment overall and choice and decision-making in particular which is
responsibility, i.e. the fact of being accountable for one's behaviour and actions. For
example, in the case of Dan who decided to set up the 'twenty-minutes rule' without
conferring with anyone in charge, his sense of accountability shimmers through when
he says "*You've got to manage it, so if you are given a certain level of responsibility,
you have to accept that and on the basis of that using maybe your life skills, you know
you have to make certain decisions*" (see quote on p.189). Similarly, Wendy was
conscious that it was her choice to change shoes was not in agreement with the set role
script in terms of the uniform requirements - thus, it can be argues that she took
accountability of her action of 'breaking the rules'. Whilst research suggest that
empowerment as a managerial measure within organizations is beneficial to
organizations as it allows the creating of competitive advantages (Ripley and Ripley,
1992; Batten, 1995 and Kotter, 1995), employee commitment, quality products and
services (Lashley, 1995) nothing is known about the benefits of empowerment within

the context of the sport event volunteering in general and of self-empowerment in particular. For example, to what extent is the WFG'08 volunteers' behaviour of self-empowerment is desirable or acceptable from an event organizational perspective, especially if it is based on autonomy rather than previous agreement with the person-in-charge. From a volunteer's point of view other questions are how comfortable sport event volunteers are with taking the self-leadership and authority to take action and to what extent this impacts on their experience.

## 10.3 Revisited: the WFG'08 volunteer as bricoleur

As outlined earlier, bricolage can be understood as "*the process of creating something new out of resources available*" (Allgard, 2009:82). While the bricoleur has the choice to newly combine and rearrange his or her available resources, a new element may be added which will "*involve a complete reorganization of the structure, which will never be the same as one vaguely imagined nor as some other which might have been preferred to it*" (Levi-Strauss, 1968, p.19). However, as suggested by Levi-Strauss (ibid), bricolage is pre-constraint by the history as well as the by the original and the altered features of each tool and material available. The example of bricolage that Levi-Strauss uses in his work *The Savage Mind* (1968) is the potential multiple use of a piece of oak wood as a) an extension of a plank of pine or b) as material in the form of a pedestal. Thus, there seems to be a sense of fittingness, i.e. the features of the tools and material must lend itself for successful bricolage like the piece of oak wood that can serve as a plank or a pedestal. The application of the Levi-Strauss concepts of bricolage to the context of sport event volunteering seems at first look difficult as unlike a wooden plank, the ways in which the WFG'08 volunteers managed their role as sport event volunteer cannot be deconstructed as such. Instead, the concept of bricolage has to be employed rather loosely in the form of a metaphor: although general guidelines had been provided in the generic role script in the form of the volunteer handbook, there were no tailored procedures for any particular situation that the sport event volunteers could potentially have encountered. Instead, like the crafty maker of quilts who patches together material of different colour, pattern and texture in a skilful way (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005), some of the interviewees found themselves in situations where they had to tap into their personal resources in the form of past experience, skills and attitudes towards their role in order to manage their role effectively. Thus, the research participants made flexible use of "*different tools, methods, and techniques of representation and interpretation to the puzzle*" (Weinstein and Weinstein, 1991:6), i.e. the interpretation of the issue or

situation that they had to address. Consequently, it may be argued that the successful management of the volunteer role involves a certain degree of spontaneity and improvisation which is the essence of bricolage (Leybourne and Sadler-Smith, 2006). Establishing a parallel to the work of Moreno *et al.* (1955) *The discovery of the spontaneous man* the WFG'08 volunteers can be compared to actors that perform "*spontaneous-creative role playing*" (p.161), i.e. by being placed into unfamiliar situations actors for which they have no specific script, they have to make-up their role behaviour as they go along and as they see it fit. However, bricolage has not been without critics: the debate brought forward by Hammersley (1999) reflects one of the manifold ways in which bricolage can be understood and applied by the individual. In the case of Hammersley, bricolage is perceived as an unplanned and unstructured affair whilst Denzin and Lincoln (2005) depict it as an act of connaissance, i.e. a course of action that builds on the researcher's past experience and present knowledge. Furthermore, it may be argued that bricolage always involves a degree of contemplation as the researcher has to know first what is in his toolbox and how he can use what is available to him. Thus, spontaneity and improvisation within the context of WFG'08 volunteering can be seen as an extension of the volunteers' awareness of tools in terms of one's consciousness of knowledge, skills and options.

The idea of bricolage strongly relates to Wrzesniweski and Dutton's (2001) concepts of 'job crafting' that they define as "*the physical and cognitive changes individuals make in the task or relational boundaries of their work*" (p.179). Applying this concept which is described to be of proactive nature (Berg *et al.,* 2010) to the context of the WFG'08 volunteers, the volunteers design their volunteer role and behaviour around the rough role script that received and the expectations and demands that come with the role. Job crafting which in the context of this study can be expanded to 'role crafting' relates to bricolage as the actors change the way in which they approach their tasks and duties related to their roles (Wrzesniweski and Dutton, 2001). For example, rather than relying on being told what to do and depending on guidance from above, the interviewees' approach towards self-empowerment and self-leadership as well as their use of existing skills and life experience when dealing with tasks reflect this aspect of job-crafting. As suggested by Wrezesniewski (2003), job crafting further includes the reduction or increase of tasks, e.g. through extra-role behaviour which is the behaviour that exceeds the expectation and demands of the role. Examples of extra-role behaviour are the proactive measures of the WFG'08 volunteers by taking the initiative, e.g. actions taken

by Dan to manage the use of the computers by the competitors by setting the '20 minutes rule' or Ann's decision to look after the well-being of other volunteers by sending them on breaks. Consequently, as job-crafter, individuals can be perceived as to some extent making rather than just taking a job which reflects the debate amongst scholars with regards to role-making versus role-taking. The idea of volunteers making-up their role behaviour relates to the debate between scholars with regards to role-taking and role-making discussed earlier in the literature review (see Chapter Four). Whilst advocates of structural role theory such as Merton (1957) perceive actors as merely take a role and perform it by following a role script that is tailored around set expectations of others, guidelines, rules and regulations (Lopata, 1995), scholars supporting the symbolic interactionist approach towards role-theory like Turner (1962) and Hewitt (1979) are in favour of the idea that role occupants perform their role without following a rigid script and adhering too much to role boundaries. In view of the situation of the WFG'08 volunteers and the manner in which the interviewees managed their WFG'08 role, rather than excluding one or the other role-theory approach, it can be argued that in the case of the interviewees both perspectives, i.e. role-taking and role-making are applicable: initially, the WFG'08 volunteers took the role, however due to the absence of a clear role-script and manner in which the volunteers' were managed resulting in their self-empowerment and employing their various skills and life experience, they ended up making their role. It might even be argued that the concept of role-merger that was established by Turner (1978) and refers to the integration of one's attitude and behaviour learnt and developed in another role into an incumbent role is applicable to the context of the WFG'08 volunteer: the example of Dan who learned from his IT job how to solve problems associated with computer password or Bernard who managed the potential danger at the open-road race relate to the idea of adopting a known approach towards a familiar problem that they come across when performing other roles in the past, and the volunteers using one's life experience accumulated during the performance of past roles. Similarly, the case of Karen who used her organizational skills that she developed in her role as mother supports the idea of role-merging processes within the context of the WFG'08 volunteer role management.

Due to the nature of the sport events such as the WFG'08 that are unique by nature and cannot be tested in advance (Getz, 2005), it may be argued that a detailed script that prescribes a volunteer behaviour pattern can never be provided *per se* as one does

not know in advance how things unfold. As most WFG'08 volunteers were involved in different sport events that took place at different locations and often found themselves in new situations, no day was the same. Thus the aspect of 'againness' in the form of uniform and repeatable behaviour which is an inherent feature of role-taking (Natanson, 1966) was not given. Consequently, the claim can be made that the role behaviour of sport event volunteers is inherently subject to role-making in the form of bricolage or role crafting, i.e. whilst initially the role is taken, the volunteer role behaviour is crafted. From a volunteer management perspective this conclusion has implications for the event organisers as directors who can enhance the volunteer experience by providing the parameters and support systems which allows the volunteers to integrate their attitudes, behaviour and understanding of how the volunteer is conceptualized and to be enacted whilst allowing the achievement of desired outcome in the form of the event organizers' aims and objectives.

**10.4 Conclusion**

This chapter has explored and discussed how the WFG'08 volunteers managed their role. Drawing from research findings in the form of sub-themes and different theories, the interpretations of the WFG'08 volunteer as bricoleur has been established who initially takes on a role but ends up making or crafting his/her role. In view of the lack of knowledge on how sport event volunteers manage their role, this chapter contributes to the body of knowledge by providing an insights from the volunteers' perspective. Furthermore, it has brought together and applied a combination of relevant theories and concepts to the sport event volunteer context. Using the metaphor of bricolage has highlighted the creative and skilful way in which the WFG'08 volunteers mastered their role. At the same time, the chapter has raises concerns with regards to the managerial implications these findings suggest in terms of managerial approaches from event organisers towards their volunteers.

**CHAPTER ELEVEN**

**Role exit: departure from the WFG'08 volunteer role**

*Departure from this happy place, our sweet*
*Recess, and only consolation left*
*Familiar to our eyes, all places else*
*Inhospitable appear and desolate,*
*Nor knowing ur nor known…*

John Milton, *Paradise Lost: Book XI* (2001 [1909-1914])

**11.0 Introduction**

Role exit has been defined by Ebaugh (1988) as the "*departure from any role that is central to one's self-identity*" (p.149). A more elaborated and inclusive description of the term is provided by Ashforth (2000) who understands role exit as "*the psychological and physical withdrawal from the role and the cultural context and net of relationships within which the role is embedded*" (Ashforth, 2000:109). The notion of role withdrawal is reflected in the disengagement theory (Cumming and Henry, 1961) that is has been predominantly used within the context of retirement from the work role (e.g. Hochschild, 1975; Carter and Cook, 1995; Achenbaum and Bengtson, 1994; Curtis and Ennis, 1998). Inherent in the concept of role exit and related theories such as the theory is the process of transition, i.e. the movement or change from state, situation or role to another (Drahota and Eitzen, 1998), e.g. the passing from adulthood to old age, from working role (worker) to non-working role (pensioner) (Guillemard and Rein, 1993). In the case of the World Firefighters Games 2008 (WFG'08), transition occurred in the form of the individual moving from WFG'08 volunteer to ex-WFG'08 volunteer. First references to role exit emerged in the work by Blau (1973) who describes role exit as the departure from a major role  and that not only relates to loss and change of status but also to entrance or return to another role. Other authors such as Allen and Van de Vliert (1984), Strasser (1984) and George (1993) focus on the latter by emphasizing the process of (re-) socialization between roles, the alteration of role expectations and gain and loss of status and role identity as a result of role exit. Thus, in addition to the definition provided by Ashford (2000), the psychological and physical withdrawal from a role entails the withdrawal from the role behaviour through disengagement, the ending

of the volunteers' identifying themselves with the role that they depart from and being socialized into a new or re-socialized into an 'old' existing role (Drahota and Eitzen, 1998). Blau (1973) distinguishes between the following for types of exit: a) an act of nature, e.g. death; b) expulsion or banishment; c) involuntary action, e.g. being fired and d) voluntary action, e.g. a person leaving a partner, career change. In the context of the WFG'08, the role exit was bound to the end of the event, i.e. the help of volunteers were no longer required after the event has finished. The timing of the role exit was subject to negotiation and agreement between the volunteer and the event organisers before and during the Games, thus the role exit was initially of voluntary rather than involuntary nature. Furthermore, due to the limited duration of the WFG'08, the volunteer role was of temporary nature and role exit was consequently expected to occur.

One of the interview questions was concerned with how volunteers felt when the WFG'08 came to an end, resulting in the individual's departure and disengagement from the role, and how they managed and adjusted to the change of no longer being a WFG'08 volunteer. Interviewees' accounts varied, allowing similarities and differences to emerge resulting in a number of subthemes that accommodate the palette of sport event volunteers lived experiences with role exit and their measures of managing and adjusting which informed the overarching theme of the WFG'08 volunteer as '*the bereaved'*. This chapter briefly introduces the reader to the metaphor followed by an outline and discussion of the sub-themes that emerged from the respondents account on how they felt when their involvement in the WFG '08 came to end and encompass a) *the experience of vacuum;* b) *feeling of sadness and loss;* c) *feeling lonely;* d) *return to everydayness;* e) *mixed emotions;* f) t*iming of role exit;* g) *nature of role exit* and h) *getting closure.* Furthermore the question how the volunteers managed and adjusted to their role as ex-WFG'08 volunteers is explored under the sub-theme '*coping'.*

**11.1 The WFG'08 volunteer as the bereaved**

Bereavement is defined as "*the process of losing a close relationship*" (Small, 2001:20) and has its origins in the Anglo-Saxon word 'beriafien' which means "*to be robbed*" (Rees, 2001:157). Bereavement tends to be exclusively used in connection to the loss of someone with whom one had a close relationship, e.g. according to Stroebe and Schut (1998) bereavement is "*the situation of a person who has recently been experience the loss of someone significant through that person's death*" (p.8). Golding (1991) criticizes this common association of loss to death by a loved one as being

exclusive of other life situations that entail loss and deprivation such as the experience of physical incapacity such as the amputation of a limb as well as physical crises, e.g. "*divorce, assault and rape*" (p.5). This perspective of bereavement is echoed by the definition of bereavement by both Corr *et al.* (1997) who state that "*the term 'bereavement' refers to the state of being bereaved or deprived, robbed, plundered or stripped of something: that is, bereavement identifies the objective situation of individuals who experience a los*s" and Allen (1991) who depicts bereavement as having been robbed or being deprived of something or someone. Distinguishing different forms of losses such as changing or loosing of jobs, e.g. through retirement or redundancy, changing locations through migrating, separating from loved ones e.g. through divorces or death, becoming disabled or an amputee, Parkes (1998) and Saunders (1998) agree that bereavement is a ubiquitous phenomenon that is not limited to a specific type of loss.

Whilst the interpretation of the WFG'08 as the bereaved has been strongly underpinned by the notion of loss, it is further supported by the interviewees' emotions that accompanied the experience of the volunteers' departure from their WFG'08 volunteer role. The interpretation of the volunteer as the bereaved will be revisited and explored further at the end of this chapter after the sub-themes have been presented and discussed.

## 11.2 The lived experience of role exit: becoming an ex-WFG'08 volunteer

As suggested by Ebaugh (1988) a concomitant feature of role exit is "*emotional disentanglement*" (p.149), i.e. role exiters experience a number of different feelings that range from elation and relief and mixed feelings to sadness, fear and anger as they depart from a role. Similarly, a range of emotions emerged from the interviewees' accounts which are outlined in the following sections.

### 11.2.1 The experience of vacuum

Feeling lost and disoriented was a set of emotions that were experienced as result of the role loss and that was commented by Jane and Kara as follows:

> "*I had a feeling of loss. I thought 'Oh, it's finished now. Now what I am going to do?' (Jane, p. 10, l. 436)*

*"It was like 'Mhh, what shall I do now? My job is finished now'. (<u>Kara, p. 25, l. 1216</u>)*

The questions '*Now what I am going to do?*' and '*What shall I do now?*' suggest that the enactment of sport event volunteering had temporarily dominated the life of volunteers who appear to have been thrown off balance when the Games were over and with them their involvement as sport event volunteers. As a result, Jane and Kara seem to have found themselves in a state of being in limbo in the form of feeling disoriented, not knowing what to do with themselves. The issue of uncertainty is mentioned in the work on role-exit by Ebaugh (1988)  that relates uncertainty to the loss of familiarity and which leads to the experience of 'vacuum' resulting in "*the future becoming frightening in its uncertainty and unfamiliarity*" (p.144).

Similarly to Jane's account, the experience of vacuum that has been reported by three-quarters of those interviewed in her study by Ebaugh (1988) on the exit of roles, is inherent in Karen's narrative that provides a deeper insight into this phenomenon:

*"I had been looking forward to the Games for weeks and weeks and weeks., planned all my diary around it. And then suddenly you get up Wednesday and you realize "Oh, no job today. No Arena, no St. Georges, no evening events. What am I going to do now?". "Back to normal "sort of thing. And it was almost like… I wouldn't say a dream but it that huge event has now been and gone. I got lots of lovely memories and photographs and everything but that part of my life is finished. Over. Complete. "Never will happen again " type of thing. It's almost like, I don't know, when you are waiting for something. Because he signed us up in about November or December and the event wasn't happening until the end of August. So it's like something had been on the calendar, on my diary and not like "Oh, I'm desperate to do it", just something I knew was coming up and coming up. And with everybody being involved, even my niece coming over … a very busy ten days of day events, evening events, social events and then just "Whoop, gone!" It felt like stepping into a void… Yeah, a void .. just like "Oh, what now? What am I going to do now?". It's gone, it's over. And it will never happen again. Gone! That part of my life is no gone, closed, finished." (<u>Karen, p. 26, l. 1219-1240)</u>*

Sharing this experience of 'vacuum', Andrew recalls this notion of uncertainty and disorientation but adds the perspective of 'emptiness':

> *" It was gone…. it was this horrible feeling of emptiness to see everything that has been colourful, so full of life… gone. I just didn't know what to do with me myself. I felt lost.  I thought" Now, what happens?" (Andrew, p.10, l. 426-427)*

Another emotion that according to Ebaugh (1988) is closely linked to the experience of 'vacuum' and which has been experienced by some interviewees is the motion of anti-climax:

> *"It was an anti-climax. It was awful. It was a terrible anti-climax." (Gloria, p. 5, l. 236-238)*

Karen who shared this feeling elaborates on her experience of anti-climax by comparing the period before and after her exit from the sport event volunteer role:

> *"You know, you're just getting into the swing of it. And then, afterwards, there was a bit of an anti-climax. I thought "Uhm, it is all gone now. It is finished, it has stopped. That was it". (Karen, p. 10, l.462-465)*

Anti-climax is defined as "*a trivial conclusion to something significant or impressive* (Allen, 1991:46). Ebaugh (1988) provides as more metaphorical insight into the concepts of anti-climax by describing it as a feeling of anxiety and like "*being in mid air, ungrounded, neither here nowhere and being at loose ends*" (p.143).
However, in comparison to Gloria and Karen, Wendy did not encounter this sense of anti-climax, although she had initially expected it:

> *"I thought I would just hit rock bottom but I didn't. Because in a way, there wasn't sort of anything final. The Games will be held again in two years time So you know, you know, there wasn't sort of anything final. There was no final curtain for the Firefighter Games. Because they are already gearing up for the next WFG in two years time. People were already talking about Korea and all this. And so you know it did not feel like this is the end". (Wendy, p.10, l. 478-479)*

At this st'age, the reason for these opposing experiences is not clear as little appears to have been written on anti-climax. One possible factor might be the concept of finitude: in the case of Wendy, the fact that the WFG'08 are staged bi-annually and were be hosted by South Korea in 2010 seems to play role as from a long-term perspective it can be argued that the Games as such have not ceased to exist. In contrast, the aspect of finitude was felt by Karen:

"*It is finished, it is has stopped.*" (Karen, *p. 10, l.462-465)*

Another negative emotion was the experience of 'feeling lost" which, according to Ebaugh (1988) is part of the 'vacuum'-experience. For example, at the end of her last day as sport event volunteer that entailed the cleaning of seats and the removal of sporting equipment on the last day of the WFG'08, Katherine described how she missed the Games:

*"I sort of felt a little bit at a loss, I must admit. The Games left quite a hole then."* (*Katherine, p. 10, l.439-441*)

The quotes by Jane reveal similar feelings and thoughts:

*"I felt a little bit lost at first. Because I've spent ten days apart from one or two days. It was like 'Mhh, what shall I do now? My job is finished now!'" (Jane, p. 25, l. 1216-1219*)

### 11.2.2 Feeling of sadness and loss

Feeling sadness was another reaction that some volunteers recall:

*"Well I was sad when they [the Games] were over. It was just so exciting and it felt so special." (Wendy, p.7, l.321-322)*

*"I felt a sad. Like 'Oh, it's a shame it's all over.' It was sad having to say goodbye to this wonderful experience." (Kara, p. 27, l. 1295-1304)*

Experiencing sadness was questioned by Jane:

*"I tend to take things to heart. But you know, you get so involved with it and... and then it's over and you think 'What did I do with myself before this?', you know. What, what… how can I be so sad when something is finished when I was fine before it started!"* (Jane, 27, l. 1295-1304)

The link between sadness and loss emerged in the conversations with the Jane and Gloria who recalled how they missed the Games:

*"I missed them [the Games], I thought 'Oh!' I sort of got quite into it, sort of quite into getting the train and, you know, meeting people and that."* (Jane, p. 10, l. 436)

*"I was very sad when the Games were over. I loved being a part of it. I loved being a volunteer. And I missed it terribly, I really did."* (Gloria, p. 6, l. 256)

Their feelings were shared by Andrew and Dan who however elaborated on their feelings reflecting their attachment to the Games. Whilst Andrew's account refers to the element of fun:

*"I just sat there, looking at what happened over the past ten days and you think 'How has it happened? Where is it gone?' And it, you know, it hurt. It does hurt you. It does hit you, it does hit you hard. I was very sad. Just to see that fun that you've had enjoyed for the last couple of days, gone…gone to another city. Gone, everyone flying back, everyone going back to work. I really missed it all. I've been really happy, and you know…I've enjoyed myself, I had a great time… and then just to see it all go once it's finished…it's a sad feeling."* (Andrew, p. 9, l. 419-423 & p.11 461-464)

Dan's memories reflect the attachment to and sense of loss of the interaction with others during the Games:

*"Uhm, I mean X.. I spent quite a lot of time talking to X. I probably won't see X again, you know. And the photographer… there were two photographers who came working for Events Photography. Uhm… we spent time talking, chatting. And then it's all finished. There was a little social thing going on. Not on any*

*great level but you've got a common cause, you spend a lot of time in the same area… that sort of thing. Uhm, and then, it's over. It was quite sad really." (Dan, p. 9, l. 419-247)*

The term 'loss' is understood as "*the condition of being deprived or bereaved of something or someone*" (Allen, 1991:702). Although loss is usually linked to bereavement of a loved one or redundancy, the definition implies that loss can be linked to other situations making it a rather ubiquitous term (Parkes, 1998) as its inherent meaning rests on the concept of discontinuity, i.e. the individual is faced with the notion of "*not having something or someone anymore*" (p.7). Within the context of this research, the volunteers were faced with no longer having the volunteer role and their engagement with the Games. The aspect of the different types of loss has been addressed by Mitchell and Anderson (1983) and Parkes (1998) who distinguish between different types of loss ranging from material, functional and systematic loss to the loss of relationships and roles. As suggested by Mitchell and Andersson (1983) role loss occurs through retirement and acquisition of new roles. In the case of WFG'08, role loss is understood to have taken place in terms of 'retiring from something' rather than 'retiring back to something' or 'retiring for something' which are the three types of meaning that people attach to retirement (Crawford, 1971), i.e. the volunteers automatically retired from their helper role when the WFG'08 came to an end. From an emotional perspective, retirement can be perceived as "*ending of something desirable*" (Hochschild, 1975:562) resulting in retirement being regretted and the experience a feeling of loss (Crawford, 1971) which has been reflected in some of the interviewees accounts.

### 11.2.3 Feeling lonely

The notion of loneliness was an underlying feature on one of the interviewee accounts:

> *"You know… I mean… I mean, it was not just standing around looking at the place for the last time. I obviously put my feet up on the seat, taking my pictures… you know go around the backstage. And I was sitting in the… uhm.. crew cantine… you know where we were all having our meals and that… and I am just there, sat there, alone. There was only me there in my yellow shirt and I said 'What have you done and seen during these past weeks?' I mean I even looked… walked around the arena. There was just me... I would say I was*

*tempted to have a silent 7cry. I was just looking for another person in a yellow shirt, just to say 'Hello'… just to say, you know, 'Are you feeling the same?' but there was no one. I tell you it was very lonely, considering you've been talking to everyone." (Andrew, p.10, l. 438-447)*

As reported by in the study on role exits by Ebaugh (1988), the feeling of loneliness was experienced by those research participants that struggled with letting go of their old role and to adjust to their new role which according to Ebaugh occurs due to the absence of a social support structure that could have helped the exiters with their role transition. Drawing parallels to Andrew's account, his sense of feeling lonely is enhanced by the fact that he had no one to talk to and share this experience of sadness and loss that he experienced when the Games were over.

### 10.2.4 Return to everydayness

Another sub-theme that emerges from the interviews is the concept of everydayness that has been introduced in the role-entry chapter as part of the theme 'un-everydayness'. Return to everydayness after the end of the WFG'08 was related by interviewees with different aspect of their everyday-lives. For example, Karen and Andrew associated the exit from their volunteer role with a return to the routine and boredom of everyday-life:

*"Although I do lots of stuff, it is very routine: Tuesday hospital, Thursday dancing, Friday hospital plus Saturday Badminton with the kids, Tuesday training. Tuesday is my running club. You know, things are marked out. I know what I'm doing. And people don't think I've got a boring life but if I look at it..  on a day-to-day basis, yes, it is rather boring. Although I do lots of stuff, it is boring because it is routine and it is the same every week. But that… volunteering at the Games wasn't. It was a huge change, a good change." (Karen, p. 28, l. 1318-1324)*

*"I thought "Remember who you were before you started?". "Back to driving… have a few days off just to recover.. do what you do before this happened" I didn't want let it go.. but I knew I had to… So I want back to driving, back to routine.. back to boring work." (Andrew, p. 10, l.426 – 427 &  449-450)*

In contrast, the end of her volunteer role enactment meant a return to the consciousness of pain for Gloria who suffers multiple illnesses:

> *"For me it was this feeling of having to go back to reality, back to the pain. I am in quite a lot of pain all the time and it is very difficult to find things that divert me from that pain because I can't take any painkillers. I am allergic to basically every painkiller under the sun…. So helping with the Games was good because it allowed me to block out the pain and sort of … to forget it for a while." (*<u>*Gloria, p. 5, l. 238 & p.6, l. 252-255 & l. 272-273*</u>*)*

The findings enhance the idea of the event volunteer world as a 'liminal zone' outlines in Chapter Seven: like tourists, who travel to and stays at a destination "*which is not one's own...usually for a relatively short periods of time*" (Cohen, 2004:20), the WFG'08 volunteers leave behind their mundane world, the 'everydayness' of their lives, as they move the environment where the sport event takes place and in which they enact their volunteer role. However, as they exit the WFG'08 volunteer role and return to their general day life, the volunteers are confronted with the repetitive nature of work, monotony and related emotions such as boredom. In the case of Gloria, leaving the "liminal zone' of the WFG'08 meant to return to the consciousness of pain.

### 11.2.5 Mixed emotions – a laughing and crying eye

In contrast to the accounts of negative emotions, some interviewees recalled mixed emotions about their role exit which ranged from feeling sad to being relieved. For example, Ann enjoyed her role enactment as WFG'08 volunteer, however she felt a sense of relief when she could leave her volunteer role behind:

> *"Oh, I was lost. I was like "Okay, I've done eight days" but then I was relieved when it was over. I have been having difficulties with getting into my shoes. But I got on great. And on the last night I got this niggle in my foot and I thought "I'd be glad when it's finished because I didn't get home until quarter to one in the morning". When you're there and you're travelling and you're meeting people and the excitement that's going on and watching people's faces and that, it is great. It is a shock afterwards when you have to tell yourself "That's it, it's over. You've got a chance to rest now and go to sleep." (*<u>*Ann, p. 11, l. 523-528*</u>*)*

Jane had similar sentiments. While she welcomed a rest, she missed her work as sport event volunteer:

> *"Personally I was very tired. So, from that sense, it was nice that the Games were over. I thought "Now I can have a rest". And, you sort of think "right, there's nothing to do today". I missed it." (Jane, p. 9, l. 399-401)*

In contrast, Ivy emphasized that she was glad to be able to catch up with work:

> *"I wasn't glad it was finished, you know, I quite enjoyed it , but at the same I had so many other things like my housework that I hadn't really been doing, and my garden, I neglected the garden. So I was quite pleased to have some time back again." (Ivy, p.2, l.98-102)*

As highlighted in their quotes, interviewees like Ann, Jane and Ivy had mixed emotions about their role loss: on the one hand they felt sad that their engagement as a sport event volunteer had come to an end whilst on the other hand they seemed relieved that the Games had finally ended so that they could return to normality. This reaction relates to a study by Parkes (1993) on widows who as a result of the loss of their role as spouses experienced a feeling of relief from their responsibilities. Consequently, these findings reflect Crawford's (1971) idea of 'retiring from something' where retirement from a role is seen as a release from specific obligations. In contrast, the emotional response to role loss by other WFG'08 volunteers appears to have been stronger, e.g. Andrew who described his feeling of loneliness and Karen that seemed to have strongly missed her role as sport event volunteer at the WFG'08. This may be explained by the proposition of Parkes (1970) that the painful emotions are antecedents of the process of detachment from something or someone which takes place through "*unlearning and disengaging*" (p. 452), i.e. removing of self from what is known, and de-socialisation (Hochschild, 1975). Kleiber *et al.* (1987) associate the latter to disengagement as part of the role exit process requiring the role occupant to withdraw from behaviour associated with the particular and reducing the social interaction with members of the related role set. In the instance of the WFG'08, the idea of unlearning and disengagement is underpinned by the initial development of behavioural patterns during the event as a result of being a sport event volunteer, such as travelling to the Arena every day during the Games, wearing the uniform, interacting with others, looking after

the athletes etc. Once the Games were over and the role of the WFG'08 volunteer officially ceased to exist, depending of the level of attachment and identity with the role, volunteers had to unlearn their routines that they developed as part of their role performance, disengage from their roles and their sense of purpose through role-detachment and role de-socialisation and return and re-adapt to their everyday life as it was before the event. As suggested by the research findings, the emotional impacts of these processes as part of the role exit varied among the interviewees.

**11.2.6 The timing of role exit - suddenness versus gradual transition**
The timing of the role exit was another sub-theme that appeared from the interpretation of the data, in terms of suddenness and gradual transition. The metaphor of the roller-coaster was used by some interviewees to describe the suddenness with which the volunteer role enactment came to halt to make place for role exit and leaving the volunteer with no time to mentally prepare for his/her departure from the role:

> *"It was a bit like being on a roller-coaster and all of a sudden it's flat. Yes, it was flat. It just seemed to go so quickly as well. I knew that the Games would eventually come to an end and that my volunteer work was a temporary thing …but I just wasn't prepared for it. I was quite sad when it was over… quite sad."* (Kara, p. 6, l. 466-469)

The comparison of role exit with a roller-coaster ride was shared by Jane:

> *"For me it was sort of a rollercoaster-emotion really, you know. You start off with thinking "Oh I don't know what to expect, I don't know how it's going to be organized." When we first arrived to the muster station, I did honestly expect somebody to say 'Right, Team A do this, Team B do this, Team C do this'. And it wasn't like this at all. It was 'Alright, some volunteers. Can you go and do this?' We weren't from the same team or anything but it all got done and we all mugged in and we all got it done. And then as the week progresses, as I say, you are off in a rollercoaster. You feel good, everyone gels together, you confidence grows, you feel better yourself and all that… and then it suddenly ends. Then you are back down again. And you think 'Oh, all goes flat'."* (Jane, p. 9, l. 403-413)

The comparison of the sport event volunteer experience with a roller-coaster ride provides a sound basis for empathy from the reader: most people have found themselves sitting on a rollercoaster at some time in their lives, either as children, teenagers or adults during a fun fair or when visiting an amusement park. After the initial shock of the high speed motion and the curvy, high and low movement of the rollercoaster car, they adjust themselves to the thrill and rush. When the ride comes to an end, their body has to cope with the high level of adrenaline. Although one knows that the rollercoaster ride does not go on forever but has to come to an end eventually, one is not really prepared for when that moment arrives. Depending whether people enjoyed the ride or not, they either feel a sense of disappointment or an extreme sense of relief that the ride is over. In the case of WFG'08, the volunteers were informed ahead of the amount of days they would be helping out at the event. Thus, they knew when the last day of work would be which theoretically allowed them to anticipate and get mentally prepared for their approaching role exit. However, although the interviewees such as Kara and Jane fully completed their time of volunteer engagement as originally planned and knew when their last day of volunteer work was, they still felt their role exit as having come to a sudden stop.

This finding also appears from the account of Dan:

> *"On the last day, you're sort of... we packed the computers up a bit early so the guys could come and pick them up. Uhm, and there was a definite sense of 'it's winding down'… but I still wasn't prepared for the Games to be suddenly over. 'Whuum!' There's a very sharp cut-off point. So it is very intense for a very short period of time and the transition to normality is quite marred at the end of it ...the volunteer work seemed to end so suddenly."* (Dan, p. 12, l. 565-567)

The notion of abruptness and lack of transition is taken a step further by Karen who describes her experience of role exit in view of her return to everyday-live after the WFG'08 have come to a close:

> *"My work as a volunteer at the Games finished at one o'clock Tuesday morning. Last record, off we go. And then Wednesday, back to normal… back to work, back to being a housewife. It seemed unreal somehow… like waking up from a dream." (Karen, p. 26, l. 1256-1258)*

The timing of the loss has been identified as an important influencing factor on people's adaptation to loss, as in the case of sudden loss, individuals don't have the time to mentally prepare themselves for this (Walsh and McGoldrick, 1998). As suggested by the work of Osterweis *et al.* (1984), those who face sudden and unexpected loss may experience a sense of guilt and regret as they wish to either finish, said or do things different had they know about the imminent loss. These literature findings may be help to understand the reaction of Sara whose volunteer involvement came to an unanticipated and sudden halt when a close family passed away:

> *"I did have a feeling like… 'What a shame I wasn't able to be there right to the end' … I felt I didn't say goodbye. It was as if I was suddenly plucked out, I was suddenly take out of that role. Yeah, very much so. I was thinking 'Uhm, what a shame, I'm not going to be there at the end and I can't say good-bye'. I really wanted to that but it was left open-ended."* (Sara, p.14 l. 682)

As indicated in her account, Sara felt regret of not being able to say goodbye to everyone and to see her volunteer engagement through to the end as originally planned.

### 11.2.7 The nature of role exit: voluntary versus un-voluntary role exit

During the interviews, the nature of role exit in terms of the aspect of voluntariness with regards to the individual's willingness to leave the sport event volunteer role was unveiled. For example, in the account of Andrew, the notion of holding on to being a WFG'08 volunteer becomes tangible:

> *"It [the event] was gone! I just did not want it to go, you know… I just did not want it to go. I was standing there and I was really discouraged. It only really rally hit me hard when I realized I was the last one… I was the last person in the yellow shirt to walk out that arena. I was the last volunteer to walk out that arena. Yes, I was the last one. You know, I just did not want it to go…. I had to hold it… hold this moment. I walked around the arena floor just looking at the lights coming down, watching the stage being dissembled."* (Andrew, p. 9, l. 411-419 & 424-425)

In Andrew's account the sense of reluctance to depart from the volunteer role can be literally felt – rather than looking forward to the busy time to be over and being able to return to normality, Andrew just did not want the Games to end. This experience is something that most of us can relate to, be it when a holiday that was thoroughly enjoyed comes to an end or in a more tangible sense when the last drop of a good bottle of wine has been drunk and one has to leave. This unwillingness to let go is reflected in the ethnographic study of lecturing in a virtual classroom through on-line teaching by Bender (2000) who recalls how she felt and when a class she enjoyed delivering reaches its end: "*ending a class is much like ending a terrific novel. There is the same feeling of not wanting it to be over, a feeling of loss; a feeling that something was really profound*" (p.388). At same time, these research findings may be challenged by the observation of Aiken (2001) that if a loss is expected to occur, the process of adjusting, i.e. recovering and coming to terms with the loss, may be less. The temporary nature of volunteer is inherent in sport event volunteering, i.e. the volunteer's engagement has an official start and an end which is not only dictated by the duration of the event but also by the mutual agreement between the sport event volunteer and the event organisers. Thus, this form of volunteering is not ongoing, like for example volunteering in a hospice or a club and the role exit is 'on-time', that is, expected (Hagestad and Neugarten, 1985). Consequently, it may be argued that the volunteers could mentally prepare themselves for their role exit. However, as suggested by the research findings, this must not be necessarily the case due to individual's level of role attachment and the meaning that the sport event volunteer role held for him or her.

**11.2.8 Getting closure**

The role exit experience of suddenness gives food for thought in terms of assisting the sport event volunteer with their transition from role enactment to role exit and raises the raises the question about providing the volunteers with some of sort of closure. Being involved in the WFG'08 from start to finish seems to be one way of allowing volunteers to come to terms with the end of their sport event volunteer role enactment:

> *"I had closure because I have seen the start and I have seen the end and I wonder how the people who have done a day or two in the middle only. I felt strange but I had a proper closure compared to some of the other volunteers."* (Jane, p. 9, l. 431-434)

Especially being around to 'see the end' of the Games seems to be of significance: witnessing the shut-down of the event appears to have allowed Andrew to realize that the Games and thus his volunteer engagement have come to an end:

> *"There were a lot of emotions on the last day, especially for me. I mean I was actually one of the few volunteers on the last day… taking it all apart, that moved me! To pick up the judo mats and tidy them all away. It was the realization of the moment that it was gone... it is all over… there's no more days." (Andrew, p.9, l. 398- 401)*

In comparison, Sara who was not able to complete her volunteer engagement due to an unexpected death in her family during the Games requiring her presence at home, not being able to see her role enactment through to the end, she felt a sense of incompleteness:

> *"I did have a feeling that…. 'What a shame' -  I wasn't able to be there right to the end" because it's a kind of closure as well and you'd be part of that… uhm… party spirit and part of that saying good-bye to you colleagues." (Sara p. 16, l. 732-735)*

Accompanied with the sense of being incomplete came the feeling of disappointment:

> *"I felt disappointed that I wasn't able to fully commit the time that I said I would. I did feel 'Ohh', you know, 'I've committed all those hours and now look I can't fulfill them'. And I felt disappointed. I must admit, I did feel disappointed that I wasn't able to stay." (Sara, p. 15, l. 714-717 & 729-730)*

Staging a volunteer-party at the end of the WFG'08 was mentioned as a way to provide the sport event volunteers with a sense of closure:

> *"I was hoping that there would be a party for all the volunteers at the end of the Games, like the do at other large events. Yeah, that is also a disappointment. I mean it's not like anybody wants a reward, it's not like that but…I expected that there would have been some sort of farewell… to each other and to the event… therefore that would have been closure for everybody." (Sara, p. 16, l. 743-747)*

Staging a post-event party for all the sport event volunteers is a common feature of a number of large, major and mega sport events such as World Under 23 Rowing Championships (2006), the Olympic Games (Capaldo, 2001) or the Commonwealth Games (Chapman, 2006). In the case of the WFG'08, no '*end of Games*' festivities were held for the volunteers, nor were volunteers certificates issued (the latter occurred in December 2008 where volunteers were 'surprised' by being sent WFG'08 certificates by mail). Instead, a volunteer reunion was arranged for the end of October 2008 of which the volunteers were informed by email two and half weeks before. However, at this stage, two months after the Games, the response to this measure varied among interviewees: for example Wendy welcomed the staging of a volunteer reunion, even though this was not immediately held after the Games:

> *"I got an email that said that they will hold an event in October sometime for all the volunteers. Like a party or something. It is some sort of get-together. It will be nice to see all the people again."* (*Wendy, p. 11, 514-516*)

In contrast, the fact that the volunteer meeting was not held right after the Games was also subject to criticism:

> *"I think, there has been an email being sent around about uhm… a reunion or something, you know and I'll definitely go. It will be great to catch with the other volunteers. But to be honest, they could have done this right after the Games… when we all were still in the spirit of the Games. It seems a bit out of place now."* (*Kara, p.11, 533-536*)

This sense of belatedness was shared by Sara:

> *"Well, I got an email about having a party at the Albert Dock at the end of October. But I wasn't sure about that because it didn't give much detail about it. Uhm, it was like anybody could come so I didn't know whether they just hired that place just for the volunteers and family or friends or whether it was just an ordinary night, just going there and have a drink with people who happened to be a volunteer. So I wasn't sure. I mean, I am not able to go anyway but it kind of made me feel 'Oh, well…',you know. It looks as if they're trying to do something but it seems a bit too late for that now." (Sara, p. 16, l. 748-756)*

Whilst Smith and Lockstone (2009) view "*post-event functions*" (p.157) from an event management perspective and depict them as a means to encourage volunteers to help again in future, very little seems to have been written about the personal value of closing ceremonies and the issuing of volunteer certificate as post-event rituals. Drawing from the work by Van Gennep (1960), rituals and events have a significant function as they mark a stage of a person's advance through life by becoming rites of passages. The use of rituals to achieve role completion is advocated by Kearl (1986) who argues that successfully completing a role performance temporarily affects one's sense of satisfaction and social order. Applying this concept to the context of the WFG'08 measures, staging end-of-games festivities such as post-event volunteer party at the end of the event may be perceived as a rite de passage that signals to the volunteers that their volunteer role has officially ended as well as to mark the sport event volunteers transition from their sport event volunteer role into the role of ex-WFG'08 volunteer and with it the return to everydayness.

## 11.3 Coping - the volunteers' mastery of the role loss

A final theme that emerged from the analysis and interpretation of the findings is coping in relation to how volunteers managed the role loss that they experienced. As suggested by White (1974), coping has been interchangeably used with terms like 'mastery', 'defense' and 'adaptation'. In view of the multiple meaning of coping, Pearlin and Schooler (1978) provide a more detailed description by depicting coping as "*any response to external life strains that serves to prevent, avoid or control emotional distress*" (p.3). Drawing from their understanding of coping, coping within the context of this research is perceived as the WFG'08 volunteers' response to emotional strain caused by the loss of their WFG'08 volunteer role. In view of their experiences with role exit, the interviews with the WFG'08 sport event volunteers indicated a range of measures that were used to cope with experiences of role exit and to manage the concomitant negative emotions. These measures included a) *taking time out versus moving on,* b) *staying attached through volunteering and* c) *memory managemen*t.

Taking time out to recover appeared as a measure to cope with role exit during the imminent period after having being a WFG'08 sport event volunteer:

> "*I took the day off… I was overwhelmed. I missed the Games so much. I just needed some time for myself before going back to work." (Andrew, p. 9, l. 435)*

Karen who also took time off to recover from her role loss provided a more elaborated account:

> *"I found it difficult to pick up my life where I had left it… before the Game... I did the first day. I didn't really too much. I pretty much sat around and watched a bit of TV and read a few papers and had a bit of coffee and stuff and just thought 'Mhhh! I think I just slowly get back into my routine of dancing again on Thursdays' and stuff like that. I mean I did get back into it, but obviously not straight away. It took me a while to get used to the fact that my work as a volunteer at the Games was over and that things were back to normal." (Karen, p. 27, l. 1297-1302)*

In both cases, having to 'return to normal' and to adjust to the everydayness of their lives required space and time in order to manage the transition from the WFG'08 volunteer role to the role as ex-WFG'08 volunteer and the 'old' roles from which they stepped out for a while. For other volunteers the process of adjustment seemed less of an issue. For example, Edward and Karen recalled how they dealt with the fact that they were no longer sport event volunteers by moving on with life:

> *"Because I knew it was only temporary and that the event would be over after ten days and that you have to get on with the normal life and forget it. Plus I am married and our lives do not depend on things like that. We have other stuff to do. I am occupied. I live something out and then continue to do other things." (Edward, p.4, l. 172-176)*

> *"I didn't struggle. I just let go… because I've got so many other things that go at the moment anyway. So, no, maybe that's just me. I just do something, get on with it and then move on to another thing." (Karen, p. 10, l. 470-473)*

This measure of moving on was eventually adopted by Kara who after her initial period of recovery returned to everyday life:

> *"It's all over. It's all finished. And I am back doing the housework. I had to get on with all the normal day to day things. Things that you put aside but you haven't done. You have to catch up with things. You have to do your housework and*

*seeing your family and friends and everything else you have to do as a normal individual. Catching up with everything that has been neglected over these days." (Kara, p. 26, 1257-1283)*

The decision to stay involved with event volunteering emerged as a further activity to come to term with the exit from the sport event volunteer role. For example, Ann was grateful for her ongoing engagement with the Liverpool'08 volunteer programme, which was created in view of the status of Liverpool as the 2008 Capital of Culture that involved the staging of events in the period of leading up to and during 2008:

*"I am glad I was with the `08 because I had other things ready to look forward to. It was a shock when the Games came to an end but I knew that other things were going to come up so I knew I would still be in with it." (Ann, p. 12, l. 550-551)*

These measures of coping through adjustment relates to the work by Ebaugh (1988) who identifies the building of bridges between the role from which the individual is about to step out and the time that follows in order to allow the process of adjustment and re-establishing to occur. These bridges are "*in the area of jobs, friends, family, and hobbies*" (p.184). According to Ebaugh's study (1988), those individuals who had erected bridges before the leaving the previous role had less problems with dealing with the "vacuum stage" mentioned earlier. In the case of Ann, the building of bridges in the form of her engagement with the Liverpool '08 volunteer programme seems to allow her to come to terms with the exit from her WFG'08 volunteer role and the concomitant negative emotion whereas in the case of other interviewees such as Andrew and Karen, these bridges were not in place as such before their role exit. Similarly, no bridge was in place for Jane before leaving her role. She also struggled to come to terms with her exit from the WFG'08 volunteer role after the Games were over. However her new interest in volunteering that was sparked by her performance as WFG'08 volunteer seems to act a bridge towards staying involved with volunteering:

*"I had a feeling of loss. I thought 'Oh, it's finished now. Now what I am going to do?' I wish I had thought of that moment of anticlimax earlier. But that's when I thought 'Right, now I think about volunteering for someone else. What shall I do now?' Obviously the Olympics are coming, also the Paralympics, that's the one,*

*you know I very much would like to get involved in. So I thought 'Yeah, why not volunteer for that one. I can do that. I've done this, I can do that'. However, in the meantime I will look around and see if there are any volunteer opportunities in Liverpool. I really would like stay involved and volunteer for something that is happening soon." (*<u>Jane, p. 10, l. 436-440</u>*)*

Another measure how the interviewees managed their role exit was through memory management in the form of individual and collective recollection. These measures were informed by the volunteers' sense of nostalgia, i.e. those people undergoing the process of role exit tend recall and reflect on those moments and things that were memorable and precious to them (Ebaugh, 1988).

With regards to individual recollection, a couple of techniques were employed to store, manage and retrieve memories. For example, one activity that helped with the storage and later retrieval of memories was the taking of photographs during the WFG'08 and editing them afterwards:

*"I mean, there was just me and my camera. I obviously put it on self-time to get as much pictures as I could which I stuck online… onto facebook…. After the Games, I was editing the photos on the computer… making them all nice. And basically, putting my memories in and... you know, the whole things…finalising… making it stick in, making sure it stayed in my head, you know, the moments, the feelings, the pride, the passion… everything about that."(*<u>Andrew, p. 9, l. 437-441</u>*)*

*"I got lots of lovely memories. My daughter and I took millions of photographs which I can look at no. They help us to remember" (*<u>Karen, p. 24, l. 1200</u>*)*

In the case of Karen, the experiences were consciously stored in what she refers to as her 'bibliothek' (the German word for library) of memories that she can retrieve whenever she wants to:

*"There are just so many experiences to like put into my little book which is my brain… to put into my reference book of all things that I've seen and done being part of. Uhm, like my little library, my 'bibliothek' of memories. They are stored*

*there now. It's gone and it's over but they are stored there to recall them sometimes."* (<u>*Karen , p. 26, l. 1251-1256)*</u>

While these measures were undertaken individually, other interviewees appear to have made use of the collective memory by maintaining the social network that they established during their time as WFG'08 volunteers, i.e. they collectively reminiscence on their work as sport event volunteers at the WFG'08 and share their nostalgia. For example, Kara keeps in contact with the women she met during the Games which allows her to relive the memories of the Games together with others:

*"I meet with people I am still in contact with. One of the other girls that I worked with, she took millions of photographs. She's made DVDs so we are going to hers for dinner next week to watch the DVD. She made us all one each."* <u>*(Kara, p.20, l. 925-930)*</u>

Similarly, Karen maintains the social network that she established during the Games which allows her to think back to the Games together with others ex-WFG'08 volunteers:

*"I have become friends with the girl who I met at the Games and who lives close to my house. We sometimes go for a drink. When we've been out, we had a giggle. And 'Oh, I remember doing this and that' and 'Do you remember that one?'. I have lots of fun memories to talk about."* <u>*(Karen, p. 26, l. 1251-1256)*</u>

In the case of Edward, the sharing of nostalgia takes place on an ad hoc basis, i.e. his contacts with former fellow-sport event volunteers seem less structured. For example, he recalls the moment when he unexpectedly met one of the other volunteers in town:

*"I start to forget what it was like. When I was involved with the Games I was working with an older man. On the last day… he said 'Alright, I am going now. It is three o'clock'. He wanted to go because he was there since six o'clock as I was. And he said 'Alright then. See you when I see you again'. And not a long time ago, I was in a shop in Liverpool and he came in. He recognised me and said 'Oh, it's you! How you're getting on?' And we talked and the experience came back to us. It was great."* <u>*(Edward, p.3, l. 118-124)*</u>

Furthermore, a member of the Merseyside Firebrigade that Edward met during the Games goes to the same pub like him which allows them to occasionally refresh their memories:

> *"I keep seeing one of guys from the fire brigade who I met during the Games in my local pub. I was surprised when I came into the pub a few days after the Games and said 'Hi'. He said 'Oh! You were one of the volunteers. You were a volunteer at the Firefighters Games'. And we had a beer together. And I always see him and his friends when I go to the pub. We usually have a chat and sometimes we talk about the Games and what it was like to be there." (Edward, p.8, l. 351-357)*

With regards to coping with role exit, the manner in which the WFG'08 volunteers dealt with the end of their volunteer engagement may be better understood by referring to the literature on coping strategies of grieving. Coping styles are reflected in the model developed by Kuebler-Ross (1969) and the 'dual-process model of grief' by Stroebe and Stroebe (1995). While the former entails acceptance as a way to cope with loss, the latter explicitly illustrates the loss-oriented and restoration-oriented process and their oscillation between these processes as central tenet: The loss-oriented process refers to "*facing grief, confronting stimuli and thoughts associated with the loss*" (Archer, 1991:104) also referred to as "*grief –work*" (Stroebe and Stroebe, 1995:480)  which eventually results in the gradual detachment from a person or thing, i.e. it is the end-point of grieving (Freud, 1953 [1917]) by letting go. In contrast, the restoration-oriented part of the model refers to the person's attention to other aspects of life after the loss allowing the individual to move on and to being no longer concerned with the loss such as dealing with everyday life, engagement in new experiences, e.g. learning to try something new which may result in replacing what has been lost. The model proposes that in principal individuals move between these two processes but that the balance between the loss and the restoration-orientated process varies from person to person. Placing this model into the context of this research may help to understand how the sport event volunteers that participated in this study, managed their role exit and with it the role loss, e.g. some volunteers seemed to have been more engaged in the loss-oriented process than others before focusing on restoration. For instance, the accounts of Andrew who was so overwhelmed by the loss of the sport event volunteer role indicate that he spent a lot of energy on trying to make his memories stick by spending

the day after the end of the WFG'08 formatting photos that he took during the Games and placing them on Facebook to share with others. Similarly, Katherine needed a day to unwind and to get detached from her involvement in the WFG'08 before returning to her everyday life. In contrast, although they felt sad that the Games had come to an end, other volunteers seemed faster in moving from the experience of loss to the restructuring their life as it was before their Games by going back to other things that needed doing (e.g. Edward, Kara) or by trying to volunteer at a sporting event again in future, e.g. the Paralympics 2012 (Jane). Managing role loss by staying involved in volunteer work, e.g. Ann who has been heavily involved with the Liverpool '08 programme and Jane who decided to look for volunteer opportunities in future similar to the WFG'08, echoes the finding of coping styles by Glick *et al.* (1974) and Cook (1988) that suggest that individuals may manage their grief by staying distracted through hobbies and work.

While these processes may be undertaken individually, coping can be also a collective practice: as suggested by Aiken (2001), the process of recovery from a loss can be positively influenced by sharing the grief with others, e.g. family, friends and colleagues which are referred to by Pearlin and Schooler (1978) as social coping resources that allow the developing of coping repertoires. In the context of the loss of the sport event volunteer role, the post-event volunteer party, where the staging of the event is celebrated and the volunteers share with each other their feelings of farewell and memories of their volunteer engagement may serve the purpose of a collective coping practice. In reference to the account of Andrew on feeling lonely and left alone with his negative emotions, being provided with an opportunity to talk to another volunteer may have helped him to feel less lonely:

> "*I would say I was tempted to have a silent cry. I was just looking for another person in a yellow shirt, just to say 'Hello'… just to say, you know, 'Are you feeling the same?' but there was no one. I tell you it was very lonely, considering you've been talking to everyone." (Andrew, p.10, l. 438-441)*

Gallagher *et al.* (1989) describe cognitive coping strategies such as reviewing past memories, e.g. by looking at photos or sharing stories and memories related to what has been lost. This collective sharing of memories emerges from the accounts of Edward, Karen and Kara who describe remembering their engagement in the WFG'08

when meeting other ex-sport event volunteers. This coping strategy is referred to by McClowry *et al.* (1987) as "*keeping the connection*" (p.365) and by Klass *et al.* (1996) as "*continuing bonds*" (p.5) with what has been lost which can be extended to not only entail maintaining vivid memories and stories but also to keep contact to people that are part of what Littlewood (1993:82) refers to as "*mourning group*", i.e. people who shared the relationship related to who or what has been lost. Similarly, Carter and Cook (1995) perceive the continuity of friendships and acquaintances as a key factor of adjustment to role retirement. In the case of the WFG'08 volunteer such as Katherine who is still in touch with group of ladies that she met during the Games and with whom she recalls her time at the Games when they meet, maintaining the social network with other ex-volunteers may be seen as a form of this strategy.

**11.4 Revisited: the WFG'08 volunteer as the bereaved**

Entering the world of lived experience of role exit and the palette of emotions felt by the sport event volunteers through the interviewees' accounts resulted in the image of the sport event volunteer as a bereaved person who had experienced a loss being repeatedly conjured up in my mind. This was enforced by one research participant referring to bereavement during the interview:

> *"There was a sense of … a slight sense of bereavement... in the sense of ... you are leaving a place where you got to know some people. Even though it's only in a quite superficial way, even if it is just like 'Hi' and that sort of thing, they know your face and they maybe know your name, but that doesn't matter. It is that friendly face thing that you leave behind." (Dan, p.9, l. 446-450)*

The loss occurred through the research participants' departure from their role as WFG'08 volunteers. Whilst for some interviewees role exit was not issue, for others such as Andrew and Karen, the loss of their role to which they seemed to have been very attached to, came across as a rather dramatic experience. Like a bereaved person that has experienced a personal loss, they underwent the process of grieving. At first glance, the idea of grieving might seem out of place as it may appear as being a too strong concept to be used in the context of sport event volunteering. However, the range of negative emotions described by the interviewees such as feeling sad, feeling lost etc. explored earlier in this chapter reflect that they felt pain and suffering following the loss of their role as sport event volunteer at the WFG'08. Even though the intensity

of emotions and feelings seemed to vary from one interviewee to another, the application of the term 'grief' to the situation of the exit from the sport event volunteer subject seems hereby justifiable. According to the literature (e.g. Archer, 1991, Golding, 1991, Parkes, 1996, Corr *et al.*, 1997), the process of grieving is closely linked to and an inevitable part of bereavement. Drawing from the work on grieving by Raphael (1983), grief can be understood as "*the pain and suffering experienced after a loss*" (p.20). In comparison, Frude (1990) provides two clinical perceptions of grief that derive from the nature of the grief process: following the depression model, grief can be perceived as "*a form of depression following the loss of an important attachment*" (p.343) whereas it can also be related to stress theories that describe grief as "*the stress response to bereavement*" (p.344). Last but not least, a more poetic understanding of grief is provided by Parkes (1996) who describes it as "*the price we pay for love, the cost of commitment*" (p.6). In either case, grief is perceived as the reaction to bereavement. As suggested by Snell (2001), often no distinction is made between grief and mourning - instead these two terms tend to be used interchangeably, with mourning relating both to the emotions and behaviour in the form of rituals that are undertaken to express grief.

Early research on an individual's grieving process has been drawing from Bowlby's attachment theory (1958, 1969) which maintains that people develop many different attachments to persons, objects and places throughout their lives which provides them a sense of belonging that allows them to feeling secure as they know that they have a place in the world and a sense of control over their life. These attachments that serves the purpose of maintain relationships, are cut when a loss occurs leaving a person with a reason to grief. However, the degree of a person's suffering from the loss is subject to variation as it is depending on the level of efforts and emotions that a person invested into their attachments (Parkes, 1997) which explains the differences in responses by the interviewees regarding their lived experience with exit from their WFG'08 roles. Based on this theory, Bowlby (1958, 1969) identifies the response to loss through three stages: protest in the form of a person's feeling of anxiety over being separated from something or someone close, despair expressed through grief and mourning and detachment. Elaborating his own theory, Bowlby developed the model '*work of grief*' that identifies four progressive and sometimes overlapping phases of grief which are a) numbness, also referred to as inner emptiness; b) yearning, searching and anger; c) disorganisation and despair which entails a sense of uncertainty, aimlessness as well as apathy and d) reorganisation. Although other stage theories followed, the key stages

of Bowlby's work are more or less inherent: for example, Averill (1968) categorizes shock, despair and recovery as the three stages of grief. In comparison, the model provided by Kuebler-Ross (1969) seems more elaborated as it breaks up the shock and despair phase resulting in five stages of grief which are denial, anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance. Finding parallels between the findings of his research and Bowlby's studies, Parkes (1972) describes the stages of grief as response to loss as numbness, pining, i.e. yearning, depression and recovery.

The interview accounts failed to establish a parallel between the lived experience of role exit and shock as identified as the first stage of grief by the work by Averill (1968) and Kuebler-Ross (1969). However, there seems to be a relation to numbness inherent in the models by Bowlby (1960) and Parkes (1972): for example Andrew reported feeling 'empty'. Although the accounts of the interviewees varied in terms of depth and extent of description, they appeared to have more or less passed through the stage of disorganization and despair in terms of not knowing what to do with themselves after the WFG'08 were over as well as the stage of depression, e.g. feeling sad and recovery. Depending on the individual's extent of deprivation generated by the role loss and they personality, the degree of intensity of negative feelings differed which corresponds to the proposition that the severity of grief is variable, i.e. some people may experience a stronger sense of grief than others (Archer, 1999; Aiken, 2001), making grief a "*non-unitary phenomenon*" (Parkes, 1988: 242).

In the context of bereavement, funerals serves as social rituals that allow those left behind to confront, face and accept the loss of a loved one, i.e. they are provided with closure (Imber-Black, 1991, Aiken, 2001). In the case of an ambiguous loss where the bereaved have no physical evidence that a person has passed away, those left behind may lack a sense of closure in terms of saying good-bye in the form of a burial ceremony (Boss, 1991). Referring these aspects to the context of sport event volunteering, a volunteer party at the end of WFG'08 may be perceived as a social ritual of bidding farewell to a people's ephemeral role that they had performed and lived through over a short stretch of time during which they may developed a role attachment of varying intensity. Staying the context of bereavement, the interpretation of end-of-Games festivities centre around the volunteers would have allowed the volunteers to collectively share their position as bereaved individuals that grief about and together mourn the end of the Games, and to collectively move towards the new identity, e.g. being an ex- WFG'08 volunteer that has to return to the everydayness of his/her life. With regards to the management of the memories at the post-event stage, the

metaphor of the WFG'08 volunteer as the bereaved continuous to stick in the mind: similar to the situation where a person lost a loved one, nostalgia is experienced and may be collectively shared by looking at old photos and reliving the past through the use of anecdotes and stories (Parkes, 1988).

## 11.5 Conclusion

This chapter provided insights into sport event volunteers' lived experience of their role exit in terms of the emotional as well as managerial perspective: whilst the overarching theme that depicts the WFG'08 volunteer as The Bereaved and the range of sub-themes have highlighted how the volunteers felt during the role exit stage, it also highlights how the volunteers came to terms with this final stage of their role performance. Given the paucity of research on role exit within the context of event volunteering in general and sport event volunteering in particular, this chapter addresses this void in the body of knowledge. Interestingly, the research findings study showed no parallels to the four-stages-model of role exit developed by Ebaugh (1988) consisting of a) first doubts b) seeking alternatives c) turning points in form events that trigger the decision to leave the role and d) creating an ex-role which raises the question how the role exit from ephemeral roles like sport event volunteering varies from exits from central roles. Using the interpretation of sport event volunteers as bereaved beings that suffered and grieve the loss of their role fulfilled the purpose of this chapter which was to explore and to understand how the volunteers experienced the departure from their volunteer role and to establish why they felt the way and managed the role exit in the way they did. It needs to be stressed that the interpretation of the lived experience of exit from the sport event volunteer as bereavement is a subjective construct and does not serve the purpose to convince the reader that this interpretation is the only one valid. Furthermore, in view of the absence of studies on role exit within the context of event and sport event volunteering, themes that emerged from the analysis of the data were discussed in light to other literature on role exit loss and bereavement.

# CHAPTER TWELVE

## The WFG'08 volunteer as sojourner in a liminal zone

*For we are strangers before thee, and sojourners, as were all our fathers: our days on the earth are a shadow, and there is none abiding"*

Chronicle I, *The Holy Bible* (1999, 29:15)

### 12.0 Introduction

This chapter re-visits the theme of the first loop which depicts the World Firefighters Games 2008 (WFG'08) volunteer as sojourner in a liminal zone and elaborates and discusses the fittingness of the term to the WFG'08 context.

### 12.1 The WFG'08 volunteer as sojourner in a liminal zone

As outlined in Chapter Six, sojourners are depicted by the literature as temporary rather than permanent residents in a place. Relating this metaphor to the context of sport event volunteering the volunteer event volunteer temporarily enters the role of a helper at sporting events which themselves are of "*limited time duration; that is they are not continuous*" (Dimmock and Tiyce, 2001:356). By being temporally and spatially displaced, they enter a 'liminal/liminoid zone' which in the case of the research respondents refers to the sport event environment including the volunteer role that the individual has temporarily performed and which took him/her to the specific geographical areas in which he/she enacts the volunteer role. Consequently, the sport event volunteer can be seen as being temporarily suspended from his/her everyday-reality. Besides being faced with less familiar surroundings such as the event site/s and venue/s, the volunteer is, depending on the nature of event, also confronted with a new social environment, i.e. depending on their task, some volunteers worked with a volunteers, event managers and volunteer coordinators that they had had not worked with before, and meet different event competitor, making him in fact a potential stranger. Whilst some events are staged in one location and one venue only, others involve several cities within the host country, e.g. the FIFA World Cup, and/or entail a number of different venues within the host city, e.g. the Commonwealth Games. Depending on his/her level and kind of volunteer activity and type of sporting event, the sport event volunteer may thus be required to travel to different venues, thus facing

repeatedly a new environment. Within the context of the WFG'08, all the volunteers that participated in the event, were from Liverpool and surrounding area such as Cheshire and the Wirral and were to some extent familiar with the city and the location of the Arena. Thus, it could be argued that they encountered a familiar rather than a new environment. In reference to the physical environment this was indeed the case. However, in view of the socioscape of the WFG'08 that the volunteers encountered and in which they were surrounded by strangers on a daily basis, the concept of the volunteers entering an unfamiliar environment seems fitting. Consequently, the features of the 'liminal zone' in which the WFG'08 volunteers sojourned are extended by including not only the aspect of time and physical or geographical space but also a different social environment. As the WFG'08 'socioscape' was subject to change as the interaction between members of the various parties are unique and never the same and the processes that take place in the 'socioscape' are not static but in a constant flux (Albrow, 1997), the sport event volunteers were required to adjust on a daily if not on an hourly basis depending on the nature and location of this duties: for example, for two days Karen was helping out at the Toughest Firefighter Alive Tournament in Liverpool City Centre working together with different people whilst on another day she found herself on the beach in Hoylake to help out at the beach rugby contest where she was working with another group of volunteers and met 'new' event competitors. Consequently, entering the liminal zone of the WFG'08 involved a sense of 'not knowing what to expect' – they entered the liminal zone of the WFG'08 as 'adventure tourists': taken from their world of everydayness and entering a zone of 'un-everydayness', the sport event volunteer became the 'adventure tourist' who was to explore "*the hidden and unknown*" (Weber, 2001:363) in the form of enacting a new or unfamiliar role. The stage of entering this liminal world was accompanied by the volunteer's expectation of structure in the form of task allocation, a sense of role unpreparedness as well as lack of role allocation and role clarity. As a result, some research respondents experienced negative emotions such as role anxiety and apprehension, similar to sojourners who are likely to experience "*a sense of cultural estrangement and alienation*" (Chirkov *et al.*, 2005:426) due to encountering an unfamiliar environment. The encounter with liminality of the WFG'08 in terms of the volunteer role was defined by what is referred to by Fox (1999) as "*decision-making moments where the individual makes choices*" (p.1) in terms of his/her management of the WFG'08 volunteer role: as suggested by interview findings some of the volunteers

took the initiative and managed their role by adopting a job-crafting or bricolage approach towards their tasks and duties, resulting in role-crafting.

Whilst residing in the liminal zone of the WFG'08 role, the volunteers established new relationships with other people, members of their counter-roles. The process of encountering the "socioscape" of the WFG'08 and establishing a sense of relatedness with the 'other' was informed by aspects relating to 'care-giving', 'care-taking', 'care-seeking' and 'care-receiving' as outlined in chapter Eight. Furthermore, drawing a parallel to Turner (1969) whose work includes the concept of ritual which he describes as a liminal process as "*it takes its participants across a 'limen' or threshold, from one status or identity to another*" (p.93) describes how ritual results in the participants' experience of transformation, the WFG'08 volunteers who took part in the research experienced a positive sense of change, a temporary, almost therapeutic transformation of self promoting a feeling of well-being, by being immersed in their role. This finding and the accounts of how the volunteers engaged with other actors in the WFG'08 socioscape and their counter-roles defy the perspective of sojourners by Siu (1952) who describes a sojourner as a stranger in a foreign country who fails to assimilate. Instead, following the research participants accounts, the WFG'08 volunteers seem to have experienced a sense of fusion with other actors within the liminal zone of the sport event, especially with the members of the volunteer workforce who shared similar characteristics, such as the attitude to help make the event a success.

Reflecting the temporary nature of sojourning, the volunteers departed from the liminal world of the WFG'08 when their role enactment came to end which for most interviewees took place with the ending of the event whilst for others, such as Sara, the role exit occurred earlier due to unforeseen personal circumstances. For some interviewees this exit came was a painful experience and was accompanied by feelings of loss and mourning as they found themselves suddenly being back in the mundane world of everydayness, whilst for others the transition to normality was not an issue. Referring to the concept of 'culture shock' that is the outcome of the individual getting used and settling into new cultural environments (David, 1971; Oberg, 2006), the volunteers' lived experience of exiting the WFG'08 volunteer role can to some extent be seen as a 'reversed culture shock' in the form of volunteers having to re-adjust to the everydayness of their life. As suggested by Oberg (2006), culture shock is "*precipitated by the anxiety that results from losing our familiar signs and symbols of social intercourse... as all the familiar cues are removed...he or she is like a fish out of the water*" (p.142). It may be argued d that the use of the term 'culture shock' is

inappropriate: for example, Hottola (2004) calls for the use of the term for "*situations of genuine emotions*" (p.452) only and that it should not be interpreted as cultural confusion whilst Oberg (2006) relates culture shock to individuals who leave their home environment to live in another culture. However, the interpretation of the experience of volunteers' sojourning in the liminal zone of the WFG'08 as culture-shock can be defended as the exit from the role and the volunteerscape was experienced as sudden by some volunteers like Andrew and Karen who had embraced the volunteer role and struggled with the re-adjustment to 'normality', i.e. their every-day life and had to emotionally and mentally detach themselves from the WFG'08 volunteer role. This finding relates to the concept of 'reverse culture shock' that is often experienced by sojourners who return to familiar environment, such as tourists who after an enjoyable holiday experience a sense of strangeness and unhappiness when they first come home or return to work (Feyerabend, 1997 cited by Gmelch, 2004:28).

**12.2 Conclusion**

This chapter has outlined the overarching theme of the researcher that depicts the WFG'08 volunteer as a sojourner in a liminal zone that lies outside the individual's 'everydayness'. This interpretation adds to the existing knowledge of and perspectives on sport event volunteering as it not only highlights the temporary and spatial displacement of the individual into a liminal world but also the concomitant implications this displacement generates for the individual in terms of how she/he experiences and manages this phenomenon. Consequently, these findings challenge researchers and practitioners in the field of sport event volunteering to move beyond perceiving sport event volunteering just as another type of volunteering or a mere volunteer activity and to acknowledge that a) sport event volunteering facilitates a sense of well-being through a new or remembered sense of self and consequently can be used as a therapeutic measure or tool; b) the preparation of the individual prior to entering the volunteer work is vital for ensuring a positive experience and successful management of the allocated task; c) the management of the volunteers requires consideration to what extent the performance of the volunteer role is flexible and if role-crafting through the volunteer is desirable or not and d) the individual's exit of from the liminal zone of sport event volunteering can be subject to negative experiences in the form of loss and re-versed role-shock and needs to be prepared and managed by organiser of events that require volunteers for a longer period of time. Furthermore, rather than being concerned with the 'before-and-after' experience of sport event volunteering that is reflected in large

amount of studies on motivation and satisfaction of sport event volunteers and their commitment to volunteering in future (see Table 1), the interpretation of WFG'08 volunteer as sojourners provides a holistic perspective that incorporates the pre-event, event and post-event stage of sport event volunteering.

**CHAPTER THIRTEEN**

**Evaluation of the research**

*"We have to recognise that there is no such thing as a single correct view of any subject under study but that there are many correct views, each requiring its own style of representation"*

White (1978:47)

**13.0 Introduction**

Beginning with an outline of the comparison of the research process with looking through the kaleidoscope, this chapter provides an assessment of the study's contribution to knowledge and of its strengths and weaknesses.

**13.1 Looking through the kaleidoscope**

Conducting the interviews and analysing the data was very much like looking through the kaleidoscope. The term 'kaleidoscope' derives from the Greek words 'kalos' (beautiful), 'eidos' (figure) and 'skopeo' (gaze) (Allen, 1991) and refers to an optical device – the kaleidoscope - that was developed by Scottish scientist Sir David Brewster in 1816 (Goodman, 2004). The optical phenomenon of a kaleidoscope is based on reflections of the content of the scope's object chamber such as pieces of coloured glass, by two or more mirrors that are set in specific angles (Mish, 1990). With every turn of the kaleidoscope the coloured pieces move which conjures new reflected image (Martin-Smith. 2005), thus creating "*an endless variety of patterns*" (ibid, p.656). The kaleidoscope and its diversity of reflections it conjures, has been used as a metaphor by a number of researchers: for example, in her study on menopause, Woods (1994) proposes a kaleidoscopic approach that brings together the perspectives of women who experienced menopause with the viewpoint of scientists and clinicians thus producing *"an intersection and overlap of different lenses*" (p.241). Fitzpatrick and Vangelisti (2001) developed a kaleidoscopic model of health communication that depicts the dynamic interrelationship between health and different influencing factors as well as portrays the overlapping nature of health communication processes. Reflecting the features of a kaleidoscope, the kaleidoscopic model views health communications as*" changing, complex, teeming and dynamic. Conditions continually change, even within*

*the same person, therefore experiences are reconfigured with every spin of the dial*' (ibid:507). In their work on gender, Spade and Valentine (2008) use the kaleidoscope metaphor as a tool to study different aspects that shape and influence gender-related issues such as race, ethnicity, social class and disability.

The decision to use the metaphor of kaleidoscope for this thesis derived from the initial impression of the data that was collected after the first interviews and from re-reading the transcribed interview transcripts. Although the research respondents shared a history of having been a World Firefighters Games 2008 (WFG'08) volunteer, each interview provided me with an individual account of the experience of having lived through the role of a sport event volunteer at the WFG'08. Even though the same key questions were asked what it was like to experience the different stages of the role enactment process, each account differed in varying degrees from the other, providing me with new perspectives and angles. Thus, it was very much like gazing through a kaleidoscope: each interview represented a new twist, providing me with a new shape, a new 'gestalt', a new vision on what it was like to be a sport event volunteer at that particular event, what it was like to sojourn in that role and the socioscape of the Games. Applying the metaphor of kaleidoscope, the stages of role entry, role enactment and role exit act as mirrors whilst the spaces between the mirrors are uniquely filled by each interviewee's account of their lived experience which were interpreted using the different role-perspectives. An important implication that derives from using the kaleidoscope-metaphor is the issue of 'fittingness'. If each account varied more or less from another and provided me with a new perspective, how can findings be collated and collectively discussed? The challenge for me as a researcher emerged from the need to respect the unique beauty of the pattern that emerged with each turn of the kaleidoscope, i.e. the uniqueness of the lived experience of each of the interviewees. Even though, they shared the same characteristics of having been a WFG'08 volunteer and maybe even underwent similar experiences or encountered comparable situations, their narratives was never the same resulting in a colourful spectrum of personal memories. Consequently, both the similarities as well as the differences between the research participants' narratives had to be observed.

## 13.2 Strengths and weaknesses of the study

A number of both strengths and weaknesses derive from this study based on the approaches to theory, methodology and analysis. The first strength lies in the contribution of the thesis to the existing knowledge about event volunteering in general and sport event volunteering in particular: reviewing the model by Omoto and Snyder (2002) (Table 1), the thesis contributes to the very limited knowledge about sport event volunteering at the experiential level and has unveiled a palette of potential future research possibilities which will be outlined in greater detail in the conclusion chapter. In reference to the research agenda for future event studies provided by Getz (2008) in which he identified the planned event experience and assignment of meaning as a potential research avenue, it is argued that this study has to some extent addressed this research area via the lived experience of the sport event volunteers who are event participants in their own right (ibid).

Furthermore, the thesis provides a unique theoretical contribution by approaching the lived experiences of sport event volunteering from various role-theoretical angles and consequently applying various elements and concepts from the different role-theoretical perspectives to the concepts of this form of event volunteering: new insights into the relationship between the volunteers and others and how the volunteers managed their allocated tasks and duties were provided. Furthermore, a wide palette of specific attributes of the sport event volunteer experiences were identified at the pre-event, event, and post-event stages of sport event volunteering e.g. in terms of feelings of uncertainty, unpreparedness, personal transformation and well-being, sadness and loss, etc. As the study draws from the three perspectives on role - namely social structuralism, symbolic interactionism and the dramaturgical perspective - the extent of the theoretical perspectives linking sport event volunteering with role-related elements from sociology, social psychology and theatre is rather immense. The existing body of knowledge is further enriched by a definition of sport event volunteering. Although it might be argued that this measure has resulted in yet another volunteering definition, the value of this definition emerges from the fact that to date there is no specific definition that relates volunteering to the event context. Instead, studies either rely on the reader to have prior knowledge and understanding of volunteering or depend on generic definitions and consequently ignore the features of event that impact on the how and when volunteering can be carried out.

Contributions to existing methodological approaches derive from both the application of Omoto and Snyder's volunteer process model and the adoption and application of Gadamer's hermeneutic phenomenological approach to the research context of sport event volunteering which to date seems to be still dominated by studies of quantitative nature: adapting the model of Omoto and Snyder (2002) to the context of this research has resulted in a useful future tool to generate a structured overview of the different areas in which research on sport event volunteering has been carried in the past and to identify potential research areas contributing to the decision to focus on the lived experience of sport event volunteers in this study. Choosing a hermeneutic phenomenological approach in general and the research philosophy advocated by Gadamer addresses the call by Getz (2008) to make phenomenological studies "*a top priority in event studies, particularly for gaining theoretical understanding of immediate conscious experience*" (p.372). A further contribution which can also been seen as a major strength of this research emerges from the consistent application of the hermeneutic circle: past studies that have adopted a hermeneutic phenomenological approach and have limited the use of the hermeneutic circle to the data collection process and the data analysis process and relied on presenting themes in a linear manner, (e.g. Smith, 1998; Wise, 2002; Volkmann and Zgagacz, 2004; Lawler and Sinclair, 2006), the engagement with the hermeneutic circle in this thesis has formed the interpretation and the presentation of the data in the form of the 'double-loop' approach which observes the circular development of themes and subthemes. Consequently, the 'double-loop' approach that has been developed in this study is as a novel approach which acknowledges and fully reflects the movement of the hermeneutic circle by establishing a link between the 'whole' and its 'parts' and vice versa.

Whilst the hermeneutic phenomenological approach with its underlying philosophy about truth, knowledge and understanding of the world was appropriate to address the overall research focus which rested on exploring the lived experiences of sport event volunteers, the fact that I had to become a WFG'08 volunteer myself in order to recruit my research sample triggers the question why I did not choose an ethnographic approach in the first place. As findings from secondary research highlighted a very tight fit between the research question and the chosen research approach the decision not to choose this method and my unfamiliarity with ethnography resulted in not changing my research methodology. In hindsight and in view of the arguments provided by Holloway

*et al.* (2010) who explore the integration of ethnography to investigate event participant's experiences this could have provided an even deeper insight into what it is like to be a WFG'08 volunteer. Also, this approach would have eased the difficult process of recruiting research participants as "*the researcher can be spontaneous in terms of when and what type of data is collected*" (ibid, p.76). Consequently the limitation that derives from time gap between the WFG'08 volunteers' engagement in and performance of their actual volunteer role and interviews would not have been an issue: as suggested by Baddeley *et al.* (1984) and Russell (1999) the length of passed time between the actual encounter of a phenomenon and the point of remembering impacts on people's ability to recall events. In view of this study, research was carried out in the first week of October 2008, two months after the beginning of the WFG'08 on 06th August 2008. Consequently, the interviewees' recall of their lived experiences could have been inaccurate and subject to distortion. This pitfall was anticipated prior to collecting primary data and successfully managed by employing memory aids such as photographs and myself wearing of the WFG'08 volunteer T-Shirt during each interview - a such the successful management of the research respondents' memory recall can be seen as a strength.

In terms of my active role as a researcher in the study that has been informed and underpinned by the hermeneutic interpretative approach based on the work by Gadamer, the study has been developed and shaped through my interpretation of the relevant literature and the collected data. As such I am contributing only my understanding of the lived experiences of the WFG'08 volunteers to the body of knowledge. In view of the fact that I had been working as WFG'08 volunteer at the Games myself in order to recruit my research sample and had gone through the event volunteer stages myself, and that I had come across some of the interviewees during my work as a volunteer, the analysis and interpretation of the findings is likely to have influenced and shaped my own lived experiences of the WFG'08 volunteer role. Whilst this observation can be interpreted as another weakness of the study, it is neutralised by the fact that the adopted research philosophy in the form of interpretative/hermeneutic phenomenology accommodates this aspect rather than excludes it as it is the case in the school of 'pure' phenomenology that is advocated by Husserl and characterised by the process of bracketing. A potential pitfall that emerges from the researcher's engagement in the research process is that of mismanaging the representation of the research respondents' voices in the final text which may result in

the muffling or muting of the voices of the research respondents (Fine *et al.*, 2000). Sparkes (2002) argues that both political and moral aspects emerge from decisions about "*whose voices are included in the text, however they are given weight, interpreted, prioritized, and juxtaposed*" (p.19) as they have implications for "*how readable the text is and for how the people it portrays are 'read' and understood*" (ibid). The presentation of data seems to be subject to conflicting viewpoints: whilst Gergen and Gergen (2000) encourage researchers to break with traditions and "*avoid impulses towards elimination, the rage to order and the desire for unity and singularity*" (p.1042-1043), Sparkes (2000) stresses the need for a selection process as trying to include all voices "*would threaten to consume the individual story*" resulting in what Smith (1993) refers to as "*a commodified cacophony*" (p.395) that results from integrating too many interviewees' voices in the text. In view of the challenge of presenting the lived experiences of the WFG'08 volunteers in the final text whilst incorporating my own voice as the researcher who interprets and analyses the data in support of relevant literature, they study has achieved a good balance - not only between the interviewees' voices in the text and my authorship over the research findings but also between the interviewees' accounts.

With regards to the interpretation of the data, adopting the kaleidoscope-approach was not without potential implications for the study: comparing the kaleidoscope-concept with other optical devices, Paliwoda and Slater (2007) argue that although the kaleidoscope produces a variety of constantly changing images and pattern, researchers "*never get deeper or beyond the images presented to us as they are without any order or any form of prioritisation*" (ibid, p.378). In contrast, the telescope provides an opportunity to "*see farther and more clearly into the distance*" (p.378) whilst the microscope allows a much deeper investigation of "*what is immediately before us*" (p.378). Relating their critical evaluation to the context of this study, their argument seems valid as having chosen the lived experiences of the WFG'08 as a research focus has indeed generated new perspectives on sport event volunteering as well as potential research angles that can be explored in future and which will be outlined in greater details in the conclusion chapter. However, at the same time the various images that looking through the lens has conjured in the form of the different lived experiences of the WFG'08 volunteers have not just been accepted as such - instead, the interpretation of the findings were guided by the different approaches towards the role theory and the analysis of the data was informed by relevant secondary research. Using

the comparison by Paliwoda and Slater (2007), it can consequently be argued that gazing through the kaleidoscope was followed by examining the interviewee's accounts in greater detail through a microscopic lens.

As suggested by Holroyd (2007) "*it is important to recognize that all resulting understanding will never be complete as some experiences will remain undiscovered*!" (p.1). This quote highlights that one of the limitations of the thesis derives in fact from its overall aim that is concerned with promoting the understanding of sport event volunteering. Due to the nature of research topic in terms of the my position as researcher having to rely on the interviewee to access and recalled his/her lived experiences of the WFG'08, the reliance on the research participants to self-select which resulted in a limited number of interviewees, the findings of the study does not presume the totality of neither the interviewees' nor all the WFG'08 volunteers experiences. Furthermore, taking into consideration that events are unique by nature (Getz, 2008) and thus lend themselves mainly for a case study approach, research findings are restricted to chosen context, i.e. the WFG'08 as selected sporting event, only. Consequently, the insights gained and conclusions drawn from the lived experiences of the WFG'08 volunteers cannot be generalised and applied to the context of other sport events. On the other hand, the research provides a foundation for future comparative research.

## 13.4 Conclusion

This chapter has outlined my reasons for using the kaleidoscope metaphor as a title for this research. It also has critical evaluated the thesis in terms of its contribution to existing theoretical, methodological and analytical approaches highlighting the strengths and weaknesses of the research. Furthermore, it outlined a brief reflection of my personal experience of the research process.

# CHAPTER FOURTEEN

## Conclusion

### 14.0 Introduction

The conclusion chapter evaluates the contribution to knowledge further by referring to the aim and objectives of the study and outlines the implications and recommendations for future research. Furthermore, it provides a personal reflection on the process and experience of undertaking doctoral research.

### 13.1 Revisited: the research question

The thesis set out to explore the lived experience of sport event volunteering from a role perspective in order to contribute to a better understanding of this form of volunteering. In order to achieve this aim, a working definition of sport event volunteering was developed which did not only allow me as a researcher to have a clearer idea about this type of volunteering but also can be perceived as a contribution to the existing body of knowledge about event volunteering as outlined in the previous section. Secondly, the study aimed to discover and critically evaluate the meanings that sport event volunteers attach to their volunteer role and how they make sense of their role as helpers involved in staging large sporting events. A wide range of themes were identified as part of the data collection and interpretation process which covered the different stages of the role performance period, name role entry, role enactment and role exit, analysed and discussed in support of relevant literature consequently addressing this second objective. Thirdly, the study was concerned with the critical synthesis of how the individuals managed their volunteer role. As suggested by the research findings the management of the World Firefighters Games 2008 (WFG'08) volunteer role was subject to 'job crafting' relating to bricolage rather than enacting the role by strictly following a script.

### 13.2 Implications and recommendations for future research

The richness of the collected data reflected in a large number of themes and subthemes has resulted in a numerous research avenues and perspectives that can be explored in future which can concentrate on event volunteering in general or sport event volunteering in particular, e.g. the perspective as sport event volunteers as consumers of the event experience could be adopted tapping into the discipline of consumer

behaviour. Consequently an experiential approach towards defining sport event volunteering could be developed. Furthermore, a sociological focus could be pursued in future in terms of exploring the social process such as the socialisation process that occurs during sport event volunteering.

In view of the role enactment stage, a wide range of future research possibilities emerge: drawing from the work of Appadurai (1990) who developed a range of scapes', the concept of a 'volunteerscape' that reflects the key components and actors of the volunteer world in general and of the sport event volunteering in particular, could be developed.

Also instead of approaching research from volunteer's point of view, the potential research topic could be approached by the perspectives of the event organisers and/or volunteer coordinators, e.g. building on the work by Shaw (2009) their lived experiences of recruiting, training and managing sport event volunteers could be explored. Similarly, the experience of event participants/ visitors of their interaction with sport event volunteers could be subject to research. In view of past studies on multiple role performance and its impact on the role occupant's health (e.g. Thoits 1986, Voydanoff and Donnelly, 1999; Marks *et al.*, 2001) future research could explicitly focus on the how the sport event volunteer role fits into the volunteer's role repertoire and how it impacts on the volunteer's physical and psychological well-being. Furthermore, with regards to the work by Kirchmeyer (1993), exploring the positive spillover-effects from the performance of others roles, e.g. parenting and recreation, on sport event volunteering represented another research avenue. A further concern could be the aspect of 'trade-offs', i.e. sacrifices of home or work life (Milkie and Petola, 1999) in relation to sport event volunteering and vice versa.

Studies on organizational management have explored the value and importance of creativity in the work place: for example Amabile (1988), Kanter (1988) Devanna and Tichy (1990) and Shalley (1995) have recognized the positive link between employees' creative performance and the organizations' advantage over competitors. In contrast, very little seems to be known about the value of volunteers' creativity for the organization in general and for event organizations in particular. Thus exploring the impact of volunteer behaviour in terms of role management measures on the event visitor's experience represents an area for further research. Future studies could also adopt a human resource perspective by exploring the desirability of volunteer's self-

managerial measures in terms of self-empowerment and self-leadership from both an event organisers and volunteer perspective. Drawing from the work by Deci *et al.* (1989) and Scott and Bruce (1994) on employee-supervisor relationships, such a research focus could be extended towards an investigation of supervisor management styles and how sport event volunteers can be effectively managed.

Furthermore, the need for further research on trust within the context of sport event volunteering lends itself as future research area, for example based on the work by Parasuraman *et al.* (1985) that view trust a crucial requirement for the development of service relationships, trust could be explored from Rousseau *et al.*'s (1998) multi-level perspectives approach, e.g. from the point of view of the volunteers, the event participants and the event organisers which reflects multi-level perspectives. Such a study could accommodate a multi-dimensional focus on the antecedents of trustworthiness within the event volunteer context.

Another research option emerges from the event organisers' risk of losing volunteers who by definition are unpaid helpers, during the WFG Games due to dissatisfaction with their volunteer experience which was the case at the 1996 Olympic Games (Van der Wagen, 2004). This raises the questions how low or high the initial trust of the event organisers in the event volunteer is. Furthermore, in view of the work by Sheppard and Sherman (1998) that is based on Fiske's (1990) studies of human relationships and explores the nature and depth of interdependence in relationships, the form and depths of relationships between event organisers and the volunteers could be researched.

In view of the role exit stage, future studies could be concerned with the role of the event organizer in general and the event coordinator in particular in assisting volunteers with this final stage of their role enactment. As the generic body of knowledge on role exit still seems to be dominated by the work of Ebaugh (1988) that is concerned with actors' disengagement from a major role, there is space for studies on role exit from ephemeral roles such as sport event volunteering. For example, using the models by Ebaugh (1988) and Drahota and Eitzen (1998), a systematic study could be carried out that intends to explore the stages and processes and their experiential dimensions within the context of sport event volunteering. Drawing from the four-stage model by Watkins (1990), a role exit model of event volunteering could be developed that incorporates the stages of role shock, recovery, consolidation and mastery.

In addition, the role exit coping strategies of sport event volunteers could be researched in more depth. An empirical approach towards research on role loss from a bereavement perspective could also be undertaken by measuring the role-loss emotions by making use of past studies on the measures of grief, e.g. the grief reaction inventory by Hogan (1988) and the rating-scale by Caserta *et al.* (1990).

With regards to the methodological approach towards exploring the experiential dimension of sport event volunteering from an ethnographic approach outlined in the previous chapter would allow a deeper insider perspective into the social reality of sport event volunteering.

## 14.3 Personal reflection - the PhD process as a journey of discovery

Reflecting on the process and personal experience of undertaking PhD, I underwent numerous learning experiences that were generated by 'fusions of horizons', i.e. the merging of old viewpoints with new perspectives, which significantly contributed to my development as a person and a researcher. Recalling the early stage of commencing the PhD in October 2006, I remember how I envisioned the process of undertaking doctoral research to be a very structured and straight forward. Instead, undertaking a PhD resembled very much going on a journey of discovery that started off with no particular research question and research methodology in mind other than it had to address a specific aspect of social event impacts. Referring to the quote by Brown (2006) who perceives research as the "*entry into unknown territory*" (p.9), the PhD-journey has led me through vast and unknown areas of existing body of knowledge on the different subject areas and research methodologies. Furthermore, it has guided me to new findings that were generated from the analysis of my primary data. At times, I found myself distracted by the secondary research findings as they sparked new research interests whilst others seemed initially relevant to my chosen research topic and were explored further in order to establish if they were of significance and value to my research aim or not. Whilst this part of the research process greatly increased my knowledge and awareness of existing theories and subject areas, it was sometimes the source of frustration which emerged from the having spent a lot of time reading around a specific topic, theory or research method, and arriving at the conclusion that secondary research findings were not appropriate for my research question or approach. Similarly, the process of recruiting a suitable research sample proved to be very challenging: I never imagined that getting access to sport event volunteers would

be so difficult. In view of volunteering being an act of help, I expected that the helping behaviour of sport event volunteers including the volunteer coordinators as gatekeepers would extend to their willingness to participate in my research. Nevertheless, the challenge of recruiting a research sample resulted in my learning about the various strategies of how to recruit research participants and allocating enough time to this stage of the research.

Another 'fusion of horizon' occurred during the data collection process: Having carried out semi-structured interviews for my BA (hons) dissertation, I appreciated the skills that interviewing requires, such as ice-breaking techniques, active listening etc. However, I did underestimate the aspect of memory recall. Whilst some interviewees had no major problems to travel back to the WFG'08 in their mind and to remember what it was like to a WFG'08 volunteer, others needed a much longer 'warm-up' time. Also, exploring the emotional dimensions of their volunteer experience, it was sometimes difficult for me as researcher to get the individual to open up about how they felt in a particular situation or moment. As a result, the interview schedule could not be rigid in terms of time, e.g. some interviews lasted two hours whilst others exceeded three hours.

In view the nature of the research philosophy and method that was adopted for the PhD, applying the principles of the hermeneutic circle of inquiry both during the interviews and the analysis of the collected data provided me with a valuable learning curve: For example, rather than perceiving the interview with the WFG'08 volunteer as a mere 'question- answer' exercise in which I asked the question and the interviewee answers, I had to engage in the hermeneutic circle by establishing a conversation with the WFG'08 volunteer. Having been a volunteer at the WFG'08 myself, there was the danger of me dominating the conversation by talking too much about my own volunteer experience in order to engage the interviewee or to fill the moments of silence. Listening to extracts of interview recordings in preparation for interviews with WFG'08 on the following days, I learned to be much more aware my influence as researcher on the flow and dynamics of the interview.

With regards to applying the hermeneutic circle to the data analysis process, I found myself amending and rearranging the 'whole' and the 'parts' in form of the themes and subthemes that emerged by going over the interview transcripts again and again and exploring the literature related to the various themes. Consequently, my perspective of the PhD research project being a straight-forward affair was merged with the

experience that the analysis and writing-up stage is in fact a rather messy endeavour that requires patience, perseverance and time.

Overall, I experienced not as a linear process as previously expected but as a circular course of action where I was moving back and forth between the different research stages such as development of a research questions, undertaking a literature review, writing the methodology chapter etc. As a result I had to remain flexible and open towards adjustments which for example involved the re-consultation of literature, reconsidering decisions of sampling, the refinement of adopted research and data analysis methods, changes of themes and sub-themes.

Not having been involved in any formal volunteering activity in general and in sport event volunteering in particular in the past, undertaking research on the lived experiences of sport event volunteering which resulted in my engagement as volunteer in the WFG'08, has shaped my personal perspectives on volunteering. Besides not knowing what it was like to be a formal volunteer, I failed to understand why people undertake this type of activity and how they experience it. Instead, I perceived people who give their energy and time 'for free', as mere helpers, if not even cheap labour. The findings from my research including my own experience of having been a '08 WFG volunteer introduced me to the emotional dimension of volunteering that I was not aware of in the past. As a result I no longer perceive event volunteers as mere helpers but as individual that bring along their expectations, skills and life experiences but as individuals that enact a role in which they encounter and react to a palette of different feelings such as anger, joy, relief, sadness, empathy, trust etc. Having been under the impression that that event organisers/volunteer coordinators have to merely keep their volunteer workforce happy by providing them with something to do, a volunteer kit, food and drink, my perception of successful sport event volunteer management has been amended by the need for event organisers/volunteer coordinators to understand the inner world of volunteers in order to tailor volunteer programmes more effectively and to provide them with a positive volunteer experience.

## 14.4 Conclusion

This study that explored the lived experience of sport event volunteering using the context of the WFG'08 has achieved its aims and objectives. Whilst it provides valuable new experiential insights into what it is like to be sport event volunteering and delivers theoretical, methodological and analytical contributions to the existing body of

knowledge, it has also identified a palette of potential research avenue that can be pursued in future. Furthermore, it has provided the reader with a personal reflection on the research process and insights into how this research has shaped my personal and development.

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