LAND OF HOPE AND GLORY: ENGLISHNESS, IMPERIALISM AND AUDIENCES OF MAJOR SPORT EVENTS

Doctoral Thesis

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Abstract

At the time of writing, public debate about the imperialism associated with 'Englishness' and subsequent marginalisation of 'other' identities has become increasingly salient. From the European Union Referendum to the mourning of Elizabeth II's passing, explicit displays of the contention between identity, hierarchy and privilege are plentiful. But what of those everyday practices and spaces in which the boundaries of an imagined national community are enacted? In conjunction with other day-to-day sources of nationhood – literature, religion, monarchy, and so forth – sport is an omnipresent domain in which individual fears about being and belonging are played out.

This thesis examines the cultural significance of high-profile major sport events (MSEs) to audiences' production, embodiment and creation of 'Englishness.' It begins with a postcolonial reading of 'Englishness' that considers the interplay of imperialism, nationhood and sport viewership. Following this, a philosophical discussion about the nature of truth and knowledge serves as the entry point for broader consideration of the sensory experience of participant households/families watching MSEs. Through a methodology based on "watching people watching" MSEs, this work engages with the mundane, everyday and taken-for-granted parts of sport viewership through which imperial imaginaries, 'othering' processes, English exceptionalism and forms of 'motivated ignorance' remain unnoticed and unchallenged in the practices of MSE audiences. I argue that participants were (re)defining, (re)producing and (re)enforcing social hierarchies of belonging based on arbitrary characteristics of an imperially defined 'Englishness' and highlighting a collective responsibility for inequity. This thesis therefore contributes to dialogues at the intersection of imperialism, nationalism and sport viewership by presenting the 'concrete' ways in which – actively unaware or otherwise – difference may be enacted.

Keywords: *Englishness, Nationhood, Imperialism, and Major Sport Events*

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Acronyms

ASEN - The Association for the Study of Ethnicity and Nationalism

BBC - British Broadcasting Association

BSA - British Sociological Association

DFLA - Democratic Football Lads Alliance

FIFA - Fédération Internationale de Football Association

IOC - International Olympic Committee

MSE - Major Sport Events

MP - Member of Parliament

NFL - National Football League

UAE - United Arab Emirates

UK - United Kingdom

UKRI - UK Research and Innovation

VAR - Virtual Assistant Referee

WASP - White, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant

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Declaration

The research embodied in this project, was carried out under the supervision of Dr Nicola De Martini Ugolotti and Dr Ian Jones. I declare that all the material presented for examination is my own work, and that any quotation or paraphrase from the published or unpublished work of another person has been duly acknowledged in this work which I present for examination. To this end I confirm that I have read and understood Bournemouth university's 8A Code of Practice for Research Degrees (Policy, Procedure and Guidelines), and policy on plagiarism.

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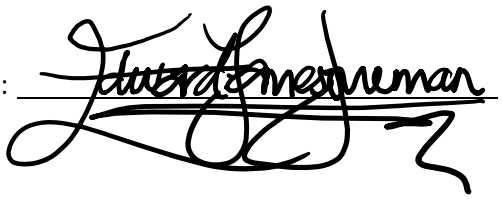
Signed:  Date: 27/07/2023

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"I must confess that over the last few years I have been gravely disappointed with the white moderate…Shallow understanding from people of goodwill is more frustrating than absolute misunderstanding from people of ill will. Lukewarm acceptance is much more bewildering than outright rejection".

~ Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., 16 April 1963, p.177~

Preface

Before you lies my thesis "Land of Hope and Glory: Englishness, Imperialism and Audiences of Major Sport Events." It started its life humbly, during regular visits to my 'local,' where with close friends and family I would watch major sport events (MSEs) and regularly end up discussing 'Englishness.' These same people now take delight in identifying my research as an excuse for "a couple of pints," but my passion for conceptualising the processes of meaning-making and interpretation within the 'silent majority[1]' was born from the visceral and uninhibited debates had during instances of sport viewership in ordinary settings. In these moments of self-identification, I saw people I believed to be opposed to inequity and injustice convening behind imperialist narratives (e.g., nationalism, chauvinism, exceptionalism, egoism) as they navigated issues of state ideology and the politics of identity.

If questioned about the prejudice, discrimination and antagonism directed towards 'others,' the response was invariably "it's just a joke." Readers may have encountered this sentiment, oft invoked by the 'silent majority' who may also dismiss criticism of hegemonic 'Englishness' as the archetypal political correctness of Generation Z. They judge the criticism to be an over-sensitive reaction from people whose 'wokeness' has made them hellbent on forever being offended in a never-ending 'culture war,' doubtless due to a deadly conspiracy of the "Guardian-reading, tofu-eating, wokerati," I say sardonically. (I recommend, if any are yet to see it, watching MP Suella Braverman's bitter rant in the English House of Commons on 18th October 2022. It would be funny, if not so serious.) Those "just joking" never perceived their words as upholding narratives that legitimise hierarchical conceptions of human civilisation and worth. Regardless of intention, the fictions of their position only serve to benefit the mobilisations of fear, anger and arrogance that dominate the contemporary English sociological landscape.

There was also a less obvious, more devious enactment of imperialism. Insidious. Inescapable. It is one we are all implicated in just through sheer happenstance of living in a system through which so many everyday practices, choices and patterns end in welfare disparity. All roads lead to Rome. Sometimes the complexity of global connections creates a distance between action and consequence so vast that we can never comprehend the impacts we have. Often, however, ignorance did not seem a viable answer for what I was witnessing. Instead, in the face of blatant injustice, the people around me seemed motivated to ignore their own culpability. What emerged was a quiet hypocrisy: "I care deeply about the environment," but I am still flying to attend this fixture; "I believe in workers' rights," but I am still going to buy this sweatshop-made sport product; "LGBTQIA+ lives matter," but I am still

watching the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) men's World Cup in Qatar. Make no mistake that there is choice made, and it is a privilege to have such a choice, but this is a world in which the luxury of being indifferent no longer exists.

My connection to this topic has led me to recognise this indifference. I am a White, public schooled male, brought up in the Home Counties. My lived experience allows me to have unique access and to interrogate nationhood in communities for whom belonging is a given. I am a product of that world. If I were to be honest, I have come to see part of this project as an uncomfortable journey in challenging my own prejudices. Yet what follows is not an indulgent self-promotion of racial goodness. The very fact that I have been able to conduct Doctoral Studies has been enabled by the inherent privileges of my position. This has in no small part been afforded by the consequences of an imperial world from which I am directly benefiting. In truth, I have found it difficult to navigate the complicated terrain of attempting to disrupt hegemonic narratives on the one hand, but in doing so yet again place a white male voice at the forefront of discussion. A big part of this was always engaging critically with my own complicity in imperialism. I have written honestly in this regard. My goal was always to author a thesis that, drawing on my own experiences, would embellish a picture of everyday life that helps others in their efforts to bring about more radical change.

Beyond providing an intermediary position in the context of nationhood, of course I hope that this PhD proves impactful to those working within the academic fields of postcolonialism and sport. I hope that it fosters a sense of creativity to think 'differently' when it comes to research methods and representation. More than anything, though, I hope each reader sees the importance of their own mundane worlds to instances of social justice, and that it is our miniscule everyday lives which hold the transformational power needed to create a better world.

Introduction

In this thesis I am attempting to act as the interlocutor between sport and postcolonialism. I suggest that each field of study has something to offer when applied to 'Englishness' in conjunction, by providing a wider scope with which to interconnect topics pertaining to imperialism, 'Englishness,' and Whiteness. I believe MSE viewers offer a valuable entry point for producing a more substantiate and sustainable challenge to the privileged exclusivity of 'Englishness.' Therefore, I interrogate MSE viewership using a postcolonial framework to engage with 'Englishness' as a physical representation of mundane imperialism. The data used to address this overarching aim are the result of mixed methods of data collection deployed over a period of eight months. This included 10 short-term sensory ethnographies, where 'Goggle-box[2]' style recordings were taken of 9 participant households and/or families watching MSEs. I recorded all dialogue and took observational field notes during these recording sessions. Participants also presented artefacts, which they felt represented 'Englishness.' Research participants ranged in age from 15 to 90, and a total of 21 participants (7 women, 14 men) were involved in this study. Whilst everyone during recruitment identified as 'English,' not all participants were White, and 2 had dual citizenship. In analysing MSE audiences, I ask: How does imperialism, as a doctrine of power, function within self-identified moderate citizens? In what ways might MSE viewership be a significant means of codifying and structuring this within 'Englishness'? To what extent do audiences of MSEs engage with nationalistic narratives of England? Further, and equally important: In what ways can researchers disrupt the ordinariness of racial and ethnic exclusive 'Englishness' during MSE viewership? In conclusion, I reflect on the need for understanding 'Englishness' outside a simple awareness of Empire. Instead, I recommend that we force ourselves to rethink our most deeply held beliefs about who we are and re-consider the institutions and wider social arrangements we support. To appropriate the concept of anti-racism, an idea, action or policy is either imperial – that is, contributing to an 'Englishness' that subjugates – or it is anti-imperialist, because it is attempting to dismantle these narratives of identity (Kendi, 2019).

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Imperialism is constitutive of the 'Englishness' enacted during MSE viewership. This is the major hypothesis guiding my thesis: that performances of 'Englishness' cannot be separated from the imperial knowledge-power nexus which produces inequitable modalities (Bhambra, 2021). I argue that this mostly goes unnoticed and is rarely acted upon consciously, but in the hyperbolic 'Englishness' of MSE viewership we see boundaries of belonging surreptitiously (re)defined, (re)produced and (re)enforced in the mundane enactments and spaces of everyday life.

I have arrived at this point as a result of living through a period of increased nationalism, when identity and loyalty has been attained through shared belonginess to the nation (Valluvan, 2021a). Alongside this, the social significance of 'Englishness' has increased, reorganising itself behind pseudo-authoritarian politics that favour elite and populist sentiments (Bhambra et al., 2020). The European Union Referendum (Brexit), defending statues of historical figures, and the mourning of Elizabeth II's death are cultural events that all relied on a 'communal sense of national belonging' (see Valluvan, 2019). But despite something of a superfluity to the problematisation and particularisation of 'Englishness,' there is growing recognition that the way in which national identity is differentiated, understood and experienced by dominant and/or majoritised groups has been "caricatured and condemned, rather than explored and properly conceptualised" (Kenny, 2020). To a certain extent insular, sour and xenophobic iterations of nationhood have reduced 'Englishness' and 'Whiteness' to masculine, working-class Northern communities (Bhambra, 2017a). This has not only restricted majority viewpoints to a subsection of White identity, but also risks overlooking the diversity of ethnicities and geographical backgrounds now identifying as 'English' (Clarke, 2021). My thesis attends to this issue by producing a narrative of lived experience for those whose 'Englishness' is taken-for-granted.

On 'Englishness,' postcolonial theory has pushed researchers to consider nationhood through the contemporary experiences of non-White bodies, highlighting the marginalisation and silencing of identities, both historically and in the present (for example: Bhambra, 2007; Olusoga, 2016). The imperial tropes associated with hegemonic expressions of nationhood – shown to function on simplified boundaries of 'us' vs 'them' – have been equally well documented (for example: Billig, 1995; Kumar, 2003). Outside the academic domain, we have seen a rise in resistance movements (such as 'Rhodes Must Fall' and 'Black Lives Matter') offering alternative paradigms for how we should understand 'our' national identity. Understandably, these approaches have been marked by the embrace of marginal voices which means that the framework for 'studying up' is available in abundance (Nadar 1972; Mohanty, 2003). It is:

> *"no coincidence that postcolonial theory did not start off within the academic establishment of European countries, but rather in the colonies and post colonies – and by authors who in one way or another, have experienced life contexts that might be called peripheral on the global scale" (Kerner, 2018, p.620).*

In this regard, I am advocating for postcolonial accounts of experience that illuminate the engagement with imperialism by those whose identity is 'deemed to belong.' I do not do this with the intentions of

legitimising more moderate world views, but as a critical part of the conceptual and methodological agenda.

Postcolonial theorists are guilty, for the most part, of neglecting the significance of sport, even though sport has long been understood as constructed upon differences (of 'us' vs 'them'; O'Donnell, 1994) and the invention of cultural traditions (Hobsbawm & Ranger, 2012). In the limited literature available, the discussion has focused predominantly on the symbols of Empire in sport (Mangan, 2013a; Field, 2021). Even when used as a focal point of discussion, it is done so mostly within the context of anti-colonial struggle (Field, 2021). This is hardly surprising, given that seminal postcolonial scholars such as Said or Spivak either mentioned sport fleetingly or not at all. The field of sport studies has largely replicated this ignorance, choosing to only see postcolonialism as a descriptive term for 'bodies' of previously colonised populations (Carrington, 2015). However, it would be fair to say that this has been recognised by academics and there is a growing engagement of sport studies with postcolonial perspectives[3] (for example: Burdsey, 2010; Spaaij and Broerse, 2018). The same is true of sport fandom, and MSEs such as the Olympics have been highlighted as culturally significant in the (re)production, embodiment and creation of national identity (for example: Tomlinson & Young, 2006; Arnold 2021). Some older contributions are also enjoying re-publication (such as: Bale & Cronin, 2020). In this regard, my thesis builds on Carrington's (2015) 'Post-colonial Theory and Sport,' which proved a welcome addition to the postcolonial cannon. Carrington outlined how scholars could challenge the epistemological claims and theories about modern sport as being produced in the West. According to Carrington, we would be better placed by considering modern sport in contexts where it is given meaning – especially politically and ethically. This would present a 'serious intellectual challenge' to current understandings of sport itself, which is thought of in terms of "some timeless, supposedly objective characteristics" (p.112). In this way Carrington highlighted why postcolonial theory is important – because of the decolonising tools it presents to contest European superiority. Nowhere is the 'hidden underbelly' of imperialism more prevalent than in the sporting spaces, institutions and practices of Europe that "tried to disavow their own inherent ethnic heterogeneity and racial hybridity. European states were, from their inception dependent upon the labour, bodies, and resources of the colonised" (Carrington, 2015, p.113). Adopting a postcolonial position, therefore, necessarily forces attention on how categories of belonging operate under imperialist regimes of truth and power.

While important, the focus of sport studies adopting postcolonial lenses has been on populations which can be identified as being previously colonised and their descendants. For example, Bale & Cronin (2020) arrange the chapters of their volume by location (Oceania, Asia, and Africa). The issue with this is that imperialism is restricted to its 'continental' contexts, as something 'belonging'

to the experience of regionally grouped 'others.' Likewise, postcolonial research on the leisure/sporting experience of racialised people 'here' has focused on minority ethnicities (for example: Ratna, 2017a, 2018; Thangaraj, 2012, 2015; Thangaraj et al., 2018). Despite the recognition that colonisation was essentially different across place and time, the exploration of imperialism within the 'silent majority' has received comparatively little attention, even though imperialism is fundamental to their lived experience. Though researchers should continue to provide space for marginalised groups, White academics must consciously engage with their 'own' localities to unveil the complicity of the former colonising nations with systems of domination, aiding the de-linking of totalising meta-narratives of European Enlightenment into a narrative founded on the connected sociologies of human history (Bhambra, 2014). In this way my thesis is a response to Bhambra (2017), who called on academics to engage honestly with the imperial legacies that configure our present so that we may adequately reckon with the continuing injustices that exist within our contemporary epoch. This demands an altered, reinvigorated, somewhat moral confrontation of the often taken-for-granted assumptions about the English nation (Bhambra et al., 2020).

This is not to say that research exploring how 'English' sporting cultures create, interpret and understand nationhood within the context of postcolonial theory is non-existent. There has been acknowledgment of the integral role sport plays in perpetuating European myths. In England's case this helps to emphasise how, in conjunction with other sources of nationhood – war, religious institutions, and the royal family – sport serves as one of the most important spheres in which English national identity is contested and (re)produced (Carrington, 2015). Sport is a domain in which fears surrounding individual belonging and identity can be articulated. Perhaps the most notable and continued contribution on this front has been made by Fletcher (2011, 2012a, 2012b, 2014, 2016, 2020). His work has presented critical self-reflection and demonstrated the ways in which Whiteness goes beyond skin colour, affecting the way we experience sport. This focus on sporting experience has – and this is not a slight on the research – restricted Whiteness to specific instances and practices (the same can be said about other works on this subject; see Long and Hylton, 2002; Hylton and Lawrence, 2014). Instead, we can use these articulations to develop a more holistic analysis of how inequities are produced in the ordinary moments of our lives. In this sense my thesis is influenced by the work of Ratna (2017b), who argued that researchers do not have to "be Black and/or female to express a Black and/or feminist political consciousness" (p.113). Whilst I remain conscious that this risks White saviourism, I must not ignore or flatten my connectedness to diverse groups. From the outset readers should acknowledge that the processes being explored in this thesis are intertwined with intersecting forms of privilege and inequity, and can be unpacked further by considering imperialism, 'Englishness,' and MSE viewership in conjunction.

Why should we concern ourselves with the convergence between imperialism and sport? Why is it important for us to understand the narratives and practices of sport audiences? Often, 'Englishness' during viewership manifests in nostalgic visions of nationhood, buttressed by accounts of England as a 'free' 'land of hope and glory,' augmented by romantic recounting of the global hegemony of the British Navy, and a communal sense of national pride forged in the victories of two world wars and one World Cup (Black, 2016). This emphasises that sport viewership is illustrative of the basic properties of self, namely increasing belongingness to the 'English' community. Consider the overtly jingoistic and patriotic song 'Land of hope and Glory' (sung by 'English' football and rugby fans):

Dear Land of Hope and Glory,
Mother of the Free.
How shall we extol thee,
Who are born of thee?
Wider still, and wider
Shall thy bounds be set;
God, who made thee mightier,
Make thee mightier yet!

Dear Land of Hope, thy hope is crowned
God make thee mightier yet!
On Sov'ran brows, beloved, renowned
Once more thy crown is set.
Thine equal laws, by Freedom gained,
Have ruled thee well and long;
By Freedom gained, by Truth maintained
Thine Empire shall be strong.

Thy fame is ancient as the days,
As Ocean large and wide:
A pride that dares, and heeds not praise,
A stern and silent pride;
Not that false joy that dreams content
With what our sires have won;
The blood a hero sire hath spent
Still nerves a hero son.

(Benson and Elgar, 1902)

'Land of Hope and Glory' is "inescapably an imperial construct" (Devine, 2019, p.1017) and the discourse projects a fictitious 'greatness' onto the national imagination (Brooks, 2020). The song legitimises a belief in the superiority and moral integrity of an imagined 'Englishness' which emerged because of the unprecedented strength and prosperity of the English Empire (Dorling & Thomlinson, 2019). This is a typical example of the way audiences are positioned as part of a socially, politically, culturally and ethnically homogenous nation (Watson, 2020). Yet at the same time, collective belonging is returned to the standard boundaries of community, presented through little episodes and anecdotes (presented as historical fact, these could anecdotally be described as a Blackadder[4] account of 'Englishness'). This quick example illustrates why MSE viewership deserves our attention – as a significant pedagogical tool in the project of developing the cultural, economic, and geopolitical interests of a dominant group (Silk, 2015). However, before moving forward to develop this argument, some terminology needs to be clarified.

Imperialism

Firstly, it is essential to this thesis to distinguish imperialism from colonialism. The standard definition of imperialism – deriving from the Latin *Imperium*, meaning 'command, dominance, empire' – is now almost exclusively used in reference to 18th century European expansion and subsequent colonialism (Scott & Marshall, 2009). However, whilst the 'idea' of imperialism was used to redeem colonialism at the precise moment of European expansion, to only consider the two in correspondence denies the multifarious nature of imperialism (Young, 2001). Perceiving imperialism as synonymous to colonialism also risks perpetuating narratives that postcolonial scholars seek to dismantle, by erasing the extensive world history of imperial conquest (such as the great Pre-Columbian civilisations, Asian Empires and Pre-Colonial African Kingdoms). Instead, I follow Patnaik and Patnaik's (2016) theory of imperialism which, contrary to the above, accounts for the abiding relevance of imperialism across periods of history and treats colonialism as a historically specific case of imperial ideology. Therefore, imperialism should be understood as a term that encompasses the historic social organisation of civilisations to maintain a sociological, socio-political and socio-economic status quo. Such an abstraction about civilisation is not novel; it is at the heart of major theories on social stratification within sociology (such as Gramsci[5] and Khaldûn[6]). The key point is that the term imperialism focuses attention on hierarchies of communal belonging that rely on a state of equilibrium between dominant and submissive. This is significant because it extends its meaning beyond just 'Empire' to any formations and/or conditions of belonging to a single nation – for example, 'Englishness.' Therefore, any celebration of this specific belongingness would only serve to cement the ideologies of imperialism, even more so in the uninhibited and intense moments of supporting the national team.

Sport Viewership

In reference to supporting the national team, readers will have already noted that I use the term viewership instead of fandom. This is because the word fandom, I argue, results in a reader conjuring a stereotyped image of sport consumption. The study of sport consumption has been saturated by the fields of behavioural science (Theodorakis & Wann, 2008; Toder-Alon et al., 2019), sports psychology (Wann & James, 2018; Winegard & Deaner, 2010) and management studies (Yoosefy et al., 2020; Humphries & Smith, 2006). Across these disciplines there would appear to be a fascination with understanding viewership only in relation to fandom. Fandom has itself been reduced to consumption, which has tended to rely on gauging an individual's degree of perceived fandom through a Likert-scale – commonly Wann's Sport Spectator Identification Scale (SSIS; Wann & Branscombe, 1993). The claims of 'scientific' credibility, objective determination of 'reliability' and 'validity', as well as ability for replication made by these studies are justifiable prerogatives (Jones, 1997). Yet the reliance on using decontextualised behaviour measures to understand fandom means that the process of identifying 'fans' by how they 'consume' sport has been standardised. So too has it led to large segments of the population being excluded from research. Wann and Branscombe's (1993) scale fails to capture any deep, nuanced account of how the behaviours of those that watch sport 'play out.' The assumption is always that we can explain human behaviour by determining social 'facts,' reducing fans to a set of variables and using empirical boundaries (such as 'how often' or 'how much') as appropriate indicators of reality (Horna, 1994).

The logical positivism of such positions is typical of classical European thinking that heavily favours quantifiable analyses. The rigidity of objectivity is reflected in an apparent obsession with strict adherence to cumbersome definitions of 'what constitutes a fan?' Yet questions of 'who' or 'what' a fan looks like are of little importance to this study. As Osborne and Coombs (2013) suggested, I wish to avoid being drawn into a quest for 'authenticity' and linguistic dichotomy categorisations. Instead, I want to reflect on the omnipresent nature of MSEs in late capitalist societies. The reality is that sport fandom is not reserved for a select few, taking place at a set time or space. Many people who may not identify themselves as 'fans' will find themselves constantly surrounded by the vast (and frequently overlooked) images and stories of MSEs. Sport is consumed "on billboard advertisements, [in] newspapers, [on] radio and television coverage, in conversations overheard on the bus, websites browsed at work, cereal packet promotions, the clothing of strangers in the street or a multitude of other ways" (Crawford, 2004, p.108). Such an understanding is crucial within the parameters of this thesis as it extends the reach of sport beyond its assumed boundaries. The impact of MSEs then moves past those actively following a specific sport and/or team on a regular basis, to encompass all who are

part of a community currently engaged in an MSE. In other words, any viewership of MSEs (including the associated paraphernalia that saturates the landscape during these events) initiates an individual into the display and maintenance of 'Englishness.' Even if an individual's experience with it is fleeting (such as inadvertently watching a news highlight), they are brought into the processes of nation building that function in the sporting space.

Everyday

MSEs are everyday in terms of the common and ordinary ways in which they are engaged with (this should not be confused with '*every day*,' which would refer to the frequency of MSEs). In reference to the 'everydayness' of national identity and MSEs I hope to build on the formative concepts of Anderson's (1983) 'imagined communities,' Billig's (1995) 'banal nationalism,' and Skey and Antonsich's (2017) 'everyday nationalism.' These works show how nationalism is not solely available to extremists, or existing objectively 'out there,' but inherent to all 'our' experience as part of a nation that "continually (re)construct and (re)inscribe a common set of values and sense of belonging" (Hammett, 2021, p.17). Put simply, just because something is 'banal' does not mean that it is naïve or does not deserve attention.

Rather than banal, though, I use the word mundane to describe the everydayness of viewership of MSEs as I feel it better embodies the unobtrusive extraordinariness and vulgarity of engagements. The mundane is an essential aspect of the everyday experience (Dobson et al., 2021), but whilst the subject of everyday 'Englishness' has been well researched, there has been a tendency for academics to reveal moments of consequences, which were made visible because they stood out from the mundane (Enloe, 2011). As I see it, the issue with this is that the mechanisms of 'othering' are framed as dispositional. Instead of producing accounts capable of eliciting critical reflection by readers on their own behaviour, the focus on intense expressions of 'Englishness' always risks engendering a perception that "I am not like those people." By contrast we all live the mundane – I certainly do – especially in everyday routines that appear unexceptional and devoid of decision making. To paraphrase Storey (2014), mundanity "includes the extraordinary, the wonderful, profound sorrow and profound joy, love and sacrifice, politics, and poetics" (p.2). In this way, postcolonial perspectives of mundane MSE viewership can enrich and complicate the aforementioned concepts on nationhood by illuminating the ways in which the mundane might be complicit in 'hierarchies of belonging' (see Back et al., 2012).

'Englishness'

As per Stuart Hall (1997), there is a sense that the question "What is Englishness?" elicits different answers. Numerous studies have investigated 'Englishness' within a broad spectrum of

contexts, and yet there is scant evidence to suggest what it truly is (see: Kenny, 2014). On the one hand, there is ample evidence which points to the existence of a hegemonic 'Englishness' which continues to inform a contemporary 'collective' national identity (Spracklen, 2016). In this sense, 'Englishness' rests on the authoring and authorisation of imperially defined differences between self and other (Loomba, 2015). This is a key argument of postcolonial thinkers, who call for an urgent "re-thinking and re-formulation of forms of knowledge and social identities authored and authorised by colonialism and western domination" (Prakash, 1992, p.8). To deal with this, I perceive 'Englishness' as an idiom, which is suggestive of the existence of 'powerful survivals' of self-identification that configure current notions of national identity (Thompson, 1965; Aughey, 2008). Therefore, I place 'Englishness' in quotation marks to signify the term's idiomatic continuity, but also to not deny it has essential flexibility as a social construct.

Building on this, I approach national identity using Kenny's (2014) proposition that lies outside the prescriptive stances towards nationalism: the so-called modernist and primordialist approaches. As he puts it:

> *"Take seriously modernist epistemological claim(s) that the traditions which are said to lie at the core of Englishness are, in fact, deliberate acts of recreation and renewal, which need to be understood in relation to different kinds of political context and intention. But…also borrow the primordialist insight that, without an appreciation of the underlying traditions of belief that provide the resources and contexts available to individual authors and audiences, we cannot understand how national thinking and sentiments develop and gain their meaning" (p.25).*

Therefore, 'Englishness' would be neither necessarily consanguineous nor solely based on the connected histories of global socialisation brought about by the fundamental distribution of ideology, geographic positioning, and materiality of imperialism. With this reading of national identity, "What is Englishness?" becomes inconsequential. A shared, collective 'Englishness' would then arise from cultures both 'ethnic' and 'civic' in nature. In this regard, I hope to expand and update Tinsley's (2019) decolonising of the ethnic/civic binary, with specific reference to MSE audiences, which did not feature as part of her analysis. In my view, MSE audiences are, more than ever, (re)producing and resisting constructions of 'Englishness.' I contend that, given the prevalence of MSEs in everyday life, observing audiences offers an opportunity for the further understanding of the ordinariness and surreptitiousness of nationalism's legitimisation.

English or British

Any reconfiguration of nationhood also requires a 'reclaiming' of 'Englishness' as an identity separate from British citizenship. Certainly, the confusion of 'Britishness' and 'Englishness' is a peculiar phenomenon, with many devoting entire essays to the subject (Kumar, 2010; Cohen, 1995, 2000;; Crick, 1995; Hussain & Bagguley, 2005; Henderson & Jones, 2021). Many point to debates during the early 1970s (when the United Kingdom was discussing membership of the European Economic Community) as giving political salience to today's common misinterpretation that nationhood is linked to parliamentary sovereignty (Wellings, 2012). Misplaced beliefs such as this were compounded by the electoral campaign of Margaret Thatcher in 1979 with her rhetoric of putting 'the Great back in Britain' only serving to obscure the Englishness in her politics and cement Britain as White, Anglo-Saxon and Protestant (WASP; Wellings 2012). Thatcherism became representative of a 'proud' but narrow British citizenship which drew heavily on English traditions and projected her governmental mission not solely as a consensus of liberal democracy, but as an eternalised belief in an imperial national identity which she alone could secure for the future (Wright, 2009; Lynch, 1999). Whilst subsequent governments attempted to avoid direct depictions of Britishness that suppressed Welsh, Irish and Scottish nationalism, symbolising British national character and culture became central to political campaigning. The election manifesto of the Labour Party (1997) used the slogan 'cool Britannia' to emphasise that we could be proud of our history, and William Hague (leader of the opposition party at the time) suggested a Conservative Government would "be optimistic about Britain's future because we are comfortable with Britain's past" (Conservative Party, 2001, p.23). More recently, the Conservative Party has been exceptionally ignorant to the realities of colonial rule, claiming in their 2019 manifesto that they will "forge stronger links with the Commonwealth…such as India, with which we already share deep historical and cultural connections" (p.57). They have all, in their own ways, seen the past only in positive terms with little reflection on colonial conquest and the ongoing implications this has had for formerly colonised peoples.

Despite many theoretical differences and variances in conveyance, there is a clear common goal in political discourse that uses certain narratives to present a form of nationalism which has ensured, since the beginning of the English nation, that a single ethnic group gets principal identity (Kumar, 2000). This complicates the boundaries of English identity and British citizenship, resulting in an understanding of globalisation that consumes alternative narratives and events to the one emerging from the English Empire. Readers should be aware that, though significant efforts have been made throughout this thesis to distinguish between ideological English nationhood and British citizenship, there may be instances where reality prevents such a clear boundary of definition. In such circumstances, readers can presume that, whether English or British, "the fuss is about names rather

than things" (Taylor et al., 1975, p.622). The risk of erroneous assumption is problematic, but I believe it represents a more realistic approach to understanding the essential polyvalence of the terms 'English' and 'British' within discourses of nationhood, instead of casting the two as alternative forms of psychological 'identity.'

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A guide to reading this thesis

The narrative arc that follows, in a general sense, can be expressed as an exploration of enactments of 'Englishness' during MSE viewership. It is the application of existing theory on this topic into spaces of relative privilege and ordinariness, with the intention of assisting individuals in their efforts of disruption and resistance (Bhambra, 2020). Chapter One: Imperialism, 'Englishness,' and Sport, lays the groundwork for analysis by interconnecting the topics of imperialism, MSE viewership, and 'Englishness'. More specifically, I argue that the 'Englishness' which appears in the viewership of MSEs is a performative representation of imperial categories of belonging. I am not suggesting that there is a real or 'true' English (or that there could be), but rather, I am provoking readers to consider how the mechanisms by which they interpret and respond to national belonging have operated under discourses of power and the constructions of knowledge which claim to represent truth.

I use postcolonialism to reflect in greater detail on the perception of 'Englishness' as harmless and the realities of contemporary inequities. I draw on three key elements of postcolonial theory (linearity, autonomy and historical materialism) to create a framework with the potential to create a more comprehensive account of imperialism – by interacting with a full set of social, political, economic, and cultural structures. All the while I emphasise the routine performances of nationhood through MSE viewership as a site to assess subconscious acts of exclusion. MSE viewership offers an important alternative avenue through which we can interrogate the ordinary discourses and 'affective regimes' (see Gilbert, 2008) of nationhood in contemporary England. It creates a space for re-invigorating previous research and encourages us to ask how 'Englishness' might be enacted in everyday spaces.

In Chapter Two: Ways of Being, I take a more philosophical tack to discuss the key methodological considerations which underpin the research strategy. To make sense of a chaotic world in which the audiences live, a broader discussion of truth and trueness takes place. It frames the perspective for analysis and has implications for the conclusions drawn. I build on this in Chapter Three: Researching Mundanity, outlining the practical elements of this research project. The methodology is reflected in the methods of data collection which had an adaptability and creativity at

its core, helping to produce a more 'complete' picture of sensory experience. This creativity is reflected in the representation of the data in the form of screenplays, which are illustrative of the mundane imperialism and motivated ignorance associated with participants' enactments of 'Englishness.'

In Chapter Four: Mundane Imperialism, I consider the key outcome of my analysis – that participant enactments of 'Englishness' during MSE viewership were underscored by mundane imperialism. Particularly prevalent was the normalisation of 'othering' and legitimisation of exceptionalism, which also highlighted the unseen ways in which MSE viewership (re)produced imperial power-knowledge dynamics. These discussions inform a nuanced exploration of the mundanity of imperialism. I contend that participants were enactors of and nostalgically invested in the mundane life of imperialism, expanding upon theories of nationalism in the process. This helps to assess how extensive participant engagement with nationalistic narratives of 'Englishness' was during MSE viewership and by extension, the way in which imperialism functioned in their self-identification as moderate citizens.

I build on this in Chapter Five: Motivated Ignorance, trying to rationalise why the inequities associated with 'Englishness' are allowed to continue. To do so, I introduce the concept of motivated ignorance as a potential explanation. In this context I highlight participants complicity in inequity through their enactments of mundane imperialism, especially by denying the hybridity of their belonging whilst simultaneously (re)enforcing hierarchies of belonging that ensure 'Englishness' is returned to Whiteness, Christianity, and gender normativity. This informs a broader interpretation of the MSE viewing experience in which I argue that participants were responsible for the maintenance of imperialism via 'Englishness' as a form of motivated ignorance. In relation to existing literature on Whiteness, I add to the reframing of inequity by reconceptualising 'Englishness' beyond the geographic and economic localities in which it has existed up until now.

In the conclusion, after offering a brief summary of my thesis, I consider the key contributions this research makes to offer some recommendations for future theoretical, methodological, and practical work on the topics of this thesis. This thesis aides the postcolonial study of sport, as well as highlighting the synergy between postcolonial theory, banal nationalism, and MSE viewership. The critical framework of this thesis also offers an approach to unpick the relationship between methodology and knowledge production, which is integral to creating more equitable futures. Relatedly, the method innovation associated with this research provides exciting opportunities for future research and fosters researcher creativity.

Chapter One

Imperialism, 'Englishness' and Sport

This chapter puts into dialogue existing literature on imperialism, nationhood, and sport in order to develop a postcolonial framework capable of illuminating the many diverging categories of belonging which intersect to create imperial 'Englishness.' In this sense, Chapter One presents postcolonialism as a valuable strategy for critical sport scholars to interrogate hegemonic narratives of nationhood as an imperial construct that situates 'others' around an imagined homogenous national community. Whether or not we look at the interconnections between imperialism and nationhood is therefore "a position in fact taken – either to study the connection in order to criticize it and think of alternatives for it, or not to study it and let it stand, unexamined and, presumably, unchanged" (Said, 2012, pp.80-81). To meet this challenge, my thesis examines one of the most hyperbolic occasions within which 'Englishness' and its imperial frames of reference are (re)produced. I view MSE viewership as not just anecdotally but inextricably linked to ordinary enactments of imperialism. It is important to acknowledge the significance of MSEs in everyday life so that the intersections of imperialism, 'Englishness,' and viewership can be understood in more detail.

The significance of MSEs

There has been a longstanding acknowledgement in sociological and cultural analyses of sport, that MSEs are sites which bring together complex social systems – such as race, nationalism and gender (see Horne et al., 1999; Real, 1975; Wenner, 1989). Yet despite equal recognition by influential cultural theorists such as Hall (1997), outside sport studies there would appear to be a prejudice surrounding the cultural significance of MSEs beyond a general principle that they are important to some people (Arnold, 2021). Within certain academic loci, such as the Association for the study of Ethnicity and Nationalism (ASEN), it is only just being realised as a subject that might be worth centring within academic discussion (Billig, 2023). Truthfully, I find this somewhat surprising in the context of nationhood given the day-to-day prevalence of sport. However, it remains as Wenner (2021) reflected, that in tandem to their own argument a researcher must also make the case for studying sport. Whilst this should not be a 'tough case to make,' it has taken well into this millennium for major scholarly societies to formulate a place for sport research. Therefore, I must justify the importance of MSEs to a postcolonial study of 'Englishness.'

One key justification requires that MSEs are understood as spectacles. Within late capitalist societies this not only refers to global sporting competition, but also those events with smaller reach

– across the various sub-dimensions of sporting spectacular the status-quo is always (re)produced (Andrews, 2016). In Debord's (1967) terms, "the spectacle serves as total justification for the conditions and aims of the existing system" (p.13). Put simply, MSEs are not necessarily politically produced (although contemporary *sportswashing*[7] practices present a serious challenge to this suggestion), but they become political through the populist sentiments that are attached to them (Andrews and Silk, 2018). Hence why, conceptions of the sport spectacle have tended to emphasise audience passivity (Kellner, 2012), and see audiences as covertly seduced into maintaining the existing 'state of play' (Andrews, 2016). Whilst I push back against the almost religious characterisation of sport viewers as passive consumer, I cannot ignore the fact that the spectacular society is epitomised within the cultural 'mechanisms of leisure' (Kellner, 2012). Generally speaking, we can observe that MSEs such as the men's football World Cup are highly visible and spectacular. But more specifically, "in a world of 'flows' they provide symbolic and real channels, junctions and termini…their calendars and periodicities create distance and space... [and] they offer concrete, if transient, versions and visions of symbolic and participatory community" (Roche, 2002, p.7). MSEs are thus, with respect to sociological analysis, distinctively influential cultural phenomena to the socio-spatial and socio-temporal development of popular tradition. In other words, MSEs are an intermediary between individuals and the narratives of exclusion that govern their belonging.

On this, it is important to consider why MSEs are so central in 'platforming' notions of national identity (beyond just their prevalence and function as a spectacle, as previously discussed). MSEs certainly make the imagined community 'feel' more real – every single supporter who cheers becomes symbolic of the nation (Hobsbawm, 2012). Where better to study everyday 'Englishness' then, than in the "lunatic modern habit of identifying oneself with large power units and seeing everything in terms of competitive prestige" (Orwell, 1950, p.153-154). But how then, readers might ask, do MSEs construct social identities? This is the issue with 'catch-all' approaches to the role of sport – that sport is comprehended as end to identity in itself (Jarvie and Maguire, 2002). MSEs do not in themselves construct identities, and academics must move away from 'seeking out' the identity of one group in the context of sport (Harris and Parker, 2017). Instead, MSEs must be understood as 'platforming' social identities insofar that they serve as an expression of self for people classifying (read: identifying) themselves and 'others' (MacClancy, 1996). MSEs are significant because, in the everyday lives of those within a nation, they frequently 'allow' people to make sense of their identity in a 'real' way. Therefore, it is not about studying people's 'Englishness' on account of their supposed 'sameness,' but exploring the interconnections and interrelations within and between individuals as they (re)shape their belonging. I argue that a postcolonial approach is well placed to aid such an investigation because of the interconnected focus on power relations that they foster.

A Postcolonial 'approach'

As discussed earlier, the idiosyncratic and far-reaching features of imperialism are by now well established in academia. Generally speaking, postcolonialism is the term that has come to define this diverse field of theoretical and empirical study, the normative agenda of which is to seriously challenge western domination and dismantle the knowledge and social identities forged during the period of colonialism (Prakash, 1992; Lynch, 1999). There are many encyclopaedic accounts of the field that successfully summarise the tremendous range of contribution from across the academy, and it is not necessary to comprehensively outline this here (see Loomba, 2015; Bush, 2014). Although it is worthwhile acknowledging the sheer scope of the field's theoretical base, which reaches across disciplinary boundaries, intersecting "philosophy, linguistics, sociology, history, feminism, race studies…[and] discourse studies" (Loomba, 2015, p.3). Despite finding an 'academic home' within English departments (Loomba, 2015), postcolonial studies have been undertaken on several divergent topics, including the meaning of Empire, the diverse experience of colonial identities and subjects, the economic consequences of imperialism, and decolonisation (Kerner, 2018). In this sense, postcolonialism is not a tightly bound 'field,' but a complex entanglement of temporalities, localities, lived experiences and perspectives (Loomba, 2015). It is perhaps more useful then, to conceptualise postcolonialism as a critical practice that foregrounds colonial dynamics and legacies, which can be applied across academic affiliations.

What does this mean for the study of sport? It means that postcolonialism has the potential to be fruitfully applied to numerous subjects. Including, but not limited to; sport history (Carrington, 2015), the 'body' (Spurr, 1993; Mirzoeff, 1995), development and peace (McGee, 2019; Lucas and Jeanes, 2020), slavery (Besnier, 2015; King, 2012), and colonial resistance (James, 1994). To further complicate the matter, these subjects could also be approached from various disciplines and explored in the context of 'Englishness' and/or MSE viewership. For example, I could quite easily focus on the economic legacies of colonialism in sport to explore peoples understanding of slavery. But, in this chapter I follow the work of Kerner (2018) and focus on three themes shared across the broad spectrum of postcolonial enquiry: linearity, autonomy and historical materialism. I hold that as a focal point, these three themes are particularly significant in the context of 'Englishness' because the accent is on unpacking specific aspects of nationhood, without completely severing each dimension from the other. These themes reflect the two broad overlapping contexts of postcolonial studies, as identified by Loomba (2015). The first engages with Western intellectual tradition, particularly with regards to how ideology works, how subjectivities are formed and how we understand experience. The second challenges the history of 'othering' and the dominant definitions of belonging. Relatedly, this structure demands an intersectionality which I believe to be necessary in an analysis of everyday life. No single

force (re)produces 'Englishness' at one time and to treat peoples everyday belonging as anything other than multifaceted, would be inaccurate. This is particularly true of MSE viewership, during which an individual is continuously facing an endless 'bombardment' of various narratives, structures, and feelings.

Therefore, as I consider the key tenets of postcolonialism outlined previously, I explore the ways in which they speak to sport studies and vice versa. Bringing postcolonial theories and sport into dialogue with one another to interrogate 'Englishness' emphasises the nuanced and unacknowledged ways in which imperialism takes effect within a social landscape where the signs and structures of its inherent inequity often goes unnoticed by the majority (McDermott, 2020). The focus is always a dual one, unpacking both the epistemological consequences of imperialism on 'Englishness' and the signs and strategies of disavowal used by the majority that prop up an inequitable status quo (Ince, 2018). This involves an almost brutal critical self-reflection and embracing political imperatives as inherent to the research agenda. Such a demand is not supposed to be easy, but real transformative work requires "that we meet people where they are, and move (with) them, toward a better way of living" (Grossberg, 2015, p.4). Hall's (1992) poignant phrase 'wrestling with angels' resonates here, as throughout this chapter I wrestle with many intellectual arguments, political challenges, and identity categories. To address the multiplicities, the complexities, and the relationalities of existence, researchers cannot restrict themselves to one framework and should instead seek imaginative and novel theoretical bases (Cole, 2015). In this way I am, to borrow from Deluze and Guattari (1980), using a 'conceptual toolbox' in developing my theoretical framework. I am 'wrestling' with several distinguishable theories, and 'picking out' the strengths of each to grapple with the inhumanity and inhumanness that continues to limit possibilities in life for so many (Grossberg, 2015). I argue that postcolonialism is an 'approach' that holds together such a radically contextual interdisciplinary framework, because of the approach to existence which it demands. In saying all this, I am perhaps drawing this thesis closer to physical cultural studies than the 'sociology of sport.' Therefore, readers should understand that I am starting from the assumption that through operations of power societies are divided hierarchically, and that physical cultural contexts offer a window into exploring these divisions (Silk and Andrews, 2011). It is from this position, that I now begin to interlink imperialism, 'Englishness,' and MSE viewership.

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Linearity

One of postcolonial theorists' central strategies for disrupting nationalist discourses of identity is to acknowledge that the world as we know it is the result of historical processes and not temporally de-linked. As Kerner (2018) highlights, there is a longstanding intellectual tradition within Euro-Atlantic thought of compressing, and thus de-historicising, the lived experience of ethnic 'others.' This emphasises why we must study contemporary re-actualisations of imperialism and take seriously "the influences of European colonialism on current forms of political, social and economic structures as well as on current patterns of thought" (Kerner, 2018, p.616). Such an understanding has emerged as a result of Said's (1978) seminal work, '*Orientalism*,' which sought to expose the fundamental principles and structures of colonialism embedded within different systems of power, knowledge, and representation. The history of modernity was based on the ontological and epistemological distinction of the western world which divided the past into distinguishable parts, effectively removing the 'other' from its history (Bhambra, 2014). The Orient was therefore always understood according to conceptual 'truths' concerning the East and West, rather than accounts that adequately represented what was 'observed' (Said, 1978). A culmination of discourse had suggested what there was to see and this had affected future representations of what scholars were looking at (Bhambra, 2014). These ideas populated a wide range of sectors, drawing on stereotypes of experience to relay messages of identity. Therefore, we must oppose all attempts at 'naturalising' forms of life – especially through ethnicisation (Kerner, 2018). In the context of 'Englishness,' this alters how we should interrogate and understand MSE viewership conceptually. This is because it produces critical reflection on the ways in which sport audiences are homogenised, and nationalism legitimised across them. In other words, homogenising viewership presents challenges for both the academic enquiry of 'Englishness' and the way in which MSE viewership is understood.

Homogenising viewership

Accounting for linearity is important for academics studying sport viewership and nationhood because of the risk that 'others' are homogenised in terms of 'self.' In the context of 'Englishness,' this means being conscious of treating national identity as a unit of unaltering natural fact (Fox, 2017). Otherwise, academics may inadvertently begin from the standpoint within the absolute itself and position nationhood as an objective reality "which must simply be presupposed" (Horkheimer, 1978, pp. 178-9, cited in Abromeit, 2011, p.114). In likeness to Said's (1978) writing about the construction of the 'East,' knowledge about 'Englishness' can be ideological if it relies on *a priori* assumptions about its existence. The result of this is that in studies of Englishness, the "normative direction of movement has nearly always been from them….to us" (Cohen, 2014, p.xi). We can see this in Aughey's (2008)

work on the Euro96 anthem for English football fans 'Three Lions,' especially the line "Football's Coming Home," which he contends was the intimation that England was coming home to itself. He continues;

> *"This was one sort of return at least and what the English needed to do, according to the anxiety of imitation, was to assert themselves – but in a self-confident and agreeable way…The English must try to become as cuddly and likeable and fun as the others (so long as one does not bother to look too deeply into their cultures)" (p.98).*

Even though one must accept that Aughey's writing contains a wealth of socio-political knowledge about hegemonic Englishness, it returns 'Englishness' to a singular identity. In doing so the very essence of imperialism – the systems of thinking, talking and representation – can continue to exist unchecked[8]. This result also emerges outside of the academic sphere because MSEs offer people an opportunity to position themselves alongside other members of 'the' nation. Not because they meet, speak or see each other, but because such events force each of them to exist in an imagined communion (Anderson, 1983). 'Englishness' becomes pure invention, an imagined community that was created (with ill intent or not), rather than the result of some national awakening of the self (Gellner, 2008). Knowledge about 'the' English is a product of structures and representations inherited from the past (Said, 1978). Therefore, the task of analysis is not to discover an absolute 'Englishness,' but make sense of the ways in which MSE viewership operates on a communal sense of shared belonging, whilst simultaneously (re)defining a hegemonic identity through associated anecdotes and episodes.

Within current global structures this is especially problematic, not least because everywhere is nationally defined in one way or another, making it impossible to escape the nation as a temporal reality (Aronczyk, 2013). This has made the nation, or 'Englishness,' unavoidable – so much so that it functions as a constant thing as if existing 'out there.' Billig (1995) recognised that the subtle representations of an imagined national community 'flag the nation' on a routine basis, making 'our' national identity unforgettable. Thus, as Billig argues, the nation is the cornerstone of an individual's sense of both self and their surroundings. Critical for this thesis, Billig's attentiveness is to the stealthiness of nationalism's operation, creeping into everyday life even if it is not part of the topic (Aronczyk, 2013). This is particularly true for MSE viewers who are constantly locating 'the' nation as part of 'their' position in the world they live. The problem is that there is wider significance to what is often perceived as the 'harmless' (re)production of this process. For example, performances of 'Englishness,' such as singing "Land of Hope and Glory" (rooted in imperial nostalgia), may not

necessarily imply willingness to continue hegemonic Whiteness, but implicate viewers within racialised hierarchies. Undoubtedly, this is exacerbated by the 'ecstatic' symbols of nationalism associated with support that realise the nation in more concrete ways. Ultimately, though, this process goes unnoticed, and it is probably fair to make the assessment that the majority do not regularly spend much time ruminating on the nature of 'our' nationality, nor the intricacies of being an 'English' citizen (Skey, 2011). The role of MSEs is interesting because the boundaries of explicit and ambiguous collide, making it a locus where the overt signs of collective membership and the underground, ordinary discourses of everyday belonging coalesce. The postcolonial perspectives presented in this chapter are capable of unpacking this dynamic. This is because they focus attention on how MSE viewership becomes an occasion during which explicit linkages to imperialism are reasserted and reinscribed as the baseline —the ordinary and expected incarnations of and associations to 'Englishness.'

This then, in ideological terms, is the role that MSEs play — affording researchers the opportunity to respond to Aronczyk's (2017) demand of academics to "undertake a study of banal nationalism that does not only bring ordinary practices to the surface, but examines instances where nationalism is subsumed under other names" (p.244). Fundamentally, Aronczyk is guided by questions about what makes nationalism banal. In other words, when, where and how is nationalism made legitimate? Though I am not conceptualising the legitimacy of nationalism in the same frame as Aronczyck (2017), it does lead one to assess the role of sport in cementing narratives of belonging that have developed outward from imperialism. Modern sport legitimises behaviour that would elsewhere be recognised as extreme mobilisations of character, as I shall now discuss.

Legitimising nationalism

The perception that there is nothing wrong with enforcing 'othering' during sport viewership (Magrath and Stott, 2018; Burdsey, 2020) presents a useful logic with which to consider nationalism itself. This is not to enter into a debate about nationalism, but to identify the relevance of sport as a reason to believe that the principle of national identity is defensible, so long as it is presented as patriotism during moments of support. Over 20 years ago, Archard (1999) identified that a linear historical heritage had resulted in a shared moral belief that the nation was worthy of special support, a view shared by both nationalism and patriotism. To unpack this and the consequences for a reading of MSE viewership, we must attend to the binary categorisations of nationalism that have dominated theory: civic and ethnic. The former is celebrated as the patriotism of the liberal, inclusive, and civilised and the latter as violent, exclusive, and problematic (Tinsley, 2019). The issue with such steadfast boundaries is that it fails to consider the inherent coexistence of civic and ethnic nationalism.

Decolonising the civic/ethnic binary, Tinsley (2019), traces the origins of the categories by critiquing Kohn (1944; who introduced the binary) and presenting civic nationalism as a European concept, born out of colonial expansion, and made possible through the creation of an ethnic 'other.' Therefore, "civic nationalism is inherently violent and exclusionary…predicated on ethnic nationalism [so that] no nationalism can be truly inclusive" (Tinsley, 2019, p.358). Such thinking poses somewhat of a challenge to the work of Anderson (1983), given that his theory relies heavily on the distinction of civic and ethnic nationalisms. It is a theory predicated on the presupposed existence of individual national communities, where the "liberal national entity…rests not only on an overlapping consensus about certain values essential to its functioning, but also on a distinct cultural foundation" (Tamir, 1995, p.9). Instead, we may be better placed by considering that the everyday signs of the 'imagined community' – crusader fancy dress, crowns, lions, Redcoats – are not civic per se, but that they are deemed to be 'legitimate' both in certain situations and in specific narratives that maintain national interests and values. We could therefore fairly reframe discussions of civic and ethnic, as ultimately a process of distinguishing between patriotism (civic) and nationalism (ethnic). In instances of viewership, patriotism, or displaying love for one's 'own' nation is deemed rational and proper. Therefore, ethnic nationalism is legitimised in the sporting space by being disguised as patriotism (remembering there is minor difference at the core of both terms).

A good example of this is the cross of St George in the English flag. St George himself was born in Turkey to a Palestinian mother, the story about the dragon is thought to have come from Silene (modern day Libya), and he is a saint 'we' share with many other states and nations such as Beirut, Catalonia and Ethiopia (English Heritage, 2021). Despite all this, many will commonly identify the Saint as 'belonging' to England (even though he never visited the country; Bueltmann & MacRaild, 2012). The irony that the flag has become synonymous with far-right groups such as the English Defence League (EDL) and British National Party (BNP) should not be lost on readers. But this vignette emphasises the linearism that is apparent in the narratives of our past, present and future. It also illustrates that away from the spatial arrangements of MSE viewership and fandom, displays of St George's cross are met with unease due to the relationship it has with ethnic nationalism. Yet in the sporting realm the display is legitimate, recognised as the practice of a good, patriotic (civic) citizen.

Given such obvious contradictions, what makes the sporting celebration of 'England's' patron saint suddenly socially acceptable? Perhaps, the question should instead be whether someone can ever celebrate 'their' country whilst also promoting 'its' language, culture, history, customs, symbols, and narratives (especially when it comes at the cost of supressing 'other' identities). In response, liberal western elites adopted terms such as 'moderate patriotism' or 'playful nationalism' as,

arguably, a means of legitimising intolerant behaviour in certain situations. Nathanson (1989) presents a particularly admirable and poetic vision of society by suggesting that,

> *"One could say, have a preference for one's own country, a greater love for it, and a greater concern for its well-being without going so far as to think that morality ceases at the border…we can hold that patriotism is a virtue as long as the actions it encourages are not themselves immoral" (p.536).*

An idyllic utopia for sure! (Readers may wish to pause here and consider, seemingly prevalent, attitudes in England towards migrants (see Shukla, 2017) and refugees[9].) Sport scholars have also sought to defend the patriotism of fans along similar lines (such as: Alonso Dos Santos et al., 2020; Gleaves & Llewellyn, 2014). But in trying to justify the morality of fans, such arguments seem to ultimately miss the point. Dixon (2002) is adamant that moderate patriots will always temper their allegiance at the point at which an act becomes immoral, suggesting by example that "while annexing a small, peaceful neighbouring country in order to appropriate its rich mineral deposits would undoubtedly be in their country's best interests, moderate patriots would not dream of proposing such a blatant violation of the neighbouring nation's rights" (p.76). In believing this narrative such arguments fail, on several fronts, to correctly take account of the 'real' issues at hand. There is not recognition of the contemporary ways in which power and privilege operate implicitly within a system that was fundamentally structured to favour a principal identity. What if not all subjugation occurs as the result of the callous actions of the immoral few, but also arises "blindly, accidentally, and defectively out of the chaotic activity of individuals, industries, and states" (Horkheimer, 1993, p.13). Therefore, critiques of patriotism should not seek to tackle attitudes towards 'other nations' exclusively, but the process of 'othering' itself – especially as this process of 'othering' allows exclusionary distinctions between those 'of here' and 'from here' (Brah, 1996). In this way, the ontological implications of the imperial affect domestic populations with equal vehemence.

Without entering into a debate between the ethical theories of Kant and Mill, you will typically hear sport audiences recognise discrimination (such as a recent YouGov survey looking at European football, in which 90% of English responders felt racism was an issue in the Premier League; Ibbetson, 2021) but categorise it as being played out by 'individuals,' 'in the minority,' or who are not 'representative of everyone else' (Poulton, 2021). MSE viewership therefore plays a significant role in framing what 'othering' looks like and allows individuals to interpret their own positionality as not being part of the problem. MSEs offer multiple entry points for people to celebrate narratives of exceptionalism in an acceptable way. Likewise, it reiterates the need for audiences to practice not just

indifference, but an active resistance to behaviours and practices of discrimination, such as anti-racism (Campbell, 2019).

Autonomy

Relatedly, the second major concern of postcolonial studies is about autonomous development (see: McEwan, 2001, 2018; Bilgin, 2019). This concern challenges the assumption of both historic and current accounts of world history being located exclusively in Western Europe (Kerner, 2018). Through this process, White iterations of 'Englishness' became intellectually and morally superior and therefore standard, as did their "display(s) and cultivation of social and cultural capital" (Dorling & Tomlinson, 2019, p.89). Rather than reflecting on the realities of historic global connections, 19th century historians such as Lord Macaulay suggested that "in consequence partly of our geographical and partly of our moral position, we have, during several generations, been exempt from evils which have elsewhere impeded the efforts and destroyed the fruits of industry" (p.99). The consequence of this is a denial of the essential hybridity of the globalised world that brought about what we know as modernity. This has meant that in conceptualisations of modern sport, influences from sporting cultures outside Europe have been downplayed or ignored and that binaries are "often invoked unproblematically, of modernity/tradition, the rational/irrational and the civilised/primitive" (Carrington, 2015, p.111). In MSE viewership, this manifests in a self-produced superiority which can be seen in the popular belief that 'we' (read: 'English') invented sport and gave it to the world (for example, Bose, 2012). Postcolonial theory can be utilised to address this perception by revealing, as Carrington (2015) suggests, modern sport's essential hybridity and dependency on global labour, resources, and bodies. The sociology of sport, and by extension MSE viewership, should therefore be conceived of as globally connected.

'Connected Sociology'

There are many scholars who have called for more globalised sociologies, perhaps none more so than Bhambra (2007; 2014, 2016a; 2017b; 2022). One of the ongoing arguments within her work is for sociology to be 'global' in as much as it acknowledges the 'globally diverse' origins which produce contemporary experience. Her 'connected sociology' would help us to locate 'Englishness' within wider processes and connect it to "colonisation, dispossession, and appropriation" (2016a, p.10). Clearly aligned with the previous section, the understanding here is that a failure to situate national identity within wider processes would normalise a 'national' identity that could not be anything other than exclusive. Whilst slightly different in its approach, it brings back to the forefront of discussion the issues with conceiving the nation in homogenous terms and with a singular starting point. In addition, Bhambra (2016a) goes further by arguing that this is a misidentification of power relations, which

results in viewing the solution to current inequities as merely more inclusion, rather than a full addressal of domination and exclusion.

However, whilst accepting the idea of diverse and pluralistic accounts of sociology is easy, research will often continue to accept standard versions of history that (re)create established narratives about where, how, and to whom history took place. As Bhabha argues, the history of modernity relies on the "writing out of the colonial and postcolonial moment" (1994, p.250). We see this process played out regularly within public spheres. English schoolchildren are asked 'Why did Nelson and Wellington become national heroes?' without any question as to whether "they should treat people like Nelson and Wellington as incontrovertible national heroes" (Evans 2011, p. 11). Michael Gove MP, whilst Secretary of State for Education, was particularly keen to portray their heroism as "unflinching historical facts" (Watson, 2020, p.14). The national history curriculum, he said, could not be "improved by taking out Clive of India and Wolfe of Quebec and replacing them with Eddy the Teddy" (Gove 2013, p. 8). Robert Clive's story is described as one of 'heroic' achievement in which 'British' children could today still take pride, instead of questioning the morality and ethics of a military commander responsible for establishing control over India and laying the foundations of the entire British Raj. In this example we see how the boundaries of England's being in the world orbits the belief that progression and development belonged to, and were exclusively, 'English.'

Returning to the concept of 'connected sociologies' this example emphasises the way in which the colonial formation of England and its postcolonial present is silenced, or at the very least misrepresented (Bhambra, 2016b). Within academia, one of the most alarming consequences of this is a resurgence of liberal interpretations of colonialism as an educational civilising mission that developed the underdeveloped. The shortcomings of this position are clear and yet it has once more found appeal within political science, perhaps in response to the ground gained by anti-colonial movements in recent years (Wigham & Black, 2018). In 2017, Oxford University embarked on a five-year project, entitled 'Ethics of Empire,' headed by Regius Professor of moral and pastoral theology Nigel Biggar (a long-time apologist for the British Empire). The project's 'rationale' was to "develop a nuanced and historically intelligent Christian ethics of Empire" (The McDonald Centre, 2023). It could be viewed as countenance, following Britain's decision to leave the EU, to gain institutional rapport for future projects premised on Anglo-Saxon racial superiority (Bhambra et al., 2020). Yet Biggar is not alone in his desire to rehabilitate imperial rule. Bruce Gilley (2017) attracted strong criticism for his article 'The Case for Colonialism' which was originally published in '*Third World Quarterly*.' Despite taking a global look at colonisation, Gilley reiterates the growing appetite for imperial mythology and fantasy within England:

> *"The notion that colonialism is always and everywhere a bad thing needs to be re-thought in light of the grave human toll of a century of anti-colonial regimes and policies. Western and non-western countries should reclaim the colonial toolkit and language as part of their commitment to effective governance and international order" (p.1).*

There is no concession that colonial rule may have created the political landscape which caused 'grave human toll,' nor does it give weight to the relative achievements of campaigns such as 'Black Lives Matter,' 'Kick it Out,' and 'Rhodes Must Fall', to name a few. It is entirely possible that Gilley (2017) asks us to rethink the 'civilising mission' that he mistakenly suggests led "to improvements in living conditions for most Third World people" (p.2) to counter the threats to supremacy posed by these campaigns. Even if we ignore Gilley's use of archaic language, there remains a view of the world that perceives western understanding as inherently better. He seeks to save his English identity from obscurity, from the 'challenge' of Celtic nationalism, the 'claims' of multiculturalism and the 'threat' of Europe (Kumar, 2003). Gilley (2017) exonerates England of any moral wrongdoing and attributes continued global inequality to the corrupt regimes of 'third' world nations.

This abstract division of the world places Europe and much of the West as modern, and most of the rest as traditional (read: backward; Bhambra, 2016b). Therefore, postcolonial theory challenges the existing understanding of autonomy. Acknowledging this concern offers a more direct challenge to dismantling 'Englishness' and the way in which power is understood to operate within everyday practices and spaces. Importantly for this thesis, it would mean reconstructing present understandings of belonging through a more honest acknowledgment of ill-informed narratives of both past and present. Therefore, the starting point for understanding MSE viewership is that imperialism is ubiquitous, and all viewers are enactors of an exclusive belonginess, rather than simply consumers of external forces.

Media, MSE audiences, and nationhood

Imagining world history from this 'connected' vantage point invites critique about the prevalence of media studies scholarship in researching MSE audiences. In many ways this reflects broader criticism of the prescriptive frameworks found within social science that have 'strong normative situatedness' in Enlightenment tradition (Shome, 2019). This is not to say I do not see media as important in maintaining and manufacturing narratives of 'othering'. There is of course research that successfully interrogates mainstream media, identity formation and nationhood, for example by

Vucetic (2021). Rather, from a postcolonial position, I identify several issues with sports media studies that challenge longstanding narratives within academia, positioning the audience as passive consumers.

Firstly, many sport media studies do not establish "basic premises about the nature of media in modern society…Except in a rather oblique fashion, they fail to confront issues of causation, from, within and to media" (Hesmondhalgh and Toynbee, 2008, p.10). This means that contemporary sport media studies have not comprehensively critiqued the field's history as heavily Eurocentric or recognised how the media, especially print, aided imperial expansion (Shome, 2016). Media (like sport) is not a neutral domain, but the product of social and ideological constructions of the world by those who had a personal stake in dominance (Moyo, 2020). Mauro (2020) argues we should recognise the deeper dynamics associated with historical processes of 'othering' within media discourses. Just as academics embraced the myth of objective scholarship, journalists have embraced the myth of objective media (Herring & Robinson, 2003). But such a statement raises more questions than answers, which highlights the need for a more comprehensive body of work that entangles postcolonial communication and media studies (Kumar & Parameswaran, 2018).

Building on this, the second issue is that we are witnessing trends toward greater partisanship, both in the way sport media is structured and how it is received by audiences (Peterson and Muñoz, 2022). I suggest that this results in arguments that either do not consider contemporary discrimination 'outside' of sport media or take on a grandiloquent Chomsky-esque determination. Either way there is a stubbornness to offer more contextualised approaches to the issue of sport media and discrimination (Poell, 2020). Put simply, one cannot understand the role of sport media without first considering the wider social environments in which they operate or vice versa (Wolfsfeld et al., 2013). However, critical media studies have typically focused on transnational media corporations as owners of production (Gibbons, 2009). Likewise, cultural studies have tended to be locked into the interrogation of sport media through textual analysis (Ferguson & Golding, 1997). The problem with this is that politics of belonging are understood as being exteriorised by the media and internalised by audiences (Hall, 1980). On the contrary, in this thesis, viewers are recognised as active agents in not only the consumption, but also the (re)production of 'Englishness.' Making audiences the principal producers of 'Englishness' would mean that sports sociology was not "guilty of mere ivory-tower abstractions but would be capable of the 'deep' understanding of contemporary social processes which it professes to seek" (King, 2002, p.211).

Finally, it is worth briefly mentioning that media itself is at somewhat of a crossroads. We continue to see shifts away from traditional forms of mass media towards 'platformisation' and 'social

media' (Mauro, 2020). The resulting fluidity in producer and consumer, seriously challenges the privileging of western capitalist (media) corporations as 'makers' of knowledge (Bhambra, 2017b). For the reasons detailed here, I argue that centralising the media within this thesis is not necessary. I reiterate that sports media is hugely influential in manufacturing who belongs; we could not discuss the representational power of MSEs without appreciating the role of media in this process (Mauro, 2020). However, under a postcolonial framework 'modern sport' could quite easily be replaced with 'the media' (Diary Entry 2). I am not saying the two are symbiotic, but that both are products of globalised development. This means that only with later enquiry will we be able to produce accurate interpretations of media's role in (re)producing hegemonic identity narratives (Poell, 2020). In this sense, there is a need for a renewed theoretical discussion in Media Studies and postcolonial theory is well placed to offer a transformative critique. But this falls outside the scope of this thesis.

Historical Materialism

The final major concern of postcolonial theory seeks to address the material legacies – particularly economic – of formal colonisation (Kerner, 2018). Whilst the focus on historical material processes has invariably drawn postcolonialism closer to Marxism[10] (see Spivak, 1988; Olson and Fox, 2010; Samaddar, 2017; Sinha & Varma 2017; Ekers et al., 2020) there are several points of critique made by postcolonial thinkers about (neo)Marxist[11] theories; the interpretation of historical change that sees imperialism as a necessary step in achieving a socialist global order (linearism; Veltmeyer & Petras, 2015); the presumption that the social and historical processes that matter, which are determinative, are European (autonomy; Kerner, 2018); and the understanding of imperialism only through a bourgeoisie/proletariat power dynamic (Lazarus, 2002; Bartolovich, 2002). Although seemingly incompatible (Chibber, 2014), cross-fertilising postcolonialism and Marxism produces a perspective capable of articulating existing critiques of MSEs as spectacles of late-capitalist consumption with critical analysis of MSE viewership as a domain where 'common-sense' assumptions and stereotypes about 'Englishness' are consumed, enacted, and connected to imperial nostalgias.

Consuming MSEs

Given the obvious relationship between socio-economics and sporting culture (Warner, 2018), it is worthwhile considering MSEs within a global consumer marketplace. As Carrington (2015) suggests, we are much better placed to produce postcolonial critiques if modern sport is "conceptualised more as a particular physical manifestation and representation of European myths…born of colonial conflict, than as the actual objective embodiment of the 'truth'" (Carrington,

2015, p.112). Looking at MSEs from this perspective rather succinctly demonstrates the way in which capitalism and race collide during MSE viewership.

Addressing this relationship, Silk (2015) analysed the London 2012 Olympics opening ceremony. According to him, the opening ceremony highlighted the central issues of "being, belonging, privilege and hierarchy within a post-colonial heterophilic Britain" (Silk, 2015, p.1). The 'popular' and 'powerful' arena of MSEs, Silk asserts, serve not only a pedagogical function, but ideologically and politically position audiences to question themselves within the past and present nation. Importantly, the portrayal of an "authorised past" during the opening ceremony was not an attempt to perform an historically accurate depiction of England but present an acceptable view of the nation.

Even though the focus of Silk's paper is on what audiences saw, there is an acceptance that it was informed, for the most part, by what they wanted to see. In this way the prologue of the opening ceremony reflected many of the 'quintessential' characteristics of 'Englishness' by depicting 'Britain' as a:

> *"tableau vivant of rural English life in the 18th Century: a prelapsarian age of cows, goats, geese, sheep, shire horse, a bank of wild flowers, a mill race, a Cotswold stone cottage with smoking chimneys, a Wheatfield stippled with poppies, a wooden barn, a trio of maypoles, a kitchen garden [and] rustic games of cricket and football" (Williams, 2012, cited by Silk 2015, pp.70-71).*

In conjunction with these orthodox narratives of Britain, the 'rustic' and 'quaint' opening was followed by a depiction of the industrial revolution, which is an interesting example of the general inaccuracy of 'Englishness' (Rowe, 2013). It is illustrative of the ideological construction of 'Englishness.' As Said (1978) reminds us, "the construction of identity is bound up with the disposition of power and powerlessness in each society" (p.332). Britain was being depicted as a producer of wealth and the scene reminded the nation that the industrial revolution began and indeed spread outward from England (Silk, 2015). Through this, industrialisation is a process invariably returned to the 'cotton-mills of Manchester,' even though 'cotton' was a crop farmed in the southern states of the U.S. by African slaves and made use of dyeing practices that originated in India and the Middle East (Bhambra, 2017b). Such a view changes the narrative of English superiority, as there was a globality that brought about advancements to England's industry. Without 'others,' the processes that placed England on a path to Empire could not have taken place.

The impact of ideologies of consumption and commercialism should not be downplayed, as 'Englishness' has increasingly been aligned with market-led aims of corporate neoliberalism and vice

versa (Silk et al., 2014; Andrews & Silk, 2018). In this sense, the opening and closing ceremonies of MSEs have received a considerable amount of attention (such as: Lemus-Delgado, 2016; Maingard, 1997; Vincent et al., 2019). In the build-up to MSEs, all manner of collectibles, fashion garments and advertising slogans are "embodied, waved, worn, displayed, performed, watched, heard and sung" (Silk et al., 2014, p.727). During the catalysed nationalism associated with MSEs, the 'omnipresent utilisation' of national mythology validates and internalises imperial discourses precisely at a point of conscious ethnopolitical contestation (Billig, 1995). This corporatized control of 'Englishness' is problematic; firstly, it incorporates the agendas of 'inclusion' and 'exclusion' with the materialistic impulses of state and transnational capitalism. In Horkheimer's (1993) parlance, the capitalist economic imperative thus holds up 'the law of human society' and therefore dictates how we identify as citizens – through notions of 'consumption as citizenship' (Paton et al., 2012). This gives credence to Neo-Marxist theorisations on 'late-stage capitalism' that express inequality in terms of a rigged system favouring the unrealistic perspectives of the bourgeoisie. Secondly, nationalist discourses of 'English' superiority and 'mythical English values' have been manipulated under the perverse interests of capital as essential aspects of viewership, whilst maintaining an illusion that 'sport' is void of any ideological manipulation (Silk et al., 2014). Finally, I believe that corporatized nationhood enhances arguments that the general citizen ignores the lived reality of the poor and how their decisions may directly impact the 'misery of others' (Horkheimer, 1993). It means that conscious acts of consumer purchase make individuals complicit with wider systems of inequity. Furthermore, it reinforces MSE viewership as a facilitator to the consumption of imperialist narratives.

Black Marxism, Critical Race Theory and Postcolonialism

The problem facing any conceptual and methodological economic reduction is a lack of all but the crudest sociological analyses (see; Harvey, 2003; Hardt & Negri, 2000). One way in which this shortcoming may be successfully addressed is by interrogating 'Englishness' as a racial category that benefits from the material privileges of imperialism, which is reinforced in the sporting space. The power of this is in the capacity to focus on processes of racialisation as a key element of capitalist processes of 'accumulation by dispossession.' The work of Robinson (1980, 1983, 1997, and 2000) offered a radical new dimension to Marxist tradition and is an example of how researchers can attend to the aforementioned shortcomings about Marxism. 'Black Marxism' was an effort to produce a more comprehensive account of the relationship between race and capitalism by encouraging us to think of the multiple modalities of racism and the material forces outside of colonialism through which it was enacted (Virdee, 2019). According to Robinson (1983), a 'racial capitalism' had not broken from, but merely evolved from the old-world orders. He argued that no strata of European society could be free of an expression of non-white racial value. Therefore, European civilisations could not be understood

as the 'product' of capitalism but considered bound to the historic effect of racialisation (Robinson, 2000).

Whilst 'racial capitalism' demonstrates how separate concepts can be brought into focus together, a postcolonial perspective highlights how 'Black Marxism' is guilty itself of historical idealism by failing to contend with the extensive history of capitalist policies prior to European expansion and the other characteristics which can be used to legitimise exploitation (Ralph and Singhal, 2019). Therefore, instead of seeking to make claims of causality, the goal should be to eliminate all racial and other socially constructed unjust hierarchies. To this end Critical Race Theory (CRT) offers a framework for interrogating racialised inequalities and privilege. CRT is not just about the presence of race, but also its absence (Fletcher and Hylton, 2016). Fundamentally, CRT theory posits that racism is ordinary, materially deterministic, and that race is socially constructed (Delgado & Stefancic, 2023). CRT therefore encourages intellectual engagement with the contemporary conditions of racialised belonging. On this point, there is synergy (not synthesis) between CRT and postcolonialism (Meghji, 2022). Both share a focus on how representations of intersecting oppressions "become grounded in interdependent concepts of binary thinking, oppositional difference, objectification, and social hierarchy" (Hill-Collins, 1990, p.71). Whilst CRT offers more 'applied' concerns in looking at how organisations and policies make racism invisible, postcolonialism is more focused on how racial hierarchies and stereotypes are reproduced in cultural domains. In the context of national identity, the synergism of these theories balances "the study of national racialized social systems, with their own internal logics and processes, with the transnational focus of decolonial thought, which stresses the continuity of the past" (Meghji, 2022, p.660). In other words, it provides a frame to examine 'applied' hierarchies and stereotypes of belonging being enacted and connecting these to global historical associations of imperialism.

Crucial to this is, as Fletcher and Hylton (2016) have suggested, CRTs focus on everyday racialised realities, as opposed to simply naming Whiteness. We can see how this might be effectively deployed by considering the work of Hall (1991). Drawing on his personal experience of an exclusive national identity, he argued that to be 'English' was to know yourself in relation to what everybody else was not. In this process, he continued, identity is always structured, so that when we speak about the 'English,' it is grounded in a full set of histories, economic relations, cultural discourses and sexual identities (Hall, 1991). The conception of 'Englishness' which emerges involves a clear theory of culture and identity which Gilroy (1990) described as ethnic absolutism. It views nations as culturally homogeneous 'communities of sentiment,' which for Gilroy[12] denied 'race' as a meaningful biological category and instead made it a cultural issue. Racialisation was made ordinary and therefore

intrinsically related to English identity (Gilroy, 2002), re-specifying itself in the contentious cultural terms of lifestyle, consumption and values that must be preserved and maintained from 'dilution' and 'pollution' by non-White, non-Christian, non-heterosexual 'minorities' (Bracke and Hernández Aguilar, 2020). A homogeneous gemeinschaft[13] of 'Englishness' which supposedly existed in the past has led to racial difference being influential in the creation of an English identity and therefore Whiteness itself (Carrington, 2010). In this way 'Englishness' is dictated through the distinction between White and non-White others (Hesse, 2007), which if correct makes Whiteness the first hurdle in order for belonging to be granted. This highlights that there are multiple social categorisations that determine not only who belong, but also how people are expected to behave and act (Skey, 2011). In the context of 'Englishness,' there is therefore a need for more intersectional analysis that engages with the axis of difference which have come to define contemporary belonging: race, religion and gender. This is especially true of MSE viewership, as it is an occasion during which these categories of belonging intersect and coalesce to create an exclusive 'Englishness.'

The Axis of 'Othering'

The perspectives being advanced in this chapter have highlighted the need for an intersectional approach to studying 'Englishness' that pays close attention to the ways in which 'othering' is naturalised, identities are made autonomous, and the material dimensions of nationhood. On this latter point, it is interesting that the 'threat' to England is often discussed in economic terms, such as lost job opportunities or the consumption of NHS resources (Rhodes and Hall, 2020). However, there remains the unavoidable fact that we cannot separate 'Englishness' from the historical and ongoing forces of imperialism. In acknowledging this postcolonial approaches illuminate the dualism of 'Englishness,' whereby it is an identity that has developed all the outward trappings of a category free from Empire, but the surreptitious functions of imperialism still linger in the structure of everyday institutions and the mundane symbols of nationhood (Gikandi, 1996). Using the key components of postcolonial theory, as explored in this chapter, to entangle the diverging categories of belonging associated with 'Englishness' can help draw out the ways in which MSE viewership is significant to everyday enactments of 'othering'.

Race

If 'Englishness' cannot be separated from the 'ethnic absolutism' that makes it an exclusively White identity, that means 'all White people' are entered into the macro processes through which White privilege is maintained, regardless of desire or the amount of benefit one receives from racial hierarchies of belonging (Quraishi and Philburn, 2015). To elaborate on this point, the work of Fletcher

(2014) highlighted that in 'othering' the very idea of ethnicity itself – the 'telling' of White people's understandings of their 'race' – has not been subject to rigorous critique or evaluation. With particularly good reason, the narrative of scholarship on race and ethnicity would appear to have focused on the experiences of ethnic minorities within White majority societies. Hitherto, there has been an assumption "that being White means one is ascribed with power and privilege that is used to one's advantage on a daily basis. This conceptualisation…assumes (wrongly) that all White people are conscious of their 'Whiteness' and its attendant privilege" (Fletcher, 2014, p.246). Nor does such a stance consider the reduction of racism (post-civil rights era) to overt forms of discrimination, engendering "a confidence that we are not part of the problem" (DiAngelo, 2018, p.9). Referring to the invisible power relations that sustain racism should not be read as an abdication of individual responsibility for compliance in systems of oppression, but an attempt to help elicit a more productive discussion on racial hierarchies in society. The goal is to "stimulate meaningful conversations about Whiteness and move White folks past emotions like defensiveness, denial, guilt, and shame (emotions that do nothing to improve conditions for people of colour) and toward a place of self-empowerment and social responsibility" (Chiariello, 2016, section 1). To reiterate; it is imperative to listen to and provide a space for ethnic minorities to document their experiences within systems of oppression, but academics must continue to consciously engage with Whiteness as a racialised identity.

We can consider the counter-protests of England's far right to renewed calls for an altered history curriculum as demonstrating how racism is framed as a specific form of Whiteness. Moreover, they clearly interpolated and brought together the (contested) symbols of the colonial past and sports fans. Agitated by the BLM movement, the (self-described) 'football lads' of the DFLA sought to 'defend' memorials and statues of individuals who they felt represented their history, but in doing so they were defending individuals who had benefited directly from and, in many ways, instigated the racialised hierarchies of the past. However, the reaction of the DFLA was framed as 'individual pathologies' of racial hatred. Instead, it was an overtly racist action from the many 'racial strategies' that White people can employ when creating their own racial reality (Harris, 2022). In saying this, I am not suggesting that all White people are racist, but that Whiteness is central to the everyday decisions they make (Bowler, 2017). In this sense, 'Whiteness' is rarely engaged with by White people, and there would appear to be something of a fundamental disconnect between the racial self-perceptions of White Moderates and the realities of racism (DiAngelo, 2018). This is important because Whiteness can only operate as a system of power so long as the majority agrees to it as a category of belonging. It emphasises the need to "address how processes of exclusion and dominance might operate implicitly through routine and normalised practices" (Fletcher, 2014, p.3). MSE viewership of the national team (as a site to engage with an inherently whitewashed vision of group identity) positions

viewers within a space where, rather than contesting the racialised notions of belonging, they openly celebrate it – thus consenting to the maintenance of racial hierarchies from which they ultimately benefit (whether they like it or not).

On presenting this thesis at BSA and ASEN conferences the criticism I have received to this line of argument is "but what about minority fans?" Such questioning likely comes from an incomplete understanding about how belonging and fandom operate. It is reminiscent of the tired cliché, "I can't be racist as I have black friends." What this stance fails to acknowledge is that inclusion is controlled by gatekeepers and never fully guaranteed, and that in becoming an act 'Englishness' has made racism so insidious that anybody performing it perpetuates racial imperial hierarchies (Bhambra, 2014). Fletcher's (2014) work resurfaces here, who reflecting on his own experience, notes that "one's insider or outsider status is never certain; rather it is filled with dissonance and ambiguity, it is an ongoing performance and is always in a state of flux" (p.244). Elaborating upon this helps to present a more rigorous defence of the arguments presented within this section.

Firstly, despite trends of growing inclusivity in certain contexts, MSE viewership is a realm in which hegemonic masculinity, and the implications of Whiteness and heterosexuality, persists (Allison and Knoester, 2021). This was evident at the 2016 Australian Open where several fans wore 'blackface' at a Serena Williams game (Hylton, 2018). Within sports viewership a person's belonging only exists when and for as long as the ethnic majority allow it, with 'minority' fans' inclusion and acceptance relying on several interlinking factors (Ratna, 2014). As De Martini Ugolotti (2022) suggests, membership within the 'in group' is often "contingent on the capacity (or willingness) of specific racialised, classed and gendered bodies to contribute to a palatable and visible…image of vibrancy and diversity" (p.6). 'Englishness' is then a 'performance' in which all individuals must play their part in embodying imperial narratives in order to belong. The contradiction in such a performance is that it means ethnic minorities can themselves (re)produce inequitable relationships.

Secondly, the presence alone of ethnic minority fans does not immediately mean racism is over. If we allow ourselves to equate diversity with equality, we fail to truly dismember racial hierarchies. I could unpack this further, but in responding to the 2022 Conservative leadership race (where half the original candidates were of ethnic-minority backgrounds and half were women) Professor Andrews explained this process to Smith (2022) rather eloquently, saying that:

> *"Representation isn't just about having a Black or a Brown face…It's about representing the views and interests of Black and Brown people. [The leadership race] is a perfect example of why diversity is not a solution to anything…This is the*

most racist government of my lifetime, on immigration matters at least. So the idea that it's somehow going to be good for race relations, just because a Black or Brown will be head of it, is ludicrous."

Readers should understand how worthwhile it would be to accept this. Thinking more abstractly, we can see that whilst our societies may 'look' diverse, the individuals who wield the most power in this world (the gatekeepers) still represent a very narrow identity. Objecting to Anderson's imposition that racism was antithetical to nationalism, Gilroy (2004) states that in the UK race is "fired by conceptions of national belonging and homogeneity which not only blur the distinction between 'race' and nation but rely on that very ambiguity for their effect" (p. 44). Moving forward, we must appreciate that race is always framed as a problem for ethnic minorities, as opposed to dealing with the real issue – White perpetuation. Crucially missing from most discussion is Whiteness, even though it is Whiteness that leads to the categorisation of non-white bodies. "White supremacy is bigger than the sum of individual White people's actions" (Tinsley, 2022, section 3). To put it plainly, racism does not exist because Black people do.

In summary, we can borrow intellectual thought from previous discussions about nationalism and force ourselves to re-conceptualise race and racism outside the commonly used rigid dichotomies by which they are understood. This would mean admitting that we live in a racist world, with Whiteness a matrix of power entrenched in imperialism, and thus that all White people are (directly or indirectly) involved. For some readers, acknowledging this will be extremely uncomfortable (Diary Entry 3). Know that this is not said out of malice, but out of a desire to present a more truthful account of everyday racialised belonging, so that we can all invest in anti-racism work. This cannot be achieved without recognising the role religion plays in racism, or the significance of gender in marking the identities of 'others.'

Religion

To truly dismantle the racialised hierarchies within 'Englishness,' we must also consider the dimensions of social division imposed through religious marginalisation (Kearns and Forrest, 2000). Pronounced shifts have occurred in the contours of race and nationhood, with the Windrush Generation[14] no longer representing the metaphorical 'bogeyman' (Rhodes and Hall, 2020). The change would appear to have been replicated across the body politic – a Centre for English Identity and Politics (Denham, 2019[15]) study of English residents repeated a survey conducted by British Futures in 2012 and found that "only 12% of respondents felt skin colour was important to English identity, down 21% from seven years previous" (section 1). Though this gives credence to arguments

that Whiteness has been normalised and unnoticed in self-identification, it also suggests that researchers must consider religion and faith as key markers of difference in the racialised expressions of national belonging (Virdee and McGeever, 2018). Indeed, in the early-1990's Anthias and Yuval-Davis (1992) warned that scholars had failed to take religion seriously as a central component within the emergent agendas of contemporary racism. Increasingly, 'the Muslim' or perceived 'Muslimness' has become the:

> *"embodiment of a range of social, cultural and political concerns linked to terrorism, criminality, repressive gender politics, 'troubling' cultural predictions, and sexual pathologies (evident in debates about 'grooming')…Halal meat, veiling practices, self-segregation, challenges to civil liberties and free speech, are all identified as marking a cultural threat to the nation and its Anglo-Saxon and Christian character" (Rhodes and Hall, 2020).*

In their interrogation of racism and nationalism, Rhodes and Hall (2020) confirm the process of 'othering' in the context of religion. So too did it emerge during their explorations of the discursive frames of nationhood that White Englishness was increasingly being cast as a 'minority,' victimised by the processes of immigration and globalisation. The entanglement of these narratives with mobilisations of imperial longing, which has erased the brutality of the colonial era, marks the enduring appeal of racialised national identity. It is indicative of a renewed assertion in the presupposed 'character' of the nation which is both 'White' and inherently 'Christian': two key discursive formulations to which core value is attached.

Considering the existence of a presupposed national 'character,' Storry and Childs (1997) argued that despite the declining levels of people actively 'practicing' Christianity, England is commonly assumed to be a Christian nation (partly due to it occupying a political and spiritual role, with the Anglican Church being the chosen religious body of the British government). The result of this link, they continue, is that even with the presence of large Jewish, Hindu, Sikh and Muslim communities, a majority of people would feel themselves to be 'Christian' in terms of their underlying values and principles. Therefore, a 'passive Christianity' has emerged as a replacement for active religious belief which is enforced through subtle cultural experiences within the everyday lived experience of English society. For example; the 5th of November (Bonfire Night) is a popular celebration that commemorates the failed Catholic plot to blow up the Houses of Parliament by Guy Fawkes, and the Christmas period will often see people listening to carols on the radio, watching Christmas programmes on television, and attending public performances of the nativity story. These religious festivals have become part of 'British Heritage,' which, under the commercial project of tourism, has

exaggerated fanciful and fictitious representations of the English nation (Olsen, 2003; Littler, 2005). So too, have increasingly popular period dramas, such as 'Downton Abbey,' re-created narratives of an ideal Britain, with "the common elements of the aristocracy, venerable buildings, and English eccentrics" (Storry and Childs, 1997, p.309). Under the illusions of a principle religious affiliation combined with a process of 'othering,' 'Englishness' is then restricted to either 'active' or 'passive' Christian belief. It highlights once more the changing nature of 'overt' and 'covert' discrimination, with 'passive' ethnic and religious understandings of being continuing the power imbalances of imperialist dogma.

To this end, it is important to acknowledge the imperial linkages within the socio-theological movements of 'muscular Christianity.' A movement that came into vogue within English public schools and the Protestant Church during the Victorian Era, muscular Christianity derived many of its tenets from the 'civilising mission' archetype and underpinned the colonial aspirations of the English elite (Putney, 2009). Once more, we are faced with contradictory discourses whereby the ethical principles of "fair play, respect, strength, perseverance, subordination, obedience, discipline, loyalty, co-operation, self-control, self-sacrifice [and] endurance" (Parker and Watson, 2017, p.143) are developed through a movement steeped in the philosophies of social Darwinism that was both 'sexually repressive' and 'morally priggish' (Haley, 2013). The key point is that the expansion of a muscular Christian ethos was yet another mechanism through which imperial values could be instilled as core aspects of identity on both economic and moral grounds (Mangan, 2013b). Often, the 'British style,' 'gentlemanly amateur,' or 'proper conduct' was used to signify the 'correct' way of being and aided the practical enterprise of 'civilising' colonies (Perkin, 1989). Imperialist thought, as asserted by Dolan and Connolly (2017) was, therefore, "transformed from mere opinion into fact because they were perceived as being reproduced in spaces where political and academic bias were not present" (p.161). This matters because it theoretically may imply that modern sport was also 'invented' for the purpose of ensuring the conformity of hegemonic groups and the compliance of 'others.'

There are several ways in which religion and sport collide, especially during viewership and commentary, where faith-based language and metaphors are often used (Lewis, 2013), and sport can hold 'divine' importance (Hoffman, 2011). Parker and Watson (2022) highlighted the ways in which Christian values are evident "in and through modern day commercialised sport" (p.164). Using MSEs as an example of the promotion and propagation of muscular Christian values, they conclude that MSEs might be considered 'sites of worship.' This emphasises a previous suggestion made in this thesis that 'Englishness' can, to a certain extent, be an element of consumption, which is significant because it means that a 'physically supreme white Christian imperialism' (Carrington, 2010) is diffused within

the identity of the nation during MSEs. Modern sport, inter alia, operates in passively affirming the muscular Christian divinity of 'Englishness.' The key takeaway of this is that 'Englishness' has been imbued with a 'divine' superiority and that Christianity is significant to the embodiment of 'who' and 'what' is deemed 'English' (Rhodes and Hall, 2020). For example, in Dart and Long's (2021) study of Jewish identity, participants suggested that they may pass as 'White Anglo-Saxon Protestant' before suggesting that "those whose ethnic identity was more visible 'had it worse'" (p.691). This is important because during the alignment of muscular Christianity and 'Englishness,' the boundaries of race and religion meet, which reiterates that belonging is contingent on several interconnecting factors. The implication of this is that those whose 'Englishness' is taken-for-granted are therefore privileged. MSE viewership brings the interplay of these social categorisations to light, and the postcolonial approach foregrounded in this thesis can unpick such intersubjectivity. Furthermore, it focuses attention not on the severity of 'othering' during viewership, but on the everyday ways in which 'Englishness' is homogenised, essentialised and/or validated.

Gender

When considering the 'everydayness' of 'Englishness' it is necessary to acknowledge that gender is one of the most 'obvious' markers of identity (Vidacs, 2020). This points to the fact that both race and religion are interlinked with, constituted by, and performed through gendered binaries. Gender is a meaningful category that buttresses the national imagining, and gender relations have, perhaps unsurprisingly, occupied a central space within postcolonial theory (Boehmer, 2005). Furthermore, it is worth appreciating that many decolonising and political transformations have been actualised through feminist activism[16]. Gender certainly played a key role in the agendas of Empire – most starkly illustrated by the images of Britannia. In this way, the female form symbolized the nation's morality and superiority, and English women's presumed propensity for civil and domestic refinement made them an integral part of the domesticating (civilising) mission of the colonial project (Wilson, 2003). White femininity became a category through which the nation's self-ascribed 'manners of humanity' could be understood (Wilson, 2003). In practicality, the secular institutions of the Empire were heavily influenced by the morality of the 'English Lady' (Rendall, 2006, p.110). Placed against the backdrop of 'Britannic nationalism,' 'English' femininity was thus representative of the characteristics of Britannia herself.

Likewise, White masculinity became the superior identity, deemed to represent the supposedly ideal male virtues – "strength, toughness, determination, grit, aggression, commitment, and single-mindedness" (Horne et al., 2012, p.93). There are clear links here to muscular Christianity, as stoic masculinity represented the ideal (Parker and Watson, 2022). Furthermore, sport was

practically used to position the 'English' male as superior, with male dominated sports symbolising the patriarchy of Victorian society – particularly in team sports associated with English public schools such as cricket and rugby – and forming "the distinctively masculinised modern sport phenomenon… [Becoming] powerful and symbolic representations of all that was deemed by the ruling class to be worth in the Anglo-Saxon male" (Allen, 2014, p.21). This highlights that sport was deemed capable of teaching lessons of manhood and central to (re)enforcing the superiority of 'imperial manliness' over 'others' (Mangan, 2014). Adams (2020) describes this process as a 'masculinist hidden curriculum' which shaped sports "saturated with maleness, 'heightened' masculinity…and rife with abuse, intimidation, and violence" (p.464). Importantly, sport plays a critical role in mapping gender, which during MSEs are attached to 'Englishness' both symbolically and ideologically to (re)produce the authority of 'English' femininity and masculinity.

This points to the complexity of gendered belongingness to the nation, as the patriarchal divisions of gender itself create categories for exclusion and inclusion. Though White men and women were deemed superior, they were not equals[17]. Men had been created to rule, lead and be strong, and women had been created to be submissive and serve (Midgley, 2017). White women struggle to be represented as equal to their male counterparts, having long been characterised by qualities that mean they require patriarchal assistance (Litchfield, 2018). Hooks (2004), describes the system as 'insidious' due to the denial of its existence, and her use of the phrase 'imperialist White-supremacist capitalist patriarchy' is useful in understanding the inter-locking systems through which the 'silent majority' make sense of the world. This makes visible how the boundaries of gender are also used to reinforce racial difference. Race always informs representations of athletes; the 'Black woman athlete' is constructed as masculine, hypersexualized and sexually undesirable, whereas the femininity of the 'White women athlete' embodies Western notions of heteronormativity (Adjepong and Carrington, 2014; Toffoletti et al., 2012). This is particularly salient in the cases of Maria Sharapova and Serena Williams, who invoke rather drastically the juxtaposition of racialised gender, with the former framed as feminine and dainty, the later as masculine and sexually grotesque (Litchfield et al., 2018). The construction of such narratives is interesting in the contexts of masculinity. However, whilst the Black male body is in many ways the epitome of hegemonic masculinity, 'racial folklore' will often diminish the intelligence of black male athletes (Parry et al., 2020). Therefore, the norms and forms of Whiteness associated with 'Englishness' uphold the White male body as dominant. This emphasises that, whilst belonging is fluid, it is contingent on 'meeting' the standard of White, Christian and male value.

In sport studies, Hargreaves (1990; 2002; 2013) has written extensively on the intricacies of racialised gender, successfully framing the complex interplaying continuums of gender and race, along which certain bodies are afforded access depending on what dominant groups deem permissible. This recognises that analysing gender alone does not sufficiently address the close relationship of gendered and racial binaries that result in sexism, objectification, and homo/bi phobia (Hargreaves and Anderson, 2014). This is because, together, "they have produced dominant ideas of males and females, masculinity and femininity; ideas that were cemented into sport during its early history and subsequent spread from the West to other countries throughout the world" (Hargreaves and Anderson, 2014, p.4). This highlights how sport viewership serves as one of the principle cultural practices through which masculine and feminine value systems are conceptualised (Cleland et al., 2020). This is significant to the celebration of 'Englishness' during MSEs because it means that the imagined identity of the nation cannot be separated from the processes of 'othering' associated with the 'traditional' gender identities and created at a time when imperial thought was most conscious.

MSEs undoubtedly exist along highly gendered lines (Phipps, 2021). The intersectional experience of sport fandom provides an easy entry point to interrogate race, religion, acceptable femininity, and masculinity. Female sporting events are always gender marked, situated as secondary to the male alternatives: Women's Cricket World Cup, FA Women's National League, RFL Women's Super League and so forth. Even when we consider the Olympics and Olympians (a gender-neutral term), Cambridge English Corpus (2016) have shown that there is significant statistical difference in the tendency to gender mark female Olympians in comparison to males. Practically speaking, men and women compete mostly in separate leagues and competitions, use different equipment, and abide by different rules (Piggott and Matthews, 2020). This is not to say that audiences engage with MSEs as blank canvases; rather, they link sport to the existing cultural structures of 'othering' within which they already exist (Allison and Knoester, 2021). In the sporting domain, performances of the patriarchy permeate the audience, leading to the (re)production of unequal power relations (Arnaldo, 2020). Sport viewership is engorged by stereotypical notions of masculinity and femininity, only further attaching imperial dynamics to the identity of the nation during international competition.

Adopting a postcolonial perspective therefore means recognising that gender itself produces unequal exchanges within communities, but also that gendered 'othering' cannot exist outside the broader epistemic processes of imperialism (Miescher, et al., 2015). As should be increasingly clear, no categories that came to or will define modernity are free from imperialism. Importantly, 'Englishness' is gendered, which makes any celebration of it part of a wider system that (re)enforces

the patriarchy. Therefore, the continued injustices faced by 'non-conforming' gender identities are the result of, amongst other things, the surreptitious identities of the nation.

Class

In the context of the overall discussion of this section, class is a complicated topic. Whilst there are clearly socio-economic dimensions to 'Englishness,' class is often weaponised by many White people to erase the existence of racial inequity, or at the very least their own culpability for racism (Warren, 2001). For this reason, I seriously question the significance of class to this thesis. This is, of course, not to say that class does not matter, or that it does not present a substantial barrier to dismantling oppression. For instance, most ethnic minorities have fared far worse socio-economic hardship because of austerity measures (Fisher and Nandi, 2015). Sport itself is heavily stratified along class boundaries, particularly in terms of participation, and class analyses have held a key space within sport studies (Bairner, 2007).

I have arrived at the conclusion that focus should be directed elsewhere, following Bhambra's (2017a) article "Brexit, Trump, and 'methodological Whiteness': on the misrecognition of race and class," in which she discusses how the views of the White majority have been skewed to reflect only that of White working-class people. She shows that the claims of social analyses that sought to 'legitimise' the claims of the 'left behind,' are not represented by empirical evidence. For example, the Brexit referendum was in fact delivered on the back of financially stable, middle class, English voters situated in the south as opposed to xenophobic 'economic-have-nots' in the north. Rather than reflecting the reality that White English citizens are not part of any marginalised group, academics and media commentators have presented the voice of a small section of anti-immigration voices as disrupting the establishment. Though the context of Bhambra's writing is Brexit and Trump's America, the paradigm through which she makes her argument is applicable here. Firstly, a focus on White 'working-class' rather than all workers places all 'others' outside the historical labour process. This means that analyses have tended to ignore the fundamental role colonialism had on contemporary class. Secondly, for the most part there has been a distortion of populations so that the prejudice of the contemporary is framed as an issue that a 'certain type' of White person must deal with and not all White people.

Importantly, Bhambra (2017a) is not saying that White people don't experience poverty; they do, but it is not caused by their Whiteness. In other words, class is relevant to this thesis only to an extent because, class-based dichotomies aside, all White English can claim belonging to the same 'unquestionable' idea of nationhood. To this point, class does not exist as a distinct category to which only White people belong, and who therefore face fundamentally different conditions from those who

are not white. The consequence is that class has come to dominate discussions about soft nationalism when it is in many ways insignificant in terms of the dynamics of imperialism that 'Englishness' functions on. Class status may well affect the visions and symbols of 'Englishness' to which an individual identifies. But, to only focus on 'misdescribed' groups when investigating national identities is a failure "to consider the prior absence of solidarity across racial lines that explains the present distribution of advantaged and disadvantages" (p.220). As a standalone category of enquiry, White 'English' identities could be examined in the context of class and their differences contextualised. However, decocting these variances as anything other than particular forms of White identity fails to acknowledge the underpinning process of 'othering' inherent to all iterations of 'Englishness.' Class has been placed as an objective marker through which xenophobia and nationalism have been confined to the peripheries of society – when the evidence suggests otherwise. It is time researchers move past this and recognise that 'Englishness' is something everyone enacts as part of MSE viewership.

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Conclusion

This literature review has put into dialogue existing scholarship on imperialism, nationhood, and sport. Three key tenets of postcolonial thought have been presented, not as a 'better' approach, but as beneficial when applied in synergy with alternative perspectives to the study of 'Englishness.' Contesting the linear narratives of national belonging highlighted the impact of imperialism on knowledge systems which have, in turn, affected how nationhood and nationalism have been interrogated. Elaborating on this emphasised the everyday ways in which 'othering' is legitimised, and to some extent 'normalised' as a standard aspect of belonging. Common narratives frame the identity of this belonging as autonomous, and this chapter challenged the homogeneity of 'Englishness.' This suggested that 'Englishness' must be considered socially connected, and an essential hybridity must be recognised. Resultingly, imperialism is a behaviour which everyone is a producer and consumer of, rather than something in which the 'Brits' are 'passive captives' (as Colley's (2003) revisionist theory of Empire would suggest). The notion of 'consumption' is important, and postcolonial theory's socio-economic concerns were applied to address the ways in which 'Englishness' is actively consumed as a product of racialised identity. Drawing on Black Marxist and Critical Race Theories highlighted that an interplay of scholarship has the potential of balancing out the study of 'Englishness' to address conceptual weak-spots and emphasised that an intersectional reading of the dominant categories of identity associated with 'Englishness' was required. This was not to say that intersectional analyses of

'Englishness' have not taken place, but that a postcolonial approach has the capacity to push existing thought further by putting into dialogue several distinguishable theories and concepts.

Whiteness, as a matrix of power and its associated narratives, was framed as central to 'Englishness' and positioned as a primary barrier to belonging. In this way it is not necessarily skin colour that is paramount to belonging, but the values and beliefs associated with hegemonic Whiteness. Building on this, religion was highlighted as instrumental to the development of 'Englishness.' Interwoven with the belief systems of hegemonic Whiteness, Christianity is, albeit passively, paramount to belongingness to the nation. As a visible marker of identity, gender is equally significant to 'Englishness.' It also presented an entry point to demonstrate the complex interplay of race, religion and gender in processes of 'othering.' Finally, class was presented as a concept that, whilst undeniably influential to lived experience, is not entirely relevant to this thesis. However, the discussion of class did reiterate that 'Englishness' is often (incorrectly) assumed to be an identity 'belonging' to a narrow group of people, rather something enacted by all those situated within the nation-state. The task is therefore to engage with everyday 'Englishness' as a common-sense, apparently inoffensive standpoint that nevertheless maintains the status quo.

Throughout the application of postcolonialism to literature on 'Englishness' in this chapter, MSE viewership has been pointed to as offering a particularly unique opportunity to explore the intrinsic imperialism of 'English' nationhood – by providing fans with a site to articulate understandings of national belonging. Furthermore, the existing literature on these topics makes visible the interconnectivity of sport and 'Englishness' that goes beyond the anecdotal. Instead, modern sport and 'Englishness' are connected as facets of imperialism and help to illustrate how imperial values, fantasies and nostalgias have manifested themselves across society in the banal. In the words of eminent sport scholar Dunning (1999), "sport matters." The cursory reason for this, which simply points to the social and economic pervasiveness of sport (Theodorakis et al., 2012) feels somewhat 'lazy.' This is not to say that the absorption of sport into every day existence is not important, but that such a reflection is merely a description of the landscape in which sport operates implicitly. It fails to go far enough in developing understanding about how sport is used by people to create meaning and situate the 'self' in relation to 'others.' Why MSEs? Because they offer a medium for researchers to uncover and interrogate the exegeses of life that elsewhere would be hidden or subdued. Considering that the radical changes necessary to address inequity have not occurred, and are in many ways worsening, research is needed that applies the tools at our disposal into different spaces, such as MSE viewership, as part of the effort to uncover ways in which we may put existing theories to better use (Diary Entry 1). It is to this end that this thesis now turns.

Chapter Two

Ways of Being

In this thesis, a 'Gogglebox' method meant recording people in their own homes watching MSE fixtures in which an English national team was competing. 'Watching people watching' offered an innovative approach to generating insights that would have perhaps gone unheard and/or unseen in alternative methods such as interviews, where participants may be unwilling to disclose, or unaware of their behaviours. It has enabled the application of existing theory into new spaces, interrogating sport viewership in the context of imperialism by observing audiences of MSEs as they navigate topics pertaining to their national identity. However, before I detail the exact processes of 'doing' research, this chapter discusses how we experience the world around us and come to gain knowledge of who we are. It is important to recognise that my methodological understanding, in a collective relationship with the theoretical framework, has had implications for the design of this research project. Critically, one of the objectives of this thesis has always been to examine people's 'ways of being' – observing the balance between sociological systems and the individual acting within them (Mills, 2000). Equally, when I have discussed this research, it has been assumed that with MSEs seeing "comes before words…it establishes our place in the surrounding world…The relation between what we see and what we know is never settled" (Berger, 2008, p.7). Such a perspective needs to be challenged so as to enable more than mere observation, but the exposition of the conjunction between institutional patterns and the cultures of disparate groups that produce the distinct social injustices of modernity (Bhambra, 2007).

At a methodological level this approach has developed within physical cultural studies and, following Silk and Andrews (2011), been "rooted in engaging society as a concrete, historically produced, fractured totality made up of different types of social relations, practices, and experiences" (p.14-15). For brevity, this involves subverting the academic convention of 'natural' knowledge production (which corresponds with a central aim of postcolonial studies). Instead, physical cultural theorists are prone to transgressing from tradition, sometimes oppositional, but intent on internalising morality, ethics, and the political to connect theory with social change (Silk and Andrews, 2011). Of course, this means accepting that the account provided is incomplete, partisan, and political (Frow and Morris, 2000) – I am open about this dimension of my thesis. But as, I believe, my task is to make 'visible' the inequitable oppression which marks the contemporary landscape, I acknowledge that boundaries need to be traversed, often crossed, and traditions challenged in a praxis ground within a 'sacred-moral epistemology' (Silk and Andrews, 2011). The research methodology is then

reformulated, through an ongoing ethical dialogue, which foregrounds dignity and respect (Denzin, 2005). As such, this chapter confronts existing configurations of knowledge production with partisan motivations to criticize the existing 'rigidity' of academic inquiry. Such philosophical questioning is then, a guiding principle within this thesis, and is interwoven with the theoretical discussions of the previous chapter, the methods of data collection, and the processes of analysis. The purpose of this chapter's methodological self-reflection is therefore important to help grasp the 'scientific' framework on which my interpretations are built. Yet equally, I hope that it motivates researchers to set alternative, imaginative, and radical research agendas that produce actual, positive interventions in the world.

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A Question of Truth

> *"There is a gulf between the ideas by which men judge themselves and the world on the one hand, and the social reality which they reproduce through their actions on the other hand. Because of this circumstance, all their conceptions and judgments are two-sided and falsified" (Horkheimer, 1939, p. 268).*

With these words Horkheimer (1939) was articulating a specific point about the role of philosophy in society. But it also spoke to a more pertinent and grander philosophical debate, ongoing across all academic fields – the nature, acquisition, and actuality of knowledge (Jones, 2022). Rather confusingly, the scale and range of this debate has resulted in a plethora of terms, being applied in several ways, to refer to different things (Madden, 2022). Yet philosophical approaches affect all research to a greater or lesser extent, and ontological and epistemological awareness is therefore important. Without it, the assumptions you will read, the key decisions I have made, my analysis, interpretation and discussion cannot be understood (Jones, 2022). I will try to express, as simply as I can, where I 'stand' within this veritable quagmire of methodological theory.

Unsurprisingly, given its presence in this thesis, postcolonial theory has had a heavy influence on my understandings and assumptions. There certainly exists an affinity with my thinking and the key criterion of postcolonial theory that research be explanatory about the failings of current social reality, identifying actors to change it, and providing norms for criticism and transformation (Bohman, 2021). To describe this as an objective paradigmatic 'choice' however, would be somewhat misleading. No researcher simply goes from project to project 'selecting' paradigmatic frameworks; it is not so much a 'choice,' but my way of viewing the world which has itself been shaped by the axis of privilege and oppression (Kuhn, 1962). This approach to research is not a complete divorce from the typical

constructivist and positivist paradigms that dominate social science, but one that emphasises philosophy to accommodate a deeper discussion about the nature of truth and reality (Asghar, 2013).

To appreciate the reason for needing this philosophical discussion, I turn to Horkheimer's (1939) writing on the nature of reality. Readers may have already noted my suggestion that the subjective reality of the ethnic majority is disconnected from the objective reality they create (Horkheimer, 1993). The methodological implications of this would mean that researchers need to account for the existence of both subjective and objective realities. To make such a stance tenable requires conceptualising the nature of existence using a paradigmatic spectrum, rather than according to strict paradigm binaries. Rossman and Rallis' (2012) suggestion that paradigms are better understood as having "mushy and permeable borders" (p.45) quite adequately describes my stance. Adapting and amalgamating their visualisations of the four major paradigms has enabled me to better conceptualise and situate myself within this spectrum (Fig.1).

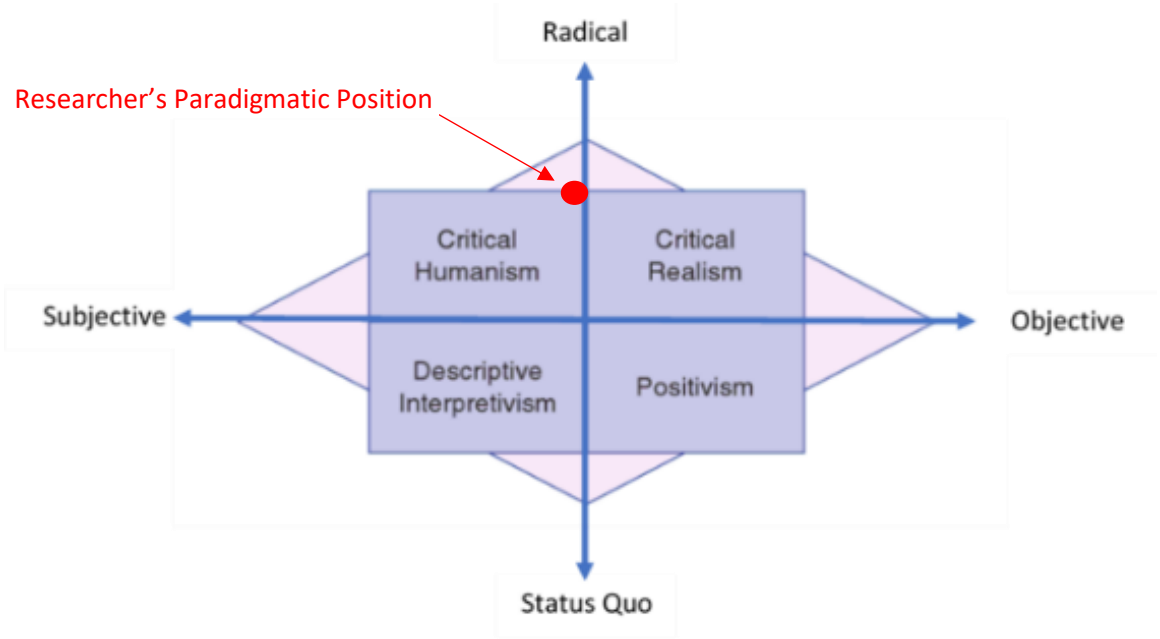

Figure 1 (Rossman & Rallis, 2012, pp.41-43)

Let me clarify how I understand this position (the red dot) and what it means for the way I make sense of my participants. In the broadest ontological sense, I believe that there are 'truths' governing existence, which humans will never be able to gain knowledge of (Bevir and Blakely, 2018). Those questions that come with existential exploration such as: Why are we here? Where do we go when we die? Is there a creator? This may seem a tertiary point, but it does fundamentally affect the beliefs I hold about what is important work to do (Rossman and Rallis, 2012). So I am, even within the social sciences, sympathetic to researchers who believe in the noble quest for objectivity. This includes Sugden and Tomlinson (1999), whose research is guided by the assumption that "while there may be

multiple definitions of reality…there is an underpinning objective truth that it is our duty as social scientists to discover and reveal" (p.392). This explains why I position myself closer to critical realist assertions about the nature of reality (or realities) (Lincoln et al., 2011) than opening appearances may have suggested (note that I do not position myself towards the right of Fig.1).

However, I am not in wholescale agreement with Sugden and Tomlinson. Chiefly, I take issue with the phrase 'objective truth,' not least because of the complexity arising from the recession of truth in a 'post-truth[18]' era (Haack, 2019). Relatedly, it incorrectly conflates an abstract concept of 'truth' with 'the property of being true' without any deliberate epistemological distinction (Haack, 2008). Sugden and Tomlinson (1999) try to work around this by accepting that there are multiple realities. But in pitting this against 'objective truth' they are, to me at least, denying the 'trueness' of people's lived experience. To suggest that a person's worldview is not 'true' is emotional invalidation, especially if we are making such a judgment based on the person not being an 'expert,' or worse — just a mundane individual. It is also not helpful in offering a legitimate challenge to the 'real-world' problem where the very idea of truth is seen "as nothing but an antiquated relic of an earlier age" (Haack, 2019, p.261). Instead, I embrace the plurality of 'truth' and agree with Haack (2005) that "there is one truth, but [also] many truths: i.e., one unambiguous, non-relative truth-concept, but also many and various propositions, etc., that are true" (p.88). This is important in the context of this thesis as it underpins the construction of a social world within which the contradictions between individual 'trueness' and collective 'truth' can exist.

The second issue I take with the quest for objectivity is that, sociologically speaking, any evidence we observe of 'objective truth' is always a fallible, social, and subjective account of that reality (Sturgiss and Clark, 2020). I do not think it possible to capture a single 'truth' within social systems in a determined and tangible way without emotionally categorising individuals into superstructures over events that actually happened (Orwell, 2000). Elaborating on my previous point, this does not mean that truth is not important, nor does it mean that social scientists are not uncovering that which is true. Equally are things made true by people, particularly in law, that once made become objective (Haack, 2019). For example, when the US Supreme Court overturned Roe v Wade in 2022, abortion was made unlawful in thirteen US Sates. In these States abortion was made morally wrong regardless of whether this is believed to be true or not. Denying all this would require no more than a schizophrenic relationship with truth. Instead, as demanded by Haack (2019), I am acknowledging frankly and openly my own cognitive limitations. Much of the social world is incomprehensible and I am unable to pinpoint absolutes in some 'eureka' moment. It means that this thesis was never designed to incriminate people for their worldview, or 'discover' predictable

sequences from subjective to objective. Rather, the intention was always to compare subjective trueness (on 'Englishness') with objective facts that are true (about England) to help produce more dynamic solutions to address the causes of inequity.

Finally, the idea of 'duty' is an interesting one and presents the clearest alignment between theory and paradigm in this thesis. Postcolonialism is a perspective that strives to emancipate individuals and organisations from structures of oppression (Rossman and Rallis, 2012). I see this radicalism as intrinsically related to my duty as a researcher; this is never to suggest that my way is right, but to offer solutions to a social world that is clearly not working. Here is where I move most drastically from an interpretivist paradigm into a critical humanist one, as I believe the luxury of simply 'describing' the social world as is, where the focus is solely on processes rather than the outcomes, no longer exists (Jones, 2022). Clearly, I rely heavily on an interpretive epistemology – not because I believe humans to be the sole creators of their worlds, but because human consciousness has the means to empower, transform, and liberate (Rossman and Rallis, 2012). Radical change occurs at an individual level, and it should come as little surprise that Said (2004) argued "humanism is the only, and I would go so far as saying the final, resistance we have against the inhuman practices and injustices that disfigure human history" (p.878). A side note to this point is that, as the three key pillars of global sustainability (social, environmental and economic) continue to crack and crumble, it will be even more necessary for researchers to be prepared to adopt scholar-activist practices (Ramasubramanian and Sousa, 2021).

This worldview does not fit neatly into the multitude of university courses or manuals on research methods. It is unlikely to make me friends within the epistemological illuminati either. But there is a need for social scientists to produce deeper, more realistic configurations of knowledge that are able to stand up to the chaotic flow of liquid modernity. The methodologies social scientists use should also be more dynamic in order to capture these changing realities, something which applies beyond just the parameters of this thesis. The critical humanist paradigm I have presented here is, as Plummer (2021) emphasises, able to encompass both the immensity of the universe and the power of human consciousness – one which leads us towards deep interconnections with earth, existence, relations, communities, societies, cultures, the planet and the cosmos" (p.200), animating our sense of what it means to be a connected human being in the world by creating a pluralistic humanism that is never static. This would function on a narrative that perpetually weaved individual experience with a global awareness of suffering, power imbalance and cruelty, to advocate an approach based on responsibility and mutual implication. This involves investigating "the interconnectedness of human lives between places and across scales of action... on a wider plane of moral and political economy"

(Kearns and Reid-Henry, 2009, p.570) so that the research is capable of somewhat reframing humanity to better position us to offer agendas for change.

Moving Beyond Visuality

The absolute nature of this universe is, frankly, unfathomable. But ultimately this is unimportant, as to study the human being is to study the human world. Whilst it is not the only world, it is the one that matters most to human beings. It is created, maintained, broken down, and then (re)constructed by human beings. But how do we come to 'know' the world we inhabit, and how can sociologists grasp this immensely complex, ever-changing, human produced world? When we consider MSEs, and in particular the study of those watching them, the proverbial cliché is that 'seeing is believing.' The default position in this regard is often that MSEs are part of visual culture. Whilst aspects of this position certainly have legitimacy, I say so with the proviso that the visual is not omnipotent during MSE viewership. For example, those living with blindness or visual impairment are unlikely to be using sight as their primary learning style[19]. We should also not delegitimise indigenous ontological understandings of non-human actors in self-determination[20]. Therefore, 'visual' research should not adopt "an ocularcentric world view that understands sight as a source of truth, reason and human agency" (Facklar, 2019, p.520). As Pink (2013) suggests, there cannot be an exclusively visual ethnography. Much more effective would be a critical appraisal that enters visuality, and by extension MSEs, into the broader discussion taking place in this chapter about reality, truth, and knowledge. Put simply, we need to consider how viewership of MSEs is both the objective act of seeing an event, and a subjective visual experience informed by various forces. As Brighenti (2007) argued, "visibility lies at the intersection of the two domains of aesthetics (relations of perception) and politics (relations of power)" (p.324). To fully understand the processes for collecting data, detailed in the following chapter, it is necessary to unpack the influence that visuality has previously had.

As previously mentioned, for many studying audiences, the ocular is judged to be the prepotent sense by which human beings come to know the world (such as Jenks, 2002). They have certainly made persuasive arguments; Berger's (2008, originally published 1972) influential expression, '*ways of seeing*,' made clear that it was not just what images show but the kind of seeing it invited. He famously used the example of female nude painting in Western Art. The crucial point is that "an image is a sight which has been recreated or reproduced. It is an appearance, or a set of appearances, which has been detached from the place and time" (p.9). Boorstin (1962) believed that society was developing new and more elaborate simulations, in which illusions and fabrications had become a dominant force in society. He argued that humans no longer experienced the reality of a place, a process he described as a 'pseudo-event.' Debord (1983) suggested that society was so

saturated by the visual that it had become the 'society of the spectacle', and Baudrillard (1981) went even further to claim that we could no longer distinguish real from unreal, a process he dubbed the '*simulacra*.' In the context of MSEs it means we should consider the extent to which events are experienced through visual image/text, rather than 'in-real-life' (Mitchell, 1995). It is not simply that these events are becoming increasingly visual, but that we are able to interact with more events on a more frequent basis (Mirzoeff, 1999).

While these key theories have been adapted and modified since they were first published, the core tenet has remained – the necessity to understand the social relations produced by visual imagery. Within the social sciences, it has led to an over-fixation on exposing visual images as agents of ideological manipulation (Rose, 2016). In likeness to this thesis' discussion of 'the media' (see pp.24-26), visual images have been afforded some sort of mythical power, manipulating the uneducated into compliance. There is some truth to this of course; visual images have been central to the cultural construction of the social world (Hall, 1997). Images themselves work according to a multifarious mechanism, and this means that visual imagery is never innocent, and we should always consider the agency of an image, the subjectivity in which it is viewed, and the social differences mobilised on viewing it. Yet I agree with Mitchell (2005) that there is something 'radically unsatisfactory' about arguments that centralise 'the image' itself. The "most obvious problem is that the critical exposure and demolition of the nefarious power of images is both easy and ineffectual," as scopic regimes can be dismantled "yet, at the end of the day, everything remains pretty much the same" (p.33). The solution is, according to Mitchell, to refine and complicate our understanding of power through a 'subaltern model' of the picture. As I understand it, this would require subjectivising visual images, personifying an image to consider them in a way of which enlightenment thinking would be suspicious. Though Mitchell's contention that "the age of imperialism is over" (p.149) is inaccurate, his approach does lead us towards a much deeper epistemological interrogation of visuality – one that moves us away from the presupposed hegemony of the visible to understand visual culture and images as 'go-betweens' in the human social world. Rather than being a producer of the social world, the visual is reframed as an intermediary for negotiations between human subjectivity and the objective realities that they create.

There is an important claim being made here about the nature and role of the visual to MSEs. Yes, there is no doubt that visual images can be made vehicles of socio-political agendas, and the decision to televise one event/fixture over another is an ideological one made by television executives. Yes, people are more likely to 'watch' MSEs than they are to 'see' them. The BBC recorded a peak TV audience of 17.4 million during the 2022 European Championship Final (Read, 2022). Yes, during moments of fandom the lines of social difference are enacted and contested through visual signs. Only

at the beginning of 2022 did the Exeter Chiefs[21] move away from its Native American-themed brand and request that fans not wear headdresses to games (Stevens, 2022). But to reduce viewership to a visual experience alone is ineffective and untrue. Instead, the task is to find a means of interrogating MSE audiences in a way that describes "the specific relations of vision to the other senses, especially hearing and touch, as they are elaborated within particular cultural practices" (Mitchell, 2002, p.174). Such thinking has had implications for the design of this project; in particular, it forced me to not slip into the comfortable position of thinking that visuality is a one-way street in which visual images of MSEs are treated like an all-powerful force.

The result of all this is that we should understand the images we see and analyse them as visual constructions of the social field. It is not the image itself that produces social difference, but our own lived experience leading up to the point of viewership that uses visual images as a gateway to new acquisitions about our belonging in the world. Placed within the framework of this thesis, visuality becomes another junction at the intersection of the imperial power-knowledge nexus. Likewise, the same argument could be made about audibility, olfactorility, tactility, and so on (Ingold, 2011). It is the same world, regardless of how we render ourselves within it. Therefore, the methodology I outline next represents a departure from the focus 'on' the image, towards dynamic dialectical observations that are; processes of learning and experience; methods of knowledge acquisition and production; and not simply a mode of data collection. Finally, for researchers themselves it means acknowledging our own responsibility in ensuring the maintenance and (re)construction of inequity, but also the power we have in resisting systems of oppression.

So, it's Ethnographic?

Whilst these discussions about the nature of reality and experience have subtly informed readers about the researchers' thoughts about their own knowledge production, there are important points that need to be addressed more explicitly. Mainly, what are the implications of the ontological and epistemological assumptions on the research experience? How is a methodological focus on human experience interwoven with a researcher's philosophical reasoning for choosing certain methods? What ways can we attend to experience in the context of our research that maximises learning potential? This does not mean that a case is being made that all research should or indeed can adopt the same approach. Once again, the commitments being made here are not a simple selection of methodology A, B or C. It is the sum of that which has come before, including the philosophical, theoretical, and experiential; it is all interconnected in ways not always possible to understand. The result is the arrival at 'short-term sensory ethnography' as the best categorisation of this thesis' methodology.

A methodology cannot be owned by a field or a single scholar, but the work of Pink (see 2001, 2008, 2012, 2013, 2015; Postill, J. and Pink, S., 2012; Pink and Morgan, 2013) has significantly informed my understanding of ethnography. Particularly influential is her interpretation that ethnographies do not necessarily require a long-term period of immersion in a single setting. Short-term ethnographies can also offer "versions of reality that are as loyal as possible to the context, the embodied, sensory and affective experiences and negotiations and intersubjectivities through which the knowledge was produced" (2013, p.35). In the same passage Pink also suggests that ethnographers do not claim to produce 'truthful' accounts of reality and the opening section of this chapter presented my challenge to such contentions. Nevertheless, I have often referred to her work for guidance and I will cover several key details that help frame my decisions regarding the procedures for collecting data.

Firstly, readers should understand that a sensory short-term ethnography does not mean attending solely to all the senses, but an altogether different practice that is itself based on a philosophic motive (which quite neatly matches the underpinning aims of my framework). It draws attention to the taken-for-granted assumptions in everyday life, leading to a more expressive and disruptive ethnographic practice (Calvey, 2021). As Pink (2015) proposes, sensory ethnography is:

> *"certainly not just another route in an increasingly fragmented map of approaches to ethnographic practice. Rather, it is a critical methodology which…departs from the classic observational approach…to insist that ethnography is a reflexive and experiential process through which academic and applied understanding, knowing and knowledge are produced" (p.4).*

This criticality is integral, and yet another example of the connections between theory and methodology in this thesis. Equally important is the 'departure' from simple observation to experiential observation. When analysing viewership of MSEs it means not just observing what participants see, hear, eat, say etc., but also considering the uniqueness of each experience. Take drinking a beer during viewership as an example. It isn't the act of drinking the beer that is significant but how the action exposes the consumer to a journey of displacements, replacements, and complacency (Ujuaje, 2022). In simpler terms, when we consume a beer do we think about the locations in which it was brewed? The brands and identity politics involved? The many histories of alcohol and what they speak to? It is also about considering the sound, taste, touch, and smell that come with the experience of drinking the beer whilst situating oneself within the nation. Sensory ethnography demands that researchers take this more embodied approach. Pink (2015) explains this in greater detail, proposing that sensory ethnographic practice:

> "*entails our multisensorial embodied engagements with others…and with their social, material, discursive and sensory environments. It moreover requires us to reflect on these engagements, to conceptualise their meanings theoretically and to seek ways to communicate the relatedness of experiential and intellectual meanings to others" (p.28).*

This ethnographic approach necessitates a dual focus then, investigating both the participants and the researcher's own experience. The concept of 'embodiment' is an interesting one as it does not quite account for the scale of sensorial ethnographic enquiry, which is about far more than just tangibility. Pink herself prefers to think in terms of emplacement as better attending to the entanglements of body, mind, materiality, and sensoriality of the research environment. The impetus on place that comes with thinking in terms of an emplaced body makes sense in the broader scope of this thesis, particularly when considered in relation to the geographical dimensions of postcolonial theory. It also brings to mind Bhambra's (2014) conceptualisation of the human world according to 'connected sociologies.' The similarities continue when Pink (2015) suggests that a sensory ethnography has the potential to account for "both global power configurations and the immediacy of experience" (p.37). In this sense it is worth noting the affinity between place-making and studying the senses, especially in a project concerned with how people situate themselves in their world locally, nationally, and globally. Also worth highlighting is the idea that sensory ethnography opens up possibilities for engaging with reconceptualised understandings about temporality, centralising discussions around autonomous development past, present, and future (a key tenet of postcolonial theory). These places and spaces are unique, created by the humans within them, and are the end product of the diverging social, material, and sensorial realities that brought the experience into existence. The everyday spaces in which we carry out our lives are often mundane and monotonous. But they are unique, and this makes them extraordinary.

Thinking in such a way brings inevitable questions about how the researcher may learn about others through their own sensorily emplaced experience. The onus throughout this chapter has been on the idea that knowledge about the human world is gained from participating within it, and it would be wrong to argue that the researcher was any different. The real issue here is not with how I come to 'know' the participants, but how it may be presented in such a way that is deemed 'academically legitimate.' In response to such a challenge, we must first accept sensory ethnography as an everyday process that continues throughout the life course (Pink, 2015). Taking onboard Ahmed's (2017) call to study that which is near to you, the entirety of this dissertation should be considered an ethnographic interrogation of the social worlds in which I have lived up to the point of writing each sentence. There is something essentially different between this and the commonly held defining feature of

ethnographic research – long-term immersion (Atkinson and Hammersley, 1994) – which I argue focuses too much on the process of ethnography rather than the outcome in terms of knowledge. In many ways we are, as Jones (2022) says, "always – whether we know it or not – taking part in ethnographic research" (p.219). So even though the MSE viewership observed took place in a short window, it was a moment within an almost three-decade long timescale (granted with different contexts and research questions). Truthfully, all this does somewhat blur the boundaries between autography and ethnography. But even though ethnographers attempt to intellectualise the emplaced knowledge of 'others' through theoretical frames:

> *"we remain embodied beings interacting with environments that might include discursive, sensory, material and social strands. We do not simply retreat into our minds to write theoretical texts, but we create discourses and narratives that are themselves entangled with the materiality and sensoriality of the moment and of memories and imaginaries" (Pink, 2015, p.28).*

In this passage Pink makes the connections between theory and methodology in this thesis truly visible by emphasising the magnitude and complexity of studying social existence. It also reiterates that the knowledge being produced was never intended to be empirically absolute. Instead, the aim was always to present an honest and truthful account of the lived experiences of a demographic too often overlooked in sociology given the power they wield. A sensory ethnography, then, offers routes towards a more complete picture of subjective experience with multiple layers of knowing. It is by no means a conventional ethnographic approach, but it has many of the common characteristics of one. It focuses on emic perspectives, ultimately looking at networks of interdependencies, and it does so through observations of natural behaviours in a natural setting (Jones, 2022). Embedded within this is a caring and humble dimension leading to the notion that researchers are working towards a better world. Returning to an earlier point about researcher 'duty,' there is a moral responsibility of ethnographers to "know themselves to be responsible for that which they cannot know empirically, that is, for the invisible process reality of their making" (Adam, 2011, p.594). I include this point to invite readers once again to reflect on and study their world or the people in it, and to try and understand it in such a way that might inspire or be a part of change (Pink, 2015). So, is it an ethnographic methodology? Yes, in a word, it is. But it is also so much more.

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Conclusion

The methodological interrogation presented here has invited readers into a deeper philosophical reflection, illustrating the specific topics of this thesis as speaking to a broader questioning about 'ways of being.' Though discussions about the nature of truth, reality, and knowledge are integral to any piece of research, I have endeavoured to engage with some of the longstanding epistemological and ontological assumptions held within academia. Granted, I myself need to debate and complicate this subject further. This doctoral thesis is just the beginning of an academic journey, and there is a possibility that my ontological position will never be fully 'ironed out.' Truthfully, if readers were to finish this chapter with only one takeaway, I hope that it is a vigour to interrogate the much grander questions about existence without the intellectualism that too often guards such questioning.

In the context of this thesis, though, these discussions have emphasised the importance of a methodology that produces a more complete account of experience that focuses attention on the network of interdependencies enacted by viewers of MSEs. In terms of 'Englishness,' it reiterates the consistency with which we find ourselves negotiating boundaries of belonging, which Chapter One suggested as being rooted in imperialism. This negotiation is never just visual but rendered through all the bodily senses. The emplaced individual is then forced into the imperial dynamics that have produced the social world in which they find themselves, without any means of being able to untangle the oppressive nature of that social world. Again, I remind readers that the task is not to criminalise people for their actions, but to move towards a means of equipping them with the necessary tools which they might use to produce more equitable exchanges.

Chapter Three

Researching Mundanity

So far, I have covered what I am looking at and why I have chosen to study it. It has led me to a critical humanist paradigm that, rather than simply seeking to understand power structures, demands a detailed and meaningful methodology which focuses attention on everyday real-life experiences within which imperialism is embedded. What is missing though, is any extensive consideration of how this was and can be done. The method(s) of data collection presented here, reflect a research strategy that was carefully considered in response to the paradigm previously mentioned. It offered a creative solution in response to the coronavirus pandemic, the larger shifts in sports viewership, as well as the nuanced nature of the subject matter. At the centre of the design was an adaptability that reflected the emergent nature of the data in this research project, which presented the opportunity to investigate any new avenues of enquiry not previously considered as they appear. To briefly summarise: 21 participants, from 9 households/families took part in 10 'Gogglebox' style recording sessions (1 household/family was recorded twice). Essentially this meant recording, face on, their experience of watching MSEs. This short-term sensory ethnographic fieldwork, which also involved other methods of data collection, produced an in-depth account of participants' lived experience. This was then thematically analysed following the guidance of Braun and Clarke (2006). I hope this summary provides some context for the opening discussions of this chapter.

Before covering these processes in greater detail, I remind readers that the aim of this project was to illuminate the relationship between 'live' viewership of MSEs and audiences' enactments of nationhood. To challenge the present issues of being, belonging, privilege and hierarchy within contemporary society, I ask: How does imperialism, as a doctrine of power, function within self-identified moderate citizens? In what ways might MSE viewership be a significant means of codifying and structuring this within 'Englishness'? To what extent do audiences of MSEs engage with nationalistic narratives of England? Further, and equally important: In what ways can researchers disrupt the ordinariness of racial and ethnic exclusive 'Englishness' during MSE viewership?

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Time Horizons

It is impossible to be completely prepared for how an ethnographic project may pan out, especially when it is being completed during a pandemic. However, to a certain extent, any research that studies MSEs will always be restricted to which events are happening and when. Broadcasting hours can also make data collection challenging, on account of different time zones dictating what times MSEs can be watched. It once again calls attention to issues surrounding broadcasting practice (re)producing scopic regimes of Western imperialism (Sealy, 2019). Therefore, there was a need for some 'intensity,' which required my being more active in directing participants to engage with relevant behaviours (Pink, 2015; Jones, 2022). Over six months, households and/or families were recorded in their own homes while watching an international sporting event in which an English team was competing, or the event was eponymously associated with the host country. In this timeframe the following recordings took place, amounting to approximately 50 hours of fieldwork:

England vs Scotland	*Men's European Football Championship (3 participants)*
England vs Czech Republic	*Men's European Football Championship (2 participants)*
British Grand Prix	*Formula One (2 participants)*
England vs Andorra	*Men's Football World Cup Qualifier (1 participant)*
England vs Hungary	*Men's Football World Cup Qualifier (1 participant)*
NFL London	*American Football (3 participants)*
England vs Northern Ireland	*Women's European Football Championship (1 participant)*
England vs Australia	*Men's T20 Cricket World Cup (4 participants)*
England vs Sri Lanka	*Men's T20 World Cup (3 participants)*
England vs San Marino	*Men's Football World Cup Qualifier (2 participants)*

Whilst data collection occurred in various forms throughout the time I spent in each home (for example, artefacts were mostly presented prior to an event starting), participant viewership of these events was only recorded during the fixture itself and did not include the build-up or any post-match punditry. Though households/families did occasionally react to half-time punditry, their comments were mostly concerned with the pundits themselves and not what they said. Furthermore, during the recording I was not necessarily focused on how viewers interacted with any commentary, which is a study in itself (one which has already received attention within sport studies, such as Lee et al., 2016). Instead, the recordings were intended to aid the sensory observation of the interaction between viewers and the fixture, 'others,' their surroundings, and themselves. This meant not restricting participant behaviour by forcing them to sit directly in front of the screen for the entirety of a

recording, but letting them sit wherever they felt comfortable, and letting them come and go from the room as they pleased (as one might do when watching an MSE 'naturally').

These sessions were obviously not 'naturally occurring,' and several participants did comment on the recording equipment as it was being set up – "Is that recording?" (Charlie), "You know I feel a bit weird knowing that I'm gonna be recorded" (Harold). Yet this discomfort quickly subsided, and I was surprised by how quickly participants settled into the everyday routines that one might carry out of an afternoon/evening, such as preparing food, calling friends, or planning the weekend family excursion. Perhaps this was a result of being in an everyday space, surrounded by people familiar to them. Though this did not make the recordings anymore 'natural,' it did follow participants into familiar environments and the stream of perceptions, emotions and interpretations were ones they might have had anyway (Kusenbach, 2003). The quest for authenticity is challenging with any ethnography, even more so a short-term sensory one. To contend with these issues, ethnographers should re-frame their research as having multiple timescales – "Every day social experience is not a matter of strategically putting selves on and off, but of constantly varying degrees of involvement and disengagement" (Katz and Csordas, 2003, p.282). Participants bring issues that affect their daily lives into the research site. Ethnographers bring an entire lived experience to the research process which comes with its own kind of evidence that enhances the validity of any conclusions made. I used the term 'horizon' in the sub-heading deliberately, to counterbalance the limited window of knowledge production in the recordings and the much longer timeframes that have informed the production of this thesis.

Participants

In acknowledging the need for a more critical engagement with ordinary experiences of Whiteness, imperialism, and nationhood, I concede that finding a sample for 'legitimate' academic study is racked with complexity. Therefore, as with time horizons, the sampling strategy in this study needs problematising in order to present a satisfactory level of academic rigour. Questions regarding researcher 'credibility' are to be expected with any study of 'familiar settings' (Hockey, 1993). I have evaluated my sampling strategy using a 'checklist' developed from criterion put forward by Miles Huberman (1994) to allay such concerns.

Firstly, an open call for expressions of interest was made in April 2021 (through social media platforms) with participation predicated on only one inclusion criterion – "You must identify as English or English/British" (see appendix 1). This fit the broadest interpretation of what constituted 'English,' with a range of geographical ties across the former 'English' colonies. Critically, it meant that I was already acquainted, however loosely, with all respondents. Following this, typical case sampling was

employed as a purposeful strategy to recruit 21 individuals (14 males and 7 females) from 9 households/families which ensured the cases involved with the research were 'typical' and (seemingly) familiar. Normally, the type of short-term observational method used in this research would not necessarily attend to the mundane practices of present "rooted in vast and idiosyncratic temporal reaches" (Katz and Csordas, 2003, p.283). Using this sampling strategy was a means of mitigating this, and it also placed greater focus on a select number of cases, which enabled the generation of 'thick' description.

The success of such a conceptually driven sampling judgement does rely somewhat on general agreement with construction of a 'typical' individual (more easily said than done). Using the theoretical and methodological underpinnings to arrive at what is 'typical' was unfortunately always going to be a contentious, but necessary, decision. To minimise the issues surrounding this, I highlight that typicality is different from representative. It is especially important that readers understand these cases are not an 'average,' but a 'typical' example of the phenomena I am investigating. Each sample/case involved in this study is descriptive and illustrative, not definitive. One cannot hope to find a means of gathering data that may be generalisable to entire populations through such a process, but whether the planned sampling increases analytic generalisability is not necessarily always relevant (Farrugia, 2020). This thesis never set out with the intention of achieving immediate 'generalisation'. Rather, it is an exploration that opens up existing studies and lines of enquiry by acknowledging the need for more ordinary idiographic accounts of 'Englishness' – that typical/normal individuals needed to have 'locatable' voices within studies, each of which was intensively analysed (Patton, 2002). The conceptual power of the data collected in this thesis is therefore not in its wholescale representativeness, but in the typicality of individualised mundanity/ordinariness which is itself emblematic of wider forms of everyday nationhood expressed in MSE viewership. This doesn't mean that the results aren't believable, true-to-life descriptions and explanations, as I argued in Chapter Two.

Finally, I have arrived at the conclusion that with the data collection methods used, a prior relationship with participants, or 'friendship' (Owton and Allen-Collinson, 2014), will always be practically necessary because of how intimate the recordings are. There is of course always a certain level of convenience going to be applied to the sampling process, even more so when a pandemic further limits access to potential participants. But filming inside a participant's own home makes finding willing participants time-consuming, difficult and relies on a certain level of 'trust' existing between participant and researcher. Also, owing to the nature of such research, a thorough consideration of the researcher's own safety must also be factored in.

Data Collection

The time horizons and sampling strategy, entwined around the central sensory ethnographic methodology pushed me to embrace the creativity and adaptability of participant observation, using technology as an integral part of the research process. Primary data collection was through 'Gogglebox' style recordings, during which two cameras (a surveillance security camera that captured the whole room and a handheld camera on a tripod that faced viewers watching the television) and a Dictaphone were used to capture all audio-visual information. Before the recordings started, I photographed any items of interest that could inform analysis by building a more complete sensory picture of the viewing space and support the fieldnotes I produced. Participants were also invited to bring forward their own artefacts that represented what 'Englishness' means to them. Furthermore, as I was present at the recording sessions, the conversations that occurred became somewhat of an unstructured interview in which specific discussion points that arose could be revisited or clarified. Consequentially, the recordings became an integral part of the ethnographic process "of creating and representing knowledge or ways of knowing that are based on ethnographers' own experiences and the ways these intersect with the persons, places and things encountered during that process" (Pink, 2013, p.35). Such methods fit with the critical humanist framework guiding my research by allowing me to examine how, across different contexts, there is an underlying approach to social existence that has been fundamentally structured by the imaginaries and material processes brought to bear by imperialism.

The ability to re-watch these recordings afforded me the opportunity for deep familiarisation with data and enabled me to observe the minutiae of audience interaction. This was equally achieved through active interaction with participants on my part, as staying discreetly behind the camera is not a viable strategy. By being in front of the camera, I was doing more than simply observing audiences; I inhabited the participants' world as I recorded footage within it and thereby became deeply involved with their creation of an imagined community. By merely being with households/families in their natural environment, I became embedded in household/family dynamics, leading to an enhanced visceral experience of the environment in which knowledge production is taking place. The relationship this created between myself, the researcher, and the camera, produces multiple layers of information (Silverman, 2016). It gave the recordings an in-built triangulation that was buttressed by including other methods of data collection, which 'painted a picture' of the numerous points of 'typicality' in participant lives.

Of course, readers should bear in mind that the way I look (White, 'Anglo-Saxon,' male), my educational qualifications, my idiosyncrasies (a reflection of a middle-class upbringing), and my prior

relationship with them, have positioned me as an insider with the group I researched. It means accepting that any reading of the recordings is heavily influenced by the elements of my own identity. Equally, whilst I made sure that participants 'took the lead' during filming, the likelihood is that my presence will have had some impact. Admittedly, the resultant researcher bias is unavoidable. However, this has in many ways been inherently built into the thesis as an integral aspect of both what is being looked at and why. Likewise, the analysis cannot make a claim of revealing an objective truth; rather, it provides an interpretation of what is 'typical', and it is my task to persuade readers as to why interpretations are valid and important. In other words, the analytic task is to offer a vision of the sensory experience of MSE viewership as it was in that moment to tell a story that enables readers to critically engage with their own senses of nationhood, Whiteness, and imperialism (Braun and Clarke, 2021a).

Analysing Method

It would be easy to fall into the trap of conceptualising the analysis of data through quantitative type 'one size fits all' standards and processes. But doing so "would at best obfuscate and at worst lead to poor quality research" (Braun and Clarke, 2016, p.739). This is particularly true of thematic analysis (TA) which – despite paradigmatic, philosophical and procedural diversity – is often wrongly discussed as a homogenous approach (Braun and Clarke, 2021a). To be sure, my approach has been guided by Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase framework for doing a thematic analysis:

Step 1. Become familiar with the data.

Step 2. Generate initial codes.

Step 3. Search for themes.

Step 4. Review themes.

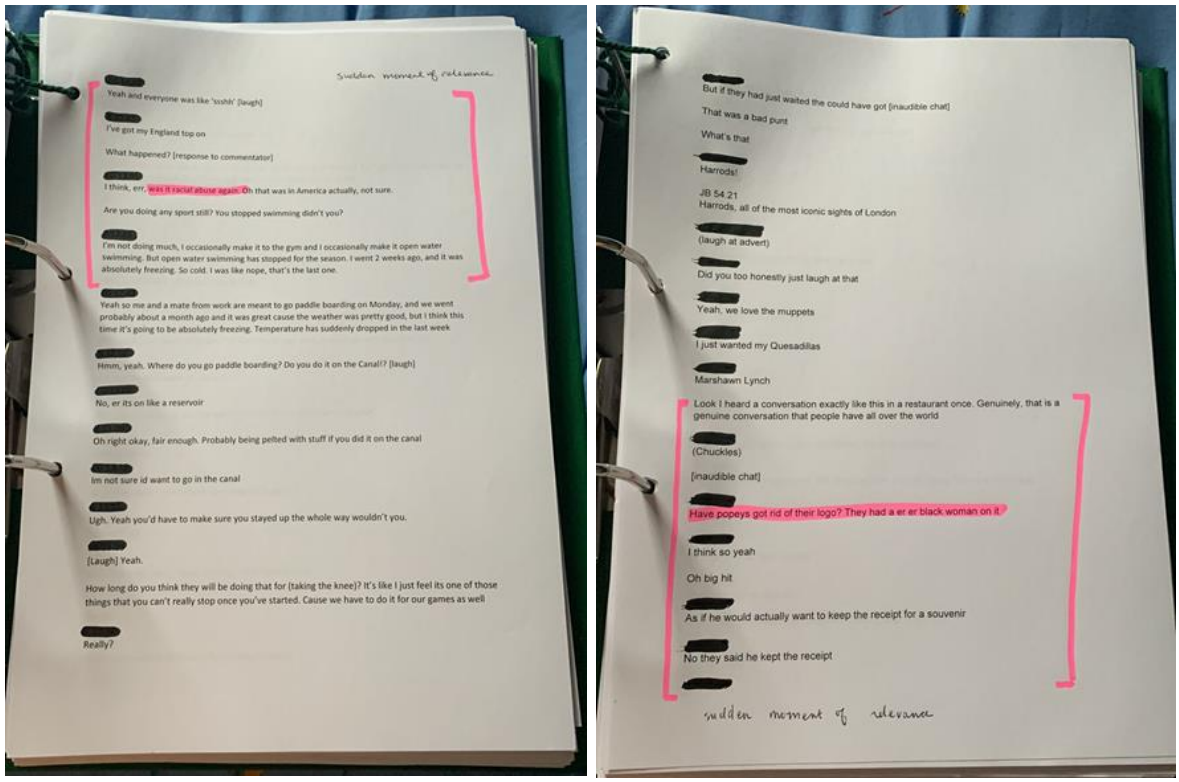
Step 5. Define themes.

Step 6. Write-up.

But ultimately, every thematic analysis will be different, due to the numerous intersections that are specific to each individual project. As Braun and Clarke have said themselves in conversation with Hayfield (2022), "[Braun speaking] we're not dictatorially describing the way everything should be done. [Clarke speaking] We're saying, 'here's a walking stick, a pair of socks, and a compass; plot your own route'" (p.430-431). With these words in mind the process of analysis detailed in this section should not be considered as mechanistically following the step-by-step guide above. Instead, it should be read through the prism of Braun and Clarke's contemporary writings on reflexive thematic analysis (see for example, 2012; 2014; 2019; 2021b) and understood as being constructed by all the writing that precedes it in this doctoral thesis.

The initial stage of any thematic analysis is data familiarisation (Step 1), which in practice meant reading and re-reading the transcriptions of the recordings in a process of immersion and critical engagement (Braun and Clarke, 2021b). This was done through the postcolonial lens as set forth in Chapter One and allowed me to note the sea of mundanity that was in fact highly relevant, dynamic and reflective of spatial-historical connections (see Table 1.2). Familiarisation notes therefore became an important analytical tool in the coding process, acting as a foundational base from which I could begin to systematically go through viewership, whilst attaching code labels to segments of data relevant to my research question (Step 2). Consider Table 1.3 (p.61) an example of the way in which coding labels acted as analytic shorthand. Readers should note that the coding is never solely latent or semantic, which I believe stays as true as possible to the underpinning frameworks and beliefs of this thesis.

Table 1.2 Examples of familiarisation notes serving as analytical tool.



Excerpts from recording transcripts; England Women's Football (Left) and NFL London (right).

Table 1.3 *A passage of viewer data from British GP with Code Labels*

Data	Code Labels
Sean: Yeah, but then you wonder that like that's probably more likely to brew in like working class people who are probably, slightly more likely to have racial connotations.	Speculative judgment about others. Specific environments foster racism. Racism is framed as a working-class problem (someone else's problem). Racist due to being working class.
Stanley: Yeah, they're all bloody racists (laugh)… it's just the working class isn't it.	Greater propensity for racist opinions (it's who they are). Demeaning of working-class groups. Perception that the working class cannot change. Working class lack intelligence.
Sean: I just think it would be interesting to look at if that would change it because I always feel like, say like.	More of an observer than participant. Not necessarily a view based on any 'objective' evidence.
Stanley: Yeah, 'cause you don't see it with like the bigger teams.	Success equals no racism. Bigger teams are better. Little teams are more working-class.
Sean: Yeah, 'cause it's also like, if you look at like, Arsenal. Most of Arsenal's supporters are Black, like there's a massive Black following. And then erm similarly with, well maybe not Chelsea, Chelsea still has a lot of racists there. But say like then, Man United 'cause they have like a really big Indian population in er… Manchester so they have like a really strong, like Sikh following and stuff like that. Say like Crystal Palace that has a lot of Black supporters because that's like South London.	No vocalisation of the meaning of arsenal (a collection of weapons and military equipment). First demarcation of race is 'Black.' Belief in informal fallacies about Racism (e.g., can't be racist if have Black friends). Chelsea is negatively different. No mention of Whiteness. Clubs are used to differentiate. Second demarcation of race is 'Indian'. 'Indian' and 'Sikhism' synonymatic. Religious racism. Third demarcation of race is 'Black.' Skin colour given geographical ties.
Stanley: South London yeah. Whereas, I can probably see a lot of Newcastle and Sunderland fans, in very White towns.	Perception of Northern England as Racist (class-based connotations). Assumed judgement. White spaces rather than White people.
Sean: Yeah, although I feel with Newcastle fans though I never really perceive 'Geordies' as being particularly racist.	Note Newcastle, not Sunderland. Perception. Geordies allowed to belong. Racism has levels (misunderstanding how it operates) Sense that there is 'acceptable' level of racism.
Stanley: Just homophobic.	Still not as good as us. Homophobia is lesser than racism (it's 'just').

Then began a back-and-forth process of revisiting each transcript, refining the more exploratory coding labels into codes that captured and differentiated diverse meaning (Braun and Clarke, 2021b). As my reading evolved, I could then bring in the other data points to produce a more complete multisensorial picture of these passages from which I could begin to refine my understanding – such as how was something said, what the body language was, what was on the screen and in the space, and whether the artefacts add anything to this interpretation (Step 3; for an example of this see Fig.2). This is different from 'cherry-picking' fragments that support a pre-conceived position. Instead, it reflects the interpretative process of working through a dataset that was treated more like a terrain, with points of relevance that had the potential to substantiate or challenge my position (Gabriel, 2018). It highlights the multiple layers of analysis involved with this research, each ranging in its inductive, deductive, and abductive orientation (Braun and Clarke, 2021b). Equally, it was a consequence of my theoretical and methodological position that the focus was on the production of typical 'pictures' in each sample, from which repetition in meaning could be developed (Steps 4 and 5). I have tried to portray this in the way that the analysis has been written up (Step 6), by presenting results and discussions alongside detailed scripts, so that readers may see the participants' stories 'come to life' and perhaps see themselves in these ordinary moments.

Figure 2 Example of combining data points to build multisensorial picture.

Artefacts: Royalist sentiment – connection to the Union – Implications for view of Scotland

England vs Scotland Men's European Football Championship

Return from advertisement break to footage of Scottish fans travelling to game.

Richard – Mind you I saw a video earlier today (Pause in speech and shows iPhone). Sorry this afternoon about Scotland fans and they're in Leicester Square and they took their shirts off and because they were so wet, they used it as a slip 'N slide. And I thought Ugh!

Said ostentatiously.

Facial Expression:
Lowered eyebrows
Narrow eyes
Nose crinkling
Chin Pulled back

Look of disgust/disdain?

Code Key:

Global Product
Place & Space
Exceptionalism

Reflexivity, Ethics, and Positionality

With that last point – that the results and discussion act as a mirror for critical self-reflection – it seems appropriate to introduce a more matter-of-fact interrogation of reflexivity, positionality, and ethics. I say 'matter of fact' because in my writing I have consistently engaged in ethically questioning my assumptions and acknowledging what I see as the shortcomings of this research. Likewise, throughout the duration of this research I have kept a reflexive diary of thoughts, questions, and answers to critique – the most pertinent of which are included in the notes of this thesis and referenced alongside the text to which they speak (see pp.142-143). They are emotive, raw, vulnerable, and not a requirement of any institutional academic standard. Nevertheless, I deemed their inclusion as capable of fostering a caring, open, and transparent dialogue between myself (the researcher) and you (the reader). I did this not only in an effort to produce a more holistic account of how this thesis took shape, but also to offer an alternate vision of academia which (despite its rhetoric of diversity and inclusivity) is so often an alienating, racialised, imperialist, hyper-masculine space (Ahmed, 2021).

Practically speaking, formal university ethical guidelines necessitate that researchers obtain informed consent, take steps to protect participant anonymity and confidentiality, and give participants the right to withdraw from your research (with certain provisos around the timing of withdrawal request in this research; see Appendix 2, 3 and 4). This research has also taken guidance from wider ethical frameworks such as the UKRI (2022) policy on the governance of good research practice and BSA (2017) statement of ethical practice. 'Good' ethical practice will also include a thorough risk assessment to reduce harm and discomfort of both participant and researcher (see Appendix 5). These conventional frameworks do, by design, take a pragmatic approach to ethics. Yet there is a nuanced aspect to ethical practice that cannot be captured by 'official' guidelines.

Paramount when writing on the subject of imperialism is that a researcher ensures they are not writing "exploitative research…perpetuating relations of dominance and control" (Sultana, 2007, p.375). I have tried to be honest and transparent when I could fall foul of this predicament, evidenced by my frankness about the implications of researcher positionality on data collection. In many ways, factored into the key elements of this research was an approach to "open up statements to challenge, interrogate taken-for-granted meanings, and disturb easy claims to objectivity" (Tonkiss, 1998, p.259) rather than provide mere commentary from the position of an omnipresent author. In addition to the researcher, considering participants' positionality also presents a means of ensuring that research practice is ethical. A key part of this was assigning pseudonyms to protect their identities, whilst still humanising their enactments. Beyond this, I have been vague about the gender, age and race of

participants because this thesis treats 'Englishness' as something that we all do, regardless of these characteristics. As markers of identity including this information would, I believe, bias readers due to existing perceptions regarding different groups.

One of the benefits of a short-term sensory ethnography is that it seeks collaboration wherever possible, demanding that participants are treated as subjective individuals engaged in a research project, rather than 'objects' of an experiment (Pink, 2015). Whilst the collection of data was led by me, the process through which they came into existence was always a collaborative one. Participants invited me into living spaces, gave excited tours of their home, showed off prized possessions, and shared food and drink with me. The dialogues were conversations between participant and researcher, never purposefully led by one individual, nor following a particular order. This was also crucial to my exit strategies, where rather than just leaving an environment, small talk continued after the recordings until our shared experience reached a natural conclusion. This thesis is as much the everyday human story of 9 households/families as it is my interpretation of the enactments of imperial nationhood within them.

The methodology itself thus takes on a moral approach, in which the practical and ethical elements are interlinked so that sensory ethnography has "certain congruences with the ethics of those who hope to make the world a better place, seeing greater sensorial awareness as a route to achieving this" (Pink, 2015, p.69). A key component of this, was acknowledging with participants that their openness could lead to discomforting questioning of their views (Diary Entry 4). I will always admire and respect my participants willingness to have moments of inhibition interrogated. This next statement I make to them, and on behalf of them to readers: nothing in this thesis is an inference of their character or, necessarily, opinions. The interpretations that I have made are of an altogether different judgement regarding the nature of imperialism and the task that faces us all in producing an equitable future. If we are to create a better world, it starts by looking at ourselves, having the humility to acknowledge 'others' ways of knowing with a caring appreciation, along with a sensitivity to understand the environments in which these views were produced.

Representation

An integral aspect of making this interpretation was deciding on a representational strategy capable of conveying the ordinary, sensorial, affective and ethnographic elements of this research. A successful representation of the data would also be a continuation of the philosophical and methodological discussion, bridging the gap between conceptual and practical. As Becker and Horowitz (1972) said, "good sociology is sociological work that produces meaningful descriptions of organisations and events, valid explanations of how they come about and persist, and realistic

proposals for their improvement or removal" (p.50). To stay true to this mantra I have adopted a screenplay format to represent the data (see Screenplay 1, 2 and 3 for examples, pp.68-70). This format highlights the mundanity of participant behaviour and the interplay of overt and covert identity formation in a truly evocative way. This once again grounds my thesis within physical culture studies, and to a certain extent using screenplays can be understood as an articulation of my commitment to "the particular, the detail, the scrap of ordinary or banal existence, and then working to unpack the density of relations and of intersecting social domains that inform it" (Frow & Morris, 2000, p. 354). Converting several key enactments into a screenplay format, I have placed them at the beginning of the sections to which they are most pertinent in the chapters that follow. I believe this helps create a picture of how people 'do' imperialism, which I argue means you (as the reader) are given the opportunity to 'make sense' of my perspective. In this way, readers are positioned as observer and participant in these enactments, transposing them into their own daily spaces. I hope readers find this beneficial, and that it produces self-reflection on their everyday existence, leading them to acknowledge the contradictions of their own mundane conversations, behaviours and consumption. I feel I should be explicit in stating from the outset that this aspect of my thesis does not follow an academic standard as such, and reading the next few chapters will differ somewhat from what readers might expect in academic work in both representation and structure. There is no gradual build-up of argument with accompanying examples, but various points of critical consciousness that attach the ordinary sensory experience of individuals to the social structures by which 'othering' is scripted, such as race, gender, nationality (Silk and Andrews, 2011).

Screenplays are most commonly created by writers as imagined dialogue which, even when attempting to be conversational, are inherently written with an audience in mind. Quite often, these scripts are intended to be easily deciphered, digested and decoded by the audience watching them in real time for entertainment (Kuhn and Westwell, 2012). Yet in this thesis the dialogue is not fictional, but directly quoted from transcribed recordings of MSE viewership and, by extension, the text (read: data) is mundane. However, as a method of writing, I believe, screenplays have creative interdisciplinary potential to bring together the investigation, discovery and reflection of research (Batty and Baker, 2018). Even though screenwriting practice is developing rapidly within universities as a mode of and for research (Batty and Kerrigan, 2018), I have found no easily accessible examples of it being used for representation. Whilst the decision to use screenplays is certainly experimental and creative, it is not unfounded, as screenplays are ultimately a "device…[being] employed as an alternative form of academic discourse to the conventional essay" (Williams, 2013, p.250). The screenplays therefore blur the boundaries of academic writing and creativity just as others have done, for example with the use of vignettes (Humphreys, 2005), poetry (Lahman et al., 2005), and visual

displays (Langley and Ravasi, 2019). Likewise, the decision to use screenplays was inspired by the commitment of many ethnographers to foreground participants in ethnographic text (such as De Martini Ugolotti, 2016; Bowles et al., 2021; Blackledge and Creese, 2022). These distinct — to some extent related methods of textual representation — have helped me in the exploration of alternative approaches to presenting participant experience.

As I have stated already, screenwriting for representation is experimental. Nevertheless, I argue that the screenplays let the data speak for itself, making it 'real' for readers. In this regard, the option to engage with screenwriting aligned with the aims and objectives of research because the practice helps to make 'visible' the way in which self-identified moderates enact 'Englishness.' Through the screenplays I hope that readers appreciate the sheer mundaneness of the data which was collected. My argument throughout this thesis has been that it is this which makes everyday 'Englishness' so extraordinary, because even the most seemingly boring private sensory experiences can be connected to, and situated within, the broadest global social forces. In this way screenwriting also provided the tools to deal with the methodological conundrum of wanting to compare subjective and objective realities. This is the intended interpretation of each screenplay – that readers engage with ethical questioning of their own everyday sensory experience by appreciating the contextual subjectivity of each moment without disconnecting it from the inequitable actualities to which it is attached. Furthermore, screenwriting also made sense given the nature of data collection in this research, and in this way the practice has enabled me to pull together various data points to help engage with the complexity of lived experience. Each screenplay begins with a heading and action that describe the location, time of day and the scene in which the viewership takes place. The lines of dialogue are headed by the 'character' who is speaking, parentheticals provide information about how it is said, or to whom it is directed, and intercutting action is also included. The result is a representation of all data points in 'snapshots' that draw readers into moments of viewership, making the mundane 'visible,' and part of the interpretative process itself.

Therefore, screenplays are a valuable creative practice capable of aiding the dissemination of data in a way that is complementary to my broader approaches towards research. In the screenplays, the mundanity within the sensory experience of participants is made visible. They present, if only in text, the way in which imperial 'Englishness' was being enacted as matter of fact by participants whose belonging was taken for granted. The screenplays not only frame participants as passive agents, but active counterparts in the imperial power-knowledge nexus. In this regard, screenwriting offered a valuable method for attending to the interconnections involved with the subject of this thesis. In other words, it elucidated critical reflection on the many different pathways involved in participants' viewership of MSEs. It would be implausible to suggest that a single strategy could account for every

interwoven strand in these engagements, rather, I suggest that screenwriting was an approach that helped focus on a specific experience without detaching it from the other forces involved with lived experience as a whole.

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FADE IN:

1 INT. FLAT – LIVING ROOM – AFTERNOON **1**

We are in a modern living-dining room in a central London flat. Shelves are furnished with non-fiction books, candles, and a wine shelf. Contemporary artwork adorns the walls. The curtains have been drawn to stop the glare of sunlight. The windows are open. It is an extremely hot summer day. The busy humdrum of the city can be heard in the background. In front of the television CHARLIE and SEAN (both young adults) are sat with their feet up on a pouffe. They drink from bottles of Peroni, glancing from the screen to each other as they speak.

COMMENTATOR
This, the British Grand Prix!

CHARLIE
I wonder who will care most about this...a home Grand Prix? You've got McLaren--

SEAN
McLaren it's a home Grand Prix. Red Bull.

(Speaking as though questioning it)

Well. Aston Martin home Grand Prix--

CHARLIE
Aston Martin yeah.

SEAN
Red Bull it almost is a home Grand Prix.

CHARILE
Yeah. And even Mercedes. The Mercedes technically...the actual team is in Brackley. Which is right beside Silverstone so...

SEAN
So, I think as the team goes, all of them want to win this one out of all of them.

CHARLIE
Yeah. And it's the original Grand Prix so it has that kinda feel, like it's the home of Formula One.

They are distracted by events on the screen and stop to listen to the commentary. The 'beep' of a reversing delivery vehicle sounds.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
We call Wembley the home of football as well. And Lords the home of Cricket. We've got the home of everything!

FADE IN:

2 INT. DETACHED HOUSE – LIVING ROOM – NIGHT **2**

We are in a yellow-walled living room that is lit by 3 standing lamps. 2 rammed bookshelves sit in adjacent corners of the room. A coffee table in the middle of the room is surrounded by seating. On one armchair is sat the RESEARCHER, on another is IAN (retiree). On the couch sits IAN's son DYLAN and his fiancée KATHERINE (both young adults). The television is linked to a laptop via a maze of wires spread across the floor. On the laptop screen the NFL League Pass logo is clearly visible. The livestream is the only way to access coverage of the NFL London. A dog occasionally scratches at the door to be let in.

The broadcast is playing adverts during a timeout.

COMMENTATOR
...Westminster Abbey

DYLAN
(Look of disdain)
What did he call that?

IAN
(Scoffs)
Westminster Abbey!

DYLAN
Oh yeah, that Royal Church in the centre of London,
(Wags a finger towards the screen and jokingly raises voice)
DO YOU KNOW NOTHING!

IAN
It's a Royal Peculiar.

DYLAN
Mmmmmmm Old Peculier[22].

IAN
(Laughs)

The advert transitions to the next, which is for Applebee's ribs.

DYLAN
(Makes a drooling sound)
I really want some ribs now.

RESEARCHER
I could really go for some ribs.

DYLAN
We could get some wings if you want wings.

FADE IN:

3 INT. GROUND FLOOR FLAT – LIVING/DINING ROOM – AFTERNOON 3

We are in a small ground-floor flat, with the aesthetic of student halls. Recently graduated MILLY (young adult) and the RESEARCHER are sat on black leather chairs opposite the television, watching England women's football team play Northern Ireland. They are sharing a Domino's pizza, which is sat atop a table that has an LGBTQIA+ flag painted across the surface. On the fridge is a poster of footballer Harry Kane. Stuck to the television frame, on the right-hand side, is an A4 sheet of paper with clearly visible text written in felt-tip pen. It is titled "EUROS Drinking Rules," below which is written:

* Down your beer if a goal is scored.
* Drink 3 sips if commentators mention fans in the stadium.
* Mucky pint if 4+ goals.
* 3 sips for yellow card.
* 2 sips for every attractive female in crowd.
* 5 sips for woodwork.
* "How is the game?" – S**** downs drink.
* Shot on target – Waterfall.

The two are waiting for kick-off and have been discussing the recent performance of the men's team in the European Championship.

MLLY
Erm, I went round one of my mates actually.

MILLY and RESEARCHER
(Both groan).

MILLY CONT'D
Yeah, like when we took that early lead, we were buzzing.
(Laughs)
Oh, it's in Australia, the next one.

RESEARCHER
Oh.

MILLY
Yeah, so me and my mate were doing those drinking rules again for the final, and I think my mate, she had just been given a bottle of tequila, so we did like a shot for every goal. So, when it got up to the penalties, we were like, are we continuing this or not (laugh).

Conclusion

This chapter has thoroughly detailed the methods of this research by providing an overview of the overall approach towards designing the research, the method of data collection, process of analysis, reflexivity and representation. Our research must be open to scrutiny, and this can only be achieved in the presence of clear processes detailing exactly how the research was done. Granted, this can be challenging when the research in question cuts across academic disciplines and research agendas. However, in Chapter Two I examined the philosophical, practical and ethical aspects of the research, stressing that viewership of MSEs goes beyond mere 'visual' experience and I have designed data collection to address this fact. The same goes for analysis, which utilised the flexibility of reflexive thematic analysis to match the guiding beliefs of this research. In conjunction with the time horizons and sampling strategy, the approach I have discussed has resulted in a broader understanding of my participants' everyday experience.

In sum, the short-term sensory ethnographic process has been re-thought through a paradigm which suggests "a way of ethnographic learning by which the ethnographer seeks to participate in the emplaced activity of others through her or his own embodied engagements" (Pink, 2015, p.115). This exemplifies the way in which thinking sensorially invites readers to consider alternate ways of understanding the nature of existence and how we may study it. In this thesis it has resulted in the methodology, methods and representational strategy becoming an integral part of developing my overall narrative. It is significant that this occurs alongside the transformative and emancipatory agendas of the theoretical frameworks of Chapter One. To renew the request of Horkheimer (1939), I suggest that such philosophical thinking become an intrinsic part of everyday academic work, as opposed to being included simply to satisfy the standardised scientific measures of credibility. With this, and through the prism of the contexts which have led to this point, I can now discuss the key findings of this research.

Chapter Four

Mundane Imperialism

This chapter considers how mundane the imperialism was in participants' enactments of 'Englishness.' I have decided to discuss the mundanity of participants' enactments first because the mundane underscored the experience of watching MSEs, which I analyse in this and the following chapter. Screenplays 4, 5 and 6, which open each of the sections in this chapter, serve as meaningful starting points to consider the key elements of the mundane imperialism associated with participants' language, behaviour and artefacts. The themes evident in these screenplays are echoed in the other examples of the sensory experience of MSE viewership within this chapter, thus enabling a nuanced exploration of mundane imperialism. The discussions in this chapter will outline the way 'othering' was normalised, characterised by accent mimicry, humour and condescension. Simultaneously, English exceptionalism was legitimised, and I will address the way this manifested in participants' discussion about the location of MSEs, the sporting infrastructure involved, and the nations competing. To this end, in contextualising participants' enactments of 'Englishness' the significance of MSEs will be emphasised. These elements provide context to the final section of this chapter, in which I will address the mundanity of imperialism, the implications of which expand on existing literature on the subject of nationhood, such as Anderson (1983), Billig (1995), and Skey and Antonsich (2017). Considering this perspective, and the associated sense of nostalgia that was integral to mundane enactments of imperialism, will enable me to critically illuminate the mundane present in participant enactments of 'Englishness' and unpick the way in which imperialism provided ontological security to the identity of participants. Resultantly, I argue that the notion of mundane imperialism is capable of positioning everyone as accountable for inequity. This intersects with the chapter that follows, in which I articulate this process further by putting it into dialogue with the concept of motivated ignorance, which was also evident during the MSE viewership of participants.

***

FADE IN:

4 INT. SUBURBAN HOME – LIVING ROOM – TWILIGHT 4

We are in an understated living room with beige walls and 2 brown settees. Beams of bright sunlight come through a bay window to illuminate the room. A dog wearing a Rooney no.10 England football shirt sits on the rug atop parquet flooring. Opposite the television are sat ISAAC (middle aged) and his daughter DEBBIE (young adult). Sat on an adjacent settee is the RESEARCHER. The England men's football team is playing the Czech Republic at Euro 2021.

DEBBIE adjusts the teal fleece blanket covering them whilst discussing national anthems with the RESEARCHER.

DEBBIE
(Smirking)
It's just passionate humming.

ISAAC stops watching the television and leans over with a 'cheeky' grin.

RESEARCHER
Humming passionately?--

ISAAC
They thought I could sing the German national anthem when they were kids. Didn't you?

DEBBIE begins to laugh in the background.

ISAAC (CONT'D)
I used to just make up these funny Z sounding words.

(Mimicking a German accent to the tune of the German national anthem)

zee za zee za ein van vuchanhein Deutschland ich bin...You had to do it in an aggressive voice as well.

DEBBIE
You can't have a nice sounding German accent...I've not come across one--

ISAAC
Er Klinsmann, Klinsmann has a nice one--

DEBBIE
That's because he is speaking English.

Normalised 'Othering'

Screenplay 4 is emblematic of the ways in which participant enactments of 'Englishness' could be associated with imperialism. It is suggestive of how ordinary the imperial dynamics that appear in everyday experiences are, so that such occurrences are taken-for-granted. Thus, the screenplay provides a meaningful opening to the discussions in this section, as it encapsulates the ways that 'othering' was normalised by several participants during the viewership of MSEs. In this sense, 'othering' did not occur in 'moments' of consequence but underpinned the unexceptional everyday enactments of participants. In the screenplay, the most notable aspect of Isaac's behaviour is the mimicry of a German accent in what was a clear attempt at humour. This is how it was received by Debbie who, laughing at her father, starts a discussion about what accents are 'nice.' In doing so, Debbie and Isaac negotiated their place within their world by positioning 'others' as inferior to the imagined community (see Anderson, 1983) to which they assumed belonging. There was nothing out of the ordinary about this exchange, as this behaviour continued throughout the recording. As a first step to understanding the mundane imperialism within participant enactments of 'Englishness,' the following section will explore in greater detail how accent mimicry, humour and condescension (reflected in Screenplay 4) was 'visible' in several of the short-term sensory ethnographies.

Accent mimicry

Participants recurringly 'othered' through accent mimicry, or what Jocuns (2022) describes as a performance of accented foreignness. This was problematic because discriminatory practices were normalised, and it gave energy to linguistic imperialism (Phillipson, 1992). Whether participants spoke in an accented English or outright framed other languages negatively, the English language – or more accurately, Queen's English – was always affirmed as the standard. In an interesting aside, the religious features of the monarchy (see Bonney, 2016) echoes discussions in chapter one regarding the sense of divinity with 'Englishness,' and several participant artefacts were idols of the Royal family. Going back to Debbie and Isaac, we can see how accent mimicry therefore functioned as a mundane linguistic system that confirmed the imperially informed view of the world that 'Englishness' is divinely superior.

DEBBIE
German just can't sound nice. You can prove me wrong but...
(Makes expression as if to say 'you won't')
It's like Portuguese--

ISAAC
German women speak quite non-aggressive, oh Portuguese is brutal.

This topic has deep roots in postcolonial theory, particularly in applied linguistics where many scholars now accept that the global status of the English language was aided by imperialism (Kumaravadivelu, 2003). The implication is that researchers must be mindful of the way in which these linguistic structures are propped up because speaking 'proper' English is paramount to being admitted into white dominated western societies (Martinez, 2022). The additional dimension to this in participant enactments was that mimicry also served to 'other' regional English accents too, such as "T'North" (Charlie) when discussing Newcastle United. This example from the recording of the British Formula One Grand Prix demonstrates the way in which accent mimicry presented as a normalised everyday behaviour, by just being dropped into 'normal' conversation:

CHARLIE
I think he's just like staying, close enough--

SEAN
Cheers!
(They clink bottles and in a West Country accent)
Got my Thatchers.

CHARLIE
(Copying West Country accent)
THATCHERS!

Here, accented mimicry (re)enforced the superiority of not just a specific language, but also a dialect. Therefore, the research participants provided meaningful examples of what Sue (2010) described as micro-invalidations, micro-assaults and micro-insults. As Burdsey (2011) suggested, so long as behaviours stay within certain parameters, 'othering' is downplayed —especially it's structural effects. Furthermore, it reiterates a point made in chapter one, that 'others' must be brought into 'Englishness' by those whose belonging is taken-for-granted. In this sense mimicking accents was grounded in imperially informed ways of placing oneself within the world because it normalised hierarchies of belonging to 'Englishness.'

Of course, people do have the tendency to take on the language around them in a phenomenon known as 'linguistic convergence' (Wade, 2022), but really this refers to a style shift, such as dropping the occasional 'y'all' into one's vernacular after spending time in the southern United States (Wade, 2022). This was not what participants were doing though; instead, they were using heavily stereotyped pronunciation in mundane conversation — such as Harold, when talking about 'Thai brides.'

HAROLD
(Laughing)
What an 18-year-old girl from Bali?
(Mimicking a Thai accent)
Bing Bong.
RESEARCHER
Oh, what's that one in Little Britain called?

HAROLD
(Mimicking a Thai accent)
Ting Tong.

In this exchange, 'Englishness' was given superiority through accent mimicry by ascribing a 'fictitious' young Thai women with a host of 'Orientalist' stereotypes. Therefore, accent mimicry was used as vehicle through which ethnicity was (re)produced, and thus differentiation was operating beyond just the expected physical and cultural boundaries (Davé, 2020). In the context of normalising 'othering,' this is important because it reiterates the way in which racism (in this instance) was "articulated without being seen to contravene the widespread opposition to racism that exists in this sphere" (Burdsey, 2011, p.278). MSE viewership plays a key role in this (re)production because it is a 'sphere' that is widely assumed to be 'apolitical' (see Carrington, 2010). Though it would be incorrect to infer any explicit intent to 'other' from the data, the frameworks discussed in chapters one and two can be used to further explore the points in this section by broadening our 'race' thinking and problematising what it means to be racist (Hylton, 2010).

First and foremost, accent mimicry, such as Leonard saying, "no way mate" with a high nasal resonance to mimic Australian English, or Ian's rhotic pronunciation of the word "jaguars" to imitate a commentator from the United States, should only ever be understood as 'othering.' However, it is too easy to leave it at this, interpreting such comments as isolated incidences of overt behaviour (Burdsey, 2011). Instead, the mundane functioning of accent mimicry in participant dialogue emphasised its normalisation in enactments of 'Englishness,' and should therefore be conceived of as a matter-of-fact strategy used by participants to not only frame 'others,' but position 'themselves' in relation to those deemed not to belong. On this point it is important to make visible that textual representations of colonial mimicry (the practice of imitating the colonial master) is a praxis that challenges the domination of imperialist legacies (see: Jalaluddin, 2018; Kamal, 2020). In their decolonial reading of Kamal's novel, Saeed and Rabbani (2021) emphasise that social satire not only contests "the colonial legacy of English culture in Pakistani elite but also subverts it with a native cultural identity" and "that mimicry can function to expose the hollowness and inadequacy of the colonial expressions of power in itself" (p.1709). This is relevant because it suggests that the mundane practices being contested in the thesis can also be 'put to use' for transformative aims. This also

highlights that mimicry is often satirical, and the fact that accent mimicry was an attempt by participants to be humorous (verbal confirmation, facial expressions and movements for external gratification allowed such an interpretation to be made) should not be understated. By perceiving accent mimicry as 'funny' and/or 'banter' (see Billig, 2005), a layer of complexity is added to the normalisation of 'othering' because it engenders the perception that there is 'nothing wrong' with it. Therefore, in the next section I will explore the key role that humour played in the mundanity of imperialism.

Humour

To start, it is important to say that it is good to laugh at things. When done well, humour makes mockery of seriousness and tragedy – maybe this is why it is so pervasive in our everyday lives (Lockyer and Pickering, 2005). Much like the previous discussion on mimicry's decolonising potential, in Hylton's (2018) study, humour emerged as a device to resist everyday racism, empowering Black voices and transforming their felt experience. The dilemma is that attempts to be funny, such as mimicking accents, do not analytically cease to be 'humour' when it involves ethnic epithet. Whether or not 'we' see it as a joke does not matter; it remains one in the eyes of the person who made it. I am here, as Billig (2005) suggested, not using the phrase 'humour' to indicate my perception of the funniness or moral goodness of 'jokes.' Instead, "humour is the object of analysis, not the judgment of the analyst" (p.28). This critical approach to 'humour' provides the necessary shift in perspective so that the focus is not on arriving at a decision on the 'funniness' of something (there is no universal rule for this) but acknowledging when and where participants 'humour' made their 'othering' appear less 'problematic.'

Therefore, the 'goodness' and/or 'badness' of statements was not necessarily relevant. Instead, the significance of humour was in enactments where laughter could be associated with imperial sentiment about national belonging. For example, during England vs San Marino, when Tom and Arthur belittled the opposition team and country:

TOM
What are the odds-on San Marino to score in the first 1—minute (laughs)--

ARTHUR
(Sniggers)
Just to score at any time.

ALL
(Laugh hysterically)

TOM
Just (Laughing), Just to touch the ball.

In this exchange, MSE viewership enabled the normalising of ethnonationalist discourse by providing participants with the space in which 'othering' could be concealed by humour and justified as part of the 'language' (see Glynn and Brown, 2022) of watching sport. Reflecting Adams' (2020) conclusions about the way coaches used humour to re-align masculinity, in my research the source of pleasure from 'jokes' was not necessarily in the reaction of other participants, but in the way that humour helped participants 'fit in.' In every family/household, there were participants whose use of humour (re)enforced their belonging to the group. For example, Jordan drew collective laughter when commenting on their own sporting ability by saying, "I'd already be having a shower!" However, when Jordan later received the same reaction to a 'joke' about the quality of the broadcast being "because we are not watching it on some dodgy Russian stream," the 'humour' was no longer innocent. As per Billig (2005), it is never just a joke. Instead, Jordan (re)produced an image of 'Russianness' as an identity to be treated with suspicion. Additionally, Jordan's 'joke' produced no visible distress or backlash, which emphasises how humour allowed discriminatory narratives to go under the radar. This extends Adams' (2020) notion of the hidden curriculum (defined in the contexts of what it means 'to be a man,' as discussed in Chapter One) to also include other intersecting categories of belonging that construct hegemonic expectations and meanings of 'Englishness.'

In everyday contexts, many will rarely pay close attention to 'little' words and phrases in this way, but speech is one of the fundamental ways in which 'we' cause harm (Sue, 2010). Therefore, presenting 'microaggressions' as humour was significant to the mundanity of imperialism in participant enactments. Building on the previous section, MSE viewership compounded this by providing a space in which 'othering' could be perceived as a normal behaviour. In truth, I was disappointed by the flippancy of some of my own remarks when watching the recording sessions back. In this sense it is right to hold oneself accountable instead of, as too often is the case, refusing to admit any wrongdoing by judging our own comments on intent alone (Davis and Harris, 2015). As Lasater and Lasater (2022) suggest, truly nonviolent communication is not just saying the right thing, but connecting to yourself, to others, and to that which you speak. However, during the experience of watching MSEs with participants, this was rarely taking place in any implicit way. For example, Debbie and Isaac did not appear to recognise the way in which their dialogue (re)affirmed the normality of 'othering' on the grounds of physical appearance:

DEBBIE
He looks like (laugh), David Luiz (laugh).

RESEARCHER
Is he still an Arsenal player?

ISAAC
No, but he's not gone anywhere.

DEBBIE
He's just had a baby. I follow him on Instagram he seems really fun. He's a really nice guy.

For some this may well be a pedantic reading of the data, but it illustrates the mundanity in which 'othering' took place across the data. The ridicule of footballer David Luiz for not meeting the standard 'look' of a White male athlete has additional nuance because, as a Brazilian national, the legitimacy of his whiteness is questioned. This speaks to Hylton and Lawrence's (2014) reading of footballer Cristiano Ronaldo, in particular their conception of 'contingent Whiteness.' Participant enactments of 'Englishness' illustrated that Whiteness, far from being just 'White vs Black,' was a behavioural mechanism that included/empowered and excluded/disempowered 'others' in relation to oneself. This reiterates that 'othering' was not solely signalled by the 'White' body and participants demonstrated how belonging was also contingent on nationhood and gender. The emergence of 'humour' alongside 'othering' in my research elaborates on Hylton and Lawrence (2015) because when participants appeared to conspicuously platform discriminatory rhetoric, it was disguised as a joke. The phrase 'just joking' (Goffman, 1974) rather aptly expresses the complexity of this matter. To some extent, the use of disparaging 'humour' was framed as an 'acceptable' means of denigrating other groups, people and their cultures (Cann and Castro, 2022). Thus, 'humour' served a normalising function by making 'othering' seem everyday. In this way, 'humour' was integral to the mundanity of imperially informed worldviews.

Furthermore, participants' use of 'humour' also (re)constructed 'othering' as a value judgment based on the binary of permissible/impermissible, rather than a process which is central to any enactment of 'Englishness.' For participants, this meant that 'othering' was only deemed problematic when an imaginary line was 'crossed' and a 'banter violation' committed (Rivers and Ross, 2019). The issue with this is that such a judgment is entirely subjective. As evidenced during an interaction between Justin and Paul where, even though they had both engaged in negative stereotyping that evening, Justin exclaimed "you can't say that!" in response to Paul 'joking' about Diwali. However, by defending himself saying "of course you can!" with an accompanying facial expression of incredulity, Paul highlighted the subjective line between what Lawless and Magrath (2021) describe as inclusionary and exclusionary banter. This shows how 'othering' can be incorrectly identified as something which is 'activated,' as opposed to an ongoing normative script of embodied experience which is the product of 'historically specific dynamics' (see Bonilla-Silva, 2019). Resultingly, in the context of 'Englishness,' we are all enactors of 'othering' because our belonging is already inscribed

with sociologically defined markers of difference (see Ahmed, 2002). Therefore, 'humour' and/or 'banter' mattered not just because it normalised 'othering,' but because it simultaneously normalised the perception that there was 'nothing wrong' with certain levels/types of 'othering.' As Chapter One highlighted, this can engender the belief that 'I am not part of the problem.' However, whilst 'humour' might help explain how participants could be 'comfortably' complicit in maintaining an inequitable status quo, it fails to fully account for the way in which language was consistently underscored with patronising superiority. Therefore, the dialogues involved in participant enactments also need to be understood as being intimately bound up with condescending sentiment.

Condescension

Whilst humour and accent mimicry made 'others' inferior at what appeared to be a conscious level, 'feelings' of superiority were evoked more tacitly and routinely (Billig, 2002). These practices are inherited and, in this sense, "can mould its speaker's thoughts in particular directions" (Billig, 2002, p.136). During MSEs, participants were instinctively placing England above their opponents – not simply following from one's viewer 'preference' for their nation competing, but as something linked to wider long-standing notions of English exceptionalism. This was reflected in the way participants continuously assessed the intricacies of sporting competition. When an England player committed a foul, for instance, Vivienne argued, "I don't think it was on purpose." Then, twenty seconds later when the opposition did the same, they exclaimed, "No I don't like dirty tactics." Or when Arthur asked, "Is there a mercy rule? How are these games even a thing? They shouldn't be allowed to play each other!" there was a sense that 'we,' 'the English,' must spare the opponent of humiliation. In this way participants continually divided the world into distinguishable parts whereby their nation was attributed positive characteristics, and 'others' negative ones. The importance of this analysis should not be understated, given the fundamentality of discursion to us as a species (Harré and Gillett, 1994). This has clear correspondences with 'Banal Nationalism,' particularly the way in which language is "part of 'our' common sense" (Billig, 1995, p.37), and that 'we' cannot see ourselves as free from the effects of this. The additional dimension of this within participant enactments was the ongoing anodyne vulgarity of this language, especially when 'other' nations were being foregrounded in discussion. The implications of this was that condescension appeared to have been standardised within the 'imagining' of nations.

During the recordings participants were therefore subtly (re)producing ideological differences between nations. This emphasised the mundane dialogs within which people actually 'do' nationalism and how invisible nationalistic discourses were. This was rather neatly encapsulated by the following exchange:

RICHARD
God's own land. Isn't that what they say Nan?

CONSTANCE
What's that?

RICHARD
God's own land.
(Bellowing)
LANCHASHIRE!

In this exchange, Richard was (re)affirming the divinity of England's countryside and attributing to it a natural beauty, peace, and religious coexistence. However, I am not necessarily concerned with the rudiments of language in this regard, but the patterns of thinking being transferred. The concern is on the outer social world conversation which we recognise as capable of being internalised (Billig, 1998). This means for example, that when Tom said that San Marino "are definitely the worst," it positioned the 'other' nation as beneath 'us.' Participant condescension was matched by incredulity that England could lose, such as "we are not going to concede" (Tom). This is significant because discrimination was grounded in these patterns of dialog. For example, when discussing a previous fixture against Hungary, Harold said "well they're more racist yeah." It means that the superiority of 'our' nation is not just created in extreme, palpable moments of support during MSEs, but also 'learned' in the way our discursive thinking structures nations (Billig, 1995). There are links here to the previous section in that 'othering' is, in part, normalised because it serves as a baseline that anchors the (re)construction of belonging during MSE viewership.

Even more normalised was the way participants used the little words 'we' and 'us,' conflating themselves into an imagined national communion (see Billig, 2002), which they appeared to absorb at a below-conscious level. The other side to this 'unconsciousness' was what remained unsaid, whereby the necessary discourse is available but there was silence. For example, in one discussion about the 2022 FIFA men's world cup in Qatar and the restrictions on drinking, the discussion went no further than going on the internet to find out the rules for alcohol consumption:

LAURA
Oh yeah, no there is then a line here.

(Reads from iPad)

"As expected, this will be somewhat relaxed during the world cup."

LEONARD
I reckon if they fine anybody out of line…

LAURA
Ah, "organisers report on planning to sell alcohol in stadiums at the 2022 World Cup but is expected to be pricey."

ELLIOT
We are not going to need to get a particularly high score at this rate.

There is certainly nothing wrong with what has been said. Yet there was an opportunity here to open up discussion regarding bid corruption, modern slavery allegations, and persecution of LGBTQIA+ communities by the host nation. Instead, conversation immediately returned to the sporting action. This speaks to the concept of orientalism, by highlighting that imperialism is made mundane through the multifarious linguistic persistency's present in communal speech. Thus, imperialism is simultaneously obvious and obscure, making it inescapable (Billig, 1995). In this sense, MSEs allow researchers to home in on these 'little' words, which in combination produce a much deeper and broader depiction of how imperialism looks in everyday spaces.

The familiarity of these words flag the nation almost constantly by situating 'us' within a community that is deemed superior (Billig, 1995). In this way, the sense of entitlement and righteousness imbued within participant language has nationalised everyday speech and made 'Englishness' routine. The following example demonstrates this, and neatly ties together the three themes associated with the normalisation of 'othering' explored in this chapter:

LAURA
Well, I'd be surprised if they've got eight Muslims around the crease which they've all got beards.

LEONARD
(Facetiously pointing at White player)
He's not got a beard!
(Laugh)

ELLIOT
Maybe they are (Pause, look around room) they're very good the er--

LEONARD
Cricket, they like cricket (laugh).

ELLIOT
(Jokingly mimicking posh accent)
The sub-continent.

Firstly, this example makes visible the intersections of religion, race and gender in enactments of 'Englishness.' Participants clearly (re)created stereotypes about Islamic appearance, culture, and

locality due to a perceived 'Muslimness' which was based on facial hair. Also evident, was how accent mimicry, humour and condescension were central to participant interaction. These linguistic strategies where not evoked in an extreme, fascistic way, but inherently built into ordinary patterns of conversation. When Elliot paused before being interrupted, they looked at other participants to gauge how their comment would be received. Having been accepted and confirmed humorous by Leonard, Elliot completed his racialised statement, which used phrasing borrowed from the colonial past. This language was not hidden but made unobtrusive by the normalcy of 'othering' which (re)enforced the mundanity of imperialism. This reiterates why it would be incorrect to judge 'othering' arbitrarily on the severity of statements (Odenbring and Johansson, 2021). 'Othering' is not necessarily about participants' individual behaviour but their actions as, what Coates (2022) calls, agents within institutional structures. However, whilst Coates is right that this means "we are all bigots" (p.95), the suggestion that 'we' are powerless to enforce this was not reflected in participant enactments. On the contrary, participants were routinely enforcing an imperial view of the world that, whilst mundane, held huge power in the normalisation of 'othering'. A key aspect of this was the way in which each participant legitimated the exceptionalism of 'Englishness,' which this chapter shall now analyse.

***

FADE IN:

5 INT. FLAT – LIVING ROOM – NIGHT **5**

A small living room in West London is lit only by the light of a television. The television is elevated on a box away from the wall and its wires run across the floor. The 'hum' of an oven cooking pizzas comes from the kitchen, where a fridge is topped by bottles of spirits and covered in holiday souvenir magnets. A set of golf clubs sits in the corner and an occasional 'clang' can be heard as someone bumps into them. The England men's football team are playing San Marino.

TOM walks into the room and passes a drink to ARTHUR (both men are young adults) and the RESEARCHER.

ARTHUR
(Speaks on exhale as sitting down)
We are not going to concede.

TOM
(Mockingly)
You know what, I might get myself a San Marino kit.

ARTHUR
(Scoffs)

TOM
(Laughing)
That would be the most rogue kit wouldn't it.

ARTHUR
It would
(A shrill laugh)
Turning up to 5 a side and everyone like what the hell.

TOM
But do you reckon you could blag it that you're actually one of their players?

As they erupt in laughter, the sound of another housemate moving about in the next room can be heard.

RESEARCHER
Yes...I reckon you could.

ARTHUR
(Disparagingly)
You wouldn't actually have to be that good would you.

Legitimised Exceptionalism

When discussing England, there was a clear sense that participant enactments legitimised the exceptionalism of their nation. Screenplay 5 is representative of how participants frequently returned 'Englishness' to an extraordinary identity. Paramount to this was matter-of-fact framings of 'Englishness' whereby the superiority of 'the' nation was a given. To reword a line about linearity in Chapter One, exceptionalism was simply presupposed. The legitimacy of England's exceptionalism did not come from any observable 'truth,' but from the inherent way of viewing the world where 'others' are 'naturally' positioned beneath 'us.' In the screenplay Tom and Arthur discuss the footballing ability of San Marino, yet there was something underhand about their comments which took their dialogue beyond the sporting action. They belittled the Sammarinese, whilst exalting themselves as 'the' English. In this way, Tom and Arthur blurred the lines between nationalism and patriotism (see Tinsley, 2019) so that 'othering' was not only normalised, but also justified. This illustrates how MSE viewership was instrumental to legitimising the nation's importance, because participants were viewing hosting places/locations, sporting spaces/venues, and performing bodies/athletes. Whilst some participants did express feelings of tension with specific mobilisations of nationalism, when these comments were situated within the entirety of a recording session their actions would contradict any prior sense of wrongdoing. Resultingly, several participant enactments of 'Englishness' geographically 'othered' the world, used sporting infrastructure as a measure of development, and attached cultural stereotypes to other national identities. These aspects of MSE viewership were central to the functioning of mundane imperialism within participants' experience, and therefore need to be considered in more depth.

Geography

The geographical way in which participants (re)imagined their world should not necessarily be considered a surprise, International Relations scholarship has already begun to examine the coloniality of global cities as being bound to the violence of imperialism (Danewid, 2020). A quick observation of the rivalries in global power would show that the legacies of Empire are influential (Paul, 2018). Some Black and Neo Marxist theorists also recognises Western capitalism as replacing formal colonisation (Mabasa, 2021). However, what is interesting is that these more abstract structures were being 'played out' in the living spaces of participants. The inherent superiority of 'Englishness' was (re)enforced by geographically mapping the world along imperial fault lines, in a process Kaplan (2017) describes as 'ethnic placemaking.' Though participants did not express it explicitly, a vision of the world as being made up of distinguishable places "occupied and characterised by an ethnic group" (Kaplan, 2017, p.115) was legitimised.

Some of this was in direct response to footage during the MSE broadcast such as aerial shots of the stadium, montages of the host nation, and advertisements. In this way, the advertisements and punditry during breaks in play were influential in the dynamics of viewership, as these moments frequently produced discussion beyond just the 'sporting action' – "Harrods!" exclaimed Katherine; "The mosque near the Atlantis," Carol pointed out; and "Westminster Abbey" Dylan said. These are examples of enactments during which participants would name the manmade structures they saw. Global cities do have distinctive skylines and landmarks which define them, and participants emphasised the way in which, as Silk (2015) argues, MSEs serve a pedagogical function because they 'allow' viewers to 'see' these spaces. This also speaks to the growth in understanding and the recognition that hosting MSEs can sell a nation's 'brand image' (Knott et al., 2015). In other words, a fictitious imagining of a nation, positive or otherwise, is legitimised. Much like discussions within previous sections of this chapter, the content of 'othering' is not damaging because of what is said, but due to the processes of understanding that are given power when any 'othering' takes place.

Therefore, whilst all participants were doing was acknowledging the locations they saw, it should not be considered inconsequential. Instead, as Kaplan (2017) argues, spaces were being inscribed into the very fabric of national cultures so that place became an "essential reflector of identity" (p.94). This could be seen during fixtures of the T20 Cricket World Cup which took place in the United Arab Emirates and Oman. During one fixture Justin said sarcastically, "lotta big bunkers in Dubai." "What, desert," replied Paul? In a different recording during the same tournament the following comments supported this interpretation:

LEONARD
(Reads from iPad and mimics accent)
Fujairah, Abu Dhabi and then it's just desert.

The family talk amongst themselves whilst Participant 16 lies on the couch and continues to look at IPAD.

LEONARD CONT'D
It's amazing when you think about it, you've got Dubai there and then you've got Yemen within spitting distance. Such a difference.

In this example, the geographical features of the places hosting the MSE induced a narrow depiction of nations. It reduced the United Arab Emirates to an image consistent with the Bedouin stereotype, which sees Arab history as that of nomadic journeying across the desert (Hawker, 2002). Leonard then continues to generate and mobilise a socio-economic and socio-political distortion of the Middle East

which creates an image of Muslim countries as backward, uncivilised, and culturally diminutive (see Touzani and Hirschman, 2019). It is not that Leonard's comments were wanton discrimination but are an example of the mundane way in which English exceptionalism becomes 'acceptable' or at the very least 'less unthinkable' (see Cameron, 2020). This supports existing literature on the civic/ethnic binary, like Tinsley (2019), highlighting that any nationalism is exclusionary but that this can go unnoticed in certain contexts. By focusing in on the mundane, my research illuminates the scale of nationalist sentiment within everyday enactments of 'Englishness' so that even the geographic location of MSEs can be representative of England's 'exceptionalism.'

This did result in slight variance between each participants storying of place. But what occurred unanimously, was that historical imperial rivalries still afflicted participants' imaginings of the world. In response to a question about remembrance celebrations Elliot said that "none of the Axis powers play cricket," Richard queried a referee's impartiality because they were "Spanish, and they hate the British for a number of reasons. Trafalgar being one, Gibraltar the other (laugh)." In these examples, regardless of context, the nation was returned to the standard boundaries of community told in terms of little episodes and anecdotes. In this sense, imperialism has not gone away and "whilst the British Empire may be dead…its ghost continues to haunt the British imagination" (Kumar, 2019, p386). Participant enactments demonstrated this and legitimised the exceptionalism of their 'Englishness' by drawing boundaries between themselves and 'others.'

Ethnic placemaking therefore obfuscated and twisted the boundaries of belonging which meant that participants could control the parameters of inclusion and/or exclusion. Crucially, when this related to geographic dynamics, 'Englishness' meant exceptional and therefore belonging. As evidenced during the Formula One, participants identified the British Grand Prix as a 'home' fixture for several teams whose base of production is in England, even though the reality is much more global. McLaren was founded in New Zealand, Red Bull is an Austrian company, Aston Martin Racing and Williams may well have been founded in Britain but are now owned by a Canadian billionaire and United States investment firm respectively. This speaks to a denial of hybridity, which Chapter One highlighted as fundamental to the self-perceived superiority of 'Englishness.' The participant's use of the word 'home' is also idealising and, interestingly, connotes predictability, safety and acceptance (see Tinsley, 2020). In this sense, 'ownership' of a place was intrinsically important for those granted belonging too, with clear overlaps to settler colonialism (Harris, 2002). It also emphasises how the structures of the imperial world are malleable and produced through constantly (re)defining English superiority. The consistency of this process relied upon multiple intersecting elements of participant

enactments legitimising the exceptionalism of 'Englishness,' and much like the geographic location of MSEs, sporting infrastructure represented development and/or underdevelopment.

Infrastructure

Participants' conceptualisation of nations through terms of 'development' had consequences not just for how 'underdevelopment' was understood, but also the way it legitimised the superiority of 'Englishness' (see Bhambra, 2014). In this way, my research challenges economic reductions of imperialism which suggest that issues of imperialism are really about 'capitalist modernity' (Ahmad, 1995), or that imperialism is a pre-requisite of globalised capitalism (Gandhi, 2019). Instead, participants were using sporting infrastructure to position England, and therefore 'Englishness,' as an industrialised, dynamic, technologically modern identity against underdeveloped, backward, and thus inferior 'others.'

One of the interesting ways in which participants framed the development of 'Englishness' was through the technical infrastructure associated with modern sport. Therefore, even though the term 'development' has often been associated with imperialism and colonialism (see Goldsmith, 2002), participant enactments suggested that MSEs acted as a site through which these longstanding narratives were evoked. For example:

TOM
VAR.
(Laugh)
VAR. NO. They have not got cameras out there.

RESEARCHER
Erm I... I, I think they do.

ARTHUR
They must have. Mustn't they?

Firstly, there is an obvious materialistic element in this exchange regarding the resources required to have VAR. The suggestion is that San Marino don't have such resources or, in other words, are not that technologically developed. It isn't necessarily clear whether this assumption is based on the quality of their team, population size, or financial strength. Nevertheless, Tom and Arthur were making an epistemological distinction that set England as the standard, to which all other nations must move towards. This demonstrates how participants (re)defining of the world showed compelling resonance with the rhetoric typically found in revivalist approaches to colonialism, such as that of Gilley (2017). This means that, whilst on the surface Tom and Arthur were just discussing the technicalities of hosting an MSE fixture, their conversation was predicated on a vision of the world nostalgically invested in the supremacy and superiority of 'their' English nation.

The exceptionalism of England was also (re)produced by the quality of the pitches being played on, for example when Paul said, “shit pitch” - something that could only be initiated in response to viewing a sporting fixture. In this way the infrastructure of the venue was intimately related to the geography of the host nation, and therefore served as a sign that further legitimised the exceptionalism of England. Thus, MSEs were exacerbating what participants perceived as infrastructural inferiorities. During a T20 game played in the UAE, Justin and Paul debated the quality of the pitch by saying:

JUSTIN
(With a look of derision)
That pitch looks like an absolute rake.

PAUL
It does doesn’t it (laugh)...it looks like, like they might be batting on glass

JUSTIN
Yeah. Yeah, it seems like it...Have you ever played in another country?

PAUL
Erm...America.

JUSTIN
(Laugh)
I wonder what it would be like to play in Australia or Sri Lanka, I wonder how different it would feel I mean the pitches we play on?

In what amounted to 25 seconds of conversation, both participants engaged with several sentiments that positioned ‘Englishness’ as being above ‘others.’ To begin with, Justin’s expression suggests a conceitedness about the standard of the pitch. Even though it is not stated explicitly, the implication is that it was below ‘their’ standard. This was (re)enforced by the descriptor ‘rake,’ derived from ‘Hellrake’ (old English), which means a dissolute or immoral person, especially a man who indulges in vices or lacks sexual restraint. Whether intended or not, by saying this Justin was borrowing from colonial rhetoric that casts the Middle East as an exotic land of sexual promiscuity and infidelity (Melman, 2016). Paul compounds this negativity by suggesting the pitch is “glass.” The sense of fragility in this comment further positions the host nation as inferior. Add to this Justin’s conflation of all nations in the North American continent with the United States, and Paul’s imagining of the world through former colonies of the British Empire. This evidenced the anodyne ways in which participants engaged with imperial dynamics to (re)produce the hegemony of ‘Englishness.’

This point reiterates the integral role MSE viewership played in enabling participants experience and imagination of the relationship between place, development and sporting

infrastructure. In this regard, MSEs were never just playing in the background of participant exchanges, but intricately woven into the structure of group interaction. MSEs reflected the divides created by nationalism, and participants anecdotally exacerbated them (Bairner, 2001). This 'English sporting nationalism' offers a 'nostalgic reassurance' (see Malcolm, 2021) that ultimately evoked concepts of English superiority. Bell and Vucetic (2019) explain that this means "identity is assigned priority over geography" (pp.370-371). Whilst my research supports this suggestion by Bell and Vucetic, their conclusion that imperialism is an ideological practice of English elites should be reconsidered and imperialism understood as fundamental to any enactment of 'Englishness.' Equally, it emphasises why it is important to consider the mundane experience of the 'silent majority,' rather than just focusing attention on explicit accounts from prominent individuals/groups. This challenges the idea that a certain type of person is responsible for inequity through aggressive and ultranationalist behaviour. During viewership, all participants leant on nationalistic narratives of England which framed 'Englishness' as both ideologically and materialistically superior. Conceptualising viewership like this helps explain why the exceptionalism associated with participant enactment was not a 'natural' form of fandom, and instead was linked to the specific imperial genealogies of England. Particularly in relation to sporting infrastructure, when 'their' nation was placed against an 'opposing' one, participants would invariably view England positively. Therefore, MSE viewership was integral to participants' codification and structuring of national identities, which promoted a 'discourse of identity' (see Vucetic, 2011) that implied the superiority of 'Englishness.' As a result, the athletes/players competing would often be associated with cultural stereotypes about the nation they represented.

National stereotypes

All the stereotypes analysed in this, and the next chapter, had a cultural dimension and legitimised English exceptionalism. However, this section considers the enactments which could be perceived as revolving around the competing nations, and closely related to the geography and infrastructure of MSEs. There is also a relationship between these national stereotypes, and the themes associated with normalised 'othering' because, whilst condescending, stereotypes would often emerge alongside humour. Far from being innocuous, cultural titbits feed into the broader systems that produce difference. Previous research has highlighted the frequency with which these discourses occur (see Fiske, 2002) and evaluated the extent to which they can be harmful (see Czopp et al., 2015). The present research adds to this by depicting 'how' these statements can be legitimised in the mundane aspects of everyday life.

An important part of this legitimacy was that stereotypes were evoked with an apparent ease and naturalness. What this meant was that even in seemingly ordinary exchanges, national stereotypes that made 'others' inferior would be (re)produced. Sometimes it may have only been one word 'dropped' into conversation, but the following example illustrates that the result is the same:

JUSTIN
It would be interesting to see longer term, to do this in different countries and see how it would be different.

PAUL
Yeah, make it international.
(Long pause)

PAUL CONT'D
It's a long way to go to just get a recording though, say India, especially if they don't say anything...but at least you get a curry.

In this exchange, the nation of India is immediately associated with 'curry.' It is also worth considering why India was the topic of discussion during a T20 cricket match between England and Sri Lanka. Perhaps it was reflection of the 'Indianisation' of cricket (Gupta, 2010), or an Anglocentric reduction of India to the three Cs of Commonwealth, curry, and cricket (Woolcott, 2010). Either way the nation was established according to ethnic anecdotes about Indian culture. Therefore, the problem with sporting national identities is that they return cultures to 'standard' stories that neglect the diverse historical globalised connections which created the sporting culture at the centre of the stereotype.

However, it was not just the competing nations that served as a platform to transpose cultural stereotypes onto national identities, but the athletes/players representing the nation as well. This mirrored classical colonial discourses that flattened the experience of foreigners and, by extension, the territories from which they came (Said, 1978). Participants Tom and Arthur made this visible whilst watching England vs San Marino:

TOM
You think they would be better then--

ARTHUR
(Laugh)--

ARTHUR CONT'D
Coming from inside Italy

TOM

> Yeah, but it would be like picking the Italian team, out of like, the population of Pompeii.
>
> Before it got blown up.

Notice how countries and their inhabitants are made inseparable here. Ethnicity is defined by place, and place by ethnicity, so that it can never be entirely clear in which direction the reduction of peoples takes place. This means that, even when participants' enactments could be interpreted as positive, the processes which feed into English exceptionalism would be (re)established. For example, whether or not Sean was intending to show fondness for an Italian Formula One driver by shouting "FORZA ITALIA" (in an accent while raising a fist), it (re)enforced a version of Italy as politically chaotic, liberally conservative, and Christian. This is because Sean only acknowledged the individual through their national membership. It once again brings to attention the work of Tinsley (2018) on nationalism and reiterates that celebrations of the nation – civic or ethnic – can only ever be actualised through 'othering.'

Of course, the nature of data collection meant that cultural stereotyping did take different forms. Personifying nations, Harold asked whether "Andorra are a racist country" and, rather confused, said "I don't understand why Hungary are so racist." Drawing on recent incidents of ball tampering by Australian cricketers, Leonard suggested "they are always cheating aren't they". Intended or not, Leonard was "diminishing the personal integrity of every Australian citizen" (Terry, 2018). Even seemingly neutral stereotypes should be met with scepticism. For example, when England was playing Scotland, Richard responded to a comment made about fans by saying, "oh they stole all the pies did they, not Irn-Bru." Indeed, research suggests that, ironically, these 'fly-under-the-radar' stereotypes may be more potent in (re)inforcing the existence of group difference and damaging to egalitarian goals (Kay et al., 2013). My research builds on this by emphasising the sense of ease with which 'lazy' cultural tropes about nations were enacted. To some extent, national stereotypes were both legitimate and legitimising because participants could (re)enforce the exceptionalism of their 'Englishness' through accepted norms of behaviour and language. As Crozier (2020) contends, exceptionalism is an "entrenched and settled attitude of mind" (p.641) that does not "induce a sense of reality" (p656). Whether intentional or not, this meant that the inequity of a national imaginary became normative, and a legitimate price to pay for the affective security of participants' own 'comfortable' belongingness (Schuller, 2018). Thus, participants were beholden to imperialism because it provided a narrative which allowed them to feel good about their own identity, action, and enjoyment (Slater, 2020). With this in mind, I will now bring the discussions within this chapter together to account for the reality of imperialism as a doctrine that is constitutive of 'Englishness' and thus, one that every citizen is implicated in through mundane experience.

FADE IN:

6 INT. DETACHED HOUSE – LIVING ROOM – AFTERNOON **6**

We are in a colourful living room with mismatched furniture, and knick-knacks lining the mantelpiece and shelves. A glass top table in the centre of the room is used as a footrest. The family dog runs around the table, playing by itself. Facing the television are LAURA (middle aged) and her two (young adult) sons ELLIOT and JORDAN. Lying across a couch is the father LEONARD (middle aged). The family are watching the men's T20 World Cup and have been debating who invented football.

LEONARD
(belittlingly)
RUBBISH!

LAURA
I absolutely agree...rubbish.

RESEARCHER
What? In terms of kicking a round thing--

LEONARD
(patronisingly)
That's not football though is it.

LAURA has been typing on an iPad, from which they read.

LAURA
"Football in its current form arose in England in the middle of the 19th century, but it's thought some versions of the game existed much earlier."

RESEARCHER
Exactly, whereas cricket--

LAURA
The first cricket--

LEONARD
(laughs/scoffs)
It's like the Scots trying to pretend they invented golf.

ELLIOT, JORDAN, and LEONARD start to argue about who was correct. LAURA cont'd to read facts off the iPad. Above indeterminate chatter we hear raised voices.

JORDAN
CRICKET!

LEONARD
(Mimic accent and look of disdain)
French Cricket.

The Mundanity of Imperialism

In this section, I offer a more nuanced discussion of participant enactments to bring together the themes that have been explored in this chapter. I continue to relate my interpretation with the critical framework developed in Chapter One and Two. In doing so, I provide a new perspective to the arguments of past scholars, by applying them to the mundane recesses of everyday experience. I contend that most participant enactments during MSE viewership can be understood as characterised by the mundane, both in the way participants actively embodied imperial discourses and the wider imperial structures that buttressed their lived experience. Screenplay 6 highlights that during MSE viewership, 'othering' had been normalised, serving as a method for participants to locate themselves in the world by offering the means to cast themselves as part of 'the' in-group, 'the' English from 'the' land of hope, glory and Empire. The behaviour of Leonard and Laura in particular, is an example of imperially informed 'Englishness' being (re)enforced and (re)produced as a default ontological position in a variety of mundane ways. But overall, the family returned the nation to a homogenous entity using humour, accents, condescension and cultural stereotypes. I have argued that in several participant enactments these themes could be associated with the foregrounding of 'Englishness' in ways and into spaces that ensured it was a normalised and legitimate practice. Whilst this assessment provides a valuable contribution to the understanding of imperialism's impact on 'Englishness,' it was not the aim of this research to uncover concrete answers regarding participants' subjective understanding of 'othering'. The aim was to tell an alternative story about behaviour that could aid the (re)framing of how contemporary inequity is understood. Thus, the role that participants played in imperialism requires broader interrogation so that I can begin to produce an account of experience where everyone involved is held responsible, which can be developed in the next chapter.

Enacting mundanity

Recognition of participants' involvement in mundane imperialism helps to avoid simplistically rehashing misplaced popular analysis that commonly reduces nationalism into "being merely an unconstructed conservativism, one that is nestled in the crusty recesses of boorish, right-wing politics" (Vullhavan, 2021b, p.89). Similarly, the xenophobic racial prejudice associated with nationalism has been oft-invoked as exclusively white working class (Valluvan, 2017). Meanwhile, the imperial ways of knowing that govern the social world at large have been neglected (Tinsley, 2021). In other words, the lived experience for most citizens has gone unchallenged and, in its broadest contexts, privilege and oppression have gone unscathed. Participants did not, for the most part, demonstrate what might be considered extreme behaviours/ethics or far-right political positions. Instead, they gave 'othering' existence through more prosaic discourses and practices. They expressed cultural stereotypes as

humour and showed discomfort if this was questioned. They framed viewership as 'us vs them,' which was also reflected in their understanding of social existence. Acknowledging the harmfulness of these mundane enactments of imperialism is crucial to understanding how individuals, not always embroiled in contemporary inequity, may be held accountable. Previous studies, particularly those focused on Whiteness, have meaningfully attended to the banal symbols of nationalism (Malešević, 2019; Bowes and Bainer, 2019). However, whilst scholarship has successfully identified and defined these issues, it has rarely moved beyond them towards combating and eradicating them (Fletcher et al., 2021). As I see it, this is problematic because it risks maintaining the illusion that only a small number of individuals are responsible for inequity, and therefore ignores the collective responsibility and intellectual imperative to dismantle imperialism. The difficulty, as evidenced by participants, is that individuals seldom connect themselves to world history, or to the history-making processes in which they are engaged (Mills, 2000). Yet, crucially, I am not simply arguing that participants were helpless, passive subjects. Rather, they were active agents in the agendas of privilege and oppression: their disposition for 'othering,' eagerness to belong, and indifference to nationalism was suggestive of a willingness to maintain the status quo. Participants' relative privileges relied on them mundanely (re)defining their world imperially, and in this sense the two were mutually dependent.

Mundanity is life in the everyday; it is the participation of individuals in seemingly innocuous practices and places (Ebrey, 2016). It "signals the routine and unfolding aspects of social life" and makes us "ask what is at stake in our daily encounters with neighbours or the people we brush past at the bus stop" (Back, 2015, pp.820-821). Imperialism too has a mundane life, whereby 'othering' – which is influenced and bound to power – is rendered ordinary and unproblematic. Readers can therefore understand mundane imperialism as referring to the day-to-day exchanges in which disempowerment and subordination are accepted as somehow normal, in apparently neutral settings (Anghie, 2006). Certainly, many participant enactments of imperialism could be understood as comforting and secure. This process is already well understood, specifically the way that banal displays offer individuals an alibi against accusations of racial stratification (Valluvan, 2022). In the data, 'othering' was shown to be ordinary, and I too believe that the mundanity with which it occurred helped participants perceive it as unproblematic, as it was inherently connected to how they saw and located themselves in the world.

However, this assessment of the data risks falling into the trap of interpretating mundanity as benign. It would result in the moments of 'othering' during viewership being framed as somehow 'different' and therefore separate from the 'real world' that occurs 'outside' (Matthews and Channon, 2016). This would be a mistake. Instead, participant experience must be conceptualised as both constituted by and constitutive of imperialism. Readers should understand that this is critical to

dissecting homogenous depictions of the nation on two accounts. Firstly, it forces us to challenge the damaging perception that certain experiences are bound to different rules or moral regulations than other areas of life. For example, participant 'jokes' about 'other' cultures should not be considered an acceptable and/or expected element of sport viewership. Secondly, it means recognising that imperialism is not realised only in the extreme exegesis of life, but in mundane expressions of antipathy and dismissal, directed at whatever or whomever has been perceived as 'other.'

It also highlights that participants' mobilisations of belonging and estrangement that occurred during MSE viewership relied on their ability to internalise and perform a vehement defence of the identifying features of homogenous communion (Gill, 2007). This was regularly manifested in participant patriotism, which has been shown to speak to Tinsley's (2017) complication of civic/ethnic nationalism. Participants' displays of 'their' nationhood incorporated an ambivalent exclusion that treated the nation as an objective entity, thereby producing an objective in-group, and racialising the nation (Tinsley, 2022a). In this way, mundane imperialism softened the nationalistic sentiment in participant expression, so that it obscured the divisions created through their devotion to the nation. In other words, participants' liberal patriotism was "the product of illiberal practices," proclaiming "the universality of their values, whilst restricting their application to the nation-state" (Tinsley, 2022b, p.810). This contradicts scholarly discussion which entertains the idea that patriotism can be ethical and distinct from nationalism. Kleinig et al.'s (2015) work, titled 'The Virtue of Patriotism,' is an example of a failure to appreciate the severity of patriotisms underlying ethnocultural dividing strategies. As the data attests, whilst the substance of participants' jingoism varied the core function did not: bordering 'the' nation and therefore accentuating those who do and do not belong, inherently placing 'the English' on top. Whether a reader wants to admit it or not, patriotism invokes insider status that can only work on binarism and exclusion (Tinsley, 2022b). Perhaps accepting this is uncomfortable because it exposes us to ourselves, bringing our flaws to the fore, and positioning us closer to the inequities in which we are involved. This is difficult, but it is necessary for a more honest and open discussion about the way nationalism is bolstered in mundane life.

This provides an altered view of 'who' does imperialism because, as participants made visible, ethnocultural belonging was being legitimised in a space that was not extreme, northern, or working class. Nor were participants engaging in inequitable exchange by accident, but often purposefully to confirm their belonging. However, to borrow from Fletcher (2014), I do not think it would be accurate to suggest that participants were conscious of the attendant privileges of their identity. Instead, I contend that they were individualistically seeking the meaning, identity, relevance and satisfaction that a sense of belonging can bring (Allen, 2020). To some extent, it was easier to rely upon these existing and reassuring frameworks of subjectivity than to challenge them and 'decentre themselves.'

Though this will be further explored in the next chapter, in the context of sport fan studies, it supports the suggestion that sport meets emotional needs devoid in other areas of an individuals' everyday life (Wann et al., 2001). However, the academic tradition has been to focus on extreme cases of sport fandom which are, on the grand scale of things, 'relatively infrequent.' The data expands this idea, broadening the ideological reach of sport to demographics that have not been afforded the necessary attention. Equally, this challenges the prevailing assumption that there is a type of person or organisation who is responsible for oppression and subordination (Kendi, 2019). This is evidenced by the way that intense social pressure to not commit transgressions encourages finger pointing to avoid blame (Lally, 2022), which could be seen in the tension between participants when discrimination was 'called out.'

The task in this sense is, as the data suggests, to foster an understanding of 'Englishness' that helps individuals to situate themselves as part of the problem in a way that is productive. As Said (2014) wrote, "the fact is we are mixed in with one another in ways that most national systems of education have not dreamed of" (p.401). Participant experience accentuated the vastness and complexity of social existence which makes the consequence of action so irrational as to appear random, likely owing to great sensitivity to slight changes in conditions. I see mundane imperialism as a concept that tackles this by eliciting critical self-reflection on one's reality. Said also suggested that it is not about rejecting the restraints of imperialism but about working through them. Mundane imperialism helps achieve this because it necessitates acceptance that no one can transcend the diversity of human history. It focuses attention on the worst and most paradoxical ways that imperialism allows people to perceive themselves as exclusively one thing (Said, 2014). Therefore, it attends to the normalised ways in which we self-gratify our identity via processes of motivated ignorance which allow us to feel individually good, whilst simultaneously disavowing our role in the maintenance of an imperial world. In simpler terms, it helps analyse individual lived experience as both shaped by and shaping social life. In the sporting realm, this issue is compounded by the fact that homogeneity is deemed to be a requirement of MSEs sensory entertainment, as will be considered in more detail in the next chapter. Ultimately, mundane imperialism meant that participants engaged in behaviour that offered comforting conceptualisations of identity. Often it stemmed from a kind of cultural mythos – highlighting the 'heroic' elements of nationhood, while ignoring its 'fatal flaws.' This archetypal storytelling allowed for the participants to remain comfortable in their complicity, perhaps because it positioned them as more of a teller or re-teller of the mythos than an active member. Such retelling not only allows for mundanity to arise, but also a sense of nostalgia in which the re-teller finds comfort.

Mundane nostalgia

As participants were expressing cultural stereotypes, it became clear that mythical past events – particularly Britain's Empire – were a source of pride. These were mythical in the sense that 'the' nation's history was envisioned as autonomous, neglecting the connected reality of the past. By discussing previous sporting experiences, military achievements and industrial strength, participants were evoking a nostalgic imagination as the starting point for the national community. Whether intended or otherwise, one pernicious consequence of this was that it legitimised the inherent superiority of an imperially defined principal identity. Building on the previous section, the moments of nostalgia were comforting because they ignored the atrocities of the past, as well as the interconnectedness and multiple identities of the present whilst invigorating a sense of belongingness, seemingly with ease. In this way, nostalgia played a crucial role in mundane enactments of imperialism.

Leading postcolonial thinkers, such as Gilroy (2005), have noted imperial nostalgia in Britain. To return to Tinsley (2020), contemporary nostalgia has become increasingly abstracted from the lived reality so that it now consists of a longing for an entirely imagined timespace. Tinsley emphasises that as the "nation was left with a sense of loss that it could not name, nostalgia blurred into melancholia, such that an all-consuming sense of longing obscured the object of that longing" (p.2336); the object refers to a return to some 'golden age' which can be characterised by acts of barbarism directed at ethnic 'others.' In this way nostalgia offers comfort because of a collective reminiscing about a 'glorious' past without connecting it to the wider atrocities that took place. This process was evident amongst participants' engagements of 'Englishness,' which reflected the suggestion of Tomlinson (2019) that we continue to manufacture an ignorance of the past within the imaginings of our national community. But in the same vein as previous discussions of Said (2012), an outright dismissal of nostalgia is not needed. Tinsley (2020) acknowledges herself that nostalgia has been intrinsic to several successful and progressive decolonial movements. As Toppins (2022) neatly puts it:

> *"Good nostalgia acknowledges that 'the good old days' never existed. Good nostalgia interrogates history. It looks back to find ways forward. It presents the possibility that design can approach progress from multiple temporal directions. It disturbs modernity and paradigms of power" (p. 26).*

Building on this, I therefore posit that rather than seeking original means of change, we should instead be considering the ways in which we can make existing social processes beneficial to our own transformational and emancipatory aims. In saying this I want to clarify that it does not mean prioritising 'western' White people's feelings, nor trivialising the severity of discriminative speech, I

am also not arguing that simply more education will somehow lead to change (Swannie, 2018). Instead, I am accepting that current efforts to actively challenge inequity are often deemed an outright affront. Participant experience evidenced that nostalgia gave knowledge systems power. Perhaps, then, researchers should be providing equally mundane nostalgic solutions, such as 'future-nostalgia' (Tinsley, 2020) which uses utopian thinking to provide people with a sense of belonging and identity free of 'othering' that strengthens their imaging of an alternative future.

Imperial patterns could be seen in participants' enactments of nostalgia. Further entrenching nationalist sensibility, participants' nostalgic imaginaries portrayed anecdotes that Saunders (2020) described as a cultural inheritance. This contests some of the conventional assumptions about sports fandom and academic criticism of postcolonial theory. As 'fans' of England, participants often re-told myths of 'the' nation and 'bought into' hegemonic versions of 'Englishness' as an intrinsic part of their support. As I interpret this behaviour, participants were not expressing rational thought, but using symbolic images as myth to define something beyond comprehension – the nation (see Bouchard, 2013). This results in a peculiar contradiction whereby, as discussed in Chapter One, viewers of MSEs can (re)produce narratives which potentially lead to their own identity being supressed. To align with Parry (2021), the conundrum for critical sport scholars is how to dismantle the imperially informed hegemonic identity narratives attached to the national team, when mythmaking is integral to kinship. I would argue it starts with distinguishing between the former as socially constructed and the later as an intrinsic human behaviour, acknowledging the apparent naturalness of mythmaking and envisioning it as a useful tool for transformative aims.

I believe a similar logic can be applied in response to Leddy-Owen's (2020) criticism that postcolonial theory has failed to adequately account for the contemporary purchase that nationalism enjoys. He convincingly argues for postcolonial critique that is more sympathetic to nation-state frameworks, and I cannot deny the significant role of the nation-state as an ideological mediator in the participants' experience. However, I do not want to position the nation-sate as actual or overstate the causality it has on 'Englishness.' The risk is that humanity can only be understood as "naturally divided into nations, that nations are known by certain characteristics which can be ascertained, and that the only legitimate type of government is national self-government" (Kedourie, 1993, p.1). Leddy-Owen (2020) is not guilty of this, per se, but I do challenge his previous insistence that nationalism is shaped by the state, that 'identities' are static, and that the salience of nationhood in individuals' everyday life and culture is very limited (Leddy-Owen, 2019). My interpretation is that 'Englishness' accommodated participants' need for belonging and identity. 'Englishness' was not fixed, which could be seen in the fluidity with which participants aligned to different nations, teams and athletes. I would thus argue that nationalism was not an ideology of statehood and/or identity; it was an unconscious

yet self-aggrandising reading and storying of the world. It was neither subjective nor completely exogenous, but a logical response to (re)defining existence through competition. What Leddy-Owen and much political punditry misjudges is that all forms of statism are problematic, not just nationalism (Sandelind, 2021).

To return from this slight tangent, the process of enacting inclusion and identity was exaggerated by participant investment in the pretence of a homogenous past nation, in a nostalgia that shied away from the essential hybridity of global connections past and present. Previously, I have discussed Bambra's (2014) concept of 'connected sociologies' as a means of locating 'Englishness' within its globalised contexts. The application of this to participant experience demonstrated that instead of recognising the actual globality of their 'Englishness,' participants (re)produced powerful cultural and economic myths around sport about their nationhood. The way in which these were framed through symbolic traits, products, and landmarks also corresponds with Andersons's (1983) and Billig's (1995) writing on nationalism. At points, the complex interplay of homogeny, imagination, and mundanity present in participant mythization of nationhood could be described as "scapegoating and stereotyping of racial and religious minorities, xenophobia, bullying opponents, and shamelessly stoking of racial violence" (Kusz, 2017, p.116). Some participants compounded this by attaching 'values' and 'positive' attributes to their national team in reference to sporting action, the implication being that the 'other' nation did not share such redeeming character traits. This is significant considering Knoester and Davis's (2021) recent survey of United States adults' perception of sport. Asking the question 'Does sport teach cultural values?' their research found that those who follow sport are often nostalgic in their traditionalism, and therefore potentially more critical of any disruption to the status quo and their sense of comfort. My results add to this study in several ways: Firstly, it supports their conclusion that sport seems to be "serving the needs and interests of elites and those with relative privilege who most benefit from the status quo" (p.1041). Secondly, whilst I have not replicated their study, sport viewership is potentially a valuable opportunity for English audiences to negotiate and promote cultural value. Thirdly, historical links and imperial genealogies could be traced to the "traditional" values that sport often reinforces. Finally, my research elaborates on their finding that people do not necessarily recognise the link between sport and cultural value by making visible the unconscious ways in which this exchange may take place.

In contrast to previous studies focused on nostalgia and sport (such as: Ramshaw and Gammon, 2005; Fairley et al., 2018; Takata and Hallmann, 2022), I did not find my participants nostalgia to be overwhelmingly informed by past sporting achievement. Some participants could not even remember the location of the game, the sport played, or the teams involved. There were some exceptions, but collective nostalgia of sporting success came from a selection of participants with

more of an active role in, and general knowledge of, sport. More commonly participants would recall watching a game to reflect fondly on time spent with family and friends, noticeably those not within geographic proximity or still alive. In this regard nostalgia had clear benefits, but my contention would be that whilst watching MSEs participant nostalgia could be perceived as part of what Maguire and Poulton (1999) called active 'ethnic assertiveness/defensiveness.' When sentimentally recounting past experiences, participants (re)produced imagined narratives (about nations, supporters, and cultures) that (re)produced stronger emotive 'us vs them' identifications. This did not feel like an innocent moment of bonding, but a tacit expression of the invented exceptionalism of their nation, which shall come into focus in the next chapter.

Ultimately, the nostalgia evident during the recordings varied across participants. However, there was consistencies in the context of imperialism, Englishness, and MSEs. Namely that the imagined homogeneous nation to which participants belonged was real and exceptional, and something they could take pride in. Nostalgia therefore played a key role in cementing the autonomy of contemporary England so that nationhood was positioned as a naturally occurring phenomena. This was accentuated by the practicalities of sporting contest and could be seen in the way participants argued about the exclusivity of sport, rather than recognising global influences on sporting pursuit. In some cases, this involved attaching values to 'Englishness' which led to some participants abstractly dividing the world into economic have and have not's, enlightened and primitive, right and wrong (the latter was particularly true of the dichotomy of the Christian West and Muslim East). Conversely, participants were also nostalgic about time spent with loved ones, in instances even the most cynical researcher would struggle to frame negatively. In other words, participant experience highlighted that nostalgia was multidimensional by serving participants' individual and collective needs (Cho, 2023). Therefore, it would be a misrepresentation to suggest that all nostalgic enactments were a deliberate attempt at discrimination and should instead be conceptualised as a mundane way of seeing and locating oneself in the world that implies discrimination as a "cost to be paid" for such a reassuring pursuit of "ontological security" (Skey, 2011) about the nation and oneself.

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Conclusion

This chapter has emphasised the mundane imperialism within participants' enactments of 'Englishness,' and considered the key aspects associated with this concept. Analysis of collected data highlighted that in the mundane, 'othering' was normalised, and exceptionalism was legitimised. This informed a more thorough reading of the mundanity that could be associated with participant

experience. My suggestion was that participants where both enactors of and nostalgically invested in the mundane life of imperialism. In exploring this interpretation, I can now respond to two of the aims of this research.

Firstly, the extent of MSE audiences' engagement with nationalistic narratives of England can be assessed. Certainly, viewership is inherently structured by the nation-state format of MSEs. The implication of 'rooting for' or being a 'fan' of a country's team and/or players representing that country, is to position those competing against one another. The nature of modern sport is also, for better or worse, competitive. However, the issue with MSE viewers enactments of 'Englishness' was the associated nationalistic narratives, that often occurred in mundane ways. Therefore, participants were framing their nationalism as 'civil' because it was enacted in a site deemed legitimate. One of the potential consequences of this is that viewers attempt to look beyond the hostile boundaries of exclusivity they must support as MSE viewers. This is not to say that MSEs should not be broadcast, but to note that they do reveal nationalistic tendencies and behaviours.

Secondly, this chapter has shown how imperialism, as a doctrine of power, may function within the self-identification of moderate citizens. Imperialism was mundanely 'active' in the self-identification of participants. Not because the signs and symbols of imperialism were explicitly evident, but because of the systems of being and thinking that imperialism produces. This has been shown to have affected everyday life and prejudices. To reiterate, these connections are not always visible in contemporary 'Englishness,' but are enacted by those involved in its celebration. Individuals may well be unable to name or articulate understanding about the privileges of their identity, but their behaviour would suggest they are not just 'passive' beings in this process. In other words, action speaks louder than words. I therefore contend that MSE viewers who self-identify as English, particularly moderate citizens, are motivated by a subconscious social awareness of the need for belonging – buying into the latent imperialism within 'Englishness' that affords them a sense of belonging. Imperialism functions trough this paradox, whereby individuals can understand themselves to not be part of the problem, whilst their behaviours prop up hegemonic 'Englishness.' The next chapter will develop this idea further, intertwining the discussions within this chapter with wider cultural, societal, and historical forces, to truly push responsibility for an inequitable present beyond the individualistic, and geographic/economic narrow ways in which it is too often conceptualised.

Chapter Five

Motivated Ignorance

In this chapter I build on Chapter Four's discussion about mundane imperialism to consider why the responsibility for inequitable exchange went unnoticed – and mostly unchallenged – in participant enactments of 'Englishness.' Drawing on Screenplays 7, 8 and 9 to contextualise my interpretation, I focus attention on a much deeper exploration of the relationship between participants' lived experience and the 'general life of society' (see Horkheimer, 1993). I will address an apparent denial of hybridity, as participants consumed homogeneity whilst also overlooking the globality of their experience. This was particularly significant in (re)enforcing hegemonic 'Englishness,' and I will consider the impact of this on race, religion and gender as intersecting categories of belonging. Bringing this together in the final section of the chapter, I examine the ways that everyday 'Englishness' (re)produces epistemologies of ignorance that misinterpret the realities of systemic oppression and privilege, allowing individuals to claim innocence (Applebaum, 2010). In this regard, the role of MSE viewership in illuminating the ignorance associated with 'Englishness' will also be highlighted. As I will show, the notion of motivated ignorance embodies a simple phenomenon that could nevertheless support explanations about why exclusive categories of belonging remain unchecked. Motivated ignorance describes instances in which an individual chooses to remain ignorant because of the costs of possessing knowledge (Williams, 2021). 'Flat Earthers' are perhaps the ultimate example of motivated ignorance; despite all evidence pointing to the contrary, they willingly refuse to acknowledge the earth is spherical, because being a member of the in-group depends on accepting the earth as flat (Jones et al., 2022). For 'Flat Earthers' the consequences are relatively harmless, but the problem with motivated ignorance is that as well as depending on it for meaning and belonging, it insulates people from the painful realities of their worldview. By introducing motivated ignorance into the study of mundane imperialism I both add to and contradict existing literature, particularly on Whiteness and sports fandom. In doing so I expatiate further upon the 'hierarchies of belonging' (Back et al., 2012) that participants actively (re)defined, (re)produced and (re)enforced.

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FADE IN:

7 INT. DETACHED HOUSE – LIVING/DINING ROOM – NIGHT 7

We are in a bright, modern, open-plan living/dining room. The walls, floor, and most of the furnishings are white. The space is very modern, with large glass sliding doors leading onto a patio and sizable garden. A peloton machine sits in one corner. Opposite a wall hanging television, HAROLD and the REASEARCHER share a couch. A dog paces between them, hoping to get some of the pizza they are eating. The two are drinking Heineken. They un-pause the fixture between England and Andorra men's football.

On the screen, players have linked arms.

HAROLD
Nice...I don't understand why Hungary are so racist.

RESEAHER
Yeah...are we not that racist?

HAROLD
Well, they're more racist yeah.

RESEARCHER
Have you been down Millwall?

HAROLD
(Laughs)
Well yeah but--

RESEARCHER
I've been down to a Chelsea game and seen people throwing out racist abuse.

HAROLD
(Laughs)
I was with you at Chelsea...I just think...I don't know...I like the idea of cheering taking the knee, not booing. I mean every team has factions, but it was like the only ones who turned up to the Hungary game were racists. It's just embarrassing.

RESEARCHER
Ah well in some football cultures it may be that the only people who turn up are racist.

HAROLD
I heard a good quote once which was er 'not all football fans are racist, but all racists are football fans' and I thought that was quite a good description.

Denied Hybridity

I chose the exchange between Harold and myself illustrated in Screenplay 7 to open this section because it demonstrates the nuanced way in which several participants enacted 'Englishness' through their consumption. The screenplay also represents a link between the discussions which ended the previous chapter and the ones about to begin because of the mundane imperialism underpinning Harold's MSE viewership. This supported my initial interpretation that participants were not unconsciously engaging with imperialism but actively initiating the imperial power-knowledge nexus which dictates belonging. In the screenplay Harold 'accepts' the homogeny of viewers and nations, exceptionalising England as less racist than others – a process which I myself do in response. Harold then proceeds to play down the level of racism amongst fans of Chelsea FC (the football club they support). All the while, Harold overlooks the global connections involved with their viewership, their purchases, even their living space. In this way the screenplay brings into acute focus how mundane imperialism was simultaneously blurred and (re)enforced through the consumption of 'Englishness.' This should not, though, be understood purely through an economic paradigm. Instead, as Gandhi (2019) suggests, we should "diagnose the material effects and implications of colonialism as an epistemological malaise at the heart of Western rationality" (p.25-26). Therefore, the argument is not to point the finger at participants for failing to account for the global inequities attached to their acts of consumption and national identification. Rather, it is to show how visions of bounded 'spirits of nations' and orientalist tropes are all grounded in an imperial framing which inherently fails to recognise anything else than these ways of seeing the world, and how this becomes evident in and (re)enforced through MSEs viewership.

Consuming homogeneity

In terms of their MSE viewership and consumer purchases, participant consumption suggested that, to some extent, they had 'bought into' a homogenising worldview. Firstly, when I say "buying 'into' ignorance" I am not referring to participants' acquisition of information, but the instances in which they showed belief in and/or support for an idea, concept, or system where their in-group allegiance – to 'Englishness' – meant ignorantly accepting a position wrapped up in homogenous framings of identity and pride. One example was Milly, who said that they stood up to sing the nation anthem whilst watching the European football championships. Secondly, with 'homogenising' I am referring to the enactments during which 'Englishness' and/or nationhood was returned to an imagined collective group that participants positioned themselves as representing. Though I cannot say for certain what participants' reasoning was for this, people are biased towards

beliefs that will be welcomed by the 'in-group' (see Funkhouser, 2022). This could be seen in the way Charlie dismissed their concern for the environmental impact of the Red Arrows[23].

CHARLIE
Ahhh look (points at screen) they have the Red Arrows flying over as well, they're good them.

SEAN
The Red Arrows?

CHARLIE
The Red Arrows. It's quite cool. Probably not particularly great for the environment but oh well.

In order to show pride for the Red Arrows (a symbol of their nation), Charlie was actively averse to thinking about or gaining an understanding of the environmental consequences of them celebrating the aerial display. It may seem trivial, but the climate crisis is intimately bound to Whiteness and imperialism, and disproportionately affects poorer communities, particularly previous colonies (Hallegatte, 2018). Rather than just a mundane moment of harmless enjoyment, Charlie became culpable for the maintenance of inequity. Charlie's 'possession' of 'Englishness' can only be enacted by 'accepting' a homogenous framing of nationhood that is made possible through processes of inclusion and exclusion which create inequity. This highlights how participants' belonging relied on them not deepening their understanding of the inequities associated with 'Englishness,' which is significant because the continuous 'flagging' of the nation (see Billig, 1995) meant that participants routinely negotiated 'Englishness' in this way.

Isaac's enactment of 'Englishness' emphasised this process of ignorance in a more certain way when watching the men's national football team. Having earlier performed accented mimicry (see Screenplay 4), he then began to discuss who he supported during cricket matches by claiming "anyone but England. Honestly, I can't explain now how I cannot get over it, because it was back in the 70s and it was you know, it was very, very racist." However, less than a minute later Isaac said, "but the thing is I sort of want to support England," and that in a pub during the previous World Cup he had kept wandering over to the television screen, "by the end of it, everyone was jumping around." It suggests that, to support England, Isaac was avoiding the realities of racism in cricket – the year after this recording reports of systemic racism in county cricket surfaced (Dart, 2022). Likewise, Isaac happily supported the national football team despite racism being widespread – during the same tournament three Black players were subject to racist abuse (Gillet, 2021). Readers should also note how behaviour and belief have been legitimised in certain contexts by Isaac. MSE viewership showed how Isaac's

allegiance to the nation relied on accepting a racialised identity. This supports discussions in Chapter One regarding ethnic minority fans of England, suggesting that they too must cement the superiority of Whiteness, and thus the subordination of their own bodies in order to belong (Bhambra, 2014). As Fanon (1988) suggests, "the oppressed flings himself upon the imposed culture with the desperation of a drowning man" (p.39). This would mean that mundane imperialism was a 'price to pay' for 'being included' (see Back and Sinha, 2018). My research elaborates on this by emphasising the way in which this was also true for ethnic majority viewers whose belonging was taken-for-granted. In other words, there was a sense during MSE viewership, that even though 'unsavoury' enactments were deemed 'part and parcel' of the game, the privilege of 'Englishness' emerged as a way of 'accepting it' and 'shrugging it' off through its mundane framing of participants responsibility for the consequences of inequitable exchange.

This point reminds us that we should also be considering the mundane ways in which nationalism becomes a legitimate worldview (Aronczyk, 2017). When Richard, Vivienne, and Constance were asked to present things that they thought represented their 'Englishness,' several of the artefacts they showed had nationalistic sentiment: a cushion emblazoned with the Union Jack and Royal seal, an England football scarf, a Team GB sweatband, a souvenir tea towel of London, framed pictures of Queen Elizabeth II and Margaret Thatcher, and a Union Jack keyring. These items are pedestrian, and when found in the family space they were seemingly innocuous. However, these participants were embodying what they saw to be an 'authentic national communion' (see Tinsley, 2021), which (re)creates an out-group of people who do not display such patriotism. What is interesting is that elsewhere, such a cumulative display of national paraphernalia would likely appear ultra-nationalistic. Harold's enactment in Screenplay 7 gave a sense that collectives of individuals can 'go too far,' which itself speaks to discussions in Chapter Four about 'othering' being a value judgment. This means that when the flag of St George becomes suddenly visible during MSEs (worn as a cape, flown from vehicles, hung from windows and so forth), people are buying into the belief that vigorous devotion to the in-group is legitimate. Whether it is understood as nationalism or not is immaterial; for Richard, Vivienne, and Constance, their displays of 'Englishness' relied on the motivation to ignore the artefact's symbolic association with behaviours, beliefs and groups they recognized as being problematic elsewhere. Equally ignored, was the ideological and practical global connections of their enactments and artefacts. The royal family they celebrated has 'Germanic' lineage and very few of their items were made 'here,' for example. Therefore, the inherent overlooking of global connections in participants experience is also worth considering.

Overlooked globality

By overlooking the globality of their experience, despite evidence of global connections, participants did not have to confront the inequities associated with their enactments, highlighting the importance of motivated ignorance both to and in the prevalence of 'Englishness.' This was especially true of participant consumer purchases, which supports previous research suggesting that individuals prefer not to know additional information about their purchases that highlight the consequences of their consumer behaviour for others (Kajackaite, 2015). All the participants owned electronics linked to sweatshops, and whilst I am unable to say whether they had considered and/or were concerned about this, the complicated ethics involved in these products' manufacture had been sent underground (Poggiali, 2015). For example, when Sean asked, "how cool would it be to have an F1 tyre?" several sustainability issues went unchecked. In this sense, Sean's motivation was to avoid arriving at an unethical conclusion about the purchase, which may lessen their enjoyment of it (Williams, 2021). A pedantic reading of the data would show that everything participants did could be located within a global consumer marketplace – such is the scale of commodity culture. On this point the catchphrase 'there is no such thing as ethical capitalism' does hold weight. Yet as one of the most influential everyday ways in which individuals can imbed imperial power relations into the fabric of society, it remains a valuable discussion.

I am not able to judge the rightness or wrongness of this, but I can suggest it reflects the significance of motivated ignorance in participants' ability to peacefully enjoy the status quo. This speaks to Marxist postcolonial readings of consumption which argue that products have become part of an obfuscating 'network of signs' (see Spivak, 1988) which hide the processes of labour in their production. The harsh reality is that, if I particularised the exploitation of labour, resources, and the asymmetry of global production involved in every consumer product I experienced during recordings, it is likely that they would all have problematic associations. This supports the demands of past scholarship, like Kapoor (2004), that called for "vigilant self-implication and painstaking, ethical engagement" (p.642). However, the issue with this, is that it positions individuals as 'impartial seekers of knowledge' (see Williams, 2021). The obvious solution in my study would therefore be to criminalise individual action so that participants could alter their behaviour. However, this fails to account for my sense that participants' ignorance was motivated. It would be too simple, and inaccurate, to suggest that participants were just unaware of the inequities they enacted. Instead, 'Englishness' should be understood as an imperially informed strategy of ignorance that creates the privilege and security of belonging for "human beings who now live in more fluid and self-conscious worlds of knowledge, epistemology, wisdom, religion, truth and trust" (Plummer, 2021, p.58). Therefore, rather than making

people more aware, the focus should be directed at challenging visions of the world which make possessing knowledge costly.

The overlooked globality associated with participant enactments of 'Englishness' cannot be understated. For example, when Debbie described how "the Czech Republic are dressed like little Coca Cola Bottles" or Isaac suggested that they "like Belgium 'cause they have nice chocolate," we should acknowledge the visual alignment of a commodity with nationhood. This suggests that the primary obstacle to addressing inequity arises from a shared, distorted way of thinking about the world (Pickett, 2021). This could be seen in the way that participants acknowledged their consumption of international products without necessarily registering the globalised connections or histories involved with their consumption of it. For example:

DEBBIE
That ginger beer has been in there for a long time.
(Looks back at RESEARCHER)
You want rum?

RESEARCHER
I'm okay, what rum is it?

ISAAC
(Enters from the kitchen)
There's this rum. This rum that I like, and it's Venezuelan, called Diplomatico. And it's sweet, quite sweet, and it's really, really nice.

DEBBIE
That's really sweet as well that one.

RESEARCHER
Where's that one from?

ISAAC
Barbados.

Equally, Richard dreamily said "Ah Lindt, it's extra creamy. I was introduced to it by my brother and erm yeah, I'm hooked" without any consideration for the historic and modern slavery involved with chocolate production, or chocolate as a colonial commodity (Hinch, 2010; Sampeck, 2019). The same could also be said about Tom and Arthur who watched England vs San Marino through a games console developed by a company headquartered in Japan, using technology invented in the United Sates. The essential globality of these products contradicted the participants' previous English exceptionalism, discussed in Chapter Four. As Gilroy (2005) suggests, the failure of working through the legacy of colonialism can lead to not only hostility and violence directed at Blacks, immigrants, and

'aliens,' but in an inability to value the ordinary, unruly multiculture that has evolved organically and unnoticed in urban centres. This inability did emerge during MSE viewership; however, the failure was an active unawareness. In other words, the failure of participants to not account for the global connections involved in their enactments was something they did, rather than something they did not do.

This 'active' process was integral in anchoring the homogeneity of 'Englishness' by ensuring that no legitimate alternative to collective identity could exist, and thus was crucial to mundane imperialism's 'staying power.' Framing participants as 'actively' involved in the denial of hybridity is also important to holding everyone accountable and responsible for (re)enforcing the boundaries of 'Englishness.' It supports an alternative approach to how contemporary inequity should be recognised and addressed, insofar that it challenges the popular assumption that 'I am not part of the problem.' This has implications for how the identity categories that inform hierarchies of belonging must be understood, as the next section will discuss.

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FADE IN:

8 INT. RURAL DETACHED HOUSE – LIVING ROOM – NIGHT 8

We are in a large living room, with the lights off. The walls are lined with family photographs and the shelves are cluttered with various heirlooms. The family have brought out Union Jack flags, pictures of the queen, and Olympic memorabilia (upstairs there is a cardboard cut-out of Margaret Thatcher). On one coffee table are several tabloid magazines from the days following the death of Princess Diana, a keepsake, the front covers adorned with headshots of the Princess. The signal on the television is weak. RICHARD (young adult), his mother VIVIENNE (middle aged), and Grandmother CONSTANCE (old aged) are sat opposite, and the RESEARCHER is sat facing almost away from the screen. They are watching England vs Scotland in the men's European Championship.

RICHARD
It's quite interesting from an identity perspective.

RESEARCHER
Yes?

RICHARD
I mean...I'm all for a bit of flag waving...but there is erm, a time and a place.

(Elongated pause, with a look as if pondering thought.)

You' know...I just think it's quite sad that it's almost become another...you know...the Union Jack has become a political symbol rather than—

Excitable commentary distracts RICHARD, and their attention turns to the game, where a Scottish player has committed a foul.

CONSTANCE
He's not happy, is he?

VIVIENNE
He never is.

Can the same not be aid for the St George's cross though Richard?

RICHARD
Well, that's...I would argue that's more of a political symbol in the eye of certain people. And unfortunately, it's got connections to the, erm, extremist groups as well. Which is very problematic.

(Re)Enforced Belonginess

(Re)enforcing the boundaries of belonging was a key part of participants' 'active' role in cementing the imperial dimensions of 'Englishness' within mundane life. This, as can be seen in Screenplay 8, involved participants negotiating many divergent categories of identity. During participant enactments, these markers of difference intersected with such frequency and complexity that reading them as anything other than interconnected would be wholly inaccurate. Therefore, like in Chapter One, even though I have separated my writing between the overarching categories of identity which govern 'Englishness' – race, religion, and gender – they must be read as entangled with one another and the interpretations made in this, and the previous chapter. Consider Screenplay 8, during which Richard, Vivienne and Constance were watching England play Scotland, which by nature of its 'Britishness' involved many colliding elements of national belonging itself. On this, it is interesting that at the very beginning of the recording session Richard had said "I must say I think it's great, 'cause you know, we are one large country at the end of the day. But we can always have some healthy competition." Then there are the artefacts, particularly those which idolised Margaret Thatcher and Queen Elizabeth, figures who were both proponents and representative of hegemonic 'Englishness.' Not only were they White, but they embodied a desirable White femininity which, as established in Chapter One, is intimately tied to Christian values and several artefacts included Christian iconography. Equally, the cross of St George at the centre of their discussion is also bound to discourses about Whiteness, Christianity and masculinity. Throughout the exchange there is a sense that Richard is ignoring the problematic associations of English flags to legitimise the family's enactments, by juxtaposing their 'acceptable' celebration of 'Englishness' against the 'bad' nationalism of politically 'extremist' sects. This was characteristic of the way in which participants (re)enforced hierarchies of belonging – (re)defining ethnonationalist narratives of 'Englishness' whilst remaining ignorant to the inequitable realities they (re)produced – and will therefore need to be considered more thoroughly.

Whiteness

On several occasion, the racialised elements of participant enactments went unnoticed, and in this way the foregrounding of racial hierarchies was closely related to mundane imperialism. 'Other' races were regularly framed negatively during 'mundane' dialogue. For example: Ghanaian fans were described as "quite loud" by Richard, and Vivienne said that those who don't sing the national anthem "drive me mad…I think it's absolutely disgraceful." Sean called the Russian driver in Formula One an "arch-villain," which led Charlie to go even further and say "definitely a team I don't like, it's the Russians and the Germans. They're definitely the villains." Harold looked forward to beating Hungary

because “we have got a real chance to spank them. Make them feel shit,” not only implying a desire to lower the worth of the Hungarian team, but make sure that the Hungarians felt worse. Whilst these racial microaggressions did not inevitably lead to wanton acts of violence (Cameron, 2020), my research has highlighted how instrumental they were to participants’ sense of belonging.

The racist undertones of MSE viewership were also informed by desirability, which impacted who was allowed to belong. Participants noted minority athletes’ jewellery, clothing, facial features, and behavioural traits during viewership. All these were in response to the footage, and MSEs were therefore enabling the (re)production of Whiteness. For example, Laura turned their nose at Black English cricketer Joffrey Archer, saying, “I don’t like his chain,” and in this way a Black-associated symbol was used to target an ethnic minority (Gallagher, 2020). Similarly, upon viewing an Indian fan in the crowd, Leonard, exclaimed “that is a horrendous moustache,” ignoring the cultural and colonial relevance of moustaches in India (Masselos, 2020). Likewise, the following exchange encapsulates the way in which minority cultural symbols were used by participants to other:

RICHARD
I tell you what...he looks like a rough lad.

RESEARCHER
Is it the hair, the cornrows that make him look tough?

RICHARD
Yeah. And the tattoos I think as well,

(The dog walks over)

Missy, come here Missy!

Despite the player’s Jamaican heritage, the hairstyle was deemed to be menacing by Richard. In this regard many participants were making judgments based on subjective values, which are themselves heavily influenced by racial stereotypes. For example, when discussing the weight of NFL Hall of Fame player William ‘The Refrigerator’ Perry, Ian questioned “the Fridge is 300 isn't he?” to which Dylan responded, “No the Fridge is like 350.” Though this seems anecdotal, and in the context harmless, the decades old racial stereotypes about Black physicality and athleticism were perpetuated (Mercurio and Filak, 2010). As Carrington (2010) suggests, “the ‘black athlete’ is a construction made from the repertoire of colonial fantasies about blackness...: the angry, wild, uncontrolled, and almost uncontrollable, and ungrateful sporting subject that owes its success to innate animalistic physiology” (p.81). Participants demonstrated that they were not just passively consuming these ‘mediated’ visual stereotypes but playing a key part in (re)producing prejudice.

Essentially, participants' racialised 'othering' was 'permitted' partly because it was extremely mundane. For instance, when Harold randomly shouted "Tyrone!" (Todd and Galinsky (2014) describe this as a Black sounding name) when discussing winger Jadon Sancho, it was brushed aside with ambivalence as Harold immediately started talking about another aspect of play. Curiously, at the beginning of the fixture (having become customary for teams to kneel in protest against racism in the game), Harold had become irate about Hungary's refusal to do so, saying, "he's pointing to the badge though. Why doesn't he just take the fucking knee then?" There was a sense that Harold was ignoring the realities of Whiteness in their own enactment by shifting blame for inequity onto 'others.' Later Harold recalled, "I heard a good quote once which was er 'not all football fans are racist, but all racists are football fans' and I thought that was quite a good description." At times, participants even appeared to 'move the goalpost' (see Higgins, 2022) with regards to racial thinking so that their viewpoints were 'acceptable.' Unsure about kneeling before games, Richard said "Ugh, they are doing this ridiculous knee business." Likewise, Milly suggested that its "one of those things that you can't really stop once you've started…Well that's the thing, you just get like noticed if you don't do it and stuff." For both participants 'taking the knee' was seen to be superficial, not because they lacked racial awareness, but because they positioned themselves as doing enough and were therefore not racist. This view, as suggested in Chapter One, reflects the functioning of racism within the 'silent majority' whereby individuals may claim innocence whilst propping up systems of oppression. In academia this contradiction is also visible, such as in Biggar's (2023) 'moral confrontation' with colonialism where he claims, "All human beings are basically equal" but "in so many respects human beings are unequal – in beauty, intelligence, moral virtue, physical strength, material resource, political power, opportunity and yes, potential" (p.30). The phrase "we are all equal…but" captures my experience of belonging during the recording sessions. Like Biggar, participants felt that everyone had a right to belong, but that there were stipulations, which ultimately (re)enforced the Whiteness of 'Englishness.'

Even when ethnic 'others' were 'given' belonging it was reliant on extenuating circumstances. Debbie continuously described Bukayo Saka as a "king," and Isaac also thought that commentator Ian Wright's Ghanaian clothing was "cool." Whilst on the surface these comments point to how MSE viewership can help to resist hegemonic narratives of identity, Debbie and Isaac openly attacked various White players depending on the league team that they played for. Likewise, Richard was shocked that Gareth Southgate was not wearing his waistcoat, saying that he didn't "look very ambassadorial," and Vivienne said, "he doesn't look good does he?" Therefore, instead of 'hard and fast' rules about belonging, participants (re)enforced Whiteness as an ideal/standard that anybody could belong to by meeting their subjective condition. When the commentator talked about Marcus Rashford, a Black football player, receiving an MBE, Richard said proudly, "a member of the British

Empire," which insinuated that belonging had been granted in their eyes. It rather succinctly highlights the key point within this section: that the direction of belonging was always from 'others' to participants. In other words, participants' racial belonging was taken-for-granted. They could therefore govern acceptance and rejection, a process that reflected previous colonial relations.

The sense that participants were controlling racialised hierarchies was also evidenced by the ease at which White people were granted belonging. Justin described English cricketer Jonathan Bairstow as 'made of muscle. He's muscly as hell,' which was said in a complimentary, adoring tone. In a different recording session, during a close-up of a White bowler, Paul was impressed by the athleticism of the cricket players, suggesting that "they look like they do more than just play cricket if you see what I mean. Proper, proper training." The perceived professionalism of White players was regularly cemented in this way and participants would (re)draw the boundaries of belonging accordingly. Sometimes White athletes from 'other' nations were subsumed into participants belonging, as this discussion about Australian racing driver Daniel Riccardo illustrates:

SEAN
See, no one has really concentrated on Danny Ric, but this is a good drive for him. Ah look he's got a Union Jack on his flag as well.

CHARLIE
Who?

SEAN
Danny Ric!

CHARLIE
Oh, that's true.

SEAN
The more the merrier.

CHARLIE
Part of the Commonwealth.

In this example Daniel Riccardo was allowed to belong because he both performed well and is a citizen of the British Empire. It evidences how on some occasions White athletes from 'other' nations were subsumed into participants' belonging. It also connects to an earlier point that Whiteness grants somehow privileged access to 'Englishness,' especially when attached to imperial connections (Commonwealth). Whiteness was more 'contingent' (see, Hylton and Lawrence, 2014) when linked to South American and South and Eastern Europeans (as discussed previously). The term 'contingent' is also useful because it draws attention to the fact that many layers and levels influenced belonginess.

Even if race was not 'in play' alternative categories such as religion and gender would be – and as this thesis has stressed, these would often be interconnected.

Christianity

One of the crucial ways in which MSEs enabled 'othering' was how they platformed narratives of Christianity. Intertwined with racialised hierarchies, the religious sentiment within participant experience was overwhelmingly passive. As previously mentioned, several households had Christian symbols on display, many had bibles on bookshelves, a couple had fridge magnets of the Pope, and one even had a solar powered Pope bobble-head (souvenirs from holidays in Italy). In much the same capacity as Whiteness, participants' experience of MSEs was infused with Christian vernacular, imagery and belief. For instance, across the recordings there were numerous instances of exclamations such as 'Oh God!" and "Jesus Christ." Curiously, nearly all the participants joined in with the performance of national anthems by either singing or humming the tune of 'God Save The Queen.' Some participants even took offense to athletes not singing the national anthem. Charlie suggested that concern for the environment came "second to Queen and Country," which although said in jest, still affirmed the central role of the Royal Family to 'Englishness.' Although there was occasionally more concrete religiosity, such as when Justin said, "oh my God," to which Carol kindly requested they "not blaspheme," I argue that participant enactments showed that it did not matter whether they were 'churchgoers' or not because the epistemological implications of 'Englishness' have such close alignment with Christian tradition. It means that, whilst researchers like Storm (2011) are correct that there is little direct relationship between a persons' faith and religion's perceived importance to nationhood, my research suggests it is inconsequential. This is because, regardless of a participant's religiousness, enactments of 'Englishness' involve exalting a 'conception of nationalism' (see Ritchie, 2021) tied to Christian Europe. Storm (2011) neglects this by distinguishing between "civic-symbolic, cultural-aesthetic and ethnic national identity" (p.828) and thus is guilty of 'defending' certain types of national identity. Therefore, I suggest that Christian 'Englishness' was reassuring insofar that its familiarity meant that participants taken-for-granted belonging was (re)enforced.

Additionally, the structure and regulatory arrangements of MSEs themselves meant that participants could not help but be involved with the religious hegemony associated with Europe, and muscular Christian traditions of modern sport. It is interesting that, when participants spoke about the MSEs they remember watching, they mostly spoke about rugby, football and cricket matches – sports that were central to the development of muscular Christianity. Considering the discussion above, it is also noteworthy that, for some participants, MSEs were operating as an 'invisible religion' (see Uszynski, 2013). For example, Constance recalled that, growing up, her family would go "down

the football religiously," but that they had not gone to a game in decades. This helps extend research into sport fandom that, whilst concluding that sport functions as a 'neoliberal religion' (see Sabella, 2022), has focused on 'intense' fandom. My research highlights how modern sport, through MSE viewership, serves the personal and collective self-understanding of more 'casual' fans. It was not, then, simply that Christianity had structured modern sport, but that it also served as a secular source that could "provide a positive outcome, rituals, magic and superstitions" (Delaney and Madigan, 2021, p.401). Harold, for example, mentioned that they were concerned England would lose because "they never win when it's on ITV." To a certain extent, there are parallels between the 'religious experience' of MSE viewership and the sense of nostalgia discussed in Chapter Four. This is significant as it implies that an imagined spiritually homogenous 'Englishness,' marked by Whiteness, was familiar and reassuring. Participants' taken-for-granted belonging was thus (re)enforced, without necessarily having to defend it with extreme displays of nationalism.

This was particularly evident during a recording of the Men's T20 cricket World Cup, which was hosted in the UAE and involved fixtures that pitted the 'English' against the 'Muslim.' Perceived Muslimness was seen in direct contrast to Christianity and therefore 'Englishness,' supporting Bracke and Aguilar's (2020) assessment that the 'Muslim' exists as a problem within Western nation-states. Whether commenting on the number of beards in a team, the clothing of fans, or the rules and regulations of Muslim majority states, participant enactments had strong undercurrents of Islamophobia. For example, whilst broadcast footage took in a group of sheikh's (with commentary describing them as such), the following exchange took place about the material of seats in the stadium:

LEONARD
Would it not be leather though, at the cricket?

ELLIOT
No, it would get sticky in that heat!

RESEARCHER
Also, there might be some religious reasons --

LEONARD
They can have sheepskin (pause) can't they?

ELLIOT
(Sarcastically expressing hunger)
MMMMMMM…Camel.

Granted, this is very mundane conversation, but there were still prejudiced depictions of Islamic faith. I was guilty myself, having been motivated to 'fit in' with the group I was ignorant of the

fact that cattle products are permissible under certain circumstances. Likewise, Elliot's comment about camel (said in such a way that framed it as distasteful) made fun of a practice which has great significance to Muslim faith, the holiday period of Ramadan, and the Prophet Muhammed (Heine, 2004). This emphasises how, broadly speaking, Islam has rarely escaped public attention, and Islamophobia exists as one of the major racist discourses used to mobilise ethno-nationalist visions of nationhood (Hafez, 2020).

However, religious prejudice was not just restricted to Islam. For example, Debbie and Isaac disliked Tottenham Hotspur Football Club players for being too 'Spursy.' This propped up antisemitism due to Tottenham Hotspur's demarcation as a 'Jewish club,' because of its geographical location in North London and nearby Jewish communities (their supporters disparagingly referred to as 'Yids'[23] by opposing fans; Poulton and Durrell, 2016). This supports statistical evidence which shows that antisemitism has also increased, with one in four affirming antisemitic statements according to a Generalised Antisemitism Scale (CAA, 2020). This means that even though there was no explicit antisemitism within Debbie and Isaac's enactment of 'Englishness,' it functioned on a narrative that 'others' Judaism whilst (re)enforcing Christianity as intrinsic to belonging. The tacit nature of this (re)production was juxtaposed against the way in which Islamophobic sentiments were enacted by participants. The crucial point is that there appeared to be a White normativity with religious affiliation, because flagrant religious 'othering' was marked by a visible religiousness. Therefore, religion must be understood as a 'raced phenomena' (Yukich and Edgell, 2020) whereby Christianity is assumed by Whiteness and vice versa. This was impacting and impacted by the gendered dimensions of participant enactments of 'Englishness,' which emphasised the intersubjectivity of hierarchies of belonging.

Normative gender

Gender was equally important to policing the boundaries of belonging associated with 'Englishness.' Non-normative femininities and masculinities were compared and stigmatised, whilst female sporting pursuit was wholesale delegitimised. It meant that 'Englishness' was being continuously (re)defined through gender normativity within which the lines of race and religion could be traced. Thus, as introduced in Chapter One, participants demonstrated that they were linking together various strands of 'othering' that already existed in their worldview, and MSE viewership provided a meaningful site that reflected, extended, and affirmed their sense of belonging.

This was certainly true of the religious distinction made about East and West, which was structured in the context of gender so that the two were perceived to have diametrically opposed conceptions towards existence. When discussing the 'Arab' world, particularly in relation to host

nations, participants would voice issues pertaining to women's rights and frame the problem as existing 'out there.' It was a narrative best understood as being constructed by the stereotypes of Muslim women as 'backward' and oppressed by a 'misogynistic' religion (Said, 1978). This is significant because it meant that participants' own complicity in gender inequity was neglected whilst (re)enforcing White Christian gender norms. In many ways the gendered constructions of the 'Muslim' offers perhaps the most pristine embodiment of the intertwined codes of identity in participant enactments. This is because several participants platformed a narrowly defined perception of the Islamic gender experience in response to skin colour, facial features, clothing, and so forth. It was reflective of populist commentary that views the hijab as symbolic of Islam's 'incompatibility' with gender equality (Choi et al., 2022). As an aside, given this sections previous attention to consumerism, it is curious that the release of the Nike Inc. 'Nike Pro Hijab' was framed in the media as bowing to an oppressive religion (Moore, 2018). My research adds to this because it shows how hierarchies of belonging were also structured by and understood through gendered boundaries which supported participants' own identity, and this was especially influential to how a person 'looked.'

By ideologically judging 'others' against 'worthy' and 'acceptable' images of femininity and masculinity, participants' enactments embodied the consequence of Europe's codification of traditional games, which means that sport has been organised and structured by restrictive sex-based divisions (see Buzuvis, 2021). During the Formula One Grand Prix, both Sean and Charlie put forward the pseudo-scientific stereotype about females having weaker necks as a reason for them not competing. The following exchange highlights how 'normalised' sexism was:

RICHARD
Can you imagine if Scotland win that horrible Sturgeon woman(pause)...UGH!

The referee whistle cuts through the conversation and the family all turn their attention to the television.

CONSTANCE
That was a bit unnecessary.

VIVIENNE
I don't think it was on purpose.

These examples are reflective of the way that participant enactments supported the quantitative data of De Souza and Schmader (2022) that "alluded to a potential disconnect between men's aspirations to support women and their actual allyship behaviour" (p.266). However, my research suggested that both male and female participants were 'scripting' their reality (Lucas, 2018) with 'accepted' gender norms and stereotypes. Milly had a drinking rule for every attractive female in

the crowd during the European Football Championships; Vivienne claimed that Jack Grealish, an English footballer, was "performing nicely. Looks like a lovely lad;" and Carol gave a fake teenage giggle followed by "but I got to see Kevin Petersen, so I was happy;" This emphasises the extent to which, like ethnic minorities, belonging during viewership meant that women had to purport hegemonic gender norms.

Furthermore, my research illustrates how masculinity was also being ideologically mapped. During MSE viewership, athleticism, competitiveness, and gamesmanship did not solely define sporting practice, but conformed to the 'essence' and 'value' (see Hartmann, 2003) of English masculinity. When recalling a chance meeting with retired footballer Frank Lampard, Constance said, "Lampard as well (winking)." There are several points to be made about participants' enactments in this regard. Firstly, despite Debbie often calling Bukayo Saka "sexy," it was White masculinity that participants overwhelmingly revered when gender and race came together. Dylan described Trevor Lawrence, a White quarterback for the Jacksonville Jaguars, as a "gorgeous-looking man," and Charlie thought that Formula One driver Lando Norris was "a beautiful man," to which Sean responded, "he is a good-looking lad to be fair." This relates to the second point, that male participants could objectify male bodies whilst still adhering to heteronormative 'Englishness.' This complicates the work of Drummond (2019), who suggested that heterosexual males can 'gaze' at male bodies for performance, whilst only women and perhaps gay men have a 'cultural right' to sexualise the male body. Whilst heterosexual male participants in my research were not constructing their admiration as homoerotic, I would contend that it was not quite as straightforward as Drummond suggests. Male participants were sexualising White athletic male bodies by complimenting their physical appearance in ways that did not pertain to sporting performance. Rather than recognising the homoerotic sentiment of their enactments, my sense was that male participants were (re)enforcing the hegemonic sexual desirability of White masculine bodies, which possessed features that mirrored aspects of their own identity. In other words, participants were (re)producing gender norms in order to ensure the security of their own belonging. This last point draws attention to a key feature of 'Englishness,' that it relies on motivated ignorance insofar that it provides a sense that belonging is open to all, whilst neglecting the reality that it creates inequity. This will be the focus of the next section, as I consider the intricate interplay of race, religion and gender in relation to the other themes discussed in this and the previous chapter.

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FADE IN:

8 INT. SEMI-DETACHED HOUSE – LIVING/DINING ROOM – NIGHT 8

We are in a dimly lit living/dining room with cream leather seating. Candles and the television light the room. The smell of fish from dinner lingers in the room. Opposite the television set PAUL (middle aged), CAROL (middle aged), and their son JUSTIN (young adult) are seated separately. The family have recorded the England men's T20 World Cup fixture against Sri Lanka on their Sky Box and have avoided seeing the result all day.

CAROL
(Reading a text message)
Do you want to go to a Diwali party on Friday?

PAUL
–aid disparagingly)
Diwali?--

JUSTIN
Dad?

PAUL
What happens at a Diwali party?

CAROL
I don't know...Diwali!

PAUL
(Laughs and sniggers)

CAROL
(Shrugging)
Fireworks, food, and drink.

JUSTIN
(Smirking)
To be fair when you put it that way.

PAUL
(Jokingly feigning
severity)
It's not alcohol free is it...Diwali?

JUSTIN
No.

JUSTIN shifts in their seat; their body language is tense and there is a change of tone in their voice.

JUSTIN CONT'D
You can't...You're so wrong...You can't say that.

PAUL
(Said as if just joking) Of course you can.

‘Englishness’ as Motivated Ignorance

In this section I present a broader reflection on participants’ complicity in the inequities of mundane imperialism by developing the idea that ‘Englishness’ acted as a ‘comfort zone’ for belonging which participants did not leave – ‘Englishness’ was motivated ignorance. This perspective furthers the potential of this thesis’ postcolonial framework to illuminate the intersubjectivity associated with hierarchies of belonging because it requires that ‘Englishness’ is understood as a subjective choice to take-for-granted imperially informed ways of being and thinking. Thus, it helps to bring together everything that I have discussed up to this point. Consider Screenplay 9, which ultimately ends with Paul choosing to ignore the reality that his humour, which delegitimised Hinduism, could be offensive. The dialogue is marked by condescension, the exceptionalism of participants’ nationhood, and denial of hybridity. Sentiment relating to hegemonic formations of the identity categories of religion, race and gender is also visible. In this way, Screenplay 9 highlights the multiple interconnections involved in participants’ enactments of ‘Englishness,’ as well as how the nuances of a participant’s individual character made these enactments diverse. The complexity of the patterns in the data made it difficult to truly distinguish between each connection as they influenced and interacted with one another (as reflected in appendix 6).

Perhaps this is why, when presenting on this topic in lectures and conferences, I have often been confronted by the belief that inequity results from a veneer of individual correctness or, in contrast, that governing organisations are responsible. However, I find such beliefs to be wholly unsatisfactory. It makes little sense to me why, despite individual proclamations against inequity, the processes creating this reality are enacted by the same individuals with apparent ease. As Slater (2020) succinctly argues, “innocence requires ignorance: a learned way of deflecting or disavowing the colonial and racial project” (p.824). My panoptic interpretation of the results is that this process best describes participants’ way of being, and their own location in the world. ‘Typical’ participants kept at bay the disturbing realities of their own everyday investment in the maintenance of imperial dynamics through ‘Englishness,’ and MSE viewership was a powerful domain in which participants could negotiate this motivated ignorance. This final section will address this in more detail.

Everyday ‘Englishness’

As I have suggested elsewhere in this thesis, it was never an aim to arrive at definitions of ‘Englishness’ but to illuminate the ways in which nationhood was returned to an imperially defined principal identity during viewership of MSEs. This did not mean that participants never defined ‘Englishness,’ but that the fragmented and fragile nature of these articulations offered little in the way of substance. More fruitful was to consider the ways in which participant behaviour (re)enforced a

bordered 'Englishness' as if it actually existed, so much so that it became constitutive of a participant's normal reality – it became 'everyday.'

There was clear correspondence with Skey's (2011) writing in this sense, as participants evidenced numerous ways of (re)producing a social discourse about 'Englishness.' Indeed, as Chapter Four has already shown, 'common sense' frameworks and behaviours shape experience so that it seems natural. As Skey suggested, this can make it "very difficult to reflect critically on the activity or its consequences" (p.151), but participants' assumed normality was exacted at a cost to those deemed 'other' in the immediacy, and all of humanity in the long term. However, whilst 'Englishness' could be understood as an everyday anchor for belongingness, I am reluctant to suggest this as part of a struggle to maintain a sense of place that has ceased to exist. I am not saying that this is not a feature of belonging in certain contexts – some of my participants also voiced their perception that identifying as English is becoming increasingly taboo – but that during MSE viewership it would be an oversimplification of participants' everyday interaction with 'Englishness.' They were not (re)capturing their belonging in direct response to a threat, but engaged in an ongoing proactive commitment to filtering, ranking and ordering diversity (Back and Sinha, 2018). This, as Yuval-Davis (2006) said, is the "dirty business of boundary maintenance" (p.204). Elaborating on the maintenance of mundane imperialism through motivated ignorance helps to highlight the way identities are ranked along hierarchies of belonging. Participants demonstrated how this might operate through their acceptance and denial of people both in and away from the sporting action. This may have been based on player ability, the opposition nation, race, religion, and so forth. But despite this variance, participants were always admitting 'others' into their imagined national community. This meant, as Back and Sinha (2016) found, that White people had automatic belonging and ethnic minority presence was 'tolerated' up until they challenged the terms of belonging. What is implied by this, is that White people are arbiters of belonging and must admit 'others' into the national community as they see fit. The most perverse aspect of this is that the comfort and security of belonging for minorities may in part be ensured through their complicity within the hierarchy.

In this way participants were (re)centring Whiteness within 'Englishness,' and ensured that racial hierarchies not only endured but were naturalised as if part of everyday life. Whiteness was attached to 'Englishness,' so that it informed the mobilisations of imaginaries, peoples and resources (Shahjahan and Edwards, 2022). These mobilisations could be seen in participant enactments of nationhood, which never involved recognition of their own racial identity. This supports Vadeboncoeur and Bopp's (2019) research into Whiteness and college athletes, specifically their conclusion that the epistemological power of Whiteness lay in its ability to promote structural unawareness on the part of White people. This was demonstrated by some participants championing

of England's colour-blind credentials, whilst still engaging in racial micro-aggressions. To return to Back and Sinha (2016), this is the contradiction of contemporary racial hierarchies: that diversity can be associated with 'Englishness' even as hostile boundaries of belonging are being (re)drawn. Considering this within the broader discussions taking place in this thesis, I would be inclined to borrow from Bennett's (1964) thoughts about White liberals and suggest that participants were "disavowing the title [of oppressor] without giving up the privileges or tearing out, as it were" (p.76). Echoing Critical Race Theory, participants' everyday belonging was beholden to a racialized hierarchy from which they benefited, but through superficial distortion of their 'Englishness' they could maintain an imagined non-racist self-image bound equally to religion and gender. Participants therefore showed that they do, in fact, have an implicit racialised knowledge. Understanding this was crucial for implicating participants in systemic oppression and holding them accountable for perpetuating the everydayness of White people's belonging. In turn this enables a more nuanced assessment of the everyday ways in which Whiteness and 'Englishness' convene, thus 'othering' itself.

In Chapter Four, I argued that a crucial aspect of mundane imperialism was the legitimisation of both 'othering' and exceptionalism. To add to this, I suggest that participants were also homogenising 'Englishness' as a White, Christian, and gender normative identity in a way that meant this view was 'legitimate.' Particularly around sporting performance, participant expression gave the sense that their belonging was inherently representative of a homogenous nationhood. By making homogenous 'Englishness' exceptional, participants rarely justified their sense of superiority. Instead, their 'Englishness' was the pinnacle, from which all 'others' could be understood. To appropriate Said (1978), the following logic can be used to characterise the experience of watching MSEs: the world is what participants knew, the participants knew their superiority, and this can be confirmed by their belonging being at the centre of society. The racialised normativity of hegemonic identities within systems of thinking has become an established subject of enquiry across various topics in sociology (see; Hunter and Van der Westhuizen, 2021). Yet as Fletcher and Hylton's (2016) review of sport studies literature showed, few of the sources have "attempted to develop on existing theories of Whiteness, or indeed, suggest any new theories of Whiteness" (pg. 100). To this end, in introducing emergent literature on the concept of motivated ignorance to complicate participant enactments, I have expanded upon discussions about banal nationalism and hierarchies of belonging by linking them, and framing participants as actively engaged in and benefiting from their involvement in these processes.

Intersecting intimately with race, this chapter has shown how participant behaviour affirmed the Christian 'divinity' and gender normativity of 'Englishness' which adds weight to arguments which contend that the dissemination of Christian tradition has ensured that the well-established hyper-

masculine, chauvinistic and self-righteous principles of the hegemonic group have become indistinguishably 'English' and thus, following previous discussion, White (MacAloon, 2013). As expected, participants structured this by juxtaposing their Christian 'Englishness' against the perceived Muslimness of the Middle East. Crucially, Whiteness was the signifier for Christianity and, therefore, belongingness to 'the' English. What is particularly interesting was the fact that cricket witnessed a high frequency of religious racialisation. This supports recent writing on the linkages between cricket, nationhood, and imperialism. To borrow the words of Naha and Malcolm (2021), cricket provided participants with "ideological support to forces of imperialism and nationalism" (p.1271). In this respect, the assumptions, stereotypes, and feelings of participants towards perceived Muslims (read: they had beards) positioned them as a definitive out-group. Importantly, participants did not just 'other' Muslim-majority nations, but English Muslim populations. Perhaps, then, Bracke and Hernández Aguilar (2020) were correct to argue that among 'Western Natives' the Muslim, as the story goes, "does not integrate into the nation-state and remain isolated from society and its values, they do not speak the national language" (p.681). Once again, we see the fluid boundaries involved with hierarchies of belonging and sport as providing a platform for contestation to take place. As Collins (2022) argues, racial thinking is an integral part of the cricket experience. Collins also recognised that racial thinking authorises racism; I would like to build on this idea in the remainder of this section.

Throughout the recordings, participants demonstrated that they possessed an awareness of the issues associated with Whiteness. Yet much of their action, such as trying to underplay racism, could be categorised by what Lynch (2016) described as an avoidance of the evidence about certain beliefs, behaviours and/or identities. I therefore suggested in my analysis, that participants everyday ideological and material consumption of 'Englishness' regularly involved avoiding conclusions that might be psychologically unpleasant or distressing. To adopt the work of Williams (2021), whilst this process was not necessarily conscious, even with knowledge about certain truths available participants' behaviour still served their own interest. This supports Woomer's (2019) thinking that ignorance "often serves to preserve current social arrangements by making it easier for people to ignore problems with these arrangements" (p.73). Put simply, it was motivated ignorance. To consider the consequences of their action would mean opening up to uncomfortable reflection on some of the core beliefs that an individual possesses. Maintaining the everydayness of imperial 'Englishness' is both psychologically and physically beneficial to anyone deemed to belong. Everyday 'Englishness' is therefore an ongoing active process of distortion that should only be understood as consolidating power.

The implications of this are significant in terms of understanding inequity. By considering participants as more actively engaged in an everyday production of 'Englishness,' they are all made accountable for the existence of oppressive hierarchies of belonging. At the risk of generalising my results, I wish to remind readers that whilst the participants are not representative, they are typical of the 'silent majority.' This supports the idea that to be truly transformative, the starting point must be that we live in an inequitable world for which we are all responsible. This perspective shifts 'isms' and phobias from something that people subjectively possess (which is open to interpretation), to something they objectively do. This offers an alternative paradigm that challenges the notion of 'unconscious bias' – now a mainstay of contemporary discourse, in particular as an explanation for racism where it often serves as a get-out-of-jail-free card (Beckles-Raymond, 2020). It also expands the historical perspectives of analyses that rightly point out the institutional arrangements present in organisations and social institutions, and my research points to similar arrangements in the mundane constitution of everyday life. In the context of racism, the principal concerns with the term 'unconscious bias' is that it camouflages racism, denies the history of racism, and fosters the belief that one can be free of racism so long as they just become conscious of their unconscious bias (Bourne, 2019). 'Unconscious' denotes an absence of knowledge, which is often interpreted as removing culpability. Equally, restricting racism to individuals fails to account for the institutional and material ways in which people enact racialised hierarchies. Participants were not sole creators of systems of thinking, but joint collaborators in a wider network committed to getting and keeping power.

In this regard, an 'unconsciousness' was not reflected in the participants enactments of Whiteness. I would suggest the following instead: 'Englishness' cannot be separated from Whiteness (read: White hegemony) nor from the privilege this grants identities deemed to belong. Therefore, by seeking belonging via 'Englishness,' participants had to be unconsciously aware of the benefits that Whiteness provided. However, by positioning 'Englishness' as an everyday collective identity, participants avoided the sinister realities of White privilege. Thus, motivated ignorance meant that they could enjoy these privileges without considering themselves part of the problem. I appreciate that at first glance this may appear to contradict Chapter One's discussion about Whiteness, where I suggested that White people are unconscious of their whiteness and the privilege it brings. However, I see it as developing existing thought through a more thoroughgoing assessment of consciousness and use in relation to Whiteness. Whilst naming privilege and articulating the way it is enacted may well be difficult for people (see Fletcher, 2014), this research suggests the 'silent majority' are aware of the sense of security that belonging can bring. Therefore, whilst signposting privilege remains a worthwhile task, people must be supported to actively unlearn imperial ways of thinking, which is particularly significant for how the role of MSE viewership is assessed.

The power of MSEs

Put simply, all the matters that have been considered in this thesis speak to the power of MSEs. However, I would like to use this section as an opportunity to pay more direct attention to the role of MSEs, and the way they offered a valuable opportunity for participants to deny the hybridity of their experience, compound the mundanity of imperialism, and (re)enforce hierarchies of belonging. MSEs played the role of both instructor and facilitator in an interplay that was underscored by participants flipping between languish and fervent engagement with the broadcast in a way I had not necessarily expected. For example, participants would often be midway through a conversation before suddenly attending to the sporting action (a key facet in this was commentator tone). Whilst it felt very much like participants were displaying 'normal' behaviours, these discussions cannot be separated from the MSEs which informed the experience.

This research therefore supports Carrington's (2015) suggestion that sport is one of the few remaining spaces in which national identity is celebrated. This was highlighted by participants' artefacts which, besides souvenirs and Royal merchandise, could be categorised as sporting memorabilia. This corresponds with Silk's (2017) idea that sport provides people with ontological security. The data elaborates on this, by showing that sport memorabilia also served to anchor participant belonging. The items participants brought forward were often described nostalgically, and through them participants imagined themselves as a member of the national community. MSEs clearly played a key role in the construction of a national community, as a plethora of studies have found (for example: Cable, 2021; Collins, 2022). Calling on Carrington (2015) once more, in this way modern sport was "interconnected with wider questions of power and ideology" and "should be understood as a central site of reproduction" (p.62). However, whereas previous sports fan research has focused on those who identify as a 'fan,' this research has shown the importance of MSEs for those who may have a more matter-of-fact relationship with them. Participants knowledge about sporting celebrities, media narratives around the competition, and recalling of past events all evidenced the pervasiveness of sport. Perhaps like Whiteness, people who "don't watch sport" are unconsciously aware of the influence it has on them. Therefore, whilst a hierarchical approach to sport fandom (see for example: Clemes et al., 2011; Hedlund et al., 2020; Brown et al., 2020) might be useful in the areas of management studies, marketing, and operational strategies of sports organisations, the results of this research suggest it might not be as beneficial in efforts to understand the ideological consequences of MSE viewership.

What is arguably so challenging about MSE viewership is that it cements the ordinariness of 'othering', the homogenisation of 'Englishness,' and motivated ignorance as a logic of thinking.

Participants commonly used MSE footage and commentary to deny hybridity and (re)enforce belonging – often it was unsportsmanlike conduct and/or poor play by the opposition that would elicit prejudice against their assumed identity. In light of the previous section, this contradicts the conclusions of Cleland and Cashmore's (2016) research into fans' perceptions of racism in British football that division and exclusion continue to influence "some White supporters" (p.40). As aforementioned, all viewers of sport are entered into the agendas of Whiteness, and it is certainly not exclusively the preserve of White groups (Burdsey, 2011). Additionally, whilst Cleland and Cashmore's (2016) idea of a 'White habitus' is thought provoking, it is open to the same criticism as 'unconscious bias,' that it treats fans as unconscious participants in – rather than (re)producers of Whiteness – through active inaction. This highlights that, rather than explicit moments of fan aggression, sport researchers must acknowledge racism's more tacit operations.

Postcolonially speaking, a critical part of this agenda is to confront the ways in which sport (read: MSEs) might homogenise populations. First and foremost, the structure of MSEs dictates that the globe is rendered as a world of nations, and this clearly had an impact on participants who attached symbols and geographical features to particular nations. This buttressed the belief that the nation was a thing that actually existed, and by extension a national identity – even though, as Gibbons (2011) found, there is scant evidence of a "unified English national consciousness" (p.866). Yet participants' rhetoric and behaviour in my research certainly suggested there was, regardless of whether they necessarily believed this. Adding complexity to this was the fact that MSE viewership allowed participants to cite the racial prejudice of 'other' nations, whilst excusing their own racialised practices. Their performances of 'Englishness' returned it as an identity to the hegemonic characteristics purported to be premium at a time of English imperial expansion. This was a part of every participants' experience, but because it was sport, participants could legitimately (re)enforce racialised hierarchies as an essential part of viewership.

Another powerful dimension of MSEs can be seen in the interconnections between MSEs, imperialism, and materialism within participant experience. The most visible sign of this was in the consumer purchases participants had made. They bought team kits, flags, miscellaneous souvenirs, even edible products branded for that specific event. In Silk's (2015) parlance, this could be understood as "the material manifestation of contemporary culture" (p.75). Sporting memorabilia proliferates around MSEs and in this way participants were entered into a racial globalised capitalist system. Despite being inherently global, though, I would argue that Gruneau and Horne's (2015) suggestion that MSEs "necessarily connect local to global" (p.2) is overly simplistic. Whilst I don't reject the premise, it does not reflect the way in which the global connections involved with MSEs were obfuscated in participant experience. Participants were involved with a vast array of global

connections during the recordings, which contradicted their English exceptionalism. It was illustrative of Spivak's (1988) concept of worlding, whereby the obscuring of the global mode of production meant that the dominance of the West appeared natural (Olson and Fox, 2010). The material dimension of MSE viewership therefore played a key role in (re)enforcing participants' perception of the dominance of their nation. That is, MSEs (re)enforced imperial systems of thinking which rarely acknowledge or consider how members of host nations, particularly in the global south, are affected by 'our' seeking of enjoyment. The results therefore support Sykes' (2021) idea that "rather than thinking about international sporting organisations, such as the IOC and FIFA, merely as global corporations…it is necessary to now understand how they fulfil the role of 'private empires'" (p.150). By thinking in this way and remembering that individuals are not passive captives in this process, researchers are provided with another avenue through which people can be held accountable for their responsibility in the continuation of deeply embedded logics of imperialism.

Furthermore, on this subject it should be highlighted that obfuscation was instrumental in underplaying the environmental impacts of MSEs. Participants spoke often about the environmental aspects of the location of both the stadium and wider tournament, but rarely entered into prolonged discussion about any impacts. It is beyond the scope of this thesis to acknowledge the complexities involved with this particular facet of MSE viewership, but readers should understand that it is an integral part of the postcolonial agenda. Briefly, we all must begin to actively consider the carbon emissions of the MSEs we view. This includes travelling to the spaces we watch them in, the consumption of natural and built stadiums, and the sporting products we eagerly buy (Thorpe et al., 2021). This is an emerging topic of enquiry, but one to which we must all pay attention, especially in research bringing together postcolonial theory and sport because of the relationship between imperialism, MSEs and the environment.

The final point I would like to address in the context of MSEs and power, focuses on their pervasiveness. Specifically, this related to the quantity of MSEs that participants were able to engage with, the scale of MSEs permeation into wider society, and the way in which MSEs brought more casual 'spectators' into the realms of fandom. Firstly, every week between June and December (when recordings took place), participants could have potentially watched an MSE fixture/event. This reflects the suggestion of Hutchins et al. (2021) that viewers are now able to watch "more sport on more devices in more places than ever and personalise viewing practices and experiences" (p.77). This was certainly true for participants, many of whom recalled both indirectly and directly watching different MSEs in different places and with different people. It emphasises the growing saturation of MSEs in society which has been noted by scholars (for example: Cashman, 2020; Fett, 2020). In light of this, my suggestion would be that MSEs are therefore becoming increasingly unavoidable, even for those

with little interest in sport. This speaks to the permeation of MSEs into other areas of life and in this way participant experience corroborates the observation of Silk et al. (2015) about the 2012 'sporting summer' resulting in:

> *"a seemingly endless list of commercially produced official and unofficial souvenirs to differing degrees depicted tradition, the past, the flag, national signifiers, London monuments and so on…from companies as diverse as Anne Summers, Fairy Liquid, Macleans, Tampax, British Petroleum, PG Tips, and Pampers, to name merely a few" (p.732).*

This emphasises the need to remain vigilant to the continued economic entanglement of sport and nation, especially as sport-washing practices and sovereign wealth funds become increasingly prevalent. Finally, the widespread influence of MSEs has implications for how sport fandom should be assessed. Scholarship has long kept spectatorship and fandom as separate entities, with individuals categorised according to levels of devotion (Pooley, 1978). This is often understood through a scaling of individuals' affinity for a team and their perception that a team is representative of them (Branscombe and Wann, 1992). The issue with this, as was illustrated by participants, is that during MSEs all viewers supporting a nation necessarily position themselves as part of the team. Participants used terms like 'we,' felt criticism of the team to be a personal insult and were interested in pundits' thoughts about their team's performance. If Gwinner and Swanson's (2003) concept of fandom is to be believed, then this would make all the participants in this research 'fans.' Moreover, given the regularity and legacy of MSEs on systems of thinking, Hunt et al.'s (1999) concept of temporary fandom must also be questioned. Simply put, the traditional classifications associated with certain types of sport fandom are not as applicable to MSEs (particularly in the contemporary landscape when MSEs occur with such regularity). Therefore, researchers should begin to consider how what we know about Type 1 fans (Stewart et al., 2003) might be applied to a much larger population during MSEs.

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Conclusion

This chapter has explored the way in which 'Englishness' could be understood as motivated ignorance because of the way participants ignored the realities of mundane imperialism in their enactments. Interpreting the sensory short-term ethnographic data in the context of motivated ignorance emphasised the extent to which, during MSE viewership, participants were actively denying the hybridity of 'Englishness,' and (re)enforcing belonging. This helped to expand upon the previous

chapter in a discussion about everyday 'Englishness' that highlighted the significance of MSE viewership. In conclusion, this helps to consider the ways in which the ordinariness of exclusive 'Englishness' can be disrupted.

The way in which MSE viewership is significant to interweaving imperialism and 'Englishness' can be understood as threefold. Firstly, the nature of MSE competition necessitates an understanding of the world as a space of nations. Resultantly, and compounded by modern sports Eurocentrism, MSEs function on 'us vs them' dynamics. This matters theoretically because it implies that modern sport was structured for the purpose of ensuring the conformity and compliance of 'others.' Secondly, MSEs arrange narratives surrounding 'Englishness' which align with imperial ways of thinking. Sometimes, this might have been via intense moments of commentary, but for the most part it was in the mundane aspects of MSE consumption that codified imperialism within 'Englishness.' Player kits, the stadiums as cultural landmarks, the consumer purchases associated with MSEs and so forth, all set out 'objective' 'Englishness' as 'indigenously' White, Christian and gendered according to norms of enlightenment thinking. Finally, viewers use MSEs as a means of both resisting and accepting existing hierarchies of belonging associated with 'Englishness.' This was not in the sense that viewers were dismantling them, but that their boundaries were continually shifting. What was consistent, was that viewers' belonging was taken-for-granted and they were invested in maintaining this.

To understand how this can be used to help researchers it is necessary to appreciate that there are many institutional arrangements which must be dismantled to bring about real transformative change. This means that those seeking more equitable futures cannot stop challenging those with legislative and organising authority. Yet, with little sign that governing bodies will enact the necessary changes, researchers must offer viable alternatives around which the majority may coalesce. As this thesis has shown, there is a huge amount of power in small everyday actions, and MSEs can play a significant role in facilitating and instructing the routine behaviours of individuals. The results of this research seem to suggest that more education is not the sole answer (although, that being said, actively addressing bigoted views is important). Therefore, my suggestion is that researchers attempt to harness everyday elements of MSE viewership and consumption as a means of enacting change. Researchers could host podcasts around MSEs that offer critical discussions about competition. They could utilise existing applications (such as Buycott[25]) or create new ones aimed at advising viewers about their purchases during MSEs. Sport scholars could even collaborate with academics in the fields of business, design, and brewing science to produce a product with environmentalism at the centre of production and consumption (Great Barrier Beer[26] is an example of how this might work). Essentially, researchers should co-opt the mundane aspects of MSE viewership and offer alternative options that appear equally ordinary.

Conclusion

> *"The only grandeur of imperialism lies in the nation's losing battle against it. The tragedy of this half-hearted opposition was not that many national representatives could be bought by the new imperialist businessmen; worse than corruption was the fact that the incorruptible were convinced that imperialism was the only way."*
>
> *~ Arendt, 2017, p.132 ~*

In the opening pages of this thesis, I stated that "imperialism is constitutive to the 'Englishness' enacted during MSE viewership." I contend that, as long as imperial systems of thinking and being continue to be enacted in everyday life by a majority who refuse to acknowledge their own involvement, society cannot be free of inequity. As previously stated, the aim of this research was to interrogate MSE viewership using a postcolonial framework to engage with mundane 'Englishness' as a physical representation of imperialism. Partnering 'Gogglebox' style recording sessions with several other creative methods of data collection, a reflexive thematic analysis of the data has illuminated 'Englishness' as a category of belong that, as things stand, can only ever be exclusionary.

By observing MSE viewers, this research has explored 'Englishness' and highlighted the mundane imperialism which is central to its hegemonic associations. It highlighted the crucial role that MSEs can play in the process of making imperialism 'everyday.' The processes involved in arriving at this point were not actualised by a minority of ultranationalist actors, but by a group of people whose belonging is never questioned. Importantly, this meant understanding inequity as a behavioural phenomenon (Beckles-Raymond, 2020), and that prejudice is something people do, often in the midst of banal practices and encounters. This developed existing scholastic understanding about nationalism, hierarchies of belonging, and sport fandom by exploring participant enactments in relation to motived ignorance, framing participants as actively unaware of the benefits that belonging can bring.

In summary, there is an intersectionality between imperialism, MSE viewership, and the concept of 'Englishness.' 'Englishness' cannot be separated from the historical and ongoing effects of imperialism, which are encoded within modern English society. In turn, 'Englishness' cannot then be viewed outside of the context of Whiteness, as White 'English' exceptionalism has created formulations of historical understanding that affect modernity. MSE viewership offers a unique perspective on the intrinsic imperialism of English nationhood and the interconnectivity of sport and

modern 'Englishness' (belonging, imperial values, nostalgia, mundanity). The methodology used within this paper allowed for new understandings around 'ways of being,' arriving at a more complete account of experience via the interdependencies between viewers (participants) and MSEs. The inclusion of MSEs also created a unique relationship between the observer (researcher), observed (participants), and the MSE itself, by positioning them as mutually independent. The methodology facilitated this by moving beyond simply identifying boundaries of belonging. Instead, it focused attention on the sensory experiences of participants which 'fuel' the entangled and oppressive nature of their socialised world. The 'Gogglebox' method went beyond the visual experience of MSEs and allowed for full immersion to produce broader understanding of everyday experience. Such a short-term sensory ethnographic approach arises partly from attempting to centre the experience of participants. Overall, this sensory approach placed individual data points within a wider context, helping to understand the multifaceted elements and entanglements within viewer experience.

The screenplay format of representing the data not only provided context for further description and interpretation, but also greater understanding about the experience itself. This creative method foregrounded participant enactments, highlighted the mundane and ordinary nature of their conversations, and was intended to emphasise the performativity of these mundane 'scenes' that (re)enforced subjectivities, histories and forms of belonging. Screenplays helped focus in on individual experience without removing it from lived existence as a whole, and the many forces at play in everyday life. I aim to explore the Screenplays further and intend to collaborate with theatre/performative artists to produce 'performances' of 'Englishness' that help my analysis reach a wider public. The analysis emphasised that the way 'Englishness' was enacted in the data was diverse, leading to complex data patterns. 'Othering' remained a constant, with participants showing English exceptionalism that 'othered' opposing countries and competitors. While there was still some negative discussion regarding English gameplay, when placed against an opponent, England would immediately be seen as 'superior.' Themes included mundane imperialism, comforting nostalgia, and everyday 'Englishness,' as elicited through MSE viewership, highlighting existing understandings on nationalism, Whiteness, 'fandom,' and motivated ignorance. Although it may be difficult to accept that these mundane and everyday instances are in fact a continuation of collective imperialist thought, when looked at in terms of a racialised hierarchy imposed by imperialism within 'Englishness,' it may prove easier to understand how everyone can be held accountable. This is not to dissuade the feeling of belonging that 'Englishness' elicits – this is a natural human need. Instead, it is important to recognise that 'Englishness' provides comfort and security (via systems of power and privilege). We must therefore look to adopt the current needs for belonging in offering alternative, more sustainable, and welcoming paradigms. In conclusion, I will consider the key contributions this thesis makes and

tie together the insights which have emerged to offer a series of reflective observations that I hope are of assistance to those who wish to build on the knowledge contained within the preceding chapters.

Moving forward

This research makes several key contributions, opening up further lines of inquiry that future research might wish to consider. Underpinning all this is a recognition of our collective lives and responsibilities of worldly care. Each recommendation is connected, and they are all invested in moving towards a pedagogy of hope that fosters multiple alternatives which might lead to a better world (Plummer, 2021). Having arrived at the end of my thesis, these recommendations are the foundation of my ongoing active commitment to creating a better world.

First and foremost, this thesis has provided a valuable contribution to the growing body of research that entangles postcolonial theory and sport studies by synergising the two fields into a space not given prolonged attention – viewership of MSEs. Therefore, my research engages with and expands Carrington's (2015) call for a reflexive sociology of sport that considers how categories of thought and analysis emerged because of Western imperialism. That being said, my thesis has certainly overlooked some specific experiences and identity characteristics, and analysis pointed to a need for greater focus on sexuality and the environment. Although I would argue that the subjectivity involved in identity formation makes any conclusive analysis of 'Englishness' impossible. This is why I suggested that researchers would be better off focusing their efforts by attending to what people do, not what they say. To this end, postcolonial theory helps to unpick modern sport as an imperial enterprise, whilst sport studies aid the application of postcolonialism into what I have argued to be an arena of nationalism. In this context, I have shown that postcolonial theory and sport studies, when put into dialogue, can maximise the transformative and emancipatory potential of each other by illuminating the tacit nationalism within self-identified moderates.

Relatedly, by expanding on the theories of banal and everyday nationalism, this thesis provides another key contribution by framing 'Englishness' as an enactment of imperial mundanity, rather than a passive engagement with the trivial. I say this in the context of sport, in particular MSE viewership. Therefore, as I recommended in chapter one, alternative sources of nationhood such as 'the media' should go through similar interrogation. 'The media,' and the study of it, should consider what the "consequences of thinking of colonialism and empire as entangled within the discipline [might be]" (Bhambra, 2014, p.3). Researchers wanting to explore this matter further might benefit from utilising the framework of this thesis to reconfigure current understandings of media and people's relation to it, and account for narratives not yet heard. Furthermore, on the subject of

nationalism, because of this thesis' focus on 'Englishness,' I have not accounted for the experiences of imperialism within 'other' colonial metropoles. There are several types of nationalism, and they will all be different in the ways that citizens engage with them. Practically speaking, it would not have been possible during the period in which this research took place to carry out any fieldwork in a geographic location 'outside' the United Kingdom. Furthermore, I could not have accounted for specific legacies of empire in different nations without prolonged lived experience within each 'place.' To link and unpack what is highlighted here indifferent contexts, researchers should look inwards and use short-term sensory ethnographies to examine audiences within their own locales.

The alignment of methodology and framework in this thesis can contribute to such efforts. By building a narrative that, in binding together the methodology with theory, methods, and analysis, this thesis has emphasised the potential of a commitment to accessing "areas of embodied, emplaced knowing" used as a basis to "understand human environments, activities, perception, experience, action and meaning, and to situate this culturally and biographically" (Pink, 2015, p.54). Centring a radical and humanist methodology helps produce agendas of change because it forces a researcher to continuously "move between the local, the pluriverse and world politics, engaging in a connected, emancipatory life of revaluing, reconciling, resisting, repairing, rebuilding, recreating, and reimaging" (p.199). However, this thesis has contributed a way of approaching research that is capable of accounting for multiple realities. With regards to 'Englishness,' this meant not being restricted to a narrow nation-state framework without necessarily disregarding the importance of the nation to everyday life. This was the result of a more philosophical discussion on the subjects of this thesis, and I recommend other researchers do the same.

As I have mentioned previously, the creativity which led to the method of data collection was in many ways, forced upon this research by the coronavirus pandemic. But its origin was intuitive insofar that the decision to use 'Gogglebox' style recordings was reached whilst I was watching the eponymous television show. Equally, it was not necessarily the aim of this research to 'uncover' subjective understandings of 'Englishness,' but to interrogate the sensory experience of MSE viewership through a postcolonial lens. Therefore, I was always seeking alternative methods of data collection because of my sense that interviewing participants would not have added anything to what has already been said on this subject. However, whilst the methods aided and assisted participant observation, I acknowledge that the perspectives of participants have not been captured. I do appreciate that what I have just said is not overly helpful, yet it is the honest answer. But, given the number of times I have been asked how I 'came up with the idea,' I will make a recommendation based on my approach to research which I hope helps researchers foster their own imaginations capable of

producing evermore creative solutions. To be clear, researchers should appreciate that they are already incredibly imaginative. Imagination can be found in hypotheses, interpretations, writing styles, resourcefulness and much more. Relatedly, what I will say is not entirely new, but a reassertion of Mills' (2000) call for sociologists to resist 'methodological inhibition.' Thus, I recommend that others approach research as I have done – with an open-minded and playful curiosity. This does not involve a set of techniques, but the self-belief to think 'outside the box' and the bravery to take risks. To this end I hope my thesis has given readers encouragement.

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I would like to close this thesis by focusing on the two major topics that informed this study: imperialism and MSE viewership. By exploring 'Englishness' at the intersection of imperialism and viewership of MSEs, this thesis emphasised the significance of mundane imperialism and motivated ignorance to the everyday belonging of self-identified moderates comforting nostalgia. In doing so I highlighted the resonances of my interpretations with existing understandings on nationalism, whiteness, motivated ignorance, and the nature of 'fandom'. This is particularly useful for those studying nationhood and identity more broadly, because interconnecting these concepts has developed a more nuanced explanation for inequity, one which holds all humans to account. I also hope that readers find this thesis useful in informing their own efforts to look inward onto themselves and recognise the mundane imperialism in their worlds. Perhaps this thesis provides readers some insights to reflect on their (re)production and (re)enforcement of hierarchies of belonging. This is not comfortable, nor is it easy, but maybe by adopting the humanness running throughout this thesis 'we' can create ever more productive challenges to taken-for-granted ways of thinking and being.

Finally, it seems right to end on MSE viewership. This thesis has shown that MSEs are consumed on far larger scale than existing measures of fandom can necessarily capture. The way that the consumption of sport is understood needs to be reassessed. Beyond the confines of fan identification scales there exists a wealth of potential research opportunities, and I believe that this thesis can be built on in this regard. Academics studying sport fandom should begin to engage with sport, especially MSEs, in much wider contexts. On the subject of nationhood, MSEs are a forum in which 'Englishness' is celebrated and contested, and a site where the structures of imperialism are embraced as an essential part of the sensory experience. Through a complex network of connections 'we' are all actively engaged in the manufacturing and utilisation of 'Englishness' to (re)define belonging. Do not forget this when you next hear 'Land of Hope and Glory.'

Notes

1. Silent majority – A large group of people who have not expressed an opinion about something (OED, 2023). In politics the "silent majority' was a term used during Richard Nixon's second presidential campaign to describe conservative voters who did not participate in public discourse (King and Anderson, 2009).

2. Gogglebox – A British television programme broadcast on Channel 4, launched in 2014. There are now 2 domestic spin-offs of the show, and there are 7 international versions of the show. Families and/or households are recorded from their own dwellings watching and reacting to television shows. It is in many ways, an audience study in itself.

3. This is particularly true of Sport Development studies, which have acknowledged the inherent Western worldview associated with the mobilisation of sport to meet 'international' development goals (such as Darnell and Hayhurst, 2011; Levermore, 2017; Millington and Darnell, 2019).

4. *Blackadder* – Written by Richard Curtis, Ben Elton and Rowan Atkinson, was a BBC pseudohistorical sitcom airing 1983-1989. Each series followed a different historical period which is stereotypical of the socio-historical English narrative. The first series takes place in the Middle Ages, then the Elizabethan Age, followed by what is referred to commonly as the Regency Era, and finally commencing with a series set in 1917 on the Western front.

5. Antonio Gramsci sought to understand how in the culturally diverse societies of Europe, the ideologies of the bourgeoisie could be seen as the norm (Gramsci, 2011). Roughly speaking, hegemonic theory posits that the dominant group manage – supposedly consensually – to legitimise and validate their culture, whilst subordinate groups struggle against their own cultures being absorbed into the dominant one (Muller, 1999). It was the 'greatest paradox' Gramsci explained that capitalism proclaimed to be democratic, when in fact it not only perpetuated social differences, but crystallised them (Gramsci, 2011).

6. Representing almost a complete break from traditional histography, Ibn Khaldûn's *Muqaddimah* (meaning introduction) is one of the most significant sociological writings of the 'pre-modern' world (Lawrence, 2005, p. vii). Written in 1337, Khaldûn conceived a dynamic theory of history, the chief concern of which was to identify the psychological, economic, environmental, and social factors within the currents of history. Central to the *Muqaddimah* is the concept of *Asabiyyah* (meaning group feeling), which – according to

Khaldûn – is strongest amongst the communities on the periphery of great civilisations. As civilisations grow, taking in additional cultures as a consequence, it becomes impossible for everyone to share the same *Asabiyyah*. Whilst the *Asabiyyah* of the elite group falls away, another one takes its place, and the cycle starts anew (Lawrence, 2005).

7. *Sportswashing* typically refers to states using sporting events/franchises as a means to launder their reputation and/or poor human rights track record. Though it has more recently been publicly associated with football (where national state-owned airlines and oil refineries can be seen emblazoned on the shirts of players), it is by no means a new enterprise. Sport has long been a key battleground for diplomatic endeavours, for example the 1936 Berlin Olympics, the Football World Cup in Argentina's junta regime in 1978 or the 1995 rugby world cup after the end of apartheid.

8. This process has been described as methodological nationalism (see; Delanty, 2016; Sager, 2016; Chernilo, 2020) although it should be noted that those making these accusations have not done so to draw attention to imperialism and English identity.

9. See the Nationality and Borders Act 2022 which fundamentally breaks "the UK's commitment to the 1951 UN Refugee Convention…[the] legislation amounts to the Home Secretary "unlawfully rewriting" what is means to be a refugee" (Amnesty International UK, 2022).

10. The theses of Hobson (2018; originally published in 1902) and Lenin (2015; originally published in 1916) set the academic standard for anti-colonial arguments when analysing imperialism and their work was rejuvenated by the events of the Second World War and Vietnam War. It meant that anti-colonial intellectuals focused predominantly on socialist/Marxist frameworks when debating imperialism (Bush, 2014). Lenin (2008) saw imperialism as the 'highest stage of capitalism' which emerged as a "direct continuation of the fundamental characteristics of capitalism in general" (p.238). Dividing nations between oppressor and oppressed, it was 'undoubtedly' defined by monopolies and oligarchy (the capitalist class) striving for the domination over the weak (Lenin, 2008).

11. It is interesting that Marx (1972) saw imperialism as a 'vile' and 'brutal' affair, adopting anti-imperialist sentiments in much of his later work. He said of the British rule in India that there could not remain "any doubt but that the misery inflicted by the British on Hindustan is of an essentially different and indefinitely more intensive kind than all Hindustan had to suffer before" (p.32). Despite the economic exploitation associated with colonial regimes; the

European invasion of territories had caused a greater sociological rift for Marx that could never be repaired. “England has broken down the entire framework of Indian society without any symptoms of reconstitution yet appearing. This loss of his old world with no gain of a new one imports a particular kind of melancholy to the present misery of the Hindu, and separates Hindustan…from all its ancient traditions, and from the whole of its past history” (p.33). The question in this thesis is whether the same can be applied to England itself.

12. Gilroy (1990) outlined ‘race’ in a context for hegemonic struggle and believed it to be an agent of historical change. Importantly, he revised his original theorisation to reflect the fact that the mobilisation of urban populations he envisaged had not come to fruition (Gilroy, 2002). The assertive decolonisation in which his core theory made sense was in retreat, connected “to wider cultural shifts like the rise of identity politics, corporate multi-culture and an imploded, narcissistic obsession with the minutiae of ethnicity” (2002, p.15).

13. *Gemeinschaft* – The social relations of communities, often in reference to family ties.

14. *Windrush Generation* – The name given to those arriving in the UK from the Caribbean between 1948 and 1971, the label is a reference to the ship HMT Empire Windrush which docked in Tilbury, Essex on 21st June 1948, which is regarded as the symbolic starting point of Caribbean migration.

15. John Denham was a Labour Member of Parliament for Southampton Itchen (1992-2015) and a government minister (1997-2003 and 2007-2010) before establishing the Centre for English Identity and Politics at Winchester University. The centre has since transferred to the University of Southampton where he is a Professorial Research Fellow in the Department of Politics and International Relations. His blog, titled ‘The Optimistic Patriot’, explores ‘progressive patriotism’ that “demands a strong national story about who we are, how we came to share this land, and where together we are going”. I have already unpicked the challenges of patriotism (see chapter 2), but it emphasises the extent to which methodological nationalism has successfully embedded itself within academic institutions.

16. Women have been paramount to the process of Decolonization globally, central to movements of resistance against the hegemony of the West and global patriarchy (Schiwy, 2007). In global and community-based localities women’s movements have driven action and whilst it would be impossible to name all those who have pushed for change and accountability past and present, I hope the following provide readers worthwhile resources

on women's rights and successful advocacy practices: Julieta Paredes, Berta Cáceres, Blanca Varela (Central America); Vandana Shiva, Kamala Bashin (South and South East Asia); Funmilayo Ransome-Kuti, Margaret Ekpo, Oyeronke Oyewumi (African).

17. All the 10 richest people in the world are men, 9 of them are White, and only 1 of them (Elon Musk) was born in the global south. Although Elon Musk moved to Canada at age 17 and growing up in South Africa would have enjoyed the full privileges of apartheid (Dolan and Peterson-Withorn, 2022).

18. *Post-Truth* – A situation in which people are less influenced by factual information than by their emotions or by beliefs they already hold.

19. Concepts about vision are growing and cannot be understood as working exclusively through optical faculties (Ingold, 2021).

20. Bringing indigenous ontologies into the academic space is fraught with frictions, but it has a key role to play in decolonising research. For example, Guttorm et al. (2021) invite Eana (the Earth in North Sámi) as the narrator of their text. It highlights that we must challenge notions of 'scientific ignorance' surrounding alternative ways of knowing. To clarify, I am not suggesting that visual images aren't important to indigenous peoples but that we should always respect certain ways of knowledge or arguments that undo the legacies of intellectual colonialism.

21. The Exeter Chiefs are an English Rugby Union Club. The decision to rebrand was reached only after a two-year review which is interesting in itself. But we also see the discussions present in Part One of this thesis in the rebranding too. In particular this should bring to mind the predictability narrative around English heritage when reading that the new logo "draws inspiration from the Celtic Iron Age Dumnonii Tribe, which encompassed a unified area covering Devon, Cornwall, and parts of Somerset for many hundreds of years before Roman occupation…as well as the later 'Celtic Kingdom of Dumnonia'" (Stevens, 2022, Section 2).

22. *Old Peculier* - A beer brewed by Theakston Brewery since 1809, named in honour of the Peculier of Masham (a Peculier being a parish outside diocese jurisdiction).

23. The Red Arrows (official name: Royal Air Force Aerobatic Team) is an aerobatic display team of the British Royal Airforce formed in 1965.

24. *Yid* – An offensive slang term frequently used against Jewish people.

25. *Buycott (2023)* – In this context I am referencing a smart-phone application that reads the barcode of a product, to help consumers decide whether to buy or avoid that product based on how the company aligns with their values and principles. The term itself refers to a protest of a company/country with dubious ethical standards in which consumers avoid purchasing any product associated with company/country (Collins, 2023).

26. *Great Barrier Beer (2023)* – An Australian brewing company who give "Ten percent of the price of every can, six pack and carton sold goes directly to the Australian Marine Conservation Society to help fund their work to protect the reef from the effects of warming waters and pollution caused by climate change.

Reflective Diary

Throughout my doctoral studies I have kept a reflective diary. It was intended as writing practice – recording daily reflection on standard occurrences. But mostly, as it turns out, it became an outlet for the things I found maddening. Several of the entries offer a powerful insight into my experience and thought processes as the thesis narrative developed. I hope the inclusion of these 'self-dialogues' add to the authenticity, vulnerability, and rawness with which this entire thesis has been written.

11th December 2020 (Diary 1)

Everything is fucked. Of all the conclusions I have made in the last year I feel most confident about this one. Even modern sport seems to be reaching the edge of a proverbial cliff-edge. I realise that I must dismiss optimism. How can I, in light of what I see, expect things to be better? No, there is no optimism, just realism. But I have hope. Hope is what fosters real change. I must force myself back to this during my PhD. The hope that collective efforts in dismantling inequity will be actualised.

27th July 2021 (Diary 2)

Media Influences people. There, I said it. Happy now? Yes, it has an obscene amount of power. Yes, a handful of rich (mostly white men) own it. Yes, it platforms a warped view of the outside world. So what? Why do you insist on discussing 'The Media' as if it where some great leviathan overlord that engulfs every study of sport audiences. Must I include in this thesis a section devoted to all ideologically charged institutions. What else? Perhaps a chapter on romantic painters. Followed by one on Shakespeare's plays. Then to finish off why don't I give my thoughts on 'Daemonologie' by King James VI. Maybe I am missing something? Media, Modern Sport, are they not the same. This is an oversimplification perhaps? Can it not be argued that 'the media' (what a great generalisation this is) is another larva of the imperial parasite. Surely you could just as easily transpose my framework into a study of sports media. Would this not be much more beneficial than wasting our time entering into some chicken or egg debate.

12th February 2022 (Diary 3)

I am to be frank, a victor in the lottery of life. Not in some sort of patronising, pompous, Cecil Rhodes way. But in a, when specific cultural signifiers equal advantage in this world I lucked out kind of way. I am White. I am Male. I was public schooled. I was baptised and confirmed Anglican. I grew up in one of the UK's most affluent towns. Two parent household et cetera, et cetera. These are just

some of the factors that have contributed to an easier daily existence for me than many others. I am privileged. This is a fact. There isn't anything wrong with it. I am not guilty. I am not sorry. I am aware. But it doesn't feel so simple. I cannot accept it. Nor can I warrant staying idle.

Woe is me I know! Of all the afflictions to befall a researcher this may rank lowest in severity. Still, it nags endlessly. I hope that my work adds something, but who am I to speak of prejudice when I know not what it is to suffer from it? How ignorant. Who am I to place Whiteness at the centre of debate? How arrogant. What right do I have to say how things should be? How conceited. Remember though that you do not pretend to be speaking from these positions. But how can I suggest I understand the positions of my participants? You are not able to truly. But what then is the value of this contribution? You are not the judge of this. You can only endeavour to focus on the experience of those you feel you can relate to (audible eye roll). Ugh, the sanctimonious undercurrents of such a statement make me cringe.

13th February 2022 (Diary 4)

It could be that none of these questions matter. A classic case of imposter syndrome. The problem simple; your own overthinking. The solution easy; get over yourself. Regardless, I cannot make sense of it. Perhaps the best I can do is to utilise my privilege to help others. But why do I feel like this makes my research some sort of ego trip, even when I know it is not. And so, the cycle begins again. Ultimately, all I can do is write with clarity, openness, and recognition that these are my own experiences, my own understandings, my own interpretations. All of which will have been influenced by my privilege. Make no bones about who you are. But how am I to accept this as right without seeing an entire universe of consequence. You cannot. So, I must resign myself to accepting that I can only do my best, and hope it is good enough. Yes?

Maybe this is what working through the discomfort of privilege means. Maybe it is part of a much deeper questioning about my existence. About my place, who I am, and what the point of this all is. Maybe that's what my research is actually about. Likely I will never be satisfied by an answer.

10th July 2022 (Diary 5)

How can I speak foul of my participants? I am struggling with the prospect of producing publicly available criticism of people so close. I envy anyone with a sense of righteousness so steadfast that they can simply believe what they are doing is right. Of course, these people have willingly offered themselves as participants. I am therefore free to interpret as I see fit right? But just writing that has made me flinch at the indifference. Why is this so difficult?

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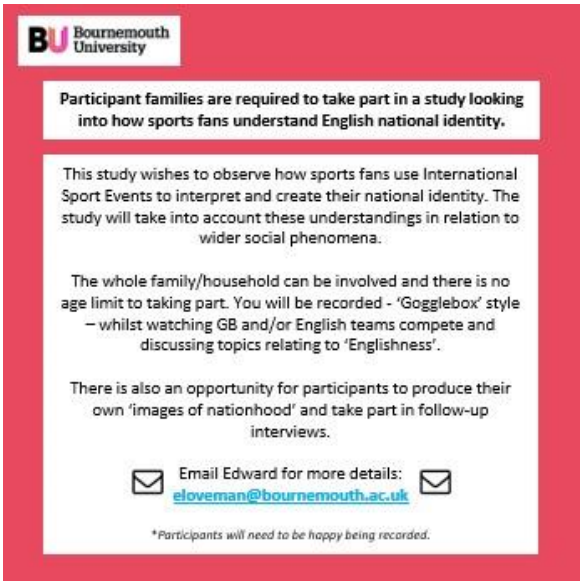
Appendix 1



Social Media Call for Participants.

Appendix 2

Bournemouth University

Participant Information Sheet

The title of the research project

Land of Hope & Glory: An Ethnographic Study on Englishness, Imperialism and Sports Mega Events Audiences

Invitation to take part

You are being invited to take part in a research project about national identity. Before you decide to participate it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Please contact the researcher if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part.

What is the purpose of the project?

The aim of the project is to examine the relationship between 'live' viewership of Sport Mega Events and audiences' understandings of nationhood. Specifically, the study concerns itself with how sports fans negotiate historic and create new meanings around narratives that relate to nationalism and imperialism. The purpose of this is to gain greater insight into how people understand and interpret their nationhood. Doing this will involve examining how Sport fans navigate and create understandings around state ideologies, politics of race, religion, and gender, that may represent a jingoistic idea of English culture.

This project is scheduled to last until January 2023.

Why have I been chosen?

You and/or a member of your household has identified that you may be interested in taking part in this project. For you to be included in the project, at least 2 members of your household will need to be happy being recorded watching an International Sport Event on TV whilst discussing some topics that relate to your national identity. You must identify as English or English/British. There are no other exclusion/inclusion criteria.

This project is looking to recruit between 5 - 8 families/households with approximately 15 – 25 participants.

Do I have to take part?

It is up to you to decide whether or not you take part. If you do decide to take part, you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a participant agreement form. We want you to understand what participation involves before you make a decision on whether to participate.

Please note: If you or any family member have an on-going relationship with BU or the research team, e.g., as a member of staff, as student or other service user, your decision on whether to take part (or continue to take part) will not affect this relationship in any way.

Can I change my mind about taking part?

Yes, you can stop participating in study activities at any time and without giving a reason.

If I change my mind, what happens to my information?

After you decide to withdraw from the study, we will not collect any further information from or about you.

As regards research data that has already been collected before this point, your rights to access, change and/or move that information are limited. This is because we need to manage the use of this data in specific ways in order for the research to be reliable and accurate.

What would taking part involve?

The minimum requirement for participant involvement is to be recorded, 'Gogglebox style,' watching an International Sports fixture where either an English or British team is competing. This will require 2 – 3 hours of your time. During the recording, you will be able to use a prompt sheet to discuss topics relating to national identity with other participants. Participant families/households will be asked to be recorded on multiple occasions, but it is up to you and/or family if they wish to be continually involved in the project. Participant families/households will also be invited to produce their own reflections of national identity which will be discussed with the researcher, but this is not essential for your involvement. Your own reflections could take any form, such as a home video, drawing/painting or written story.

If during the recording participants provide interesting insights that require further development or clarification, then the researcher may request to have a follow-up interview with them to gain a more detailed understanding of what was being discussed.

On the day(s) of recording, the researcher will deliver recording devices which your household/family will need to setup, following researcher instructions. You will need to start and stop the recordings. The researcher will stay outside the residence and have access to the recording equipment remotely. This will only be possible when the devices are switched on. Once the recordings are finished your family/household will need to return the devices to the researcher. Any equipment will be disinfected before and after you handle it.

Please note: Due to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, it is not currently possible for the researcher to enter the place of residence. However, government guidelines are changing regularly. If government guidelines permit, you should be aware that the researcher will request to access your place of residence so that audio-visual equipment can be setup. You will need to be in a separate room whilst this takes place. To safeguard against any potential Coronavirus transmission: the researcher will complete a lateral flow test before entering the residence, be wearing PPE (mask, apron, shoe covers and gloves) and clean any surfaces that they come into contact with. During any recording, the researcher will wait outside the place of residence. Once the recording has finished (2-3 hours) participants will need to be in a separate room whilst equipment is removed. Additionally, consent will be requested for any changes to take place.

What are the advantages and possible disadvantages or risks of taking part?

Whilst there are no immediate benefits to you participating in the project, it is hoped that your involvement with the project will help researchers understand how they can put existing theory to better use in articulating arguments of resistance to disrupt tumultuous and ill-informed historical interpretations of everyday nationhood.

Whilst it is not anticipated that you will be at any risk by taking part in this study, you may find that discussing some of the topics covered uncomfortable, either with other participants or with the researcher. You should remember that you have a right to withdraw from the study at any point.

What type of information will be sought from me and why is the collection of this information relevant for achieving the research project's objectives?

Your name, telephone number and/or email will be collected for the researcher to be able to contact you regarding filming, send you any relevant forms and a finding report pertaining to the project following completion. You will also need to provide your address so that the researcher can come and film your family/household during an International sport event.

So that the researcher can analyse how sports fans our making sense of their national identity your thoughts, opinions and experiences will also be collected. You are the owner of any visual material that you produce. As part of the consent process, you will be asked to give license to the researcher to publish, distribute, archive, perform or otherwise disseminate within research outputs that may be available to the public on any platform in any media.

Please note that your contact details will be destroyed as soon as it is no longer necessary for the researcher to make contact with you and your family.

Will I be recorded, and how will the recorded media be used?

When watching the sport event and if you take part in any interviews you will be recorded. Unless you specify on the consent form that you wish to be identified as being associated with the project then all data collected will be anonymised. Likewise, unless you specify otherwise, any materials you create, such as photographs and artwork will be included in research outputs anonymously.

The audio and/or video recordings of your activities made during this research and the transcription of the recording(s) will be used for analysis and for illustration in the researchers PhD thesis, conference presentations and lectures. In these instances, any identifiable information will be removed – through the blurring of faces, voice changes and/or the redacting of personal information. No one outside the project will be allowed access to the original recordings. Any other uses for the recordings will only be made following your written permission and you will have an opportunity to view and if appropriate, edit your contribution before first publication.

How will my information be managed?

Bournemouth University (BU) is the organisation with overall responsibility for this study and the Data Controller of your personal information, which means that we are responsible for looking

after your information and using it appropriately. Research is a task that we perform in the public interest, as part of our core function as a university.

Undertaking this research study involves collecting and/or generating information about you. We manage research data strictly in accordance with:

- Ethical requirements; and
- Current data protection laws. These control use of information about identifiable individuals, but do not apply to anonymous research data: "anonymous" means that we have either removed or not collected any pieces of data or links to other data which identify a specific person as the subject or source of a research result.

BU's Research Participant Privacy Notice sets out more information about how we fulfil our responsibilities as a data controller and about your rights as an individual under the data protection legislation. We ask you to read this Notice so that you can fully understand the basis on which we will process your personal information.

Research data will be used only for the purposes of the study or related uses identified in the Privacy Notice or this Information Sheet. To safeguard your rights in relation to your personal information, we will use the minimum personally-identifiable information possible and control access to that data as described below.

Publication

You will not be able to be identified in any external reports or publications about the research without your specific consent. Otherwise, your information will only be included in these materials in an anonymous form, i.e., you will not be identifiable.

It is hoped that the research results will be published following successful completion of the researchers PhD.

Security and access controls

BU will hold the information we collect about you in hard copy in a secure location and on a BU password protected secure network where held electronically.

Personal information which has not been anonymised will be accessed and used only by appropriate, authorised individuals and when this is necessary for the purposes of the research or another purpose identified in the Privacy Notice. This may include giving access to BU staff or

others responsible for monitoring and/or audit of the study, who need to ensure that the research is complying with applicable regulations.

Personal data will only be used by the researcher when arranging filming and for sending invitations to any virtual interviews. This will only ever be available to the researcher. Any project data that is collected will be pseudonymised or anonymised unless you request for it not to be on the consent form.

Further use of your information

The information collected about you may be used in an anonymous form to support other research projects in the future and access to it in this form will not be restricted. It will not be possible for you to be identified from this data. To enable this use, anonymised data will be added to BU's online Research Data Repository: this is a central location where data is stored, which is accessible to the public.

Keeping your information if you withdraw from the study

If you withdraw from active participation in the study, we will keep information which we have already collected from or about you, if this has on-going relevance or value to the study. This may include your personal identifiable information. As explained above, your legal rights to access, change, delete or move this information are limited as we need to manage your information in specific ways in order for the research to be reliable and accurate. However, if you have concerns about how this will affect you personally, you can raise these with the researcher when you withdraw from the study.

You can find out more about your rights in relation to your data and how to raise queries or complaints in our Privacy Notice.

Retention of research data

Project governance documentation, including copies of signed **participant agreements**: we keep this documentation for a long period after completion of the research, so that we have records of how we conducted the research and who took part. The only personal information in this documentation will be your name and signature, and we will not be able to link this to any anonymised research results.

Research results:

We will keep your personal information in identifiable form until first publication of the research or for a period of three years after completion of the research study. Your personal information will be stored in a password protected device to which only the researcher will have access. Although published research outputs are anonymised, we need to retain underlying data collected for the study in a non-anonymised form to enable the research to be audited and/or to enable the research findings to be verified.

You can find more specific information about retention periods for personal information in our Privacy Notice.

We keep anonymised research data indefinitely, so that it can be used for other research as described above.

Contact for further information

If you have any questions or would like further information, please contact Edward Loveman via email, eloveman@bournemouth.ac.uk

In case of complaints

Any concerns about the study should be addressed to Professor Michael Silk, Deputy Dean for Research & Professional Practice, BU Business School by email to researchgovernance@bournemouth.ac.uk

Finally

If you decide to take part, you will be given a copy of the information sheet and a signed participant agreement form to keep.

Thank you for considering taking part in this research project.

Appendix 3

Bournemouth University

Participant Agreement Form

Full title of project: Land of Hope & Glory: An Ethnographic Study on Englishness, Imperialism and Sports Mega Events Audiences

Name, position and contact details of researcher: Edward Loveman, PhD Student, eloveman@bournemouth.ac.uk

Name, position and contact details of supervisor: Dr Nicola De Martini Ugolotti, Senior Lecturer in Sport and Physical Activity ndemartiniugolotti@bournemouth.ac.uk

To be completed prior to data collection activity

Section A: Agreement to participate in the study

You should only agree to participate in the study if you agree with all of the statements in this table and accept that participating will involve the listed activities.

I have read and understood the Participant Information Sheet (PISV1) and have been given access to the BU Research Participant Privacy Notice which sets out how we collect and use personal information (https://www1.bournemouth.ac.uk/about/governance/access-information/data-protection-privacy).
I have had an opportunity to ask questions.
I understand that my participation is voluntary. I can stop participating in research activities at any time without giving a reason and I am free to decline to answer any particular question(s) during any recordings or interviews.
I understand that taking part in the research will include the following activity/activities as part of the research:
• being filmed during the project
• being audio recorded during the project
I understand that I am the owner of any visual material they produce/create. I give license to the researcher to publish, distribute, archive, perform or otherwise disseminate these within research outputs that may be available to the public on any platform in any media.
I understand that I may be required to handle and setup recording devices
I understand that, if I withdraw from the study, I will also be able to withdraw my data from further use in the study **except** where my data has been anonymised (as I cannot be identified) or it will be harmful to the project to have my data removed.
I understand that my data may be included in an anonymised form within a dataset to be archived at BU's Online Research Data Repository.
I understand that my data may be used in an anonymised form by the research team to support other research projects in the future, including future publications, reports or presentations.

	Initial box to agree
I consent to take part in the project on the basis set out above (Section A)	

Section B: The following parts of the study are optional

You can decide about each of these activities separately. Even if you do not agree to any of these activities you can still take part in the study. If you do not wish to give permission for an activity, do not initial the box next to it.

		Initial boxes to agree
	I agree to being part of any follow-up interviews	
	I agree to being photographed during the Project.	
	I agree to being asked to create alternate visual materials i.e., drawings, as part of the Project	
	I understand that my words and/or visual creations may be quoted in publications, reports, web pages and other research outputs. Please choose one of the following two options:	
	I agree that my real name can be used in the above.	
	I do **not** agree that my real name can be used in the above.	

I confirm my agreement to take part in the project on the basis set out above.

Name of participant (BLOCK CAPITALS)	Date (dd/mm/yyyy)	Signature
Name of researcher (BLOCK CAPITALS)	Date (dd/mm/yyyy)	Signature

Appendix 4

Research Ethics Checklist

About Your Checklist	
Ethics ID	36268
Date Created	11/02/2021 12:44:16
Status	Approved
Date Approved	12/04/2021 17:06:55
Date Submitted	12/04/2021 10:04:38
Risk	High

Researcher Details	
Name	Edward Loveman
Faculty	BU Business School
Status	Postgraduate Research (MRes, MPhil, PhD, DProf, EngD, EdD)
Course	Postgraduate Research - BUBS
Have you received funding to support this research project?	No

Project Details	
Title	Land of Hope & Glory: An Ethnographic Study on Englishness, Imperialism and Sports Mega Events Audiences
Start Date of Project	27/01/2020
End Date of Project	20/02/2022
Proposed Start Date of Data Collection	11/05/2021
Original Supervisor	Nicola De Martini Ugolotti
Approver	Research Ethics Panel

Summary - no more than 600 words (including detail on background methodology, sample, outcomes, etc.)

Topic

This PhD is a consideration of sports audiences and their engagement with arguably skewed narratives of empire, nation and identity, specifically observing audiences of 'live' televised sport mega events (SME's) as active agents in both the (re)production, embodiment and creation of 'Englishness'. Fans will often engage with nostalgic displays of nationhood, buttressed by accounts of England as a 'free' 'land of hope and glory', augmented by romantic recounting of the global hegemony of the British Navy, and a communal sense of national pride forged in the victories of two world wars and one world cup. The central concern of this PhD is to examine how SME fans navigate and create understandings around state ideologies, politics of race, religion, and gender, when interpreting these jingoistic depictions of English culture.

Justification

Such an interrogation is of increasingly significant importance, as the social significance of White nationhood increases and reorganises behind pseudo-authoritarian politics. The right-wing resurgence would appear to demand an altered and reinvigorated, somewhat moral confrontation of the imperialist mindset that forms the foundation of 'Englishness'.

Methods

This PhD will take an ethnographic approach to analyse the performances and interpretations of national identity by families when watching SME's. Such an approach, positions audiences as embedded in complex identities and seems ideally suited as a method to uncover the active interpretation of fans in everyday contexts.

The main method of data collection will be video recording families watching MISE's within their homes. Data collection will take place over a 16-month period between May 2021 and August 2022 (this includes European football tournaments, Rugby League world cup, Olympic and Commonwealth Games). Participants may be provided with prompt sheets with topics to potentially discuss whilst being recorded. They will also be offered opportunities to actively produce/create their own recordings of their performances of national identity (such as photographs, film, story writing) to enrich the research process. These recordings will be analysed using NVIVO throughout. There is no limit to the number of times that a family can be recorded, this will be informed by the following:

- Logistics.
- The family wishes to continue their involvement with the project.
- The quality of data that a family brings to the project.

Individuals who present interesting points that require further investigation/development will also be asked to take part in follow-up interviews.

Ethical Issues

The ethical issues of note are:

- safeguarding against coronavirus.
- Informed consent for video recording.
- Anonymity - If a family wants to be directly associated with the project they can request for their names to not be anonymised.
- At present, genuine attempts to consider the values of 'English' identity are being increasingly misunderstood as personal attacks on White peoples which are in turn met with tense, often hostile responses

Filter Question: Does your study involve Human Participants?

Participants	
Describe the number of participants and specify any inclusion/exclusion criteria to be used	
No. of participants - 5-8 participant families, made up of approximately 20-25 individuals. All participants must identify as being English or British/English. Outside this, their are no specific inclusion or exclusion criteria but potential participants will be screened during recruitment (see attached document). An interest in sport is deemed to be beneficial.	
Do your participants include minors (under 16)?	Yes
If Yes, please provide details, including age range.	
Due to the fact that this project will be recruiting families as participants, minors could range anywhere from 0-16 years of age.	
Are your participants considered adults who are competent to give consent but considered vulnerable?	No
Is a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check required for the research activity?	No

Recruitment	
Please provide details on intended recruitment methods, include copies of any advertisements.	
The researcher intends to recruit participants by advertising through the following channels: • Social Media	
• Email blast to Bournemouth University students & staff • word of mouth	
Do you need a Gatekeeper to access your participants?	Yes
Please provide details, including their roles and any relationship between Gatekeepers and participant(s) (e.g. nursing home manager and residents)	
Parent/Guardians will serve as gatekeepers to minors.	

Data Collection Activity

Will the research involve questionnaire/online survey? If yes, don't forget to attach a copy of the questionnaire/survey or sample of questions.	No
Will the research involve interviews? If Yes, don't forget to attach a copy of the interview questions or sample of questions	Yes

Please provide details e.g. where will the interviews take place. Will you be conducting the interviews or someone else?

Interviews will take place online - either through Microsoft Teams/Zoom/Skype.

Interviews will be carried out by the researcher.

Will the research involve a focus group? If yes, don't forget to attach a copy of the focus group questions or sample of questions.	No
Will the research involve the collection of audio materials?	Yes
Will your research involve the collection of photographic materials?	Yes
Will your research involve the collection of video materials/film?	Yes
Will any photographs, video recordings or film identify an individual?	Yes

Please provide details

Given the nature of this research project and the methods associated with data collection it is likely that research participants will be identifiable both through voice and image in the following formats:

- videos.
- photographs.
- audio recordings.

The inclusion on minors is an important aspect of this, as to see faces is necessary for observational aspects. In terms of any artefacts produced, their inclusion in any research outputs will be used only if deemed appropriate and necessary, but this can only take place with both parental consent and child assent.

Participants will have an opportunity to view and if appropriate edit their contribution. Unless participants give consent, any identifiable information will be anonymised in the research outputs. Participants will also be invited to see any research outputs before being made public.

Will any audio recordings (or non-anonymised transcript), photographs, video recordings or film be used in any outputs or otherwise made publicly available?	Yes

If Yes, please provide details.

Visual materials such as photographs, video recordings or film may be used in the presentation of the researchers PhD thesis and/or in any other research outputs. This includes future publications, reports or presentations.

Research participants are owners of any visual material they produce/create. As part of the consent process they must give license to the researcher to publish, distribute, archive, perform or otherwise disseminate these within research outputs that may be available to the public on any platform in any media.

As owners, participants will be asked via the consent form whether they want to be named in person or pseudonymised. In the case of the later option being selected, in any publicly available research outputs, all names will be anonymised and any identifiers in images/audio files will be removed.

Will the study involve discussions of sensitive topics (e.g. sexual activity, drug use, criminal activity)?	No
Will any drugs, placebos or other substances (e.g. food substances, vitamins) be administered to the participants?	No
Will the study involve invasive, intrusive or potential harmful procedures of any kind?	No
Could your research induce psychological stress or anxiety, cause harm or have negative consequences for the participants or researchers (beyond the risks encountered in normal life)?	No
Will your research involve prolonged or repetitive testing?	No

Consent

Describe the process that you will be using to obtain valid consent for participation in the research activities. If consent is not to be obtained explain why.

For transparency and fairness, when participant families have suggested that they would like to take part in the project they will be sent a full participant information sheet. This will include the following (this is not an exhaustive list):

- What the research project is looking at.
- What sort of data will be collected.
- What is expected of participants.
- Process for withdrawal.

Potential participants will be given time to read through and understand this information, before meeting with the researcher (virtually) to discuss any questions/clarifications that need to be made. Following oral confirmation during this meeting that participants wish to take part, consent forms will be disseminated for all participants to sign. These forms will highlight that the participants are owners of any visual material they produce and/or create. They are asked explicitly, to license to the researcher to publish, distribute, archive, perform or otherwise disseminate within research outputs that may be available to the public on any platform in any media.

Every participant is required to sign a consent form, however given the varied age ranges applicable to this study consent will take the following form:

- Adults can sign their own form.
- Assent form (for children/young people (under 16) - this must be accompanied by a Participant Agreement Form signed by a Parent/Guardian.

If participants are minors, describe the process for obtaining consent/assent.

All participants will be required will need to agree/consent to being a part of the project. For any participants under the age of 16, parents/guardians will also need to sign a consent form.

Do your participants include adults who lack/may lack capacity to give consent (at any point in the study)?	No
Will it be necessary for participants to take part in your study without their knowledge and consent?	No

Participant Withdrawal

At what point and how will it be possible for participants to exercise their rights to withdraw from the study?

A participant has the right to withdraw from participating in the research at any time and/or refrain from answering a particular question during any interviews. They do not have to provide an explanation.

Given the nature of the research project, withdrawal of minors participation can be requested by the gatekeeper nominated/identified on the consent form. This individual has the right to withdraw any minors associated with the study, who they identified as participants on the consent form.

All information on withdrawing from the study is made clear in the participant information sheet and consent form.

If a participant withdraws from the study, what will be done with their data?

Depending on the point of, and nature of withdrawal the following will apply:

<u>Before any data collection takes place</u>

- Personal/Information data that has been processed during the recruitment of participants is destroyed.

<u>During data collection</u>

- Personal/ information data that has been processed during the recruitment of participants is destroyed.
- Any recording or interviews are stopped immediately.
- Participants will no longer be used or associated with the project. • Any data where the participant is identifiable will be anonymised.
- Project data collected up to the point of withdrawal can be used for analysis and appear in any published work.

<u>After data collection and/or publication</u>

- Personal/ information data that has been processed during the recruitment of participants is destroyed.
- Participants and any research data will no longer be associated with the project in future publications (articles/chapters/conferences etc.).
- If the research is yet to be completed, i.e. the data is still being analysed, any data where the participant is identifiable will be anonymised.
- Project data collected up to the point of withdrawal can be used for analysis and appear in any published work.

The above applies to all individuals taking part in the project. If those identified with permission wish to exercise their right to withdraw any minors, the same applies to all minors listed as members of the family during recruitment.

**If a situation arises where it is deemed that withdrawal of a minor is being forced onto participants to hide any harmful/abusive disclosures then the researcher will follow BU safeguarding processes.*

Participant Compensation

Will participants receive financial compensation (or course credits) for their participation?	No
Will financial or other inducements (other than reasonable expenses) be offered to participants?	No

Research Data

Will identifiable personal information be collected, i.e. at an individualised level in a form that identifies or could enable identification of the participant?	Yes

Please give details of the types of information to be collected, e.g. personal characteristics, education, work role, opinions or experiences

Information to be collected

- governance materials with information that directly identifies an individual such as a name or an email address.
- project data - opinions and experiences of participants.
- project data - videos/photographs/audio files including indentifying markers and any materials produced by participants.

Will the personal data collected include any special category data, or any information about actual or alleged criminal activity or criminal convictions which are not already in the public domain?	No

Will the information be anonymised/de-identified at any stage during the study?	Yes
Will research outputs include any identifiable personal information i.e. data at an individualised level in a form which identifies or could enable identification of the individual?	No

Storage, Access and Disposal of Research Data	
During the study, what data relating to the participants will be stored and where?	In accordance with Bournemouth University's data storage and security guidance, the researcher will ensure that research data is stored in a secure way, with backup copies in at least three separate locations which are maintained regularly. The data will be stored on the Home Drive of the university's network. The H Drive is backed up automatically on a daily basis. It will also be stored on the researchers personal password protected OneDrive and on a password protected external hard drive. The later, will not serve as a long-term storage solution. Once any data has been transferred to these locations from external recording devices (Cameras and/or Dictaphones) the files shall be deleted from these devices. The same will apply to any information received via email during the study. **If the participants produce research material, for example producing artwork, it will be scanned and stored as above. The hard copy will be stored in a locked filing cabinet to which only the researcher has access.*
How long will the data relating to participants be stored?	Personal information, which relates to participants will be destroyed once the researcher has been awarded the degree.
During the study, who will have access to the data relating to participants?	The researcher will have direct access to the data. Controlled access may be provided to the supervisory team. Participants will be made aware of this on the consent form.
After the study has finished, what data relating to participants will be stored and where? Please indicate whether data will be retained in identifiable form.	Unless participants have requested, all names will be anonymised in any research outputs.
After the study has finished, how long will data relating to participants be stored?	Bournemouth University does not specify any retention period. However with regards to long-term storage of data the following applies: Any data stored on external devices will be deleted and destroyed after the projects completion. All project data will remain on the Home Drive of the university's network. The H Drive is backed up automatically on a daily basis. This will be checked periodically and when it is no longer appropriate to retain it, this data will be securely destroyed. **This does not include personal information, which relates to participants, and this will be destroyed once the researcher has been awarded the degree.*

After the study has finished, who will have access to the data relating to participants?	All other data/information relating to the project that is not personal information will be stored securely on the BU server. Project data may be included in research outputs which will have the potetntial to be available to the public participants will be made aware of this in the information sheet and covered by the consent and release form
Will any identifiable participant data be transferred outside of the European Economic Area (EEA)?	No
How and when will the data relating to	Given that the type of data collected makes it unique, it has a higher priority for
participants be deleted/destroyed?	preservation. any data held electronically will be permanently deleted (the researcher acknowledges that moving files to the recycle bin will not be sufficient to achieve permanent deletion). The researcher intends to create outputs in which an individual can be identified. This will be explained to all participants in the information sheet and covered by the consent form.
Once your project completes, will any anonymised research data be stored on BU's Online Research Data Repository "BORDaR"?	Yes

Dissemination Plans

How do you intend to report and disseminate the results of the study?	
Peer reviewed journals, Conference presentations, Publication on website	
Will you inform participants of the results?	Yes
If Yes or No, please give details of how you will inform participants or justify if not doing so	
Participants will receive a written report on the findings of the project.	

Final Review

Are there any other ethical considerations relating to your project which have not been covered above?	Yes

If Yes, please explain.
At present, genuine attempts to consider the values of ‘English’ identity are being increasingly misunderstood as personal attacks on WASP peoples which are in turn met with tense, often hostile responses. It is therefore paramount to consider researcher safety during observation, particularly in sites that may be unfamiliar, and a full risk assessment will be undertaken prior to any data collection. Taking into account the COVID-19 Pandemic, a comprehensive Covid compliance protocol will need to be produced. This will need to protect both researcher and participant. A thorough risk assessment will be conducted on every premises identified.

Risk Assessment	
Have you undertaken an appropriate Risk Assessment?	Yes

Appendix 5

An example Risk Assessment Form (identifiable information has been removed)

Bournemouth University

Risk Assessment Form

About You & Your Assessment	
Name	Edward Loveman
Email	eloveman@bournemouth.ac.uk
Your Faculty/Professional Service	BU Business School
Is Your Risk Assessment in relation to Travel or Fieldwork?	Yes
Status	Submitted
Date of Assessment	18/06/2021
Date of the Activity/Event/Travel that you are Assessing	18/06/2021

What, Who & Where	
Describe the activity/area/process to be assessed	Fieldwork - Recording session of Men's European Football Championship Game (England vs Scotland)
Locations for which the assessment is applicable	Participant place of residence
Persons who may be harmed	Staff, Members of the public

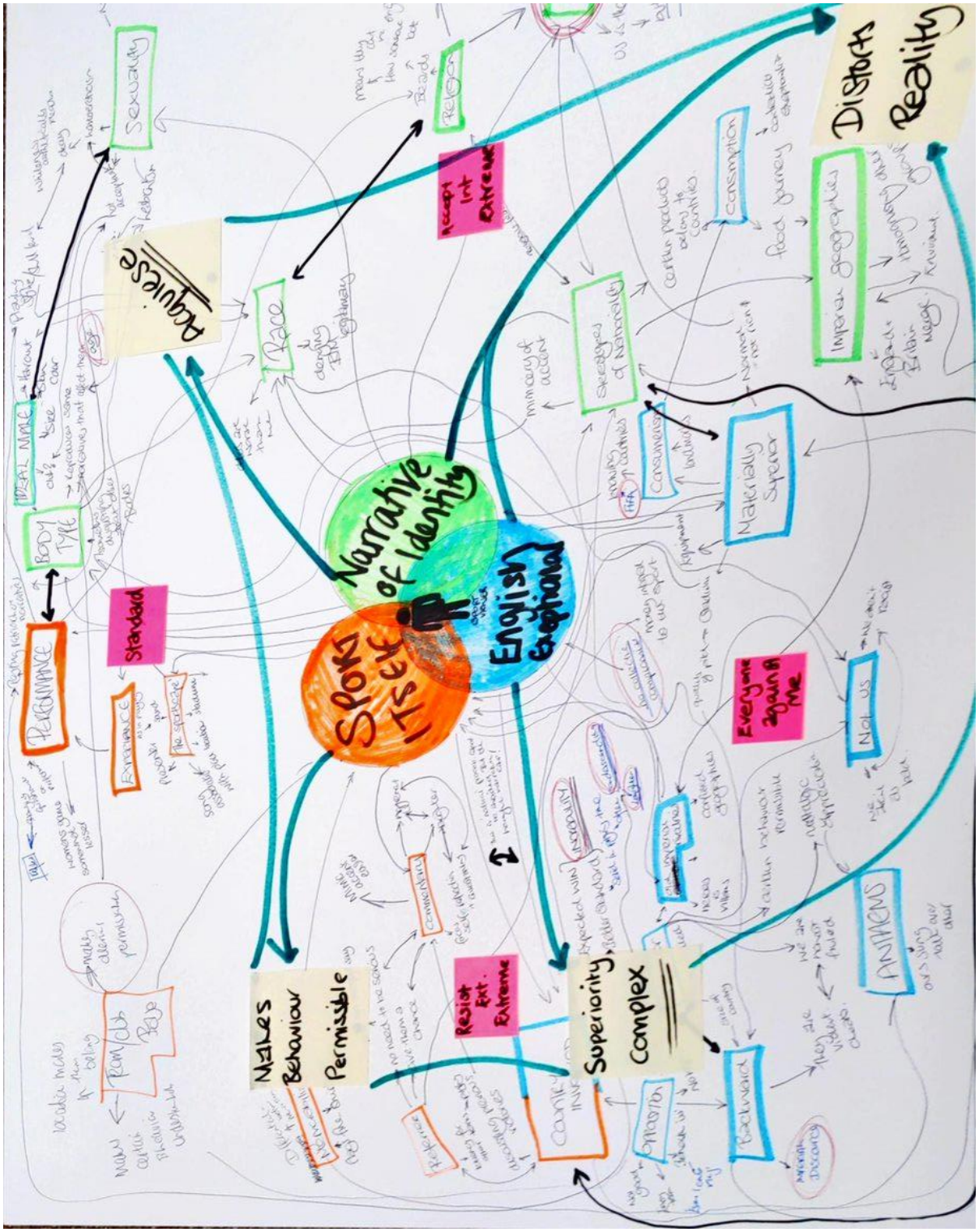
Hazard & Risk	
Hazard	Psychological (trauma, extreme stress)
Severity of the hazard	Medium

How Likely the hazard could cause harm	Low
Risk Rating	Low
Control Measure(s) for Psychological (trauma, extreme stress): prepare to field questions in order to field any heightened tensions Be aware of sensitive issues	
With your control measure(s) in place - if the hazard were to cause harm, how severe would it be? Medium	
With your control measure(s) in place - how likely is it that the hazard could cause harm? Low	
The residual risk rating is calculated as: Low	
Hazard	Violence
Severity of the hazard	High
How Likely the hazard could cause harm	Low
Risk Rating	Medium
Control Measure(s) for Violence: Meet with participants away from place of residence before recording session in order to ensure safety Researcher to terminate recording at any point if made to feel uncomfortable or at risk on physical harm Full risk assessment	
With your control measure(s) in place - if the hazard were to cause harm, how severe would it be? High	
With your control measure(s) in place - how likely is it that the hazard could cause harm? Low	
The residual risk rating is calculated as: Medium	
Hazard	Covid-19
Severity of the hazard	Medium
How Likely the hazard could cause harm	Low
Risk Rating	Low
Control Measure(s) for Covid-19:	

Social Distancing Cleaning any surfaces touched Vaccination - Researcher has received first vaccine (Pfzier) cleaning any equipment passed from researcher to participant
With your control measure(s) in place - if the hazard were to cause harm, how severe would it be? Medium
With your control measure(s) in place - how likely is it that the hazard could cause harm? Low
The residual risk rating is calculated as: Low

Appendix 6

A thematic map from the preliminary stages of data analysis.



Appendix 7

Example of full data collection – incl. observation notes, artefacts, transcripts, and analysis.

Participant Group A – First Half England vs Scotland, Men's European Football Championship

Demographic Information: 3 people – 1 male (20-30yr), 1 female (50-60yr), 1 female (80-90yr).

Location: Hertfordshire

House: Detached

Notes on surroundings:

- Dog (spaniel/brown) greeted me at door. Dog is excitable. She follows me around the house as I am given a tour.
- Enter into house onto Kitchen. White cabinets and granite work surfaces
- Kitchen Island is cluttered with day-to-day items. Ok Magazine with Diana on front cover stands out amongst miscellaneous household items (Looks like it has been there for some time).
- Past kitchen is a wooden dining table.
- Participants have already laid out artefacts as if a show and tell. We go through them. They talk about them with fondness. Talk about family experiences with each item.
- Artefact presentation (participants talk me through items)
    - VIVIENNE – "We are very patriotic in this house."
    - BARBARA – "Can't be patriotic anymore, it's not allowed."
- Walk into lounge to set up camera equipment.
- It is very dark – no lights on.
- Look around room and see quite cluttered.
- Images of children dressed in England merchandise on shelves.
- Tucked behind one sofa is a shelf with military regalia on top.
- Ask about the pictures and participants start to discuss. Atmosphere changes. More relaxed now.
- Start the recording equipment.
- PAUL asks about camera. Reassure him.
- Start conversation about guessing the results.
- Family relax again and all come and sit down.
- Recording starts.

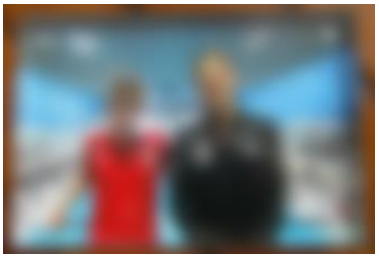
Artifacts (Numbered Left to Right):

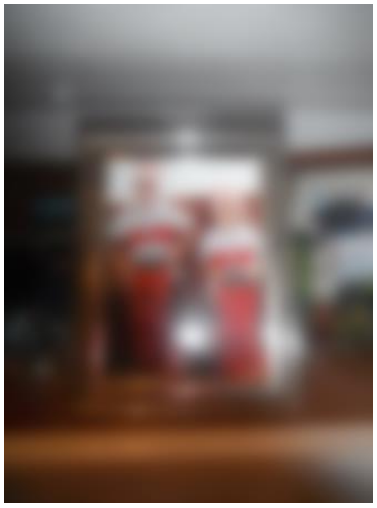
Row 1 - **(1)** Picture of children at Olympic Games, **(2)** Union Jack cushion with gold Royal Seal, **(3)** Picture of Queen Elizabeth & Margaret Thatcher in front of Union Jack flag.

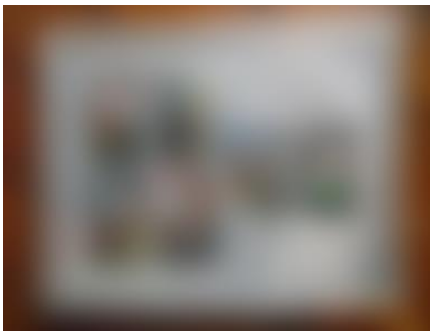
Row 2 - **(4)** London tea Towel, **(5)** Picture of children holding Christmas stockings with three lions on, **(6)** Hello Magazine with Princess Diana story on cover.

Row 3 - **(7)** Team GB sweatband, **(8)** Three Lions flag, **(9)** Picture of children at MISEs.

Row 4 - **(10)** Military belt, **(11)** Car key with Union Jack keyring, **(12)** England scarf.




Build-up

PAUL: Mind you I saw a video earlier today (Pause in speech and shows iPhone) this afternoon about Scotland fans and there in Leicester Square and they took their shirts off and because they were so wet, they used it as a slip n slide. And I thought ugghhh.

- Scottish fans on screen
- Global product (Ignorance)
- Artefacts 2/3/6/10 = Royalist sentiment – connection to the Union – Implications for view of Scotland
- Place and Space.
- 'Shirts off' said ostentatiously.
- Look of disgust/disdain 'ugghhh.'
- Exceptionalism

~~VIVIENNE: Come on Harry.~~

VIVIENNE: There will be a lot of people getting drunk.

~~PAUL: I feel sorry for (Researcher) because he wants to sit and watch the football~~

~~RESEARCHER: I can see it is fine, thank you.~~

2 minutes no comment

- Said whilst Scottish fans on screen.
- Body language and expression (disappointment) gives sense that it is someone different to them who will not be able controlling their drinking.
- Exceptionalism
- Othering

VIVIENNE: Oh, I bet it is such a privilege to be playing.

PAUL: Well, we have been to plenty of England Games.

- Playing is framed only as a special right.
- Pretentiousness – Exceptionalism?
- Comments about not watching much sport challenged by this. As well as artefacts which contradict this.

VIVIENNE: Oh aye.

PAUL: And its always very very jovial.

- Pretentiousness

VIVIENNE: Do you remember when we were right up the top and nana was in America, and I was texting her all the time.

- Unlike the Scottish fans, the English are always cheerful and friendly - Othering? - Exceptionalism?
- Imperial Imaginaries (America = United States). MSE used to understand place. Artefacts 1/5/9 show fondness for these experiences – Nostalgia?

~~PAUL: I don't~~

~~PAUL: I remember Ghana though~~

~~VIVIENNE: That was amazing~~

PAUL: cause the Ghanaians where quite loud weren't they

VIVIENNE: Yeah your right

~~VIVIENNE: Oh come on lads~~

COMMENTATOR: Scotland feel they don't get enough respect.

PAUL: (Laugh)

VIVIENNE: Oooo look at him

PAUL: I must say I think its great cause you know our one large country at the end of the day. But we can always have some healthy competition.

VIVIENNE: Yeah but now we want England

PAUL: Of course

~~1 min no comment – national anthems start.~~

VIVIENNE: I have been to games where they haven't sung, and it drives me mad. You are playing for your country you need to make sure you sing. I think it is absolutely disgraceful.

~~PAUL: (audible murmur in agreement)~~

~~VIVIENNE, PAUL & BARBARA: (Laughing at footage of fans)~~

PAUL: Ugh booos (Scottish Fans)

- Nationhood to understand belonging - Imperial Imaginaries - Place and Space?
- Tone suggested inferiority, said as though behaviour was improper - Exceptionalism?
- Reinforced by agreement.

- Laugh is condescending, suggests previous comment is an illegitimate viewpoint.
- Jack Grealish on screen – Idealised (Contingent) Whiteness.
- Imperial Imaginaries (UK all the same).
- Civic/legitimate

- Nationalism – exchange suggest English nationalism is good. Artefact support this. (Mundane (re)production?).

- Pretentiousness
- Players are dehumanised, they can only be happy and enjoy playing for their country.
- Must have pride in nation - civic/legitimate? – Nationalism?

- Othering
- Facial expression is a look of disgust.
- Patronising tone.

VIVIENNE, PAUL & BARBARA: (Stand) Sing national anthem.

PAUL: Claps

PAUL: Is he not wearing a suit (Southgate). I thought that was his signature look.

~~BARBARA: I'd have thought it was too hot for a suit~~

~~PAUL: No, its not its 12 degrees, probably that in London~~

Advertising Break

~~BARBARA: Does your Dad like the football (Researcher)~~

~~RESEARCHER: Oh, he loves it~~

~~BARBARA: (audible laugh)~~

~~RESEARCHER: He has the chart on his fridge so every time someone plays a game he goes and writes up the scores.~~

~~BARBARA: Does he!~~

~~RESEARCHER: Yeah~~

~~BARBARA: That nice isn't it~~

~~PAUL: Does he support Burnley or Manchester~~

~~VIVIENNE: (interrupting) Burnley~~

~~1 min no comment~~

- Nationalism - civic/legitimate?
- The national anthem is sacred and there is no acknowledgement of narratives that counter this.

- Idealised (Contingent) Whiteness.

PAUL: It is a shame that the stadiums aren't full, I must say.

- Expectation that stadiums would be full – Exceptionalism?

Game starts.

PAUL: Oh, there doing this ridiculous knee business

- Facial expression and tone suggest annoyance.
- Denies the stand against racism.
- Othering.

~~Game Starts~~

~~3 min no comment~~

PAUL: Ah sterling is in Scotland. Sterling is in Scotland.

- Place and Space
- Mundane othering – Humorous

BARBARA: (audible laugh)

- Humorous

~~2 min no comment~~

BARBARA: He that lads fast (Kalvin Phillips)

- Racial stereotype – Othering

VIVIENNE: Hey look he dives. Come on

- Movement towards screen and pointing is a shift in body language.
- Exceptionalism.

~~PAUL: Missy (dog) come here Missy~~

~~PAUL: Oh goodness me (close chance)~~

~~PAUL: That would be typical us, to concede in the first minute. That will have cheered up the Scots~~

~~PAUL: They they, they can get it into the box~~

~~BARBARA: There's a lot of activity done this end~~

~~PAUL: Ugh Good grief~~

~~2 min Break Vivienne left room~~

PAUL: Mummy, can I have some more chocolate please

- Infantilising tone.
- Global product.
- Imperial History and connection ignored.

~~PAUL: Please can I have some more chocolate~~

~~RESEARCHER: What kind of chocolate is it~~

PAUL: Erm Lindt, its extra creamy. I was introduced to it by my brother and erm yeah, I'm hooked.

- Imperial History and connection ignored.
- Contradicts Nationalism and comments on Scotland and Spanish.
- Global product

~~BARBARA: Should he not be here watching the match~~

PAUL: No, he is at his friends. He's in that stupid costume so

- Look equals intelligence?

~~BARBARA: (audible laugh)~~

~~G comes back into room~~

~~VIVIENNE: J would you like some chocolate~~

~~RESEARCHER: I'm okay thank you~~

~~VIVIENNE: Would you like a piece mum~~

~~BARBARA: Thank you~~

~~PAUL: Thanks mum, can I have two~~

~~VIVIENNE: Are you sure you don't want a piece~~

~~RESEARCHER: Oh go on then. Thank you~~

~~RESEARCHER: What's your brother wearing?~~

PAUL: Oh, you don't want to know

- Looks disgusted.
- Tone is mocking severity.

PAUL: Do you have a picture mum

VIVIENNE: No no I don't!

- Said as if horrified by suggestion.

PAUL: He dress in this old granny costume, with something hanging out. It's not pleasant.

- Othering – Ageist?
- Nudity is deemed improper.

VIVIENNE: A pair of boobs!

- Said as if shocked.
- As though it doesn't meet the proper standard – Exceptionalism?

VIVIENNE: But they did go back in so that was alright

PAUL: Oh, they've got a Spaniard doing it, ugh. He is hardly going to be fair; they hate us!

- Referee is on screen.
- Imperial Imaginaries.
- Exceptionalism
- Nostalgia?
- Them vs Us – Othering

~~VIVIENNE: oooo (in regards to play)~~

~~1 min no comment~~

~~PAUL: Who is he (pause). Who is he that no 14.~~

~~VIVIENNE: Phillips~~

~~RESEARCHER: Plays for Leeds~~

~~PAUL: Oh right~~

PAUL: I tell you what, he looks to be a rough lad

- Calvin Phillips on screen.
- Paul puffs cheeks out.
- Bodily language seems anxious.
- Idealised (Contingent) Whiteness.

RESEARCHER: Is it his hair, the cornrows that make him look tough?

- Othering - Black hair being policed (Corn Rows tradition of being worn by US transatlantic slaves in Church).
- Idealised (Contingent) Whiteness.

PAUL: Yeah. And the tattoos I think as well

- Straight back into mundane discussion. Feels a natural juxtaposition.

PAUL: Missy, come here missy

~~PAUL: Oh Shocking~~

~~BARBARA: What do you want missy, hey, what do you want~~

~~PAUL: You know those heat maps, those ones that show them where everyone is, I must say probably most of it would be on England's half as~~

~~it were. Rather than….He's not wearing his waistcoat~~.

BARBARA: No he doesn't look good does he

- Southgate back on screen.
- Idealised (Contingent) Whiteness.
- What a person wears informs you about their professionalism – Othering?

PAUL: Not looking very ambassadorial

~~VIVIENNE: right come on now lads~~

~~PAUL: Oh he will mess it up~~

~~BARBARA: Oh my god~~

~~PAUL: Surprise Surprise~~

~~PAUL: OOOOOHHHH, oh no come on, why am I not surprised~~

~~BARBARA: Missy sit down~~

~~PAUL: See this momentum will go soon~~

~~VIVIENNE: No it wont~~

~~**3 Min no comment**~~

~~PAUL: So do they play each other again or not~~

~~VIVIENNE: No~~

~~VIVIENNE: England have got three points though~~

- Dropped into conversation in reaction to MSE (Mundane).
- Said as if to imply he will be biased – Exceptionalism.
- Place and space.
- Nationalism.
- Nostalgia.
- Imperial conquests being used to mock referee.
- Ignores realities of past (ignorance).
- Humorous.

~~PAUL: Doubling up the pressure~~

BARBARA: Oh, the refs Spanish is he

PAUL: yes Spanish, and they hate the British for a number of reasons. Trafalgar being one, Gibraltar the other (laugh)

~~PAUL: Oh goodness me~~

~~VIVIENNE: Oh no get up he didn't do it on purpose~~

~~PAUL: (Laugh)~~

~~PAUL: To be fair they are not playing bad~~

~~**TV breaks up.**~~

~~BARBARA: Hey what's happening with that~~

~~VIVIENNE: There can't be that many watching the TV~~

~~BARBARA: Do you think its arial~~

~~VIVIENNE: Shouldn't be~~

~~**1 min no comment**~~

PAUL: Can you imagine if Scotland win that horrible Sturgeon Woman

- Sudden comment (mundane).
- Said in disgust.
- Sexism and misogyny – Othering? - Idealised (Contingent) Whiteness?
- Sport being used to legitimise speech - civic/legitimate?
- Love of union contradicted - Nationalism.

~~VIVIENNE: Hey was that Roy, that was Roy wasn't it. Watching~~

~~PAUL: Whose Roy~~

~~VIVIENNE: The old manager. Ropy Hodson isn't it~~

~~VIVIENNE: He came to talk to you at Watford Mum, at the train station. Do you remember?~~

~~PAUL: Oh oh oh~~

~~BARBARA: Here we go~~

~~VIVIENNE: ARRGGH~~

~~PAUL: For goodness sake~~

~~VIVIENNE: Come on~~

~~PAUL: (Groan), terrible~~

~~**2 min no comment**~~

~~VIVIENNE: Oh nice nice~~

~~PAUL: Come on. Will they muck it up. Yep~~

~~**5 min no comment**~~

~~**Paul steps out of room to get cushions**~~

~~PAUL: There you go~~

~~VIVIENNE: Thank you~~

~~PAUL: would you like another drink~~

~~**RESEARCHER:** No Thank you~~

~~BARBARA: Do you want another one for your back love~~

~~VIVIENNE: No ya right mum~~

~~**2 min no comment**~~

PAUL: You know I've not had anything to eat today apart from fish fingers

- Catholic faith is common to have fish on Friday – everyday Christianity – Imperial Imaginaries?

BARBARA: That all?

PAUL: Yes, the staple fish Friday

~~**3 min no comment**~~

~~PAUL: Ugh tried to be fancy~~

~~**1 min no comment**~~

BARBARA: That was a bit unnecessary

VIVIENNE: I don't think it was on purpose mum

BARBARA: hey

VIVIENNE: I don't think he did it on purpose

BARBARA: Did he not

VIVIENNE: I don't think he did

PAUL: Ohhh that was dirty

VIVIENNE: No, I don't like dirty tactics

BARBARA: It's a good job he's so strong

PAUL: Very much so

~~VIVIENNE: He just bounced of him~~

~~PAUL: Does he play for arsenal?~~

~~**RESEARCHER:** Who?~~

~~PAUL: That Tierney fella~~

~~**RESEARCHER:** He does yes~~

~~VIVIENNE: We need to get a goal in the next 5 minutes~~

~~PAUL: Well I was going to say it has been a bit boring this game. It it needs a goal~~

~~VIVIENNE: lets get one in the next three minutes and then they will be confident after half time~~

- Not an extreme aversion to English players behaviour, unlike against Scottish play – Othering.
- English, aka 'us' not to blame, accident – Exceptionalism.

- English player commits foul.
- An accident – Othering.

- Othering.
- Said aggressively.
- Scottish infringement is foul play.
- This isn't individual but associated with whole team 'tactics' (cheating) - Place and Space.

- English players have masculine/imperially desirable characteristics.
- Idealised (Contingent) Whiteness.

~~**1 min no comment**~~

~~PAUL: So what have you got up to today (S)~~

~~BARBARA: Hey~~

~~PAUL: You been up to anything interesting~~

~~BARBARA: Not really no~~

~~BARBARA: Alistair came for a cup of tea~~

~~PAUL: And how was that~~

~~BARBARA: It where nice to see em~~

~~PAUL: Well, that's good. Hello missy. (squeaky toy noise) good girl.~~

~~**5 min no comment**~~

PAUL: Oh, stop diving

VIVIENNE: Ugh

- English player commits a foul.
- Scottish player has dived in participants eyes – Exceptionalism.

~~**4 min no comment**~~

~~BARBARA: Lost his balance didn't he really~~

~~PAUL: (Groan)~~

~~BARBARA: He was going as fast as he can~~

PAUL: Oh referee, oh referee look at that

COMMENTATOR: Got to be pretty confident to pull off that hair cut

BARBARA: Laugh

- Family are agitated by referee not calling a foul.
- Reaction to MSE platforming othering.
- Humorous.

PAUL: He looks stupid

- Idealised (Contingent) Whiteness.

R & BARBARA: Play with dog

- Cut through with mundane interaction.

PAUL: Oh get up, look his hair is stupid

VIVIENNE: It is not R, He is only young

- Idealised (Contingent) Whiteness.
- It is not complete disagreement, rather age is used to forgive him for any deviance.

~~PAUL: They are trying to play to the occasion and yet they are doing nothing.~~

~~VIVIENNE: Just get a goal before halftime~~

PAUL: Oh, put your shirt on. Oh god. It's not that hot

- Nudity displeasing. Prudence – Imperial Imaginaries.

PAUL: And he has died his hair

- Idealised (Contingent) Whiteness. Hair is again a polemic issue. Classic racialized narrative

~~**1 min no comment**~~

~~PAUL: Oh look at that many people in the box~~

~~VIVIENNE: Inaudible tactical comments~~

~~VIVIENNE: Right come on run~~

~~BARBARA: Groan~~

~~PAUL: If this game ends in a draw I'm going to be very cross~~

~~VIVIENNE: Right come on~~

~~PAUL: Oh come on~~

~~**2 min no comment**~~

~~PAUL: Is that it~~

HALF TIME