



Sites of intensity: leisure and emotions amid the necropolitics of asylum

Nicola De Martini Ugolotti & Chris Webster

To cite this article: Nicola De Martini Ugolotti & Chris Webster (2023): Sites of intensity: leisure and emotions amid the necropolitics of asylum, Leisure Studies, DOI: [10.1080/02614367.2023.2173798](https://doi.org/10.1080/02614367.2023.2173798)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/02614367.2023.2173798>



© 2023 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group.



Published online: 08 Feb 2023.



Submit your article to this journal [↗](#)




View related articles [↗](#)



View Crossmark data [↗](#)

Sites of intensity: leisure and emotions amid the necropolitics of asylum

Nicola De Martini Ugolotti ^a and Chris Webster^b

^aDepartment of Sport and Event Management, Bournemouth University, Poole, Italy; ^bPositive Action for Refugees and Asylum Seekers, Leeds, UK

ABSTRACT

This paper contributes to highlight new insights on the social and political dimensions of emotions experienced within leisure through a specific focus on the everyday lives of people seeking asylum in the UK. In doing so, we draw on and expand inter-disciplinary perspectives that have underlined how the affective intensities and (in)capacities of bodies, and the conditions through which these emerge in everyday lives, are central in the workings of power. Leisure scholars have advanced important analyses on the politics of affects and emotions at the intersection of gendered, sexual and racialised axis of difference. Yet, the relevance of these perspectives has yet to be fully explored in articulating leisure, forced migration and the (necro)politics of asylum. Drawing on two ethnographic studies with people seeking asylum and their allies in Bristol and Leeds, UK, this paper contributes to address this gap by looking at two different leisure domains, music-making and football, as sites of intensity: not just discursive or symbolic, but lived, embodied and felt domains where the gradual wounding produced by the asylum regime is both made manifest and negotiated.

ARTICLE HISTORY

Received 21 October 2022
Accepted 20 January 2023

KEYWORDS

Leisure; music-making;
football; emotions;
necropolitics; refugees

At the end of the session, some people from the music-group remain in the room to sip some more tea and exchange chatter, tips, and news. I join them as I pass around a tray with some cookies. . . It is a tense period, just after the bombing at Manchester Arena, there are concerns around increased hostility and attacks towards Muslims and all those who are seen as Brown/Black and ‘foreign’ . . . but the conversation, rolling in a *pidgin*-like flow made of simple English sentences, the odd ‘untranslatable’ term and emphatic body language quickly turns to what a space like this *does*, especially at this time. . . ‘Yes, I am afraid’ Mehdi utters ‘I don’t want to be afraid to come here, but I have fear many other times too. . . I come here, even with fear, because then I see people, I am sad, I am happy, but I sing, I make noise (laughs). . . because if you only have the fear to be taken away, to be [makes the gesture of being hit] on the street, *if you only feel that you stop feel, you are. . . you stop being human. . . If I stop feeling, no taste for anything, that is the problem. . . to become, what’s the word. . . numb! if you don’t feel in your body anymore, your body becomes just a bunch of bones. . .*’ (Ethnographic excerpt, Bristol, 3rd June 2017, emphasis added)

This paper contributes to provide novel insights on the social and political dimensions of emotions experienced within leisure through a specific focus on the everyday lives of people seeking asylum¹ in the UK. In starting this discussion, we acknowledge that explorations of the social relevance and nature of emotions are far from new nor marginal in scholarly analyses on leisure

CONTACT Nicola De Martini Ugolotti  ndemartiniugolotti@bournemouth.ac.uk  Department of Sport and Event Management, Bournemouth University, UK; Associazione Frantz Fanon, Poole, Italy

© 2023 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group.
This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>), which permits non-commercial re-use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited, and is not altered, transformed, or built upon in any way.

practices and domains. Elias and Dunning's examination of the centrality of leisure in providing 'a controlled and enjoyable decontrolling of restraints on emotions' (1986, p. 65) in 'modern' societies has been key in the framework of figurational sociology within and beyond the domains of sport and leisure studies (see Dunning & Rojek, 1992). This theoretical standpoint has also been the object of important feminist critiques highlighting among other things figurational sociology's male-centred and centring perspective regarding the connections between leisure, power, and emotions (Hargreaves, 1992). More recently, feminist-informed analyses have also advanced important discussions on the politics of affects and emotions at the intersection of gendered, sexual and racialised axis of difference (Caudwell, 2015; Rodriguez-Castro et al., 2021; Pavlidis & Fullagar, 2014). These analyses have provided significant entry points to address how emotions participate in the reproduction and negotiation of power relations that fashion actions, subjectivities, and social boundaries in and beyond leisure domains. While taking stock of these works' crucial insights and perspectives, we contend that the social and political registers of emotions have yet to be fully explored in articulating the domains of leisure, forced migration and the politics of asylum. The latter has been in part addressed by an emerging body of work that has provided phenomenological perspectives on leisure and sport across forced migration and resettlement journeys (Collison & De Martini Ugolotti, 2022; Aboali, 2022), explored the relevance of emotions while supporting people seeking asylum (Doidge & Sandri, 2019) or conducting research with refugee youth (Evers, 2010). Yet, our focus in this study specifically concerns on a theorisation of the social and political dimensions of emotions amid lives shaped by the 'bureaucratic violence, and compassionate repression' (Beneduce, 2015, p. 560) of asylum regimes.

In doing so, we draw on two ethnographic studies with people seeking asylum and their allies in Bristol and Leeds, UK² (see De Martini Ugolotti, 2022; Webster & Abunaama, 2022; Webster, 2022). Through the focus and discussion advanced in this paper, we make two related contributions to interdisciplinary studies on leisure, emotions and forced migration. Firstly, we foreground the register of emotions as crucial to address the everyday, lived politics of asylum in which hope and despair, movement and immobility, suffering and laughter can literally rub against each other. As we elaborate later in this paper, we contend that this perspective can complicate the binaries that inform 'deficit' and 'strength' approaches employed in sport and leisure interventions with people seeking asylum. Relatedly, we contend that a focus on the nexus between leisure, emotions and the politics of asylum offers a unique perspective on forms of 'lateral and anti-hierarchical' (Rozakou, 2016, p. 188) practices of care and solidarity that are (and can be) enacted through leisure with and by people seeking sanctuary. Consequently, we argue that this focus can contribute to critically interrogate established canons of citizen/denizen and host/refugee relationships and *expand* understandings of existing, yet often (in)visible negotiations of dehumanising asylum policies (see also De Martini Ugolotti, 2022; Webster, 2022; De Martini Ugolotti & Caudwell, 2022; Saunders & Al-Om, 2022).

In advancing this discussion, we first offer an overview of the policy framework regulating asylum in Britain to then advance our theoretical engagement with the register of emotions and its relevance in looking at the nexus of leisure, forced migration and asylum politics. We then turn to address the methodological elements of our research before addressing the data, the paper's main arguments, and their contribution for scholarly, advocacy and practitioners' work across the domains of leisure, sanctuary and forced migration.

Dehumanisation-by-policy: necropolitics and the slow violence of the British asylum system

The backdrop of the studies that inform this paper is the policy-defined liminality (Hynes, 2011) imposed on those seeking sanctuary in Britain by the mechanisms of the British asylum system. The present iteration of this framework represents the intensification of a decade of hostile policies towards people on the move and seeking asylum (Ibrahim & Howarth, 2018; Saunders & Al-Om,

2022). Yet, it is also rooted in a longer-lasting discourse about ‘false’ or ‘bogus’ refugees trying to abuse the system; a discourse that emerged across the Global North as the number of asylum applications increased worldwide in the last four decades due to changing geopolitical and structural scenarios (Mountz, 2020). This discursive frame contributed to the cross-national ‘fast policy transfer’ of what Mountz called ‘best practices of exclusion’ (2020, xvi), policies and laws that prevent people from arriving, making asylum claims or receiving adequate support while waiting for the outcome of an application. To address the intensification of asylum management processes aimed at the ‘containment of Third World persons beyond the First World’ (Achiume, 2019, p. 1515), migration scholars have recently engaged with Achille Mbembe’s work on necropolitics.

Expanding Foucault’s work on biopolitics (2007, p. 1978) and Agamben’s notion of ‘bare life’³ (1998), Mbembe (2003) introduced necropolitics to address the hierarchies of life-worth that emerged from the spaces of the colony (e.g. the plantations system, the colonial city,⁴ etc.). The concept also addressed the more Eurocentric theorisations of Agamben (1998) and Foucault (2007p. 1978) by putting colonial conceptualisations around ‘race’ at the centre of the processes of *differential vulnerability* that constitute ‘means of governing people’ (Lorenzini, 2021, p. 44) in (post)colonial contexts. In this sense, despite the prefix ‘necro’, necropolitics applies outside of outright death, but rather through the capacity to define ‘who matters and who does not, who is disposable and who is not’ (Mbembe, 2003, p. 27). The concept thus illuminates how social and political structures can ensure that specific populations are ‘kept alive, but in a state of injury’ (Mbembe, 2003, p. 21). Recent discussions have highlighted how the explanatory power of necropolitics can illuminate the rationalities of contemporary migration policies (Davies, Iskajee and Djesi, 2017; Mayblin, 2017, Mayblin, 2020). In this sense, Davies, Iskajee and Dhesi (2017) discussed how the squalor and relentless wounding of the Calais camp in France can be likened to Mbembe’s (2003, p. 40) ‘death-worlds’. The Calais camp constituting one of the many sites where the *violent inaction* of the state imposes harm and indignity as ‘long-term *cruel* conditions’ (Davies, Iskajee and Dhesi, 2017, p. 1280, emphasis added).

In her work on asylum policies in Britain, Mayblin (2020) articulated the notion of necropolitics (Mbembe, 2003) with that of slow violence (Nixon, 2011) to illuminate the gradual, mundane, and attritional harm done by laws that are ostensibly in place to uphold Britain’s human rights obligations to those seeking asylum. Through this framework, the author addressed an increasing public and political consensus that considers conditions of destitution, hunger, and endangerment tolerable for people seeking asylum who have been inherently associated to the racialised figure of the “undeserving poor” (Shilliam, 2018) abusing the ‘benevolence’ of the British state. Mayblin’s (2020) work illuminates how the harmful ‘ordinary’ practices and processes that lie at the centre of asylum policy in the UK operate to make refugees ‘docile through pain’ (p. 14), as they endure, among other things, purposeful impoverishment, sub-standard housing, and restricted access to health and education resources. These analyses have also illuminated how the manipulation of time (e.g. *delayed* responses to asylum, resettlement and family reunification applications, *sudden* changes in legal status and support, *indefinite* detention) is actively pursued by state and state-sponsored institutions as a ‘major instrument of deterrence’ and control (Andersson, 2014; Cwerner, 2004, p. 85) aimed at people seeking asylum.

Yet, scholars have also highlighted how people seeking sanctuary are not just passive victims of dehumanising asylum and border policies, and research has underlined forced migrants’ political activism and campaigning to reclaim rights and dignity (Nyers & Rygiel, 2012; Ataç, Rygiel & Stierl, 2016). Expanding these analyses, some authors have called for research that engage with refugees’ mundane experiences and negotiations of asylum politics and pointed to the relevance of the ‘everyday solidarities, connections, and presences’ (Darling, 2013, p. 1797) that refugees and their allies enact in often unremarkable ways during migration and resettlement journeys. Within this body of research, analyses of grass-roots groups’ engagement with ‘lateral and anti-hierarchical’ forms of solidarity (Rozakou, 2016, p. 188) with refugees have recently addressed the co-creation of leisure (McGee & Pelham, 2018; Schmidt & Palutan, 2021; Stone, 2018, 2021; De Martini Ugolotti,

2022; Webster & Abunaama, 2022; Webster, 2022). Such emerging research focus turned the attention of forced migration debates beyond the established frameworks of humanitarian work and organised political action in exploring the potentialities and ambivalences of the ‘political production of sociality’ (Rozakou, 2016, p. 187) enacted through mundane encounters with refugees (Sandri, 2018). Overall, critical migration scholars importantly highlighted how the necropolitical (slow) violence of asylum policies pervasively materialise across refugees’ everyday contexts and interactions. Building on and expanding these analyses, in this paper we explore how leisure domains, embodied intensities and affective registers can become sites of inscription *and* negotiation of these ‘ordinary’ and harmful processes.

Leisure and the affective politics of asylum

In addressing the issues outlined above, we build on an inter-disciplinary scholarship that highlighted how the affective intensities and (in)capacities of bodies, and the conditions through which these emerge, are central in the workings of power (Ahmed, 2004; Anderson, 2017; Dawney, 2013; Pavlidis & Fullagar, 2014; Anderson, 2016, Salih, 2017). As these contributions have underlined, understanding how we move, and are moved by affective states that are mediated through our socio-cultural and material environments is crucial to make visible the power relations that emerge through deeply embodied feelings such as fear, shame, despair, joy, and pleasure. Exploring the domains of emotions thus constitutes a means to address how subjectivities are shaped by and embroiled in the discursive, affective, and material realities (e.g. objects, places, bodies, sounds etc.) which surround them (Dawney, 2013; De Martini Ugolotti, 2022). Relatedly, authors have discussed the domains of the physical and the affective as ‘primary to processes of government’ (Anderson, 2017, p. 503). These works have illuminated how governmental institutions operate through complex weavings of material and immaterial elements (e.g. letters and paperwork; the looming threat of detention and deportation) that infiltrate and saturate regions of thought, feelings, and action (see Darling, 2014). It is in such encounters with things and emotional states that these authors highlighted how the state is both ‘embodied’ (Mountz, 2004) and produced as an effect amid lives lived in asylum systems. In this paper, we articulate discussions on the necropolitical procedures of migration management outlined in the previous section with an analysis of what we have called the ‘affective politics of asylum’, as “the discursive and material production of refugees’ subjectivities enacted through the ‘ordinary’ materialisation of patterns of fear, hope, despair, uncertainty and (im)mobility” (De Martini Ugolotti, 2022, p. 100). In doing this, we draw on Dawney’s exploration of the mundane encounters “that illuminate and interrogate the political, material and affective constitution of ‘ordinary’ realities and ‘modes of experience’ (2013, p. 629). Expanding Dawney’s focus on mundane encounters in tourist sites, we conceptualise leisure domains as *sites of intensity* through which ‘feelings, textures and resonances emerge [as] tied into relations of force and productive power’ (2013, p. 635) amid lives lived in asylum systems. Through this perspective, we address the intimate reach of the (neco)politics of asylum in shaping forced migrants’ bodies and lives, and their temporary, but productive interruptions that emerged *as and through* embodied and affective registers in leisure domains. In other words, whereas necropolitics illuminates the ‘tactile and sensorial’ domains through which ‘populations are subjected to life conditions conferring them the status of *living dead*’ (Mbembe, 2003, p. 34 and 40), our focus engages with the embodied and affective registers that can both reveal and temporarily, yet productively disrupt these configurations of power.

This perspective enables us to address how and to what extent leisure spaces and practices constitute sites where forced migrants and their allies can *attempt to think, live, and feel* beyond the human hierarchies, categories, and (neco)politics of asylum. We contend that this focus can expand our understanding of the everyday, often unnoticed struggles that take place in negotiating refugees’ marginalisation, and dehumanisation-by-policy.

Consequently, through a focus on the lived, felt, and embodied, we address leisure and emotions as domains that cannot be reduced to ‘deficit’ narratives of trauma, loss, and victimisation or to ‘strength-based’ approaches focused on refugees’ resilience and contributions to ‘host societies’.

As Spaaij and colleagues (2019) discussed, deficit-approaches have characterised most analyses and interventions regarding sport, leisure and forced migration. These approaches have been critiqued for employing leisure and sport with premises and aims (e.g. psycho-social benefits; health promotion; skills acquisition) that reproduced homogeneous understandings of people seeking asylum as a ‘kind of person’ and as passive beneficiaries of inclusion (see De Martini Ugolotti & Caudwell, 2022). Strength-based approaches aim instead to showcase and foster refugees’ diverse skills, self-direction, and resilience as capacities often deemed to be fundamental to achieve ‘integration and empowerment’ (Whitley et al., 2016, p. 177). Yet, they have also been critiqued for failing to acknowledge ever-so-popular policy and public narratives that increasingly expect refugees to be self-reliant and pro-active in contributing to host societies, even within increasingly restrictive welfare regimes and asylum policies (Kataria & De Martini Ugolotti, 2022).

Addressing the politics of emotions in leisure domains can thus complicate public and academic analyses (in and beyond leisure/sport studies) that have tended to address refugees’ lives through the binaries of trauma *or* extra-ordinary achievements, speechlessness, *or* political and social participation (Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, 2020; De Martini Ugolotti & Caudwell, 2022). The focus we explore here highlights instead the complex, blurred, ambivalent affective registers that exceed these two parallel forms of understanding issues of forced migration; two types of *loops* (McKittrick, 2016) involved in shaping forms of knowledge and intervention around the topic that each generates their own forms of concealing and silencing.

By providing an in-depth engagement with the intensities and affordances of emotions in grassroots leisure spaces, this paper thus provides a dual contribution to scholarly analysis on leisure, emotions and (forced) migration, and more widely to perspectives discussing refugees’ everyday lives, relationalities, and negotiations of contemporary asylum regimes.

Ethnographies of (slow) violence and solidarity

This article draws on two sets of ethnographic studies conducted in the cities of Bristol and Leeds, United Kingdom, between 2017 and 2020. Bristol and Leeds are two post-industrial, mid-sized cities located in the South-West (Bristol) and the North (Leeds) of England. Both cities are part of the British Home Office dispersal programme for people seeking asylum⁵ and host solidarity initiatives for refugees as part of the City of Sanctuary movement (Darling, 2013).

Within these contexts, Nicola’s research engaged for 18 months between 2017 and 2018 with a weekly recreational music-group that was formed in 2016 by a group of refugees and two British musicians in Bristol. The group was co-led by refugees and the professional musicians with no other aim than to co-create a social opportunity for people seeking asylum and other urban residents based around playing, learning and/or sharing music.⁶ Among the sixty participants who animated the group overall (with many having no experience of playing musical instruments) about 50 were refugees who had been in the UK from weeks and months to twelve years. Overall, 27 of the participants were women and 33 men, aged 18–55 and coming from 16 countries.

Chris’ research was the result of a three-year long engagement (2018–2020) with the activities of the ‘Football for All’ (FFA) initiative, which he contributed to found through the Yorkshire St. Pauli (YSP) football fan club in Leeds. Both the fan club and the initiative enacted anti-discriminatory politics, in particular the ethos that ‘no person is illegal’ and ‘refugees are welcome’. Through outreach work in the local community, the FFA sessions explicitly aimed to engage with refugees and people seeking asylum but were also open to anyone who wanted to play football in a relaxed, fun, and uncompetitive environment. As a result, the sessions were frequently attended by upwards of thirty people (majority men and some ‘native’ women) on a weekly basis, of which approximately half had direct experience of forced migration.

While conducted independently, both our research projects implied a direct engagement in the leisure practices and spaces we participated and contributed to shape. These included a deep ‘hanging out’ with some of the groups’ participants, which often extended to home visits, cooking and sharing food and social events. In doing this, we methodologically considered how our own position as White-British/European, male academics influenced our observations and engagement with the participants and related to our own experience and responses to the emotional registers that surfaced in the groups. At the same time, the specificities of each context and leisure domain implied that we addressed differently issues of positionality, reflexivity, and our role in each group. In Bristol, taking part in the music group highlighted the multiple positionings that Nicola simultaneously occupied in it. Moments of shared sociality, interaction, and complicity clearly did not overcome the asymmetries in power and privilege that marked X’s encounters with many of the group participants. Rather, they overlapped, blurred, and complicated them, requiring a self-reflexive work on how differences, commonalities, and the space between them emerged and were negotiated in the research encounter. This self-reflexive endeavour influenced Nicola’s methodology in two main ways. Firstly, starting from the premise that ‘sharing knowledge [...] requires a long-term commitment’ (Tuhiwai-Smith, 2012, p. 16), his presence in the group focused on making time to be with the group rather trying to ‘elicit data’ or ‘recruit participants’. Secondly, he also turned to what his body did and felt to facilitate a theoretically driven, visceral analysis of “what [was], and what [was] not, ‘happening’ (Fine, 1994, p. 72) in the group. He then addressed these corporeal and affective experiences in informal conversations and interviews with the other participants to attend to the ‘more than what [was] said’ (Longhurst, Ho, and Johnston 2008, p. 215) in and about the group.

In Leeds, Chris’ methodological approach sought to acknowledge and develop his existing friendships with the participants of the study. Instead of pursuing an emotional separation between the researcher and their participants to achieve a supposed ‘impartiality’, Chris sought to acknowledge and nurture his existing friendships as a meaningful and ethical form of knowledge generation. For Chris, the horizontal nature of friendships centred on emotional connections enabled knowledge to flow on a fluid and equitable manner that partially repositioned the participants as co-researchers rather than research subjects. Similarly, to Owton and Allen-Collinson (2014), Chris’ approach did not claim to overcome the power imbalances associated with social research through a methodology of friendship, and recognised that whilst friendships are horizontal in nature, they are still situated in and (re)shaped by oppressive societal structures. In Chris’ case, his position as a white British citizen privileged him with economic and social capital not afforded to his friends on the sharp end of the UK’s hostile environment immigration policy. In recognition of the limitations of friendship in contesting and overcoming entrenched power relations, Chris aimed to stand in solidarity with his friends in their pursuit of right-to-remain in the UK. The emotions associated with friendship and solidarity (pleasure, anger, joy, sadness, etc.) were fundamental to understanding and making sense of the social world shared by Chris and the participants (Hubbard et al., 2001).

Across different ways of addressing and navigating our positionalities and privileges, our ethnographic presence in the groups and our writing were nevertheless embedded in a series of sites and practices of relationality (playing, cooking, eating, walking, and moving with others) where ‘humour, silence, news, concerns, pain, knowledge, ideas, and arguments [were] disseminated’ (Gaudet, 2018, p. 53) and guided the research process. Across both studies, semi-structured interviews (8 in Bristol, 9 in Leeds) were also conducted with participants who expressed their interest in the research and in voicing their experiences of the group.

Despite the evident differences between music-making and football, this study highlights the shared elements and experiences that emerged from these leisure domains in relation to everyday lives lived in the asylum system. These different leisure spaces and practices also highlighted the complexity and diversity of leisure experiences and uneven access to them across intersecting lines of exclusion (Mohammadi, 2022; De Martini Ugolotti, 2022; Webster & Abunaama, 2022).

Following these considerations, this study does not aim to offer ‘universal’ claims about the tensions and potentialities of leisure in contexts of forced migration. Nevertheless, we offer a situated standpoint that in privileging the experiences, relationalities and negotiations of people seeking asylum in the leisure contexts that we participated, provides a unique contribution to current analyses at the intersection of studies of leisure, emotions and forced migration. Across the paper, some participants’ names and minor details of their accounts have been modified to protect their privacy and anonymity. We have also used the real names of participants who explicitly wanted to ‘own’ their accounts and stories face the readers (see Back & Sinha, 2018).

Leisure and the multiple intensities of time and waiting

It’s a warm mid-May afternoon and Abdi, whom I just met for the research not far from where the music group meets in St Paul’s, wants to show me a place. We walk few minutes to a small and circular grassed area with big trees, one of the few in the densely built neighbourhood, and he sits on a bench, ‘this is where I spend most of my time when I am not at home’ he says tapping the bench with his hand. ‘I come here to spend my time . . . and wait’ and adds ‘we refugees always wait’. Although he received refugee status few months ago, the waiting for Abdi has not finished and it is now related to the long, convoluted, and costly procedures related to obtaining family reunification for his wife, who is still in Sudan. As we talk, I ask him if sitting here somehow made possible for him to know or exchange a few words with other people attending the park, but he replies ‘no one talks to me, I am invisible maybe . . .’ he adds with a bitter smile, ‘I come here because you can sit and you do not pay, you know, I come here and wait, same as home, different place . . .’; then, he suddenly adds ‘on the Thursday *it is different to sit here* . . . I come here before the music group start and I feel happy, I do not think about stress, I feel good about who I am going to meet, what we going to do, I feel good and sometimes smile and laugh by myself thinking at funny things that we do, it is good to sit and *wait for that*’ (Ethnographic excerpt Bristol, May 2018, emphasis added)

A key site and tool of public urban life, the bench has been discussed in the literature addressing urban conviviality and migration as a mundane but significant place where urban dwellers can shape experiences of self-care, sociality and belonging in public space (Rishbeth & Rogaly, 2018; Back & Sinha, 2018). Yet, talking and sitting with Abdi did not shed much light on aspects of urban conviviality. Instead, it offered access to the overlapping emotional intensities (isolation, loneliness, boredom, but also anticipation and even fleeting happiness) that he experienced while sitting there for days on end while living in Bristol. In this sense, the bench as a place, an object, and a symbol of Abdi’s experience of the city, shaped and contributed to make tangible his experience of time and waiting through multiple intensities. Abdi’s experience of sitting on a bench spoke to the ‘active usurpation of time for the purposes of migration control’ (Andersson, 2014, p. 796) but also of the mundane practices, such as the music group, that somehow ‘breathe[d] life into mortified time’ (Back & Sinha, 2018, p. 89). In a similar way, Mazen spoke to how the football sessions redefined to some extent his experience of waiting as an asylum seeker in Leeds:

I wanted to work, I wanted to help my family, I wanted to study and continue my study, but I was just waiting [. . .] If you have nothing to do, like absolutely nothing, you are just waiting for Monday to go pick up your money and to buy your food. So, it there is something going on Sunday, like something you like, like football, *you can’t wait for it* (Mazen, Leeds, emphasis added)

In their ethnography of grassroot solidarity initiatives enacted in informal refugee camps in Rome, Italy, Schmidt and Palutan (2021) drew on Janeja and Bandak’s (2020) distinction between *waiting for* and *waiting to* when addressing the relevance of leisure in forced migrants’ experiences of time within asylum systems. Following Schmidt and Palutan (2021), while the former captures the indefinite suspension and dead time of lives living the limbo of asylum procedures, the latter sheds light on the lively dimensions that time can acquire through engagement in leisure practices (as well as political activism) even within structural and institutional conditions *that compel people*

to wait. Expanding these perspectives, Abdi and Mazen's excerpts underlined the centrality of the emotional intensities experienced through leisure amid conditions in which waiting becomes 'a form of life' (Janeja & Bandak, 2020, p. 2). The accounts underlined how the affective intensities surfacing during the participants' leisure spilled over the spatial and temporal boundaries of these groups, contributing to shape the participants' relationships with(in) the 'temporal straitjacket' (Back & Sinha, 2018) restraining them. The excerpts underlined how the emotional intensities experienced through leisure were central in the participants' attempts to make waiting *an act* (Khosravi, 2014) as they struggled to make the trapped conditions of their present *habitable*. In this sense, while research have mostly addressed the relevance of leisure in relation to improving mental health, enhancing social capital and skills acquisition, or showcasing refugees' contributions to 'host' societies, the participants' accounts enabled us to explore and address the significance of their engagement with leisure from a different perspective.

This perspective highlighted how the participants' engagement with leisure enabled them the possibility to *both inhabit and unsettle* experiences of indefinite suspension that are part of necropolitical procedures administered on people seeking asylum. Among the unexpected affordances crafted through co-created leisure domains, several participants also voiced how important was for them to be able to shape 'mundane' relationships of care and reciprocity beside those experienced as people seeking asylum in Britain. It is to these aspects that we turn in the next section to explore further the political and social relevance of the emotions emerging in and through leisure.

Leisure and/as domain of care beyond humanitarian hierarchies

As in few other occasions, today most of the people in the group were keener to listen and share music rather than playing instruments to start with. After a couple of songs proposed by others, Maryam asked to play and chose from YouTube a ballad-like tune featuring a duet between a male and female voice. Most of us interpreted this as a romantic love song, but when it ended, Maryam explained that the song (from a famous Bollywood movie) is about a daughter and her father. As she went to explain what the characters said to each other in the song, Maryam's voice broke, she started to cry and hid her face in her hands, her body shaking. Her partner looked very concerned and went to console Maryam, but he seemed too in difficulty; By the time I had merely just taken in the scene, Sheena, Sukry and Taban had already got up from their seats and got close to Maryam, careful in giving her space but almost shielding her from the rest of the group. They stayed there for a few minutes, talking to her as they enveloped her with their bodies and voices. After few more minutes, Maryam raised her head, she had stopped crying and said 'sorry, I . . .', Mohamed, who was sitting beside me opposite to her, uttered, 'It's all right, we know . . .', Maryam looked with a smile at Sheena, Sukry and Taban who were still by her side, and Sukry shouted, 'take the drums! Let's play some music' to which Maryam added 'yes, let's do Hassan's song, let's play that . . .' giving another look and another tentative smile at the three women by her side (Ethnographic excerpt Bristol, May 2017)

In her work on the politics of emotions, Sara Ahmed (2004) challenged framings of emotions as a private matter coming from individuals' 'within', arguing instead that affective responses play a crucial role in the surfacing of individual and collective subjectivities. While Ahmed's work did not specifically focus on contexts and experiences of forced migration, her arguments significantly reflected the experiences and accounts of participants in which emotions emerged 'from the thickness of sociality itself' (Ahmed, 2004, p. 28); in this case, a sociality where often the entanglements of personal trajectories, wider political histories and forms of violence transpired. Few months after the session described in the excerpt, Maryam, who hailed from India and had by then received her refugee status after 3 years wait, returned at the events described above:

‘That day for example, I just wanted to talk about my father . . . at that time, it was all like, all mixed together . . . all this situation you live as asylum seeker, it feels like you don’t exist in this world, if I give you my example, my family doesn’t want me, this country did not want me, as I was fighting my asylum, the asylum process they say “go back to your country, go back to your country”, I was telling to the psychiatrists “no one wants me, my family disowned me and this country don’t accept me” and it’s really hard always to explain to other people, so you are fighting your battle with the home office, is very hard, and in that time you are tired of always explaining everything, and the responses are medicines, or suspect . . . you need to feel like you are wanted, you are welcome somewhere, to be able to let the guard down, feel the good things, but also the bad things . . . that day, I felt I could . . . take it outside of my chest . . . and my, my sisters really . . . they made me feel for the first time here, it’s all right, your pain is our pain, we’ll carry it for you for a bit . . .’ (Maryam, interview, Bristol)

Recent research, including our own, highlighted how addressing pleasure and fun in refugee leisure and sport spaces can challenge paternalistic narratives and even temporarily disrupt the consequences of dehumanising asylum policies (De Martini Ugolotti, 2022; Webster, 2022; Koopmans & Doidge, 2022). Yet, the ethnographic excerpt and Maryam’s account vividly reminded how joy and pain, suffering and care often threaded and overlapped in the groups. In the football group in Leeds, the benches outside the pitch were often a site of laughter and joviality before and after the football sessions and for many provided precious moments of respite from daily experiences of boredom and concerns about family and friends. However, the football group did not constitute a space where anxiety and suffering would be simply erased:

I saw Yahya leaving the pitch to sit on the picnic benches outside. I leaned through the netting on the side to ask what was going on. Short on breath, explained that he was worried for his wife in Sudan. I left the pitch and sat next to him on the bench as he began to cry. As I put my arm around him, he explained that his wife had applied for a reunion visa to join him in the UK. He had received an email saying that her exit-visa was ready to collect, but upon arrival [at the consulate] she was told that it had not arrived. He then showed me his phone and said that she wasn’t messaging him back and he was now worried for her safety. In a state of shared anxiety, we sat together on the picnic table for the next 15 minutes whilst Yahya nervously watched his phone waiting for a call from his wife. To our mutual relief, she eventually called.

(Ethnographic excerpt, Leeds, 3rd March 2019)

As Brankamp (2022) suggested, the blended emotional registers that emerge within spaces and trajectories of forced migration are not easily reconcilable or representable and have often eluded more detailed analysis in scholarship on the topic. Nevertheless, we contend that focusing on these blurred emotional registers also highlights important domains that complement and complicate understandings of leisure in contexts of forced migration. For instance, the accounts above did not suggest that Maryam and Yahya’s engagement with the music and football groups ‘healed’ them or helped them to ‘bounce back’ from their suffering. Rather, their engagement with different leisure domains seemed to enable them to inhabit and literally *breath through* with others their ordinary experiences of suspension, destitution, marginality, and precariousness, while also shaping shared experiences of belonging and solidarity *through them*. In this sense, registering in both leisure groups ‘an emotional landscape full of entanglements’ (Rosen & Crafter, 2020, p. 235) – including tensions, suffering, joy, and feelings of connectedness –, the accounts above and countless interactions highlighted the physical and emotional care labour done by the groups participants, many of whom, as people seeking asylum, were often assumed, and positioned to be mostly (passive) beneficiaries of care (Darling, 2011). Discussing the creation of an informal women centre in the refugee camp of Calais, Rosen and Crafter (2020) observed how ‘the women, who came from a diverse set of cultural and religious background, began to bond with each other through a shared ecology of emotion’ (p. 233). This ‘shared ecology of emotion’ was facilitated in the informal women’s space of the Calais camp by the sharing of painful stories and experiences, *together with* care and leisure practices, such as drinking tea and chatting, and/or giving each other massages. In the music and football groups, the participants’ accounts highlighted the complexity and diversity of leisure experiences and the different forms of sociality and (gendered) solidarity that emerged from them (see Mohammadi, 2022). Yet, the participants in Bristol and Leeds also often described how the music and football groups *felt* different from other ‘ordinary’ spaces and encounters that

characterised their lives⁷ (e.g. free-food and clothing distribution centres). That is, the groups' self-organised structures and lack of any aim beyond socialising reminded them, as Bilal put it, that 'they were not just refugees' and made irrelevant distinctions between citizen/denizen, host/guest, 'service providers' and 'users' that often characterise 'spaces of care' for refugees (Darling, 2011; Berg & Fiddian-Qasimiyeh, 2018; De Martini Ugolotti, 2022). Here again, a focus on the emotions emerging in the leisure groups enabled us to address 'what goes unnoticed' (Salih, 2017, p. 743) when thinking about the forms of negotiation of the slow violence of asylum regime *and* of the subtle but powerful asymmetries of humanitarian practices (Darling, 2011). Focusing on the embodied and felt registers of emotions made tangible the (in)visible negotiations that the participants enacted through leisure by attempting to think and feel beyond the human hierarchies and categories of State and humanitarian interventions, *even as* these enclosed and shaped their lives. In the following section, we draw together the considerations offered so far to discuss their contribution across studies of leisure and forced migration.

Sites of intensity: on the relevance of leisure and emotions amid the necro-politics of asylum

The accounts and insights advanced in the previous sections explored how leisure domains can constitute sites where liveable lives are tentatively reshaped amid intersecting forms of (slow) violence, displacement, and dispossession. In this exploration, the data underlined the relevance of emotions 'as both sites for the operation of power and as an occasion for the emergence of social lives that are more than an effect of power' (Anderson, 2017, p. 502) amid lives lived in asylum systems. It is in this sense that we address leisure domains as *sites of intensity*, or as *lived, embodied, and felt domains* where the 'gradual wounding' (Mayblin, 2020) produced by the asylum regime is both made manifest and negotiated. We contend that addressing leisure domains as sites of intensity can advance two related contributions to interdisciplinary studies on leisure, emotions and forced migration. Firstly, it can contribute to and complicate current analyses of leisure and sport amid lives lived in asylum systems which are currently mostly understood through the distinction between 'deficit' and 'strength' approaches. The nuances, complexities, and ambivalences of the emotional registers addressed in this paper challenged understandings of people seeking asylum as traumatised, grateful, and passive objects of compassion. Yet, they also cautioned from *containing* the participants' practices within narratives of refugees' empowerment and resilience (Collison & De Martini Ugolotti, 2022). Arguably, both deficit and strength approaches fit in different ways policy discourses and priorities at the intersection of humanitarian interventions and welfare provision, by making people seeking asylum 'legible through existing humanitarian narratives that focus on victimhood and trauma, or [. . .] resilience and self-responsibility, as indicative of what public perceptions expect from "real" or "worthy" refugees' (Spaaij, Luguetti, & De Martini Ugolotti, 2022, p. 406). Instead, we contend that a focus on the complexities and affordances emerging through leisure domains co-created by refugees and their allies can complicate and open-up ways of thinking about leisure and forced migration. This paper did so by attending to how the intensities emerging from the leisure groups unsettled the ordinary experiences through which the groups' participants were 'kept alive, but in a state of injury' (Mbembe, 2003, p. 21). Relatedly, the data highlighted how these leisure spaces shaped domains of sociality and care that blurred the distinctions between guest and host, service provider and beneficiary that often implicitly structure 'spaces of care' for refugees (Darling, 2011).

Following these considerations, the second contribution of this paper addresses an emerging body of work that underlined the importance to recognise and engage with the multiple forms of negotiation of the (slow) violence of asylum regimes (McGee & Pelham, 2018; Sandri, 2018; Saunders & Al-Om, 2022). Important in this regard is Mbembe's consideration that the subjugation of life in a state injury profoundly reconfigures the sites and relations among resistance and (necro) power (2003, p. 39). Therefore, we considered the rubric of emotions here not just as a private

dimension through which leisure domains and/or the necropolitics of asylum are experienced and/or endured. The ethnographic notes and the group-participants' accounts highlighted how affective intensities were not contained within individual bodies.

They were instead shared, spilled over, and carried across bodies, spaces and temporalities, thus emerging as registers through which the 'obscene, vulgar and grotesque' (Mbembe, 1992, p.1) conditions and experiences that constituted the group-participants' ordinary realities were tentatively inhabited and unsettled.

The data thus highlighted that 'what we experience with the body and through the body is no less constitutive of political subjectivities than liberal agency to protest in public' (Salih, 2017, p. 749). Far from representing only the lived experiences of 'bodies made docile through pain' (Mayblin, 2020, p. 14), the group participants' affective intensities highlighted how their bodies' (in)capacities were constantly negotiated 'amid the ongoing (re)composition of encounters' (Anderson 2016, p. 82) that constituted their lives as people seeking asylum in Britain. We thus argue that, while not registered as sites of political contention, the everyday struggles to co-create and animate leisure/social spaces beside the confines of state and humanitarian responses to asylum can extend the domains of negotiation of the politics of asylum. This, because leisure domains and the practices, encounters and intensities that constitute them can represent sites where the 'banal' effects of necropolitical abandonment are lived, felt, but also negotiated and *tentatively exceeded*.

Ultimately, an engagement with the affective registers emerging from leisure domains does not aim to 'distract' scholars and advocates from the importance of staking political claims in forced migration debates and campaigns (e.g. on asylum seekers' right to work, housing, against detention and deportations) or providing crucial practical support to people seeking asylum. Rather, an attention to the nexus of leisure and emotions can bridge these forms of solidarity and praxis (see also Schmidt & Palutan, 2021). It can do so by highlighting how the negotiation of shame, pride, despair, excitement through the 'thickness' of leisure have specific relevance for lives lived in asylum system and inherently articulate to wider struggles for asylum rights, dignity and 'the universal right to breath' (Mbembe, 2020). In the following concluding section, we offer some final considerations on the relevance of these perspectives for scholars, advocates and practitioners working across the domains of leisure, sanctuary and forced migration advocacy.

Conclusions

Within a political context increasingly conceiving and deploying *cruelty*⁸ as an instrument of deterrence towards people seeking asylum, this paper explored the nexus of leisure and emotions as *sites of intensity* where the 'gradual wounding' (Mayblin, 2020) produced by the asylum regime is both made manifest and negotiated. Drawing on ethnographic data generated with two grassroots leisure initiatives in Bristol and Leeds, United Kingdom, this paper underlined the centrality of affective registers in the participants' partial, but meaningful redefinitions of lives-spent-waiting and in the emergence of relationalities of care that took shape beyond the canons of citizen/denizen and host/refugee relationships.

Through this focus, we drew on interdisciplinary analyses that addressed how emotions participate in the reproduction and negotiation of power relations that fashion actions, subjectivities, and social boundaries in and beyond leisure domains. This work expanded these critical interrogations by articulating them with an analysis of the nexus between leisure, forced migration and the (necro)politics of asylum.

We contend that the focus and findings discussed here can contribute the work of scholars, practitioners, advocates, and community organisers working on issues of sanctuary and forced migration (roles that in our, and especially Chris' work are explicitly overlapping). It does so by decentring the focus on binary 'deficit' and 'strength-based' readings of the nexus between leisure and forced migration and shedding light instead on the entanglement of the discursive, affective, and material elements involved in the co-creation of leisure groups with people seeking asylum: the

policy apparatus regulating the lives of many of the participants, the significance of self-managed /co-created formats, the relevance taken by the kind of spaces and support (e.g. transportation, childcare, equipment) mobilised for the sessions, and the diverse trajectories, meanings, and longings that each participant carries to these spaces. We contend that the productivity and relevance of leisure domains in contexts of forced migration cannot be understood outside of these collective entanglements. Likewise, paying attention to these entanglements critically interrogates and complicates understandings of leisure as a universal, unproblematic 'fix' to refugee issues that only apply to narrow understandings of forced migration and displacement. The analytical sensibility that we have mobilised in this work has been thus oriented towards foregrounding (forced) migrants' desires, feelings, and practices, how they are entangled with the operations of (necro)power, and how they complicate, exceed, and elude many framings of state and humanitarian responses to asylum. While illuminating the deep-reaching harms inflicted upon lives lived in the asylum system, a focus on leisure and emotions thus also offered a novel entry point to address the 'turbulence, autonomy, and stubbornness' (Mezzadra, 2016, p. 36) of those whose desire for liveable lives haunt the exclusionary politico-legal architectures of immigration and asylum. In this sense, we consider the productivity of leisure domains like the ones discussed here as allowing the emergence of (hi)stories that account for violence and loss, notice the enigmas of survival, and obstinately strive (to borrow from Raymond Williams) to make hope possible, rather than despair, or cruelty, convincing.

Notes

1. In this paper, the terms 'refugee', 'forced migrant', 'people seeking sanctuary/asylum' will be used inclusively to refer to people at all stages of the asylum process, unless when relevant to draw attention to the differences produced by the maze of the asylum system (see Lewis, 2015).
2. This work does not focus predominantly on the embodied intensities and emotions directly connected to playing music and football, as these have been discussed more specifically in our previous work on the topic (De Martini Ugoletti, 2022; Webster, 2022).
3. Foucault's notion of biopolitics (2007 [1978]) addressed the emergence from the 19th century of a governmental reason whose focus is on sustaining, controlling and ordering the life and health of a population. Within this governmental reason, a differential exposure to risks to life and health among particular groups are considered acceptable to protect the biological life of the overall population and enhance its productive capacity. Agamben's notion of "bare life" (1998) elaborated on this to underline how the production of a political order (e.g. the state) is based on the exclusion of some human beings. Those who are stripped of their legal status and rights become "bare" and expendable lives in front of the sovereign and live in physical and legal "states of exception".
4. See Fanon (1967).
5. The Home Office dispersal programme accommodates people claiming asylum on a no-choice basis across cities and towns in Britain, for an exhaustive and critical overview of the programme see Hynes (2011).
6. Despite periods of interruption, the group continued to meet as this paper was being written.
7. The participants hugely appreciated and underlined the importance of the support provided by local charities. However, while being grateful for the often-fundamental help they received, the participants also explained how charity spaces were inextricably attached to physical and emotional intensities of shame at poverty and reliance on others, stress, anxiety, humiliation, fear, isolation and sheer hunger (see "How will we survive?", British Red Cross and Refugee Survival Trust, 2021; Mayblin, 2020).
8. As pointed out during the debates on the latest Nationality and Borders bill by Lord Kerr of Kinlochard in November 2021 'Facts do not support the case for cruelty'.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

Notes on contributors

Nicola De Martini Ugolotti is Senior Lecturer in Sport and Physical Culture at Bournemouth University (United Kingdom) and a member of Associazione Frantz Fanon (Italy). Nicola's research is located at the intersection of leisure, sport, urban and migration studies. In 2022, Nicola has co-edited with Jayne Caudwell the book "Leisure and Forced Migration: Lives Lived in Asylum Systems" (2022).

Chris Webster completed his PhD at the School of Sport, Leeds Beckett University (United Kingdom) with a project on the (in)significance of grassroots football spaces in the lives of forced migrants in Leeds. Chris is the co-founder of the Football For All initiative through the Yorkshire St. Pauli Football Fan Club and is Drop-in and Volunteer coordinator at Positive Action for Refugees and Asylum Seekers (PAFRAS) in Leeds.

ORCID

Nicola De Martini Ugolotti  <http://orcid.org/0000-0001-5149-7617>

References

- Abooli, S. (2022). Exploring the somatic dimension for sport-based interventions: A refugee's autoethnography. *Sport in Society*, 25(3), 506–522. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17430437.2022.2017814>
- Achiume, E. T. (2019). Migration as decolonisation. *Stanford Law Review*, 71(6), 1509–1574.
- Agamben, G. (1998). *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*. Redwood: Stanford University Press.
- Ahmed, S. (2004). Collective feelings: Or, the impressions left by others. *Theory, Culture & Society*, 21(2), 25–42. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0263276404042133>
- Anderson, B. (2016). *Encountering affect: Capacities, apparatuses, conditions*. London: Routledge.
- Anderson, B. (2017). Cultural geography I: Intensities and forms of power. *Progress in Human Geography*, 41(4), 501–511. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0309132516649491>
- Andersson, R. (2014). Time and the migrant other: European border controls and the temporal economics of illegality. *American Anthropologist*, 116(4), 795–809. <https://doi.org/10.1111/aman.12148>
- Atac, I., Rygiel, K., & Stierl, M. (2016). Introduction: The contentious politics of refugee and migrant protest and solidarity movements: Remaking citizenship from the margins. *Citizenship Studies*, 20(5), 527–544.
- Back, L., & Sinha, S. with Bryan, C., Baraku, V. and Yembi, M. (2018). *Migrant city*. Routledge.
- Beneduce, R. (2015). The moral economy of lying: Subject-craft, narrative capital, and uncertainty in the politics of asylum. *Medical Anthropology*, 34(6), 551–571. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01459740.2015.1074576>
- Berg, M.L., & Fiddian-Qasimiyeh, E. (2018). Introduction to the Issue: Encountering Hospitality and Hostility. *Migration and Society*, 1(1), 1–6.
- Brankamp, H. (2022). Feeling the camp: Affectual research, bodies, and suspicion. *Area*, 54(3), 383–391. <https://doi.org/10.1111/area.12739>
- Caudwell, J. (2015). 'Feeling blue': The ordinary pleasures of mundane motion. *Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise and Health*, 7(3), 309–320. <https://doi.org/10.1080/2159676X.2014.935462>
- Collison, C., & De Martini Ugolotti, N. (2022). Pain, Faith and Yoga: An intersectional-phenomenological perspective on Syrian Muslim women's experiences of resettlement in Sweden. In De Martini Ugolotti, N., & Caudwell, J. (Eds.), *Leisure and Forced Migration: Lives Lived in Asylum Systems* (pp. 121–138). London: Routledge.
- Cwerner, S. B. (2004). Faster, faster and faster: The time politics of asylum in the UK. *Time & Society*, 13(1), 71–88. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0961463X04040747>
- Darling, J. (2011). Giving space: Care, generosity and belonging in a UK asylum drop-in centre. *Geoforum*, 42(4), 408–417. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.geoforum.2011.02.004>
- Darling, J. (2013). Moral urbanism, asylum, and the politics of critique. *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space*, 45(8), 1785–1801. <https://doi.org/10.1068/a45441>
- Darling, J. (2014). Another letter from the home office: Reading the material politics of asylum. *Environment and Planning D, Society & Space*, 32(3), 484–500. <https://doi.org/10.1068/d13067p>
- Davies, T., Isakjee, A., & Dhesi, S. (2017). Violent Inaction: The Necropolitical Experience of Refugees in Europe. *Antipode*, 49(5), 1263–1284.
- Dawney, L. (2013). The interruption: Investigating subjectivation and affect. *Environment and Planning D, Society & Space*, 31, 628–644. <https://doi.org/10.1068/d9712>
- De Martini Ugolotti, N. (2022). Music Making and Forced Migrants' Affective Practices of Diasporic Belonging. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 48(1), 92–109.
- De Martini Ugolotti, N., & Caudwell, J. (Eds.). (2022). *Leisure and Forced Migration: Lives Lived in Asylum Systems*. London: Routledge.

- Doidge, M., & Sandri, E. (2019). 'Friends that last a lifetime': The importance of emotions amongst volunteers working with refugees in Calais. *The British Journal of Sociology*, 70(2), 463–480. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-4446.12484>
- Dunning, E., & Rojek, C. (1992). *Sport and leisure in the civilizing process: Critique and counter-critique*. Palgrave MacMillan.
- Elias, N., & Dunning, E. (1986). *The quest for excitement: Sport and leisure in the civilising process*. Blackwell.
- Evers, C. (2010). Intimacy, sport and young refugee men. *Emotions Space and Society*, 3(1), 56–61. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.emospa.2010.01.011>
- Fanon, F. (1967). *The Wretched of the Earth*. London: Penguin Books.
- Fiddian-Qasmieh, E. (2020). *Refuge in a moving world: Tracing refugee and migrant journeys across disciplines*. UCL Press.
- Fine, M. (1994). Working the hyphen: Reinventing self and other in qualitative research. In Denzin, Y.K. & Y.S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 70–82). Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Foucault, M. (2007). *Security, Territory, Population: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1977–78*. New York: Palgrave-MacMillan.
- Gaudet, J. C. (2018). Keeoukaywin: The visiting way—fostering an indigenous research methodology. *Aboriginal Policy Studies*, 7(2), 47–64. <https://doi.org/10.5663/aps.v7i2.29336>
- Hargreaves, J. (1992). Sex, gender and the body in sport and leisure: Has there been a civilizing process? In E. Dunning & C. Rojek (Eds.), *Sport and Leisure in the Civilizing Process: Critique and Counter-Critique* (pp. 161–182). Palgrave MacMillan.
- Hubbard, G., Backett-Milburn, K., & Kemmer, D. (2001). Working with emotion: Issues for the researcher in fieldwork and teamwork. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 4(2), 119–137. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13645570116992>
- Hynes, P. (2011). *The dispersal and social exclusion of asylum seekers: Between liminality and belonging*. University of Bristol Policy Press.
- Ibrahim, Y., & Howarth, A. (2018). Review of humanitarian refuge in the United Kingdom: Sanctuary, asylum, and the refugee crisis. *Politics & Policy*, 46(3), 348–391. <https://doi.org/10.1111/polp.12254>
- Janeja, M. K., & Bandak, A. (2020). *Ethnographies of waiting: Doubt, hope and uncertainty*. Bloomsbury Academic.
- Kataria, M., & De Martini Ugoletti, N. (2022). Running for Inclusion: responsibility, (un)deservingness and the spectacle of integration in a sport-for-refugees intervention in Geneva, Switzerland. *Sport in Society: Cultures, Commerce, Media, Politics*, 25(3), 602–618.
- Khosravi, S. (2014). Waiting. In B. Anderson & M. Keith (Eds.), *Migration: A COMPAS anthology* (pp. 66–67). COMPAS.
- Koopmans, B., & Doidge, M. (2022). "They play together, they laugh together": Sport, play and fun in refugee sport projects. *Sport in Society*, 25(3), 537–550. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17430437.2022.2017816>
- Lewis, H. (2015). Music, dancing and clothing as belonging and freedom among people seeking asylum in the UK. *Leisure Studies*, 34(1), 42–58. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02614367.2014.966744>
- Longhurst, L., Ho, L., & Johnston, L. (2008). Using the body as an instrument of research: Kimchi and Pavlova. *Area*, 40(2), 208–217.
- Lorenzini, D. (2021). Biopolitics in the time of coronavirus. *Critical Inquiry*, 47(2), 40–45.
- Mayblin, L. (2017). *Asylum after empire: Colonial legacies in the politics of asylum seeking*. London: Rowman and Littlefield International.
- Mayblin, L. (2020). *Asylum and impoverishment: Social policy as slow-violence*. Routledge.
- Mbembe, A. (1992). The banality of power and the aesthetics of vulgarity in the postcolony. *Public Culture*, 4(2), 1–30.
- Mbembe, A. (2003). Necropolitics. *Public Culture*, 15(1), 11–40. <https://doi.org/10.1215/08992363-15-1-11>
- Mbembe, A. (2020). The universal right to breathe. *Critical Inquiry*. Available at <https://critinq.wordpress.com/>
- McGee, D., & Pelham, J. (2018). Politics at play: Locating human rights, refugees and grassroots humanitarianism in the Calais jungle. *Leisure Studies*, 37(1), 22–35. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02614367.2017.1406979>
- McKittrick, K. (2016). Diachronic loops/deadweight tonnage/bad made measure. *Cultural Geographies*, 23, 3–18. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1474474015612716>
- Mezzadra, S. (2016). MLC 2015 Keynote: What's at stake in the mobility of labour? Borders, migration, contemporary capitalism. *Migration, Mobility & Displacement*, 2(1), 30–43.
- Mohammadi, S. (2022). A spatial-phenomenological analysis of asylum-seeking women's engagement in a cycling recreation program. In N. De Martini Ugoletti & J. Caudwell (Eds.), *In, leisure and forced migration: Lives lived in asylum systems* (pp. 35–51). Routledge.
- Mountz, A. (2004). Embodying the Nation-State: Canada's response to human smuggling. *Political Geography*, 23(3), 323–345. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.polgeo.2003.12.017>
- Mountz, A. (2020). *The death of asylum: Hidden geographies of the enforcement archipelago*. University of Minnesota Press.
- Nixon, R. (2011). *Slow violence and the environmentalism of the poor*. Harvard University Press.
- Nyers, P., & Rygiel, K. (2012). *Citizenship, migrant activism, and the politics of movement*. Routledge.
- Owton, H., & Allen-Collinson, J. (2014). Close but not too close: Friendship as method(ology) in ethnographic research encounters. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 43(3), 283–305. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0891241613495410>

- Pavlidis, A., & Fullagar, S. (2014). *Sport, gender and power: The rise of roller derby*. Routledge.
- Rishbeth, C., & Rogaly, B. (2018). Sitting outside: Conviviality, self-care and the design of benches in urban public space. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 43(2), 284–298. <https://doi.org/10.1111/tran.12212>
- Rodriguez Castro, L., Pavlidis, A., Kennelly, M., & Nichols, E. (2021). Sisterhood and affective politics: The CaiRollers mobilising change through roller derby in Egypt. *International Journal of Cultural Studies*, 24(5), 791–810.
- Rosen, R., & Crafter, S. (2020). Care in a refugee camp: A case study of a humanitarian volunteer in calais. In E. Fiddian-Qasmieh (Ed.), *Refuge in a moving world: Tracing refugee and migrant journeys across disciplines* (pp. 228–243). UCL Press.
- Rozakou, K. (2016). Socialities of solidarity: Revisiting the gift taboo in times of crisis. *Social Anthropology*, 24(2), 185–199. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1469-8676.12305>
- Salih, R. (2017). Bodies that walk, bodies that talk, bodies that love. palestinian women refugees, affectivity and the politics of the ordinary. *Antipode*, 49(3), 742–760. <https://doi.org/10.1111/anti.12299>
- Sandri, E. (2018). Volunteer humanitarianism: Volunteers and humanitarian aid in the jungle refugee camp of calais. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 44(1), 65–80. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2017.1352467>
- Saunders, N., & Al-Om, T. (2022). Slow resistance: Resisting the slow-violence of asylum. *Millenium*, 50(2), 524–547. <https://doi.org/10.1177/03058298211066339>
- Schmidt, D., & Palutan, G. (2021). Thick leisure: Waiting time in a migratory context. In N. De Martini Ugolotti & J. Caudwell (Eds.), *Leisure and forced migration: Lives lived in asylum systems* (pp. 52–66). Routledge.
- Shilliam, R. (2018). *Race and the Undeserving Poor: From Abolition to Brexit*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Spaaij, R., Broerse, J., Oxford, S., Luguetti, C., McLachlan, F., McDonald, B., Klepac, B., Lymbery, L., Bishara, J., & Pankowiak, A. (2019). Sport, refugees, and forced migration: A critical review of the literature. *Frontiers in Sports and Active Living*, 1(47). <https://doi.org/10.3389/fspor.2019.00047>
- Spaaij, R., Luguetti, C., & De Martini Ugolotti, N. (2022). Forced Migration and Sport: An Introduction. *Sport in Society: Cultures, Commerce, Media, Politics*, 25(3), 405–417.
- Stone, C. (2018). Utopian community football? Sport, hope and belongingness in the lives of refugees and asylum seekers. *Leisure Studies*, 37(2), 171–183. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02614367.2017.1329336>
- Stone, C. (2021). We're the (Global) North Bank ...": Transnational fandom, forced migration and football consumption. In N. De Martini Ugolotti & J. Caudwell (Eds.), *Leisure and forced migration: Lives lived in asylum* (pp. 67–81). Routledge.
- Tuhiwai-Smith, L. (2012). *Decolonizing methodologies: Research and indigenous people*. London: Zed Books.
- Webster, C. (2022). The (in)significance of footballing pleasures in the lives of forced migrant men. *Sport in Society: Cultures, Commerce, Media, Politics*, 25(3), 523–536.
- Webster, C., & Abunaama, K. (2022). Informal football spaces and the negotiation of temporal politics in the lives of forced migrants. In *Leisure and Forced Migration: Lives Lived in Asylum Systems* (pp. 21–34). London: Routledge.
- Whitley, M. A., Coble, C., & Jewell, G. S. Evaluation of a sport-based youth development programme for refugees. (2016). *Leisure/Loisir*, 40(2), 175–199. 2016. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14927713.2016.1219966>