

WORKSHOP

EURO 2004

COMPARATIVE STUDIES IN THE MEDIA-FOOTBALL-COMPLEX

1 / 2 JULY 2004

UTRECHT UNIVERSITY

INSTITUTE OF MEDIA AND RE/PRESENTATION

VAN SWELINCKZAAL, DRIFT 21, UTRECHT

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Addressing the European Football Championship in Portugal, scholars from different disciplines and from different European countries will discuss how globalization, commercialization and the introduction of new communication technologies have shaped, and continue to shape, football, the media coverage and representation of the game, and the ways fans participate in 'their' sport.

INFORMATION AND REGISTRATION:

eggo.mueller@let.uu.nl

WORKSHOP FEE: € 30,- (students € 15,-)

PROGRAMME

Thursday 1 July 2004

- 13.30 lunch
- 14.00 welcome
- 14.15 **session 1: Football and Media in European Countries**
David Winner:
Football and Culture in Europe
Roman Horak:
Media and football in the German speaking countries
- 15.30 coffee
- 15.45 **session 2: Commercialization of Media Football**
Thorsten Schauerte:
Football – only a game for the strategic TV-management?
Hans-Jörg Stiehler / Jasper A. Friedrich:
How much football is there really on television?
Liesbet van Zoonen:
Is Ajax to Feyenoord as Pepsi to Cola?
Thomas Schierl:
MediaSportsAdvertising
- 17.45 snacks and drinks
- 18.00 **clips and comments: 'The Miracle of Bern'**
Andreas Fickers:
The social shape of media technologies
Jan Tilman Schwab:
Fiktiver Fußball, fantasy football, fantacalcio.
- 19.00 dinner and live broadcasting of the 2nd semi-finale

Friday 2 July 2004

- 9.15 **session 3: Football, Media and Identity**
Sanna Inthorn:
Post-national identity in the New Europe?
Eggo Müller:
Dissing nations: Football, bad taste and national identity
Joke Hermes:
Football and Ethnicity
- 10.45 coffee
- 11.00 **session 4: Football, Media, Audiences and Fandom**
Ruud Stokvis:
The home base of media sport teams
Lothar Mikos:
Imagined fan communities in international football
Jürgen Schwier:
"Technology shapes fandom": Soccer fans and subcultural media
- 12.30 lunch
- 13.15 **session 5: Discussion: comparative perspectives**
- 14.30 coffee
- 15.00 end of the workshop

ABSTRACTS

Andreas Fickers (Utrecht University)

The social shape of media technologies

Our perception of sport as media event is deeply influenced by technology. Sport itself, it's mediated representation and perception, and media technologies form an interesting triangle of interdependence. While the influence of media technologies, like replay and slow motion, on the viewer's perception of sports as a dramatic narration is a well-studied phenomenon in media studies and sport sociology, the shaping of media technologies by social or cultural forces is an underresearched field of sport and media studies. Taking the Social Construction of Technology (SCOT)-Theory as a starting point, this paper will test the fruitfulness of this approach for a cultural history of sport and technology.

Sanna Inthorn (Portsmouth University)

Post-national identity in the New Europe? 'In-' and 'out-groups' in English football reporting

In the context of an internationalised football industry, the present study explores whether the concept of English national identity underpins 'everyday' football reporting. Based on a sample of two year's coverage of four national broadsheet papers, four tabloid and one mid-market paper, as well as two local daily papers, this paper analyses the representation of foreign players and managers in the English press. Specifically, it explores whether against the context of the European integration of the game, English newspapers reassert an ethno-cultural concept of English national identity, or whether they offer readers a more open, multi-facetted concept of collective identity, that negotiates both an English, local and European identity. The study uses a qualitative, discourse analytical approach and places the representation of sports within a wider social and political context. It approaches press discourses as institutionally anchored social practices, which sustain, and challenge, collective and individual identities. It explores what members of a collectivity regard as common-sense characteristics of their community (and their binary opposites) at a specific moment in time, and how this image relates to the context of discourses and narratives within society. The analysis benefits from awareness to the hybridity of texts, and their use of different narratives, for example. In its sample of football reporting this study finds striking similarities with the topic classes for racist discourse, identified by van Dijk (1987).

Lothar Mikos (Academy for Film and Television, Potsdam)

Imagined fan communities in international football

In times of global media fan cultures are no longer connected to specific times and places. A fan has access to different objects of fandom from all over the world. That is true for music, comics, computer games, films, television formats and sports. The professionalisation and commercialisation of the international football leagues like the Champions League or the UEFA-Cup in Europe lead to an increasing market for merchandising and an overall access to the matches of these leagues via television. At the same time the global television market supports an interest in national football leagues and their teams. On the one hand it is possible to watch the matches of the English or the Spanish league in every other country, on the other hand it is possible to buy a Manchester United shirt in

Poland or Australia, a Real Madrid shirt in the Netherlands or Sweden, a shirt of Brasil in Japan or South Africa. Football fans are no longer only located in the hometown of their teams. They also built an imagined community with participants from all over the world. The imagined communities are based on the televised national and international football events and the goods of the global merchandising market. The paper deals with the constitution of imagined fan communities in international football.

Eggo Müller (Utrecht University)

Dissing nations: Football, bad taste and national identity

As many studies have convincingly shown, media coverage of sport in general, and of football in particular, is one of the salient arenas where national identities are discursively constructed and -- to refer to Benedict Anderson's famous concept -- collectively imagined. On the occasion of international sporting events such as the European Football Championships, these imaginations are ritually reproduced reviving a well-known set of national stereotypes and myths. But at the same time, these stereotypes and myths are redefined and transformed according to both the specific socio-cultural context and changing formats and styles of mediated representation. Based on a case study of the representation of recent and current Dutch-German football matches, this paper argues that the representation of 'Germanness' in Dutch media can be compared to playful forms of adolescent peer interaction: by 'dissing' the other (nation) in more or less humorous or ironic ways, difference is created and, at the same time, a common ground is necessarily presumed. Depending on the context, political incorrectness and bad taste can support pro-social attitudes within a transnational media culture.

Thorsten Schauerte (University of Gießen)

Football – only a game for the strategic TV-management?

Because of their economic and cultural characteristics, soccer world and European championships make high requirements to the strategic management of the transmitting television stations. The management must try to act economically meaningfully and evaluate the financial expenditures and the possible competitive edge. The specific properties of the procurement markets and the sources of income of the football reporting are highly complex and sometimes very problematically. In Germany this situation is intensified because of the specific broadcasting system.

Private broadcasting stations are companies, which have to realize high profits. For this purpose and for the penetration of the TV-market in the past they exploited football and other sports successfully as a "battering ram". Because of this development the community of the football clubs is split into two classes. The dangers of this development are the possibility of boring football competitions and a football satiety of the audience. Both risks are slowly processes and they could complete mutually. In any case a loss of acceptance in the population would be the resulting consequence.

Thomas Schierl (German Academy of Sport, Cologne)

MediaSportsAdvertising: About the necessity of a "large-scale integration" strategy concerning commercial communication

There should be no doubt about the economic usefulness to combine advertising with sports content. Sports are a very attractive content of leisure for most

people all around the world. Therefore it seems a logical consequence that manufacturers of branded articles try to participate to create attention for their products. Therefore the industry concerned with sports advertising tries to create an emotional impact with sports content and thus uses testimonials to create trust in their product and above all a positive image. Nevertheless there are still too simple and parasitic communication strategies, which can be described as ineffective and too risky.

A helpful vehicle to optimize strategies concerning sports and advertising would be a consistent, multidimensional integration, which exceeds the term "integrated communication" favoured by the sciences of marketing (cp. Bruns 1997:96). This contribution makes the most important postulate for effective advertising concerning sports to a subject of discussion and contains an economic and recipient point of view.

Jan Tilman Schwab (University of Kiel)

Fiktiver Fußball, *fantasy football*, *fantacalcio*.

On the *mise-en-scène* of football in football fiction films

Before *DAS WUNDER VON BERN* (Germany 2003, Sönke Wortmann), the genre of *football fiction films* had the worst possible reputation: ignored by a broad audience, disliked even (or especially) by ardent football supporters. Explanations for the complete failure of presenting the world's most popular sport on the cinema screen in an attractive way claimed dramaturgic problems as well as problems of *mise en scène* that simply were considered impossible to be solved successfully. Above all, the staging of *fantasy football* or *fantacalcio* (fiktiver Fußball) in an authentic manner, which over decades had been attempted in various ways by filmmakers, was regarded an impossible achievement. The essay will explore the various problems of *football fiction films* in general (linking these problems also to the development of media football coverage) and analyse the different forms of presenting football in *DAS WUNDER VON BERN*.

Jürgen Schwier (University of Gießen)

"Technology shapes fandom": Soccer fans and subcultural media

Cyberpunks, Trekkies, Soap addicts, fans of Hip Hop, Folk Music, or basketball have one thing in common: the various forms of their particular fan cultures will have experienced a rapid and extensive medialization over the past decade. Football is no exception – intensive active consumption of mass media representation of the game has long been a hallmark of the sport. In this context, this paper will discuss the changes in German fan culture since the 1990s. As in England, two features are prominent. First, there is the foundation of independent fans' organisations ('Fans for the Fans'), which have demanded proper representation within the clubs' power structures, and which seek to work against the various unacceptable tendencies within fandom, such as racism, violence, and sexism. Second, the emergence of fanzine-culture has – offline and online – become a significant motor for change. Fans, therefore, on account of their desire and need to participate, have developed variegated forms of media activity. The World Wide Web has been a significant medium for this empowerment 'from below'. This paper aims to assess the importance of these media in the changing structures of fandom.

Hans-Jörg Stiehler / Jasper A. Friedrich (University of Leipzig)

How much football is there really on television?

Regarding the representation of football on German television, two apparently paradox developments can be observed in the past ten years. On the one hand, there is more and more coverage of football - not least due to the high prices of the transmission rights. On the other hand, less than half of the broadcasting actually covers football being played. More than half of the coverage is pre- and post-match reporting containing discussions, interviews, pre-recorded video clips, entertaining elements and commercials. The 'everyday life' of the national league (*Bundesliga*) is produced as an entertaining, strongly segmented format. The coverage of the matches only presents the most spectacular moments. Since football rights returned to the public service channel ARD in 2003/2004 for the first time since 14 years, a study of the football coverage of the two dominant football shows on German television was conducted in 2003. This paper discusses the results of the comparative analysis of *ran Sat.1 Fussball* and *ARD Sportschau*.

Ruud Stokvis (University of Amsterdam/WJH Mulierinstitute 's Hertogenbosch)

The home base of media sport teams

In Europe soccer is the main example of a media team sport. The central characteristic of the administrators of media sports is the ambition to maximise the profits from its income sources. To understand what this can mean for the policies of the boards of soccer clubs it is enlightening to compare the policies of the boards of soccer clubs with the policies of owners from American commercial team sports. In asking why a remarkable practice of American owners does happen much less frequent in Europe, one can learn something about the typical characteristics of the European situation of soccer as a media sport. The practice I would like to discuss in this paper is the threat and the actual execution of this threat, of American owners to move their team to another place. This practice is used in negotiation for favours with local governments or other important local groups. One uses this threat and its actual execution less frequently in Europe. The paper tries to find an answer for this difference in policies between American and European media sport teams.

Liesbet van Zoonen (University of Amsterdam)

Is Ajax to Feyenoord as Pepsi to Cola?

Current management strategies of football clubs use 'branding' to maintain the relation with existing supporters and to reach new groups of supporters. Managers increasingly speak of 'customers' instead of 'supporters', indicating the shift from an emotional relation between clubs and supporters to an economical one, in which supporters are primarily approached as consumers bringing in money. A necessary premise of branding strategies is that supporters relate to their clubs in the same way as they relate to other branded products. In this paper we use an existing instrument of branding research which is based on the similarity of consumer values with brand values, to examine how supporters of Ajax and Feyenoord respectively, articulate their connection with their clubs. Our results, based on survey data about values that supporters use to describe themselves and their clubs, show that supporters hold different values for themselves than they do for their clubs. This suggests strongly that the value similarity that underlies common brand identification does not hold for football clubs.