

CHAPTER 19: Sport

Jeffrey Scholes

Sport occupies a vast expanse in today’s popular culture landscape. Four of the top five most-watched programs in the history of American television are sporting events (Eames 2012). The scandals of Tiger Woods and Lance Armstrong lead the national nightly news. Yet rarely do people link sport and religion. But from the ancient Olympic games to the recent prayer-filled rituals of football player Tim Tebow, a relationship between the two most certainly exists. The intersection of religion and sport, though, is a strange one—what could athletic activity possibly have to do with spiritual matters? One might argue that sport has been thoroughly secularized; religion still deals with sacred things. It is therefore not surprising that statements about a relationship between religion and sport generate more questions than they do answers: “Are Sports Good for the Soul?”; “Does God Care Who Wins the Super Bowl?”¹ But another set of questions emerges: How does religion relate to sport, if at all? Is sport a religion, or does the one have nothing to do with the other? And if there is a connection, what might it tell us about how they intersect as an expression of popular culture?

Sampling from the wide range in recent scholarship, one can discern a variety of interpretive models used in the analysis of religion and sport: sport enacts religious myths on a secular stage; sport is a transmitter of religious values and/or an expression of divine will; or sport uniquely reveals divine will, stages miracles, and sanctifies certain athletes who perform at the highest

levels. Yet most of them avoid the production of a blended religion and sport phenomenon in (primarily American) culture.

RELIGION AND SPORT: THEORETICAL APPROACHES

In this chapter, we will examine one particular site where the sacred is produced in sport: the stadium. It is impossible to separate the modern stadium from the “profane” world of commerce, meaning that any discussion of religion and sport, especially as it is situated in a stadium or arena, must acknowledge the interdependence of sacred and profane culture-making processes. First, we shall survey alternative ways of interpreting the relationship between religion and sport. One may investigate the relationship’s *instrumentality*, or how they use each other for their own purposes; or one may investigate the relationship’s *equality*, in which sport is identified as a religion, or as having religious characteristics. Both assume a separation that presumes that sport is no longer a religious ritual but has become secularized (Guttmann 1978: 26). Along with such social institutions as the state, work, education, science, and others, sport can be performed without recourse to religion to legitimize it.

The instrumental model flows in two directions: religion using sports and sports using religion. Perhaps one of the most well known examples of religion using sports in Christianity comes from St. Paul’s first letter to the Corinthians, in the New Testament:

Do you not know that in a race the runners all compete, but only one receives the prize?
Run in such a way that you may win it. Athletes exercise self-control in all things; they

do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable one. So I do not run aimlessly, nor do I box as though beating the air; but I punish my body and enslave it, so that after proclaiming to others I myself should not be disqualified (1 Corinthians 9: 24-27, NRSV).

Here, Paul uses the sports metaphor of the foot race to transmit a religious truth. Notice, though, that Paul does not equate the race and the spiritual journey—the race for eternal rewards is more important than the one for a laurel.

Sport-as-instrument to reveal religious truths is similarly displayed by the early twentieth century evangelist Billy Sunday, who would sometimes wear his professional baseball uniform to preach. Muscular Christianity—an Anglo-American Protestant movement with roots in the late 1890s (see Putney 2001)—portrayed Jesus as a strong, athletic man, and athleticism became essential to sanctification for those churches that preached this Christology. Movies like *Chariots of Fire* (1981)—in which muscular Christianity is explored—and organizations such as the Fellowship of Christian Athletes and Promise Keepers—based upon this philosophy—make explicit the connection between faith and athletic prowess. Some athletes readily appropriate the image of Jesus as a strong, macho warrior, drawing on the principles of Muscular Christianity. Notes Robert Higgs (1995: 311), “Just as religion has been warped to justify sports, so sports have been warped to assist in preparation for war and the waging of it, as a technique in the training of soldiers but mainly as a reinforcing symbol of manliness and knighthood.” Muscular Christianity arose (in late 19th century Britain and the United States) to combat the image of the meek,

feminized boy raised in the church to sing hymns, also emphasizing sport’s character-building aspects: hard work, follow rules, and respect your opponent.

Many contemporary athletes—such as Tim Tebow, Albert Pujols, or Jeremy Lin—link their performance to “the Glory of Christ,” meaning that their faith gives them the strength to compete not just to the best of their ability, but in ways that reflect positively on their religious beliefs. But there is present the risk that, somehow, the Christian savior is in any way specifically interested in the exploits of one player or team. Shirl Hoffman (2010: 162) is highly critical of these notions of “Christ as brawny jock, impelled by self-interest and team spirit, capable of shutting down feelings for others when the whistle blows, loving it when he comes out ahead of others,” and identifies the use of “a meek and gentle Jesus whose mission exemplified servanthood, peace, and reconciliation,” as a form of what theologian H. Richard Niebuhr called “personifications of abstractions,” in this case an “unlikely model” for modern, often violent athletes.

Others use religion in ways that seem less theologically suspect, and do not seem to threaten core religious principles. In her “Church of Baseball” monologue in the movie *Bull Durham* (dir. Ron Shelton, 1988), Annie Savoy (Susan Sarandon) expressed need for “church” more than baseball, but it is baseball that she needs to be her church.² Today, “Faith Night” transforms some Major League ballparks into makeshift churches after the game, with players giving testimony and fans wishing to stick around singing praise songs. Frank Deford (1976: 59) derisively calls the practice of using famous sports figures to promote and sell religion “Sportianity.” Churches and para-church organizations that exploit the fame of Christian athletes and coaches to spread the

Gospel are, according to Deford, debasing both religion and sports. “Sport is the converse of religion,” he writes, hence the latter should not misuse the former in order to convey its truths.

In all of these examples, sport is needed but is clearly in the service of religion. This subordination is similarly reflected in the work of scholars who claim that, despite appearances, sport embodies deep religious values and principles. From a theological point of view, Greg Smith (2010) argues that athletic ability is a gift from God, and cites biblical passages as proof of the theological import of sports. Here, sport becomes a kind of litmus test that reveals who is squandering their talent, as well as a lens into the nature of divine gifts (a sentiment recently expressed by professional football player Tim Tebow (Tebow and Whitaker 2011: 173). From a sociological perspective, D. Stanley Eitzen and George H. Sage (1978: 127) and Steven J. Overman (2011) contend that modern sport draws on the legacy of a Calvinist work ethic, and mirrors Protestant values. Others argue that the principles that undergird the games themselves—and the way they are played—are religious principles that sport happens to express well.

By contrast, when sport uses religion, religion justifies, legitimates, clarifies, or promotes sport in some way. The most direct (perhaps theologically crass) way of expressing this type of relationship is to claim that God (or a supernatural force) acts to guide the outcome of sporting events. When an athlete credits God for a win or, more controversially, for guiding a ball into the basket, the supernatural is clearly being exploited to explain natural events. Less crass is the use of superstition and belief in curses to assist with performance or explain events on the field. It seems less crass because the athlete’s admission of ritual behavior that is superstitious, such as baseball’s Wade Boggs’s habit of eating chicken before every game, is usually stated tongue-in-

cheek. Michael Jordan would no doubt minimize the significance of wearing his college uniform shorts under his professional uniform—but he wore them just in case (Murphy n.d.). The superstitious rituals performed in the movie *Major League* (1989) are contrasted with the more traditional ways of getting religion involved in sport, such as prayer—even though the superstitions seemed to produce better results. Religion is often employed to explain an unlikely series of events, as with the “Curse of the Billy Goat,” which some claim is the cause of the one hundred year championship drought endured by the Chicago Cubs (see Juffer 2006: 292-293). Not unlike crediting God for a Super Bowl win, superstitions and curses are based on the logic that spiritual forces either explain or legitimate action on the field, even though the degree of belief in supernatural intervention may vary.

Novels such as *A River Runs Through It* (Maclean 1976) or *The Brothers K* (Duncan 1992), and movies such as *The Natural* (1984) or *Angels in the Outfield* (1994), cloak sport with a religious aura that endows athletic activity and the fans’ experiences with metaphysical import.

Underlying the “sports using religion” model is an acknowledgment that sport can produce experiences of transcendence that often defy ordinary explanation. Rather than reducing these experiences to material causation, religion furnishes sport with a vocabulary that may correspond more closely with the emotions felt. In similar fashion, religious terms, themes, and stories are often used in sports discourse. From Al Michaels’ famous exclamation at the end of the improbable American victory over the Soviets in the 1980 Olympic hockey semifinals—“Do you believe in miracles?” (see Posnanski 2010)—to the Chicago White Sox use of the band Journey’s hit, “Don’t Stop Believin’” (1981) to motivate their World Series run in 2004 (Merkin 2005), religion helps in ways that the X’s and O’s of game planning cannot. Lance Armstrong,

according to most pundits, was seeking redemption with his *mea culpa* to Oprah Winfrey regarding his use of performance enhancing drugs (see Day 2013). Trips to Lambeau Field in Green Bay, Wisconsin, or to the baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, New York, are frequently thought of as pilgrimages by the “pilgrims” who go there (see Gammon 2004). On the level of discourse, religious concepts are needed to convey a seriousness with which we approach and think about our sports.

The second general way that religion and sports are related is in their equation. Sport may function like religion, but rarely is religion equated to sport—usually the comparison is made in the other direction. Robert Bellah’s foundational 1967 essay on civil religion enabled comparisons of religion to responses to powerful symbols, including sport. For Bellah, many beliefs held by citizens about their nation are bolstered by powerful symbols, are a bonding agent for a national consciousness, and therefore function as a type of religious belief without resorting to a church for support. For Craig A. Forney (2007: 14-18), the development of football, baseball, and basketball dovetailed with national cultural trends in the twentieth century to form their own kind of civil religion in the United States. Michael Novak (1976: 19) takes it a step farther and claims that sport is a religion because of what it draws out of our human nature:

sports flow outward into action from a deep natural impulse that is radically religious: an impulse of freedom, respect for ritual limits, a zest for symbolic meaning, and a longing for perfection. The athlete may of course be pagan, but sports are, as it were, natural religions.

Fans may experience sport as a natural religion too, as exemplified in *Field of Dreams* (1989), in which Roy Kinsella hears voices and feels compelled to carve a baseball diamond out of his Iowa cornfield.³

Unlike Novak, James Mathisen (1992: 19) refuses to reduce what he holds to be the religious component of sport to mere human instinct, but instead sees it as an institution that organically emerges from the grass roots of a community, and which is able to “provide social integration and the legitimation of American values.” In other words, sport is a folk religion for Mathisen that

encapsulates, magnifies, and reflects back to us the primary beliefs and norms of the surrounding American culture. . . . At the same time, sport raises up particular values and myths of its own and projects them onto the culture with a normative certitude. It is this authority that emphatically characterizes sport as a folk religion. (1992: 22)

Lastly, Charles Prebish (1993: 68-69) moves beyond a functional equating of religion and sport by boldly claiming that sport is a religion in every sense of the word. Not only are rituals, saints, and worship to be found unadulterated in sports, but ultimate reality can be experienced through it. He replaces functional similarity with substantive identity.

Both models of framing religion and sport—the instrumental and the equation—are important tools for understanding their relationship. Yet often, these models assume a static relationship between religion and sport; they may individually undergo change, but the basic contours of their

relationship does not. But what if that which we consider “religion” were produced or destroyed at a secular site, through secular means? Might this not make the two more dependent than even the instrumental model admits? Spaces often maintain a tenuous hold on their sacredness, especially when it has been humanly constructed; they depend on the production and destruction of the sacred. When that space is operating in a secular setting, a new way of understanding the relationship between the sacred and the secular presents itself.

PRODUCTION OF THE SACRED IN THE STADIUM

One site of cultural production that brings religion and sports together is the sports stadium, which may be endowed with ethereal qualities. For example, in his effort to equate religion and sports, Prebish (1993: 73) compares the stadium to the “traditional house of worship,” describing it as:

set apart from the ordinary, profane world. Consequently, a series of rituals is required as one crosses the threshold, the boundary between chaos and cosmos, for purification is required of all entrants to the consecrated place... What we are indicating here is that the sport structure, no less than the traditional religious edifice, is infused with sacredness as a result of its location as the meeting point between earth and heaven, the location from which the experience of ultimacy becomes more readily accessible.

While Prebish’s model suggests that the stadium is “infused with sacredness,”—suggesting a kind of static, divinely sanctioned status—it is imperative to explore the way in

which the stadiums themselves help produce as well as destroy the sacred. For all who participate, the experience of the sacred (or the profane) is generated through the geography of the stadium, the social relations that manifest there, and the specific activities taking place within it. So while the instrumental and equality models demonstrate how religion and sport relate, a closer examination of their means of production in culture—both through human agency and the human response to external forces—will necessarily ground these models.

American sports stadiums stick out, attract attention, and have the power to alter cityscapes like few other edifices—the kind of physical power that most modern churches can only dream about. In addition, sports stadiums provoke intense emotions and religious devotion as much as a childhood home or church (Trujillo 1994: 315-318). There are also visual aspects of a stadium reminiscent of religious spaces: the pitcher’s mound in the center of a baseball diamond may remind one of Black Elk’s mountain lookout, while the bronze busts of players on display at the National Football League (NFL) Hall of Fame might be seen to resemble the saints frozen in stained glass illuminating many Catholic churches, or their statues populating church grounds. Many stadiums themselves resemble religious institutions: Fenway Park in Boston sneaks up on you, and then overwhelms you like a neighborhood temple, while Cowboys Stadium in Arlington, Texas, glistens in the sun like Robert Schuller’s former headquarters, the Crystal Cathedral (now owned by the Catholic diocese of Orange County, California). Yet appearance alone does not endow buildings with sacredness; skyscrapers inspire awe, too. Making connections between the look of religion and sports, while important observations they may be, do not actually move us closer to an understanding of how sports stadiums become sacred spaces.

From the father of sociology Emile Durkheim to the dean of the history of religions Mircea Eliade, the sacred has been considered nothing if it was not set apart from the profane and ordinary in some way. The difference between the two is “absolute,” they “are different in kind,” and “have nothing in common” (Durkheim 1995: 36). Yet this approach to the relationship between the sacred and the profane often artificially demarcates the two with clean, thick lines. Scholars David Chidester and Edward Linenthal (1995) suggest that the conversation should focus on the “production of the sacred,” and rely on anthropologist Arnold van Gennep’s (1961: 12) image of “the pivoting of the sacred” to argue that sacredness is an attribute of the productive process, and not an absolute that is inherently attached to things, including spaces. This means that the concept of “the sacred” is fluid and applicable to a variety of spaces; it can flow into a space as quickly as it can flow out (or become profane). As Jonathan Z. Smith concludes, “there is nothing that is inherently or essentially... sacred or profane. There are situational or relational categories, mobile boundaries which shift according to the map being employed” (Smith 1978: 291).

The means by which the “set-apartness” of sacred spaces is produced—and the map employed to track its production—is crucial to understanding its sacredness. In the case of sports stadiums, from the moment that an enterprising businessman saw that people wanted to watch games played in public parks, fields became enclosed and admission tickets were sold. Sociologist John Bale highlights three historical stages of what he calls “territorialization” that set the sports stadium apart: first, “playing space” is “separated from spectating space so that a segmented but monocultural sport-place was established”; second, the crowd is “segmented”; and third, sport is

separated “from non-sportive space by the establishment of ‘sport estates’ or specialized sport zones in particular parts of the city.” Today, new stadiums built in urban environments often include surrounding developments (both commercial and residential) to create a larger “sport estate” (1994: 74), suggesting that the line between the stadium and the non-stadium is less distinct today than it was when stadiums were built without these considerations. Bale is quick to point out that all three stages of territorialization are the result of the exertion of power by certain groups of people over other groups, noting that “the growth of commerce in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries led to restrictions on public access to places like the commons and the streets,” linking the stadium inextricably with the mechanisms of capitalism (1993: 123-124).

The ability of a stadium to convey the sacred and generate human experience with the sacred cannot simply be reduced to the financial interest in constructing the building. Chidester and Linenthal (1995: 9-16) highlight the three levels on which space becomes sacred. First, sacred space must be ritual space, a place where actions are endowed with extra significance, performed routinely, and in this specific space. Second, sacred space must be significant space, in that it focuses attention on what it means to be a human being. Third, sacred space must be contested space, where the question of ownership over meaning, capital, and status is heightened, revealing both the sacredness of the battle and the stakes for winning it.

While a complete analysis of the relationship between religion and sport would also include the players’ experiences, the neighborhood ballpark, and non-American sports, in the following analysis, we will focus on the fans’ experience in major American sports stadiums, which can

serve as a significant lens through which to examine the relationship between religion and sport, and the way that the sacred is produced there.

RITUAL SPACE

For Chidester and Linenthal, sacred space is a ritual space or “a location for formalized, repeatable symbolic performances” (1995: 9). Sacred space does not merely provide the environment for any repetitious action. Action in a sacred space must, by its performance, represent and fulfill a function that transcends the physical action itself. Sacred spaces are able to endow ritual behavior with this kind of significance, in part, by virtue of the separation of the space from ordinary, mundane space that surrounds it. Cross the threshold into one of these spaces, and rituals can become “extra-ordinary.” Chidester and Linenthal (1995: 9) add that the ordinary/extraordinary binary expresses a kind of “is/ought” dynamic. In a sacred space, rituals “act out and embody perfectly the way things ‘ought to be,’” and are hence always in tension with the way things are. It is for this reason that the role that rituals play in the production and maintenance of sacred space is done “in conscious tension with the way things are normally perceived to be in the ordinary world.” Sacred spaces insulate, thereby generating symbolic acts while in a dialectical relationship with the ordinary (“real”) world that is outside the space.

Sociologist Randall Collins (2004: 48) identifies four elements needed for what he calls an “interaction ritual” to result in the kind of collective effervescence that Durkheim associates with the sacred. First, two or more people share the same physical space, whether they are aware of it or not. Second, boundaries are maintained preventing outsiders from participating. Third, the

group focuses its attention on a common object or activity, and by communicating this focus to each other become mutually aware of each other’s focus of attention. And fourth, they “share a common mood or emotional experience.” Marci Cottingham (2012: 176) has no problem finding all four elements among Pittsburgh Steelers fans at a home game in 2008. Interestingly, she finds that some of the same rituals performed in the stadium spilled out into the tailgating section in the parking lot and into local sports bars, though they were more “muted and uncoordinated” (Cottingham 2012: 176). The power of the stadium extends into other venues and even into homes, but is diminished when it is appropriated anywhere but inside the stadium.

The rituals that take place in stadiums are either prescribed, obligatory, conspicuous, and long-standing rituals or subtle and situational rituals in which not all participants partake. Among the former, perhaps the singing of the national anthem before a game is the ritual most common to all American sports, and perfunctorily performed in most stadiums. In addition, rituals such as the “seventh-inning stretch” (baseball), the “wave” (football), and attempts by basketball fans to distract an opposing player shooting free throws are widely performed by fans across the country.

There are also team-bound rituals designed to mark and protect home territory. The Denver Broncos’ fans yell “Incomplete!” after each missed pass thrown by the opposition (see Adams 2008). Some of the Detroit Red Wings’ fans throw dead octopi on the ice during the playoffs (see Bradsher 1996). Boston Red Sox fans sing Neil Diamond’s “Sweet Caroline” in the middle of the eighth inning (see Vosk 2005). And “Cameron Crazyies”—fans sitting in the student section of the Duke University Cameron Indoor Stadium—shout “whoosh” after their player

makes a free throw (see Heinen 1995). At Texas A&M University’s Kyle Field, there is an elaborate system of call-and-response, practiced at midnight before each football game, involving yell leaders and fans, and intended to support the Aggies on the field while intimidating the opposition. Each class has its own yell to follow the one screamed by all (“Midnight Yell” 2013).

The rituals are grounded in the spatial arrangement of the stadium that partitions off areas for home fans, visiting fans, yell leaders, students, and the players, especially at college events. This, in turn, helps release latent territorial instincts (which could otherwise manifest in violence, and at times do) through sublimation. Home fans mimic players: “This is our house,” they claim, creating a kind of united front against threats. The lines separating fans economically, racially, ethnically, or by gender outside the stadium are temporarily blurred in this communal act of solidarity. Likewise, spatial distance between like-minded fans in the stadium is narrowed—the fan in the upper level yells the same cheer at the same time as the fan in the luxury box. Other rituals symbolically attach fan to player when vocal chants are directed to the field, breaching the otherwise sacrosanct white lines separating the action on the field from the stands. As with the fleeting but profound unity experienced by disparate fans through common rituals, the chasm between fan and player is crossed through supportive and ritualistic cheers (and boos).

Through ritual behavior, the sports stadium furnishes the space for fans to lay claim to territory, though certainly not in a proprietary sense—a reality made abundantly clear as they are forced to exit at the game’s conclusion. The unity experienced by fans—whether by all in such rituals as the national anthem or by respective teams through representative cheers—stands in marked

contrast to the disunion that exists outside the stadium, conveying a utopic way things “ought to be” in contrast to the way things actually are in the economic and social hierarchy that describes much of ordinary life. Fan rituals symbolize and act out an ideal that, while only temporarily realized, helps produce a collective sense of the sacred by way of contrast to the ordinary world on the outside.

SIGNIFICANT SPACE

For Chidester and Linenthal (1995: 12), sacred space is significant because it “focuses crucial questions about what it means to be a human being in a meaningful world.” In other words, a sacred space heightens our attention to a worldview even as that worldview is subject to interpretation. Specifically, Chidester and Linenthal highlight two aspects of a worldview grounded by sacred space: the classification of persons, and general orientations in space and time. Sacred space becomes significant space when it is able to situate entrants in a way that foregrounds questions about classification and orientation as well as provides provisional, but no less important, answers to those questions.

As noted above, people in stadiums are distinguished in three ways: by role (fans versus players), by team allegiance, and by economics. While rituals can demarcate as well as blur these classifications, the structural features of many sports stadiums serve to magnify their significance, and in so doing, forge identities based on the status assigned to the space.

Discussing religion and boundaries, Catherine Albanese (1992: 5-6) notes that

[b]y searching for identity and finding it, individuals metaphorically establish inner boundaries, discover through testing who they are not, and begin to affirm who they are. In the process, each individual finds that these personal boundaries overlap with those of others, so that there can be a free process of exchange. In other words, a person locates those who occupy the same inner territory and, because of the shared internal space, feels at one with them and their concerns. This is the meaning of identification with others.

Team loyalty is the most obvious area of overlap between fans that may share nothing else; the stadium most easily puts people into exchanges based on a similar “inner territory” occupied by the same team spirit.

This shared interest may facilitate exchanges between people of different social classes. Sociologist Nick Trujillo (1994: 312) tells a story of Jimmy and Bobbie Jo Fowler, longtime fans of the Texas Rangers baseball team, who, because of their limited funds, sat in some of the worst seats in the park. Trujillo recounts how Jimmy proudly recalled the general manager of the Rangers once trekking up into the stands to thank them for their support, and even wrote Jimmy a get-well letter during a hospital stay (Trujillo 1994: 312). This exchange between “this blue-collar couple” and the white-collar administration, unlikely as it would be absent the relationship forged in the stadium, is initiated by the team’s general manager who crossed a boundary to reach out. Did a connection to the team bind them together, or did the general manager simply want the couple to buy season tickets at the new stadium about to be built? In either case, it is the stadium that facilitated such boundary crossings.

Stadiums also reinforce boundaries based on team allegiance, thus brokering exchanges of an altogether different variety. In college sports, “visiting” fans usually sit in a designated block in a less-than-desired section of the stadium or arena, and team colors worn by fans help identify visually the “home” and “visiting” blocks. In this way, the stadium quickly focuses on the question of identity: “protector” or “invader.” One’s identity will be, in this respect, determined by the results on the field, court, or rink, but until that point one’s identity is dictated, in part, by fan seating distribution. When college games are played at neutral sites, such as the “Red River rivalry” between the Universities of Texas and Oklahoma (played at the Cotton Bowl in Dallas, Texas), such demarcation is visibly split down the middle, with one half of the stadium adorned in burnt orange and the other in crimson red (see Betsill 2012; Carlton 2012). “Neutrality” here is determined by the fact that Dallas is almost exactly equidistant from both universities. No “home field advantage” means that the contested element of sacred space is removed, making the contest among fans and players particularly acute, as can be seen in downtown Dallas the night before the game (for example, see Ricciardi 2012).

At professional sporting events, fans are not usually so obviously segregated. Unlike college games where institutional rules generally dictate who sits where, in the professional venue the market assigns seats. This means that the visiting fans rarely sit in a large block, but are dispersed throughout. Lacking the protection afforded a large, cohesive group, visiting fans must either amplify their fan-ship (like a peacock in danger) or blend in with the home fans and cheer privately (like a chameleon).

And when the cost of a ticket determines seating, classification runs largely along economic lines. The most expensive tickets—whether season tickets or tickets for a single game—are closest to the court/rink, are behind home plate, or are at mid-field. Fans can certainly camouflage their real wealth in the stadium; fans often spend beyond their means, and season ticket holders with good seats often sell them for individual games to make up for the exorbitant cost. Similar class distinctions are visible elsewhere—on airplanes, for example, or in nightclubs—but with all of the fans watching the same action and cheering in unison, distinctions such as these may be briefly obscured.

The location of luxury boxes relative to the rest of a stadium’s seats is more difficult to disguise. Here, spectators are enclosed in glass and have optimum views of the action, getting their food and drinks delivered to them while perched above fans in the stands. Technically, those enjoying the game from one of these boxes are in the stadium, but they occupy a separate territory within the building that has been carved out and rented at a premium. Some team owners sit in a box, some sit in the stands; both express a relationship with fans that relates back on the fan’s self-identification, now including notions of whether “my owner” (and hence, “my team”) is “one of the people” or not.

Interestingly, many teams (half of all NFL teams and an increasing number of teams in other sports; see Kaszuba 2012) are striking a middle ground between the luxury box and the seat in the stands. Such teams offer “personal seat licenses” (PSLs) which generate millions of dollars for the team, but prevent anyone but the very wealthy from holding season tickets. The purchase of a PSL gives the seat owner the opportunity to purchase a ticket (for that seat) for any event in

the stadium, including (but not limited to) season tickets for the team that plays there. The annual cost of a PSL varies from stadium to stadium, but at Cowboys Stadium, which hosts big boxing matches, concerts, and the Super Bowl (in 2010), they can cost up to \$150,000, an amount that even the fan who can afford season tickets, might find prohibitive. *New York Times* reporter Toni Monkovic (2008) identified a New York Giants football fan (whose family had held season tickets since 1961) that earned “a very average salary” but would now have to pay what he estimated to be “about a third of his salary.” Noted another fan “I think it’s a knock on the true fan.” So constructed, the stadium begins to resemble a neighborhood, where some rent houses and some buy. The indicators dividing the PSL owners, the “mere” season ticket holders who attend all the games, and the single-ticket buyer may not be as obvious to see as the differentiation created by the luxury box, but stadiums are slowly dividing classes on a more permanent, yet subtle economic basis.

The economics of the stands notwithstanding, perhaps the most significant dividing line in a stadium is the white line separating fans from the players. Fans are positioned to center their attention on the players, but players need not reciprocate. “Look but don’t touch” is the intractable rule. On the occasion that a fan runs onto the field, an unwritten rule permits a player to do almost anything in his or her power to subdue the fan, including the use of excessive force. After a father and son duo ran onto the field and attacked the Kansas City Royals baseball team coach, not a single team member—who kicked and punched them in response—was arrested, or even criticized (see ““I was stunned”” 2002). Interestingly, different sports have different attitudes about the line, and different ways of enforcing its integrity. The Green Bay Packers football team (and the referees) allows a player to jump into the stands after scoring a

touchdown, though only after the play is over (see Bondy 2012). The Dallas Cowboys installed a “players’ tunnel” that connects the locker room to the field, enabling fans to line the path and reach out to touch the players as they pass by.

Baseball stadiums define the boundaries between fans and players differently, with an ambiguous space between them limited by how far a player can reach (or jump) to catch a ball. In this space—at least according to the rules—the authority of the fan is equal to that of the player; a fuzzy area rather than a clear white line, where each can reach for the ball. This liminal space is, according to Victor Turner (1997: 95), “neither here nor there,” but is “betwixt and between the positions assigned and arrayed by law, custom, convention, and ceremonial.” The ambiguity can be a space of progress (as in a rite of passage), but it is, by definition, a dangerous place, as Chicago Cubs fan Steve Bartman learned when he reached for a foul ball while seated in the ambiguous “zone” (see Johnson 2011). Had his action assisted “his” team’s efforts, he would have been considered a hero; but his actions interfered with “his” team’s progress, and he was roundly criticized for breaching the fan/player barrier.

How does the classification of people in the stadium generate and direct significant religious questions? And what are the questions? In all three social divisions, the sports stadium amplifies the question of identity, in reality and as an ideal. In the stadium, the “home” fan is restricted within the same space as the “visiting” fan, and locked in a kind of struggle. But unlike a physical war, the stadium struggle (usually) ends peacefully. Grievances are aired, territories are staked out, but after the game, these are (usually) put aside. While a stadium is stratified along economic lines, it can also equalize fans, if only for the time spent in the building. And through a

process of democratization, the kinds of exchanges to which Albanese refers are made possible with those “who occupy the same inner territory” (Albanese 1992: 6). With the expressed shared purpose of “defending” the stadium, these inner territories overlap. The stadium becomes a sacred space—the sacred is produced in this place—when those entering into these kinds of exchanges, exchanges that normally do not occur in ordinary social life, cross these boundaries and experience a collective effervescence.

Alternatively, the relationship forged between fan and player at a game is one that is characterized by limits. Even though the stadium brings fans into a shared space with their athletic heroes not possible while watching on television, there is maintained nonetheless a strict boundary between them. This tension between the closeness to—and yet distance from—that which is ultimately and literally untouchable resembles that experienced by religious believers. Reminiscent of Charles Prebish’s conception (noted above), the stadium functions like the “traditional religious edifice,” uniquely putting the entrant into relationship with what Rudolph Otto (1958) calls “the Holy”: it is fascinating and attractive, and yet simultaneously powerful and dangerous.

The second way that the sacred is produced by way of making a space significant is through the orientation of participants to experiences of time. Sports and the spaces that house them raise temporal awareness by operating asynchronously with the outside world; as Michel Foucault (1986: 26) put it, they “open onto what might be termed ... heterochronies.” For Foucault, the space “begins to function at full capacity when men arrive at a sort of absolute break with their traditional time.” In football, basketball, and hockey, the game’s length is of limited duration; in

baseball, golf, and tennis, it is virtually limitless; and in swimming and track, the timer is the primary aspect of the drama that unfolds. Those in a stadium who are paying attention to the game operate on “sports time,” while “real” time plods on outside the stadium. This stadium “time warp” enables a suspension of flowing, unstoppable (lived) time and invites new, freeing ways to experience the past, present, and future.

Many stadiums house statues of the past greats who played there. Lining some stadium walls are names in “Rings of Honor” (literally signs, banners, plaques, and other memorabilia encircling the stadium), the jerseys of players whose numbers have been permanently “retired,” and championship banners. Yankee Stadium contains “Monument Park,” a museum just beyond center field enshrining past Yankee greats. Fans who step into the stadium are not only reminded of the past but, because of the game that is about to start, are also encouraged to think about how the past has a bearing on the present (both good and bad).

Beyond historic past and temporal present, time within the stadium (and for most sports) is punctuated, managed, and even slowed down during the game. There are layers of time: internal clocks framed by the main game timer that count down the time needed to take a shot (basketball), initiate a play (football), or sit in the penalty box (hockey). In many sports, time can be stopped with a time out, an injury, a penalty, a “dead” ball (that has gone out of bounds, for example), or at pre-designated breaks in the game. A coach or player who “manages the clock” knows exactly what needs to be accomplished in the time remaining, when to call a time out, and how to run a play. Athletes who are playing at a peak athletic level often experience “time slowing down” (Shainberg 1989). They are moving in regular time, but they feel that they can

anticipate future action because it seems like everyone else is in slow motion. In many sports, time is ultimately the master—legendary football coach Vince Lombardi is reported to have said that he never lost a game, he just ran out of time (Lombardi 2001: 235)—but it can be a servant of human agents during a sporting event.

Even in an untimed sport like baseball, this relationship between time and agency is present, but is experienced differently. The pitcher cannot hold the ball for an inordinate amount of time, and the breaks in the game are determined by the inning’s end, not by a timer. Theoretically, a baseball game can go on forever, and one’s sense of time has no regular, consistent punctuation; only the passage of innings indicates where (or when) you are in the game. Instead of two “games” (the play on the field and the race against the clock), there is just the one, giving a baseball game a freeing, ethereal, and even eternal feel. As essayist Roger Angell (1987: 25) puts it: “Since baseball time is measured only in outs, all you have to do is succeed utterly; keep hitting, keep the rally alive, and you have defeated time. You remain forever young.”

Each inning will end (as will the game), but no clock can predict when that will be. The timeless environment of a baseball game dramatizes the interplay between experiences of the finite and the infinite, mimicking dynamics present in many religious lives. Whether it be binaries of natural/supernatural, flesh/spirit, earth/heaven, body/mind, or material /spiritual, the ballpark contains a similar schema not found in many other locations.

Hence the sports stadium is a sacred space by being a significant space. It is where one’s identity can be cast in light of social positioning uniquely established there. And through the alteration of

a temporal orientation, everyone in a stadium can challenge measured time that is traditionally beyond manipulation and limited. If religion, as Chidester (2005: 149) has defined it, “is about human identity and orientation, about what it is to be a human person in a human place,” then religion is at work in the sports stadium because of its ability to trouble profane, mundane, ordinary experiences and recast them in expansive, yet still human ways.

CONTESTED SPACE

A third quality explicitly involved in the production of sacred space is conflict over space. Just because a space is contested this does not necessarily make it sacred. Battles over where a demarcated space should be, who has access, and what should go on there disclose that such a space is important, whether it is a convenience store in a strip mall or a Wal-Mart in a suburban neighborhood. But contests over sacred space involve a “site of negotiated contests over legitimate ownership of sacred symbols” (Chidester and Linenthal 1995: 15). Ownership—the processes of both acquisition and retention—involves power. But ownership of a publicly accessible sacred space (and its contents) is more ambiguous than in private spaces, where ownership is unambiguous. As Chidester and Linenthal (1995: 15) contend, “since no sacred space is merely ‘given’ in the world, its ownership will always be at stake. In this respect, a sacred space is not merely discovered, or founded, or constructed; it is claimed, owned, and operated by people advancing specific interests.” Who actually owns a space, confounded by questions of who should own that space, characterize the “contest” that may make space sacred.

What sacred symbols are retained by those who, in a legal sense, have no ownership stake in a stadium? For some, it is the game, and the “home” team, of which the fan is part owner. For others, it is the stadium, at which important family relationships (often a father and son) are grounded, and memories solidified. For yet others, it is the material symbols within the stadium, such as the “Green Monster” (the left field wall, which is high and painted green) at Fenway Park, or the “Touchdown Jesus” (“Word of Life”) mural on Hesburgh Library, overlooking the University of Notre Dame football stadium, that are sacred. And for still others, it is the one historic game at a particular stadium, one that generated an intense experience for those in the stadium witnessing it, that becomes an extraordinary event, even a sacred one. It is these and other symbols or symbolic experiences that bind the fan and athlete to a stadium, and often produce a strong sense of ownership.

Some stadiums reveal their status as contested spaces with the anticipation of change. The naming (or renaming) of a stadium is a particularly acute change that raises the issue of ownership. Dispute can be avoided if a stadium is named for someone (or something) clearly associated with the team, such as an owner (Joe Robbie Stadium, near Miami), the location (Candlestick Park, in San Francisco), the team itself (Tiger Stadium, Detroit), or a famous athlete with ties to the city or team (Joe Louis Arena, also in Detroit). Yet to raise additional revenue, stadium owners often sell the naming rights to private corporations, a perfectly legal but often unpopular act. A survey of students at the University of Kansas found that a hypothetical renaming of Allen Fieldhouse (named for legendary coach, Phog Allen) to something corporate would “result in greater perceived loss of team distinctiveness and anger” (see Reysen et al. 2012: 352). The loss is related to the perceived ownership of not only the name of the stadium

but also the traditions associated with the University of Kansas basketball team and to the edifice that houses them. Allen Fieldhouse expresses its distinctiveness and proximity to these home grown traditions; “Verizon Fieldhouse” would not.

In the same way, it is this sense of ownership that is challenged when a corporation’s name is added to the name of a stadium. The Celtics’ Boston Garden was changed to the Fleet Center and Lincoln Financial Field followed Veterans Stadium as the home of the Philadelphia Eagles. These corporations are seen by some as interlopers exploiting the team without investing in the community that supports it. Anger stemming from corporate naming, however, can be mitigated. If a new stadium is built to replace the old one, fans may “relinquish” ownership of the new stadium that has a corporate name—they may still feel that they own the old one. In Denver, the owners of the professional football team realized that replacing the old stadium (Mile High Stadium) with a new one with a corporate name (Invesco Stadium) would incite a fight with the public that they did not wish to engage. But needing the money that corporate sponsorship would bring, they reached compromise—“Invesco at Mile High” (see Moore 2002). Power relations were reinforced: the owners still got the corporate name on the stadium in the first position, but the final name nonetheless reveals the negotiations between interested parties, and the compromise that was reached. The use of a hybrid name may satisfy all parties. And if the corporation naming the stadium has historical, financial ties to the city—Heinz Field in Pittsburgh, or Coors Field in Denver—the “interloper effect” may be diminished.

Structural alterations to stadiums are also occasions for contestation. In 1988, when the owners of Wrigley Field (home to the Chicago Cubs) decided to put up lights in order to play night

games for the first time in club history, a battle ensued (Thomas 1987). On one side, the traditionalists (and even purists) claimed that lights at Wrigley would break with a daylight tradition that, among professional baseball stadiums, only their ballpark still kept. Some cited with pride a 1938 game that was almost postponed due to darkness right before a crucial home run was hit, helping the Cubs win the league pennant. Lights, they argued, would eliminate such heroics, and minimize the stadium’s distinctiveness. On the other side, the team’s owners and executives cited new rules that required some playoff games to be played at night on primetime television, and made it clear that Wrigley would either have lights or never host another Cubs game. This firm (and probably exaggerated) stance changed the debate, and even the most ardent opponents began to relent. Unlike in Denver, in this contest the actual (that is, legal) owners won, the strong sense of ownership shown by fans notwithstanding. As Chidester and Linenthal (1995: 16) note, “Sacred places are arenas in which power relations can be reinforced, in which relations between insiders and outsiders, rulers and subjects, elders and juniors, males and females, and so on, can be adjudicated. But those power relations are always resisted.” With Wrigley field and the fight over lights, the hierarchical relationship between owners and fans was reinforced by the power struggle over who had the authority to alter the ballpark.

Sometimes, the very existence of the stadium is at stake, tending to set off greater pitched battles between interested parties. When a stadium is threatened with a newer “better” replacement or (worse) relocation to another city, battles become entrenched warfare, and the question of ownership divides the warring factions. Who gets to decide the fate of a stadium when it is publicly owned—that is, subsidized by state or local taxes—and privately owned? Unlike most public/private hybrid buildings, sports stadiums bring with them another element of ownership;

fans, especially long-time fans, of a team come to think of the team and stadium as theirs. Razing a stadium to build a new one, or completely relocating the team, is not as simple as a calculated business decision made in a boardroom. When large sums of public money (either in the form of higher taxes or ticket prices) are required for renovation or replacement, the stadium becomes the focus of a political contest between competing ideologies. Spending millions on a fancy new stadium may seem foolhardy when a municipality has other, more pressing needs. Then again, stadiums bring jobs, can rejuvenate blighted areas of a downtown, temporarily guarantee the team’s immobility, and even create community solidarity.⁴

Little resistance may be raised by the public in cases where a stadium is in disrepair. But the type of renovation, and/or the look of the new stadium, depend on the connection of a stadium to its community. Convincing Texas Rangers fans to tear down a shoddily built stadium built in 1971 and replace it with a new one was less contentious in 1994 than replacing the “House that Ruth Built” (Yankee Stadium) in 2009 (for example, see O’Connor 2006). The case of the Cleveland Browns demonstrates the role a stadium plays in cementing a fan base to its team, a team to its city, and an owner to his or her primary interests. The Browns had played in their stadium since 1955 and had generated intense fan loyalty and allegiance from the small-market through the years. In 1995, after of a series of bad financial decisions and with the team and stadium losing money, owner Art Modell secretly began the process of moving the team to another city while publicly promoting an initiative to raise tax dollars to refurbish the stadium. Soon after, he announced the team’s relocation to Baltimore, where city officials were offering money to build a new stadium. In desperation, the Cleveland voters overwhelmingly endorsed the tax measure, but it was too late (Harris 1995).

Here, as with the controversy over naming a stadium, the result is a reinforcement of power dynamics, and money usually trumps popular consensus. The damage to the Browns fan in the wake of Modell’s decisions parallels cases of corporations closing American factories to relocate overseas. Yet the stadium controversy reveals its significance because the struggle over its location is almost existential and not just financial. Ownership of a stadium is an open question; if it were not, the Cleveland fans quietly would have resigned themselves to the harsh reality. They did not, and continued pressure after the incident resulted in the arrival of an expansion team in 1999: the Cleveland Browns “2.0.”⁵

Stadiums elicit symbolic as well as legal conceptions of ownership unlike other structures, and express their sacrality through the commitment of all participants to secure the ownership of sacred symbols, however ownership is understood. When proprietary interests conflict, we see the stadium not only at the center of the contest, but as the environment that contains and guides the struggle. In most contests over stadium ownership, the battle begins when there is a sense that something sacred will be “profaned,” be it by opposing fans or “opposing” investors.

ENCROACHMENT OF THE PROFANE

Sports stadiums are sites where the sacred is produced through rituals, meaning-making, and contestation. They are also popular cultural artifacts accessible to all, either through attendance, via television, or local and personal folklore. And while the contests over meaning performed through ritual produce the sacred, the involvement of capitalism often prevents the sacred (in the

stadium) from being protected from the profane (outside the stadium). That is, if a stadium is commercially valuable, it can retain its sacredness by resisting the profanation accomplished through commercial contests over legal ownership.

Some stadiums retain a sense of distinction through a connection to tradition. Is it possible, then, for a stadium to become so indistinct that it is no longer able to produce the sacred? Brent Mayne, head of Center Operating Company at the American Airlines Center in Dallas, suggests that recent trends encourage stadium designers to add amenities—“more opportunities for sponsorship”—to produce more revenue. “It’s much better,” he concludes, “than the concrete and brick concourses of the past” (Lamberth 2006: 6). In other words, for those seeking to make a profit from the stadium.

Some stadiums will never have to go out of their way to appeal to consumers. Historic ones like Wrigley Field and Lambeau Field (in Green Bay, Wisconsin) are icons in the world of American sport, and attract tourist/pilgrims without needing to attract ticket buyers. Most stadiums do not enjoy this luxury, and find themselves adding features to the stadium experience (in addition to the game) in order to sell tickets. Some of these are episodic and inexpensive—such as “theme nights” at minor league baseball parks. Some are more permanent; many stadiums now allow fans to watch (on their cell phones) instant replays of the game (Michaels 2012).

The new (or significantly remodeled) stadium must now provide all manner of amenities to compete with the abundance of entertainment options available to fans. The epitome is Cowboys Stadium (outside Dallas), built in 2009 and cynically called “JerryWorld” for the team’s owner

Jerry Jones, who is also the majority owner and designer of the stadium. Cowboys Stadium effectively blurs the line between sports stadium, sports bar, nightclub, living room, museum, and shopping mall. The stadium has platform cages for female “cage dancers,” commissioned art that adorns the stadium, and a Victoria’s Secret store. For less than the cost of an actual ticket, fans can buy a “party pass” which allows them entry into two upper concourse areas (one on each end of the stadium), neither of which has a view of the field; you are at the game and not at the game at the same time. Those with a ticket can watch the action on the largest high definition television screen in the world (60 yards x 30 yards), which presents the game with more clarity than one could get by watching the action on the field unmediated.

No doubt, technological features (like personalized cell phone replays and structural modifications that create shorter lines for concessions) will please most who attend these modern venues. However, the stadium’s attempt to please the fan is most often realized by blurring the line between the world outside the stadium and the world inside it; the HD screen extends the living room into the stadium; the “no line” bathroom mimics one’s experience at home. Even the advertisements decorating the stadium resemble a highway littered with billboards. Fans now get many services in the stadium that can be acquired elsewhere. The line is blurred; you are in the stadium, and yet you are not.

These changes may alter a stadium’s ability to convey sacredness. Rituals are still performed, significance is still built through classification and orientation, and contests between people still occur there, but the more the “profane” world of revenue is insinuated into the stadium, the more difficult it may be for the participants to experience transcendence. Why?

The collective effervescence, the blurring of social class, the transcending of measured time—all are predicated on the excitement that comes with the uncertain outcome of the event. Were the outcome known in advance, as with a movie, the rituals, contests, and their significance in the stadium would not move participants into states of transcendence. The stadium acts as the set-apart space that fosters these experiences.

The sense of a slow encroachment of the outside world can serve to lessen the effect of spontaneity, uncertainty, and hence the sense of sacredness. Fans do not gain more insight into who will win a game just because they are watching replays on a high-definition screen above the field, or because a new set of luxury boxes is installed in a stadium. But with the entrance of more accoutrements is the ability of a stadium to be a truly contested space. The uncertainty that breeds excitement is increasingly framed by a different story unfolding before fans’ eyes—the colonization of the stadium by corporations and private interests in the service of the bottom line. If a contest over ownership of meanings is crucial to the production of sacred space, and the participants perceive that the deck is stacked against them, then the active participation necessary to maintain the presence of the sacred may be sacrificed to the passive enjoyment of mere entertainment.

CONCLUSION

The emphasis on the production of the sacred and the encroachment of the profane in the modern stadium brings religion and sports into a different relationship than just instrumentality or

equality. While acknowledging a stadium’s economic function keeps it from being perceived as absolutely sacred space, it is clearly not just profane space, as the presence of ritual, the focusing of significance, and the contests over meaning strongly suggest.

The processes of cultural production mean that the relationship between religion and sports is fluid, not static; separating one from the other, or setting them in opposition, may impede our understanding them as cultural expressions. And while an examination of the relationship between religion and sports on the cultural plane may threaten to defile sacred spaces, it also allows for the examination of the production of the sacred in places, such as sports stadiums, through efforts to protect what is considered worth protecting. In this way, religion—as expressed through sacred symbols—is made manifest through sport, which can then be better understood through the use of religious language. Conversely, examining the profane, ordinary aspect of sports challenges the argument that sport is religion, or that it possesses some religious essence. Tracking their relationship requires close attention to the forces that produce each, and not just taking their respective cultural expression as pristine, finished products.

NOTES

¹ These questions were posed on the covers of *Newsweek* (January 11, 1971) and *Sports Illustrated* (February 4, 2013), respectively.

² “I believe in the Church of Baseball. I’ve tried all the major religions and most of the minor ones. I’ve worshipped Buddha, Allah, Brahma, Vishnu, Siva, trees, mushrooms, and Isadora

Duncan. I know things. For instance, there are 108 beads in a Catholic rosary and there are 108 stitches in a baseball. When I learned that, I gave Jesus a chance. But it just didn't work out between us. The Lord laid too much guilt on me. I prefer metaphysics to theology...I've tried them all, I really have. And the only church that truly feeds the soul day in, day out, is the Church of Baseball.”

³ Any who doubt about the power of constructed sacred space in sport should visit the baseball diamond built for the film, and extended facility built for the tourists who have visited there since the film opened (see Belson 2011).

⁴ Not surprisingly, Rick Eckstein and Kevin Delaney (2002) suggest that, despite these kinds of arguments made by stadium investors to communities, beneath the promise of increased “community self-esteem or collective conscience” is a motive to collect large sums of public money for private interests.

⁵ Though now a common nickname, the term is often attributed to “Tuesday Morning Quarterback” writer Gregg Easterbrook (for an early example, see Easterbrook 2001).

WORKS CITED

Adams, S. (2008) “‘In-com-plete’ chant may de-part,” *Rocky Mountain News* (August 30).

Online. Available HTTP:

<<http://www.rockymountainnews.com/news/2008/aug/30/adams--com-plete-chant-may-de-part/#>> (accessed 6 August 2013).

Albanese, C.L. (1992) *America, Religions and Religion*, Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

- Angell, R. (1987) “The interior stadium,” in J. Thorn (ed.), *The Armchair Book of Baseball II*, New York: Scribner, 415-423.
- Bale, J. (1993) “The spatial development of the modern stadium,” *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, 28: 121-133.
- (1994) *Landscapes of Modern Sport*, Leicester, UK: Leicester University Press.
- Bellah, R. (1967) “Civil religion in America,” *Daedalus* 96, 1 (Winter): 1-21.
- Belson, K. (2011) “New dreams for field,” *New York Times* (October 30): SP1.
- Betsill, J. (2012) “Oklahoma destroys Texas in 2012 Red River Rivalry in Dallas,” *DFW.com* (October 14). Online. Available HTTP: <http://www.dfw.com/2012/10/14/696181/Oklahoma-destroys-texas-in-2012.html> (accessed 6 August 2013).
- Bondy, F. (2012) “It’s time for the NFL to jump all over the Green Bay Packer’s Lambeau Leap celebration,” *New York Daily News* (January 12). Online. Available HTTP: <http://www.nydailynews.com/sports/football/giants/time-nfl-jump-green-bay-packers-lambeau-leap-celebration-article-1.1005465> (accessed 6 August 2013).
- Bradsher, K. (1996) “When octopuses are flying in Detroit it’s...” *New York Times* (April 14). Online. Available HTTP: <http://www.nytimes.com/1996/04/14/us/when-octopuses-are-flying-in-detroit-it-s.html> (accessed 3 August 2013).
- Carlton, C. (2012) “Texas’ DeLoss Dodds says Red River Rivalry won’t leave Dallas any time soon,” *DallasNews.com* (October 10). Online. Available HTTP: <http://www.dallasnews.com/sports/college-sports/texas-longhorns/20121010-carlton-texas-deloss-dodds-says-red-river-rivalry-won-t-leave-dallas-any-time-soon.ece> (accessed 6 August 2013).

- Chidester, D. (2005) *Authentic Fakes: Religion and American Popular Culture*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Chidester, D., and E.T. Linenthal (eds) (1995) *American Sacred Space*, Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.
- Collins, R. (2004) *Interaction Ritual Chains*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Cottingham, M.D. (2012) “Interaction ritual theory and sports fans: emotion, symbols, and solidarity,” *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 29: 168-185.
- Day, P.K. (2013) “Lance Armstrong admits doping to Oprah, but not after 2005,” *Los Angeles Times* (January 17). Online. Available HTTP: <http://articles.latimes.com/2013/jan/17/entertainment/la-et-st-lance-armstrong-oprah-winfrey-interview-20130117> (accessed 5 August 2013).
- Deford, F. (1976) “The world according to Tom,” *Sports Illustrated* (August 26): 58-65.
- Duncan, D.J. (1992) *The Brothers K*, New York: Doubleday.
- Durkheim, E. (1995) *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, K.E. Fields (trans), New York: The Free Press.
- Eames, Tom (2012) “Super Bowl XLVI becomes most-watched TV program in US history,” *DigitalSpy.com* (February 6). Online. Available HTTP: <http://www.digitalspy.com/tv/news/a364251/super-bowl-xlvi-becomes-most-watched-tv-program-in-us-history.html> (accessed 4 August 2013).
- Easterbrook, G. (2001) “Atsah defeat Sange, 20-6, as McNabb stars,” *Slate.com* (December 18). Online. Available HTTP: http://www.slate.com/articles/sports/sports_nut/2001/12/atsah_defeat_sange_206_as_mcnabb_stars.html (accessed 4 August 2013).

- Eckstein, R., and K. Delaney (2002) “New sports stadiums, community self-esteem, and community collective conscience,” *Journal of Sport and Social Issues*, 26: 235-247.
- Eitzen, D.S., and G.H. Sage (1978) *Sociology of American Sport*, Dubuque, Iowa: William C. Brown.
- Forney, C.A. (2007) *The Holy Trinity of American Sports: Civil Religion in Football, Baseball, and Basketball*, Macon, GA: Mercer University Press.
- Foucault, M. (1986) “Of other spaces,” *Diacritics* (Spring): 22-27.
- Gammon, Sean (2004) “Secular pilgrimage and sport tourism,” in B.W. Ritchie and D. Adair (eds) *Sport Tourism: Interrelationships, Impacts and Issues*, Buffalo: Channel View Publications, 30-45.
- Guttman, A. (1978) *From Ritual to Record: The Nature of Modern Sports*, New York: Columbia University Press.
- Harris, R. (1995) “Voters extend ‘sin tax’ to rehab Browns’ stadium,” Associated Press (November 8). Online. Available HTTP: <<http://www.apnewsarchive.com/1995/Voters-Extend-Sin-Tax-To-Rehab-Browns-Stadium/id-161b5e024f7ef2ec2046bf1e5d6b368c>> (accessed 4 August 2013).
- Heinen, D. (1995) “Blue Devil athletics steeped in countless traditions,” *The Chronicle* [Duke University] (September 19). Online. Available HTTP: <<http://www.dukechronicle.com/articles/1995/09/20/blue-devil-athletics-steeped-countless-traditions>> (accessed 3 August 2013).
- Higgs, R. (1995) *God in the Stadium: Sports and Religion in America*, Lexington, KY: University of Kentucky Press.

- Hoffman, S. J. (2010) *Good Game: Christianity and the Culture of Sports*, Waco, TX: Baylor University Press.
- “‘I was stunned’: Royals first base coach assaulted by father-son duo” (2002) *SI.com* (September 19). Online. Available HTTP:
<http://sportsillustrated.cnn.com/baseball/news/2002/09/19/royals_whitesox_ap/>
(accessed 6 August 2013).
- Johnson, K.C. (2011) “The invisible fan: scapegoat Bartman has managed to remain undetected for 8 years,” *Chicago Tribune* (September 26). Online. Available HTTP:
<http://articles.chicagotribune.com/2011-09-26/sports/ct-spt-0927-bartman-chicago--20110927_1_cubs-five-outs-scapegoat-bartman-alex-gibney> (accessed 4 August 2013).
- Juffer, J. (2006) “Why we like to lose: on being a Cubs fan in the heterotopia of Wrigley Field,” *South Atlantic Quarterly* 105, 2 (Spring): 289-301.
- Kaszuba, M. (2012) “Seat license fees are prevalent in the NFL,” [Minneapolis] *Star Tribune* (November 15): 1A.
- Lamberth, C.R. (2006) “Trends in stadium design: a whole new game,” *Implications*, 4, 6: 1-7.
- Lombardi, V., Jr. (2001) *What It Takes to Be #1: Vince Lombardi on Leadership*, New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Maclean, N. (1976) *A River Runs Through It, and Other Stories*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Mathisen, J. (1992) “From civil religion to folk religion: the case of American sport,” in S. Hoffman (ed.) *Sport and Religion*, Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics, 17-33.
- Merkin, S. (2005) “Sox hope journey doesn’t stop,” *MLB.com* (October 20). Online. Available HTTP:

<http://mlb.mlb.com/news/article.jsp?ymd=20051020&content_id=1255934&fext=.jsp&c_id=cws> (accessed 6 August 2013).

Michaels, P. (2012) “Let’s go to the replay: Stanford beams in-game action to fans’ phones,”

Macworld.com (January 10). Online. Available HTTP:

<http://www.macworld.com/article/1164705/lets_go_to_the_replay_stanford_beams_in_game_action_to_fans_phones.html> (accessed 3 August 2013).

“Midnight Yell” (2013) *Traditions of Texas A&M*, Texas A&M University. Online. Available

HTTP: <<https://www.tamu.edu/about/traditions.html#midnightYell>> (accessed 6 August 2013).

Monkovic, T. (2008) “Personal seat licenses: Jets to Giants, you first,” *New York Times* (June

27). Online. Available HTTP: <http://fifthdown.blogs.nytimes.com/2008/06/27/personal-seat-licenses-jets-to-giants-you-first/?_r=0> (accessed 26 June 2013).

Moore, P. (2002) “A controversial deal in 2001: Invesco buys naming rights,” *Denver Business*

Journal (March 3). Online. Available HTTP:

<<http://www.bizjournals.com/denver/stories/2002/03/04/focus10.html?page=all>> (accessed 4 August 2013).

Murphy, R. (n.d.) “10 Most Superstitious Athletes,” *Men’sFitness.com*. Online. Available HTTP:

<<http://www.mensfitness.com/leisure/sports/10-most-superstitious-athletes>> (accessed 3 August 2013).

Novak, M. (1976) *The Joy of Sports: End Zones, Bases, Baskets, Balls, and the Consecration of the American Spirit*, New York: Basic Books.

O’Connor, I. (2006) “Groundbreaking for new Yankee Stadium a step back for history,” *USA*

Today (August 16). Online. Available HTTP:

<http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/sports/columnist/oconnor/2006-08-16-oconnor-yankee-stadium_x.htm> (accessed 6 August 2013).

Otto, R. (1958) *The Idea of the Holy*, London: Oxford University Press.

Overman, S. (2011) *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Sport*, Macon, GA: Mercer University Press.

Posnanski, J. (2010) “10 interesting facts you may not know about the Miracle on Ice,” SI.com

(February 22). Online. Available HTTP:

<http://sportsillustrated.cnn.com/2010/writers/joe_posnanski/02/22/miracle.on.ice/index.html> (accessed 3 August 2013).

Prebish, C.S. (1993) *Religion and Sport: The Meeting of Sacred and Profane*, Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.

Putney, C. (2001) *Muscular Christianity: Manhood and Sports in Protestant America, 1880-1920*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Reysen, S., J. Snider, and N.R. Branscombe (2012) “Corporate renaming of stadiums, team identification and threat to distinctiveness,” *Journal of Sport Management*, 26: 350-357.

Ricciardi, T. (2012) “Red River rivalry parties, celebrities in Dallas,” *GuideLive.com* (October 10). Online. Available HTTP: <<http://www.dallasnews.com/entertainment/state-fair-of-texas/headlines/20121010-red-river-rivalry-parties-celebrities-in-dallas.ece>> (accessed 6 August 2013).

Shainberg, L. (1989) “Finding ‘the zone,’” *New York Times Magazine* (April 9). Online.

Available HTTP: <<http://www.nytimes.com/1989/04/09/magazine/finding-the-zone.html?pagewanted=all&src=pm>> (accessed 6 August 2013).

Smith, G. (2010) *Sports Theology: Playing Inside Out*, Indianapolis: Dog Ear Publishing.

Smith, J.Z. (1978) *Map is Not Territory*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Tebow, T., and N. Whitaker (2011) *Through My Eyes*, New York: HarperCollins.

Thomas, K.M. (1987) “Opposition to Wrigley Field lights still burns bright,” *Chicago Tribune* (November 16). Online. Available HTTP: <http://articles.chicagotribune.com/1987-11-16/news/8703260241_1_amendment-bernard-hansen-night-games> (accessed 3 August 2013).

Trujillo, N., and B. Krizek (1994) “Emotionality in the stands and in the field: expressing self through baseball,” *Journal of Sport and Social Issues*, 18, 4 (November): 303-325.

Turner, V. (1997) *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure*, New York: Aldine De Gruyter.

Van Gennep, A. (1961) *The Rites of Passage*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Vosk, S. (2005) “Another mystery of the Diamond, explained at last,” *Boston.com* (May 29).

Online. Available HTTP:

<http://boston.com/sports/baseball/redsox/articles/2005/05/29/another_mystery_of_the_diamond_explained_at_last/> (accessed 3 August 2013).