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SUSTAINABILITY, GREENWASHING, AND THE LIGHT GREEN APPROACH TO SPORT ENVIRONMENTALISM

jay johnson and Adam Ehsan Ali

In a handbook dedicated to helping us towards understanding how sustainability is understood, problematized, measured, and mobilized in the service of sport, this chapter asks us to consider how such a word may be taken up and utilized for purposes other than addressing harmful practices that occur as a result of sport. Because this book centers upon sustainability, it seems appropriate to unpack this particular word in order to understand how useful it is when used in statements or policies that sport organizations create to address environmental concerns. This is not, of course, to say that sport entities or event organizers are not attempting to make environmentally sound decisions that show they are, at the very least, mindful of how their operations affect the environment. What is important to question, however, is what sustainability actually means. How do we understand it? How do we visibly see sustainability in action – as it is happening? How do we implement sustainable goals, and are these really helping to preserve the complex, diverse ecosystems of the planet? What are the variables by which sustainability is measured? How abstract are they? And finally, what do we mean when we say that we want a sustainable future? Do we mean a generation from now? A hundred years? Mol (2010) observes that sustainability is highly fragmented, context dependent, and is open to different interpretations, leading some scholars to argue for eliminating the word entirely. He points out, however, that despite this anxiety, sustainability remains a central concept in debates and discourse surrounding environmental action and advocacy. This makes it pertinent to our discussion of its use in the arena of sport.

Selman (as cited in Mansfield, 2009) outlines a thoughtful version of sustainable development in ecological terms as characterized by three forms of equity. First, intergenerational equity ensures that the Earth is passed on to the future in the same condition as when it was inherited. Second, the needs of all peoples within a single generation are cared for, what she terms intragenerational equity. Finally, she defines transfrontier equity as living within the limits of local resources. These proponents of ecological sustainability encourage a foundational shift in the way humans live, which will then significantly decrease the numerous ways we extract, consume, and deplete the Earth's resources while destroying its ecosystems in the process. Such a process requires a transformation in governance and ideology concerning the relationship between humans and nature, and, as Rosenberg discusses in Chapter 4, is representative of a "dark green" approach that calls for a break in capitalist and economically focused culture. The underlying

argument here is that these types of cultures, ones in which we currently live, are environmentally unsustainable, and that we should be protecting the environment for its intrinsic worth outside of dominant systems that seek to measure its worth through consumption and the market (Lensky, 1998). This represents a challenge to the dominant Western ways of living (Mansfield, 2009) and emphasizes the finitude of the Earth's resources, which justifies the need to cease the excessiveness of Western lifestyles while limiting consumption and growth (Dobson, 2007).

These are important concepts to understand when assessing just how much needs to change in order for us to simply stop harming the environment now, much less make it "sustainable" for future generations. We concede, however, that although Selman's forms of equitable sustainability should be taken seriously, it is difficult to imagine how to go about implementing such measures. To do so would be an enormously difficult task because, as we will argue, sustainability is an extremely ambiguous concept. There is no universal meaning behind the word that specifically tells us when it is happening, how it should happen, and how we can discern it. The important point here is that it is the very ambiguous nature of the term sustainability that makes it both a powerful concept and dangerous tool, in terms of how it is utilized in mainstream discourses about environmentalism and "green" initiatives.

More widely understood approaches to addressing environmental issues are informed by these mainstream discourses, which are what scholars have termed "light green." In contrast to dark green, a light green approach to the environment is about maintaining the current social and economic status quo by harboring "environmentalism" within a paradigm of profitability and market forces. Within this approach lies a steadfast belief in economic and technological forces as the best and most viable solutions towards improving current and future environmental health. It is within this technocratic, market-driven approach to environmentalism that sustainability has become a popular term with which to label the various initiatives and projects taken up by companies and organizations, both in the private and public sector, to illustrate their ecological stewardship. Thus, although we recognize the importance of attempting to understand, measure, and evaluate sustainable objectives, we are more interested in how sport organizations, event organizers, and facilities offer promising goals on their environmental initiative, such as a "sustainable" practice, as part of their marketing, campaigning, and goals, but in reality fail to deliver on those promises in their actual operations; this process is known as "greenwashing."

Greenwashing

Mahoney, Thorne, Cecil, and LaGore (2013) define greenwashing as a socio-political perspective which suggests that businesses report positive communications of "green" initiatives put forth by their organizations to help build legitimacy within the social environment. These initiatives, however, are either difficult to measure, or non-existent in practice. With the increased awareness of the effects of climate change and the overall degradation caused by industrial practices, pressures have mounted on sport organizations and facilities for the development of more "green" practices that demonstrate a commitment to environmental sustainability. Rather than addressing the embedded causes of environmental degradation, however, many sport organizations have instead utilized the marketability of "going green" in order to increase profitability and enhance their reputation as socially responsible entities. Millington and Wilson (2013) describe the practice of greenwashing as one where there is a "material conflict that manifests as an overstatement of industry's environmental stewardship" (p. 470). This occurs when sport organizations and events recognize the importance of portraying themselves positively through rhetoric and campaigns, but either fail to adequately implement substantial changes to follow through on such promotion, or do not institute the adjustments at all. As we will see, although

greenwashing is not limited to the sporting realm, it has become a central technique for sport mega-event organizers such as the Olympics and FIFA World Cup to deflect criticism for the massive amounts of ecological damage such events reap upon the cities and countries in which they are hosted. Furthermore, numerous sport organizations and leagues have implemented policies outlining their environmental initiatives, which should be met with hesitation as to whether they are either feasible in the first place, or followed through on at all.

There are two central reasons why greenwashing is effective as part of an organization's corporate social responsibility (CSR) portfolio, both of which follow a light green approach. First of all, under this paradigm, so-called solutions to environmental issues are believed to be found within the industry, as Millington and Wilson (2013) highlight. Because of this, it is taken for granted that policies created by industry leaders will provide the best possible outcome for the environment. Such understandings allow corporations to implement creative, attractive policies and messaging around their relationship with the environment, which portray them in a "green-friendly" way. This messaging is done strategically to ensure that it does not actually hold the organization to a set standard or goal that must be met. Rather, it occurs through what we term "purposeful ambiguity," which is a common tactic within mainstream green CSR initiatives. Purposeful ambiguity refers to a process by which information pertaining to an environmental policy or objective is outlined in particular ways that make it difficult to discern how it will be implemented, why its implementation is important, and how it will be measured. If we refer back to our efforts to problematize sustainability, for example, we can begin to understand how the ambiguity of the term makes it useful for different organizations. This allows corporations to themselves define what sustainability is under their purview in ways that are internally friendly to their operations and externally pleasing to their stakeholders. This is why sustainability is dangerous; it can be used as a form of rhetoric within a light green paradigm, while lacking the necessary teeth that would hold the organization accountable to decrease its ecologically harmful practices.

Second, purposeful ambiguity is incredibly useful in greenwashing because oftentimes the goals, objectives, and measurable results are disseminated by these organizations in ways that align with environmentalist reform, but are also highly abstract and convoluted. It is not uncommon for sport event organizers and corporations to publish new environmental policy that does not include how the organization will measure whether these goals and policies are achieved. This allows the organizations to present overly ambitious environmental policy that (1) assists in manufacturing consent amongst the general public and government watchdogs, (2) makes it difficult for grassroots environmental organizations – those with a dark green ecological approach – to argue for alternative forms of sustainability objectives, and (3) maintains its current operations, some of which are potentially do the most harm to the environment.

Greenwashing and the Olympics

One of the largest culprits of greenwashing in the sporting world over the last two decades has been the International Olympic Committee (IOC) through its staging of the Summer or Winter Olympics every two years. As Cantelon and Letters (2000) note, international mega-events like an Olympic and Paralympic Games transform the physical environment of their host cities, surrounding regions, and countries in profound and permanent ways. With the vast amount of construction, landscaping, and resource depletion needed to construct the numerous facilities and modify outdoor environments for the Games, one need not look very hard to discern the potential harm that befalls host cities in the preparation phase, during the Games themselves, and following their completion. This does not include the amount of damage that occurs by way

of increasing local transportation; air travel of athletes, organizers, media, and spectators to and from the event; and the massive accumulation of waste that occurs throughout the competition.

The IOC's formation of its "green" policy was created following the 1992 Albertville Olympics, whose significant environmental damage was covered widely in the media leading up to the Games (Cantelon & Letters, 2000; see also Chapter 17). The mismanagement of the construction of the facilities at Albertville combined with a lack of environmental policy meant that the IOC had to repair its tarnished environmental reputation. The following Games in Lillehammer, who seriously took into account the environment in their planning and was quite successful overall, was quickly co-opted by the IOC to champion itself as a global environmental steward (Cantelon & Letters, 2000). In 1994, the "Environment" became the third pillar of Olympism, along with "Sport" and "Culture," and an environmental policy was in place by the Nagano Olympics in the winter of 1998. Unsurprisingly, the policy was created using a light green approach to environmental concerns (Lenskyj, 1998). As such, attention to the environment has become one of the central pieces of every Olympic Games bid proposal. Despite continuing to announce its commitment to the environment through sport by the IOC, including holding conferences and summits, signing pledges, and calling for environmental stewardship among its athletes, environmental concerns continue to be associated with all of the consequent Olympic Games that have taken place – a clear case of greenwashing.

In their evaluation of green legacies stemming from the last three Summer Olympic Games in Athens, Beijing, and London, Samuel and Stubbs (2013) note that bidding cities have "talked green" in order to be considered a serious contender to win their hosting proposal. Sustainability is a key aspect of these environmental bids, as one of their main findings was that it was critical to include sustainability considerations within the vision, mission, and brand of bid proposal, as well as in various aspects of the Olympic Games organization. As Mol (2010) argues, sustainability is a global attractor in that it has become a point of orientation, especially within mega-events such as the Olympics, where it materializes throughout not just the policies of the bid committees, but also its facilities, events, and television broadcasts.

Additionally, Samuel and Stubbs (2013) point to the ability of bidding parties to mimic the environmental policies and tactics of previously successful bids, while also implementing ambitious strategies that raise their environmental profile in the hopes of "outgreening" the competition. Importantly, they warn that positive legacies only occur if promises made on the environment by such bid committees are actually delivered.

Moreover, because no best practice standard has been implemented globally or by the IOC itself, environmental sustainability and green legacy benchmarks are actually set by the individual bid committees. As such, the pattern that begins to form around these Olympic bids is one of purposeful ambiguity. Because there are not hard standards and objectives put in place through the IOC's environmental policy, other than it is important and needs to be a significant part of any major bidding city's proposal, each city has the freedom to create ambitious policies that may not be easy to measure and goals that are difficult to achieve. Pentifallo and Van Wynsberghe (2012) note that the phrasing of questions that the IOC pose to potential bid committees does not require mandatory measures, nor compliance from the bids, and no penalty if the promises go unrealized. And because the only best standard is based on the rhetoric, not follow-through, of previous successful bids where it is unclear whether or not these environmental promises were delivered upon, there is no way of measuring and, thus, comparing these standards between each successive host city. This is accentuated through the power of sustainability as a global attractor; its simultaneous importance yet ambiguity is what makes it an excellent leveraging tool for constituting ecological stewardship amongst Olympic bids committees. So, as Collins, Jones, and Munday (2009) note in their assessment of mega-sport event environmental impacts,

although the IOC appears to lead the way on sustainable commitments, there are no methods for assessing whether these strategies are actually effective in reducing their ecological footprint or improving environmental health and sustainability.

What complicates this situation further is that, as Pentifallo and Van Wynsberghe (2012) argue, it is through these continuous phases of promises made by Olympic bid committees that the IOC's sustainability agenda is actually moved forward, which is why the IOC-designed environmental measures have failed to be met. As each Olympics occurs, there is an environmental rhetoric arms war whereby bid committees institutionalize the messaging of sustainability and environmental protection in an effort to mimic, and yet surpass, previous winning bids (Pentifallo & Van Wynsberghe, 2012; see also Chapter 8). This places the authority of environmental protection at each Olympics Games within the bid committees themselves, rather than with the IOC.

This began in 2000 with the so-called "Green Games," which took place in Sydney. Lenskyj (1998) found that Sydney's Olympic and Paralympic bid committee seemed willing to own such a label when it was fortuitous for their image, but less so when it became a point of criticism of their lack of follow-through on their environmental promises. This included failing to mention that the proposed Olympic site and waterway were contaminated with toxic waste. Such facts stand in stark contrast to Bruce Baird, the minister responsible for the bid, who was cited in 1993 saying that "no other event at the beginning of the 21st century will have a greater impact on protecting the environment than the 2000 Olympic Games in Sydney" (Lenskyj, 1998, p. 347). As the Games drew near, however, criticism built as the Sydney bid committee's relationship with Greenpeace strained after the former failed to follow through on their environmental commitments. Peggy James, the coordinator of Green Games Watch 2000, a fellow environmental activist organization, actually labeled the committee's public relations strategy as a "greenwash" exercise (Lenskyj, 1998).

Beyer (as cited in Samuel & Stubbs) states that Beijing, in response to its previous bid loss to Sydney, presented an intricate environmental plan for its eventual winning bid to host the 2008 Games. Air quality was, however, an issue in Beijing, despite the "Green Olympics Program" created by its organizers (Sheets et al., as cited in Paquette, Stevens, & Mallen, 2011). And although Vancouver's Olympic organizers were the first committee to integrate "sustainable principles" into its management structure and that "sustainability" was included as one of five values of the committee, negative environmental implications came out of the 2010 Winter Games, including a lack of resources dedicated to their green initiatives as well as the controversial highway expansion through bluffs and wetlands for Games transportation (Ponsford, 2011). Interestingly, the rhetoric of sustainability continued after the Games were over in its "Greenest City Initiative," which was meant to brand Vancouver as a sustainable city on both a local and international scale (Van Wynsberghe, Derom, & Maurer, 2012). Rather than this initiative promoting more meaningful change towards ecologically healthy action, the Greenest City policy was built heavily around the powerful term of sustainability, leveraging this association to inspire individual behavioral changes among its citizens and promote its green friendly brand towards the world community. Here we see how greenwashing tactics are employed within and towards market-driven ventures.

The rhetoric of sustainability only continued with the Rio Games, whose committee structured its "Sustainability Management Plan" around nine specific objectives. One of the objectives listed in the 106-page document is Water Treatment and Conservation; however, the waterways where Olympic events were to be held remained highly contaminated in the months leading up the Games.

An important final point on the Olympics' environmental initiatives and greenwashing tactics is to understand the larger social processes that condition the precipitation of sustainable

practices that are without any substance. Our current economic system and governance structure emphasize financial growth and technological innovation as the basis for improving the well-being of humans. There is an inherent, taken-for-granted belief in the free market, competition, and individual responsibility as the basis for personal success and resolving social issues, environmentalism included. As we have previously noted, such a belief predisposes solutions to ecological concern that maintain economic stimulation and growth (i.e., light green), while characterizing alternative measures that would slow down or halt economic growth (i.e., dark green) as outlandish, extreme, and unnecessary.

With all that we know concerning the state of host cities following an Olympic and Paralympic Games both from an environmental and economic standpoint, it would seem reasonable to question whether or not we should be hosting such events in the first place. Because even if all of these sustainability initiatives were successful, the damage that is done to all of the specific ecosystems and landscapes on which Olympic stadiums and facilities are built will still remain. Instead, focusing on sustainability initiatives allows for growth to continue while proposing to maintain or preserve the environment (for future growth). Dark ecological supporters argue that it is the never-ending need for growth that must be rethought in critical ways, especially when infinite amount of growth is proposed in a finite world with limited resources.

Although greenwashing occurs at mega sport events like the Olympics, it is also common throughout professional sports as well. We turn to forms of greenwashing as it relates to NASCAR and the National Hockey League next.

Professional sport, greenwashing, and periphery adjustments

An important aspect of greenwashing with a light green approach to environmental concerns is what we term periphery adjustments. Periphery adjustments represent changes that are made in policy, objectives, marketing, messaging, and operations by sporting leagues, events, and organizations that allow these entities to appear as though they are either being pro-active or responding to ecological issues either within their organization or more generally speaking, but importantly to do so without changing the status quo. That is, periphery adjustments do not disrupt the core functioning, financial bottom lines, and overall growth of an organization, which dark green advocates will contend do the most harmful damage to the environment. Instead, the organization looks externally to make up for those foundational practices, or dovetails its ongoing technological growth and business "efficiency" with ecological stewardship. These small adjustments or connections are then leveraged for what Millington and Wilson (2013) call impression management campaigns, where organizations promote themselves as caring about the environment through showcasing these adjustments. Periphery adjustments can range from switching to LEED lighting to purchasing carbon offsets and running spectator recycling drives. The important point is that these entities appear pro-active in their environmental work while the under layer of degradation continues, yet goes unnoticed.

NASCAR

NASCAR represents a good example of a sport organization that utilizes periphery adjustments to maintain a green image. In responding to concerns about the detrimental effects of their sport on the environment, the organization implemented NASCAR Green, an arm of the company that is meant to reduce its overall environmental impact through "strategic partnerships" (NASCAR, 2016). Arguably its most significant green initiative came in 2011, when the organization partnered with gas company Sunoco and American Ethanol to launch E15,

a biofuel with 15 percent ethanol that is meant to reduce greenhouse emissions by 20 percent while increasing horsepower. In speaking about the efficiency of the E15 brand, race car driver Austin Dillon stated that "NASCAR is an American pastime that is proving you can make anything green . . . and that when it comes to auto performance, you don't have to sacrifice anything to help improve the environment" (Pennell, 2016, para. 16). The organization also claims that through its Clean Air Tree Planting Program in partnership with the Arbor Day Foundation and the Virginia Department of Forestry, it has offset carbon emissions for all NASCAR series racing for the past 6 years, as well as the next 40 years. It has planted over 400,000 trees since the program began.

In response to the E15 innovation, by addressing their emissions through the creation of a biofuel that uses 15 percent ethanol and thus saves on gasoline, NASCAR has attempted to locate the concern associated with their sport through increasing technological efficiency. Whether or not the E15 brand fuel actually makes a significant difference in cutting down on NASCAR emissions, it is utilized as a means to adjust the sport in ways that do not affect its core functioning. That is, although it has cut down 20 percent of emissions, that disguises the fact that dozens of cars are still driving around a 2.5-mile track for 200 laps, or 500 miles, at many of these races. A dark green ecological approach would ask more structural questions about maintaining a sport that involves such an (unnecessary) depletion of fossil fuels and release of pollutants, especially with the growing evidence about climate change, the finiteness of our resources, and overall human impact on the environment. A light green approach, in contrast, locates the solution in advancing technology and maintaining growth and consumption, which inherently involves periphery adjustments such as making new forms of bio-fuel.

Although one could theoretically argue that there is some value in creating more efficient fuel as a means to minimize our reliance on fossil fuels, it is hard to envision a tree planting program that has managed to offset the next 40 years of NASCAR series racing carbon emissions. Offsetting through tree planting as a practice is problematic for a number of reasons. First of all, there is a high level of abstraction in calculating how much each tree that is planted will offset certain amounts of carbon emissions. There is an underlying assumption that all the trees planted will grow and mature successfully, on a somewhat linear timeline. This does not take into account the interaction newly planted trees have with the ecosystem they are introduced to, which could affect their likelihood of survival or their effect on other species within that system.

Second, it is ambiguous as to what magnitude NASCAR events are actually being offset in the first place. NASCAR Green states that it the program will offset all NASCAR series racing; does that only include the races themselves? Does it not include all the carbon emissions used in all other aspects of the organization's functioning, including travel, food, merchandise, and promotions? Moreover, this probably does not take into account the massive amounts of carbon emissions that are released through traveling by fans, sponsors, and other stakeholders to each event.

Finally, Wilson (2012) importantly points out that another assumption of offsetting is that environmental damage in one place can actually be balanced by an environmentally friendly project such as tree planting, in another, arguing that this in of itself is highly abstract. Moreover, he implores us to think about the actual destruction that occurs, whether or not it is offset through other means. So, in actuality discussing whether or not the tree planting effectively works as an offset program fails to address the fundamental environmental concern with NASCAR and other sport corporations, which is the significantly harmful ecological damage that occurs because of their core operations. Greenwashing is not just about disguising the damage that is done by an organization through overestimating its environmental stewardship. It also shapes the discourses that narrate the conversation about environmental advocacy, and in doing so silences more dark green forms of ecological advocacy.

NHL Green

Finally, one of the most highly lauded organizations in terms of its environmental initiatives is the National Hockey League (NHL) and its NHL Green program, which began in 2010. The league has won many awards for its environmentally based programming and operational objectives, including the 2015 Green Power Leadership Award from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) (Constellation, NHL Reduce Environmental Impact, 2015). In addition, it was invited to participate on a panel organized by the Green Sports Alliance at the United Nations Climate Change Talks, which took place in Paris in December of 2015. It has been specifically applauded for the release of its Sustainability Report in 2014, which was the first report published by any professional league in North America and that disseminated the carbon footprint and resource use of the NHL and its member clubs. Although the league has numerous initiatives, for the purposes of this chapter we will focus on its initiatives surrounding water restoration and the league's Gallons for Goals program.

Water is particularly significant to the NHL, as it is needed in considerable amounts to create and maintain the ice surfaces on which the 30 member clubs play their games. This, according to the league, made becoming focused on freshwater scarcity due to climate change particularly important. League senior vice president of NHL Green and Executive Director of the NHL Foundation Bernadette Mansur states that "[w]ater is in the DNA of the NHL. Many of our players grow up skating on frozen ponds. Freshwater scarcity affects their opportunity to learn and play the game outdoors" (NHL, 2012, para. 3). As such, the league implemented the Gallons for Goals program in 2011, where for every goal scored during the regular season, the NHL restores 1,000 gallons of water to a critically dewatered river. A commendable act, to be sure. In its inaugural year, the league donated over 6 million gallons of water through the purchasing of water restoration certificates (WRC) from the Bonneville Environmental Foundation (BEF), which then goes to support a number of national water restoration projects.

In a similar vein to tree planting and the development of E15 fuel associated with the environmental projects of NASCAR, the NHL's water restoration initiative employs periphery adjustments in order to address a massive, systemic amount of depletion to water that occurs every year as a result of the NHL's operations. To provide some context, in 2015–2016, 6,565 goals were scored throughout the regular season. Each WRC through the BEF costs $2.00, and for each WRC purchased there is 1,000 gallons of water restored. This means that the over 6 million gallons of water restored by the league through these certificates cost the NHL $13,130. Although we can debate whether or not that represents a significant financial commitment in attempting to restore water, a resource that is arguably the most used to keep the league running, it should be noted that in 2011–2012, the league depleted over 321 million gallons of water (NHL, 2014). This means that just over 2 percent of the water used by the league was restored through the purchasing of these certificates.

In this examples we see a good illustration of purposeful ambiguity, where it is unclear whether the NHL is making a significant environmentally friendly contribution in their commitment to water restoration. If one was to simply read that the league restored over 6 million gallons of water per season, the assumption is that it is indeed significant. The NHL, however, while releasing its water use, did not show us the percentage of that water that it actually restored. And because the estimation used to calculate water use included only enough to flood one sheet of ice, it excludes all the other ways water is used in NHL arenas.

Furthermore, if the league was to spend around $650,000 on water restoration, it could hypothetically restore all of its water use through purchasing WRCs. This, of course, excludes all of the critiques regarding the idea of depletion or degradation in one area being offset

or balanced by a green project in another that we explored with NASCAR's initiatives. But through a combination of periphery adjustments and purposeful ambiguity, the NHL comes across as an environmentally pro-active organization that cares about ensuring water restoration. This is one of the many strategies that have helped the league become one of the green leaders of the professional sport industry in North America.

Conclusion: the future of greenwashing and sustainability

Through tracing a history of the IOC's environmental record and the initiatives of two professional sport organizations in North America, NASCAR and the NHL, we have provided a couple of examples of how greenwashing is utilized within the realm of sport to portray its stakeholders as champions of environmental action and citizenship while disguising the continuing practices of degradation that occur with its foundational operations. The examples chosen to illustrate these practices were not random, but rather were selected because they all represent large organizations that many have applauded for being leaders in environmentalism and standing on the frontier of the green sporting enterprise. In addition, the Olympic and Paralympic Games represent a rare spectacle that results in the formation of facilities and significant changes to infrastructure that would not otherwise occur without its happening. And yet, because the environment is not a priority beyond its rhetorical meanings, the consumption and growth that occurs in the lead up to and during each Games devastates the environment and does irreparable damage to the ecosystems it exploits. Meanwhile, both the NHL and NASCAR, leagues that require massive amounts of resource depletion, whether it be water or fossil fuels, have strategically increased their visibility as green leaders in the industry.

Such incidences are why those who believe in dark green ecological approaches to sustainable action are skeptical at best when it comes to environmental solutions that occur within the current economic and social conditions. An important reason for this is that, in contrast to those who support a light green, technocratic approach, dark green ecologists believe that growth and technological innovation are not harmonious with environmental health or sustainability. Growth does not occur without consumption, and capitalism does not occur without exploitation. Under these conditions, it is difficult to believe that true dedication to environmental health and sustainability can occur. If it were to, there would be serious questions about how sport fits (or does not fit) into a society in which ecological accountability is prioritized.

Offering pragmatic recommendations of how to approach environmentalist approaches in sport at present, however, should not be overlooked. First of all, it is important to explore how a sport organization, league, or event is defining, measuring, and assessing sustainability. Are their objectives realistic? On what foundation was environmental policy built? Who are the different stakeholders involved and what are their particular histories when it comes to environmental approaches? Are the goals and objective clear? Or is there ambiguity? What is the relationship between their objectives and their fundamental operations? Is there significant dissonance between the two? These are important questions to consider when problematizing the likelihood that an organization will follow through on their promises, or whether it is simply rhetoric and thus a greenwashing culprit.

A second recommendation falls in championing alternative approaches to ecological stewardship. As Millington and Wilson (2013) note, such a critique of light green approaches is not to demean or trivialize the great efforts many companies and individuals make towards more sustainable or green policies and practices. It is instead about how certain approaches become privileged as the best or only way to champion environmentalism. This makes it easier for some organizations to take advantage of the light green approach through greenwashing,

whereas other entities may actually make commendable changes in their operational structure. Advocating for more active government involvement in the industry's relationship with the environment would represent an alternative approach that forces the private sector to adhere to public policy that is in the interest of the people, rather than a financial bottom line. Obviously, such an example goes beyond the arena of sport, but it can be approached as a strategy to hold both professional and amateur sport entities more accountable towards high environmental standards.

Finally, we believe that serious questions need to be asked about the benefits of spectacles such as the Olympics and Paralympics, the World Cup, and other mega-events, when weighed against its costs from environmental, economical, and social perspectives. How does the commercialization of the Olympics, and amateur sport, mediate the discussion about whether or not these events should occur at all? In what ways can the term sustainability be problematized in order to unearth the atrocities that occur to the less fortunate in host cities, which are often displaced in lieu of new facilities? What is the connection between this and the exploitation of the environment? Can there really be a "Green Games," and if so, what does that look like? In critically attending to some of these queries, we can attempt to unsettle the current dominant understandings of "green" advocacy as they occur in sport and spark a more mindful approach towards resolving the wants of sport with the needs of the environment.

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