

OLYMPIC POWER PLAYS:
A SOCIAL ANALYSIS OF CTV'S PRODUCTION OF THE
1988 WINTER OLYMPIC ICE HOCKEY TOURNAMENT

BY

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ABSTRACT

OLYMPIC POWER PLAYS: A SOCIAL ANALYSIS OF CTV'S PRODUCTION OF THE 1988 WINTER OLYMPIC ICE HOCKEY TOURNAMENT

This dissertation is a study of the Canadian Television Network's (CTV) production of the 1988 Winter Olympic ice hockey tournament. A critical cultural studies analysis of the production site, the crew, Olympic and network decision makers is conducted on a number of levels including the political, economic and cultural spheres of broadcasting. On the broadest political-economic level, Olympic broadcasting is analyzed to question how Canada's national private network strategically employed Olympic hockey as a *spectacle of accumulation* to boost ratings, expand market positioning, strengthen their media monopoly, and attract national sponsors while blocking national broadcasting competitors. To study the political-economic level, three methods are utilized including (1) interviews with network and Olympic officials, (2) document analysis of media and Olympic policies, papers, memos and texts, and (3) ethnographic observation of the media officials in the Broadcast Centre and at the SaddleDome hockey venue.

Ethnographic observation of the labour process of the CTV hockey crew at the arena, informed by the semiotic insights of critical communication studies, provides the second ² level of understanding, Olympic broadcasting as a *spectacle of legitimation*. These observations illustrate how the crew re-make the live sporting event into a series of cultural images to "sell" the national audience. These images are compatible with the commercial and sporting ideologies of the "Olympic family" (including the International

Olympic Committee, media rights holders and exclusive sponsors), and broadcasts that are compatible with mythologies of the unofficial Canadian “national game”. The ethnographic elements of production appraised in this study include the division of media labour, crew relations, the social-aesthetic use of broadcast technology, the conventional employment of sporting codes of commentary and visual codes of television mediation.

Despite covering a losing Team Canada, which had been positioned as a medal hopeful by CTV programmers prior to the 1988 Games, this study demonstrates how the television crew laboured to reclaim hockey as “the” Canadian sport in order to reassert a self-proclaimed superiority in producing the television feed for all world broadcasters. The work to create Olympic telecast images of the sporting spectacle is revealed to be a *social process* that legitimates select systems of meaning, reinforces particular modes of media production and strengthens monopolistic political-economic relationships: the circuit of cultural production constructs a profoundly patriotic and patriarchal version of hockey that momentarily serves the economic and marketing interests of the CTV network and the Olympic movement, while reproducing the cultural-economic power of the National Hockey League as *the* hockey reference system for broadcasting spectacles of this game.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ABC	American Broadcasting Corporation
ANOC	Association of National Olympic Committees
CRTC	Canadian Radio-Television Telecommunications Commission
CSFM	Canadian Sport and Fitness Marketing Inc.
COA	Canadian Olympic Association
CODA	Calgary Olympic Development Association
CTV	Canadian Television Network
CTV-DB	CTV-Domestic Broadcaster
CTV-HB	CTV-Host Broadcaster
FAS	Fitness and Amateur Sport (Federal Ministry)
IF	International Federation
IIHF	International Ice Hockey Federation
IOC	International Olympic Committee
ISL	International Sport Licencing
NHL	National Hockey League
NOC	National Olympic Committee
NSO	National Sport Organization
OCO-'88	Olympiques Calgary Olympics (1988 Organizing Committee)
OWGOR	Olympic Winter Games Official Report (by OCO to IOC, 1988)
TOP	The Olympic Programme (marketing arm of the IOC)

INTRODUCTION

It is often precisely by showing that what may appear to those involved as inevitable, as unchallengeable -- as resembling a law of nature -- is, in fact, an historical product, that sociological analysis can play an emancipatory role in human society (Anthony Giddens, 1982:15).

Over the past half century the reach and signifying power of the broadcast media have steadily grown. The 1936 Berlin Summer Olympics marked the emergence of the sport-television relationship. Five oversized television screens were constructed in a number of theatres around Berlin to permit German citizens to view the Olympic Games being held in their city. Following these free public displays, the private consumption of Olympic sport became possible in the 1950s as national broadcasting systems were set up in many western nations such as Canada and the United States. The first simultaneous television coverage of Olympic sports occurred in the United States during the 1960 Squaw Valley Olympics. Four years later selected events from the 1964 Tokyo Olympics were telecast around the globe via satellite transmission. Prior to the Tokyo Games, countries distant from the host site who wished to observe Olympic events had to transport films of the events by jet from the host city to their respective nations for local rebroadcasting.

From the wide range of current media personnel given access to the Olympic Games -- such as newspaper and specialty sports magazine journalists, telecast crews and radio broadcasters -- it is the television media who currently occupy the pivotal role

within the *sports-media-advertising nexus*.¹ The current size of Olympic audiences and the strikingly large fees paid for Olympic broadcast rights indicate the unprecedented expansion of the sport-television-advertising nexus during the 1980s. Broadcasting rights for the 1984 Los Angeles Summer Olympics were sold for \$91.5 million^{US} and it has been estimated that 2.5 billion viewers from 131 countries witnessed the 1984 Los Angeles Summer Olympics. Similarly, the 1988 Calgary Winter Olympics reached 1.5 to 2 billion television viewers, a third of the world's 5 billion inhabitants.

Privileged access to this Olympic audience during the 1988 Winter Games was awarded to Canada's sole private national network, the Canadian Television Network (CTV). The exclusive sets of broadcast rights purchased from the organizers of the 1988 Winter Olympic Games exclusively granted CTV the permission to produce 115 hours of domestic coverage for the Canadian nation, and 500 hours of "clean" audio-visual feed for 2000 foreign broadcasters, who then repackaged and transmitted the CTV Host feed to their respective nations. As Host Broadcaster to the world, CTV-HOST (CTV-HB), was initially contracted to be paid a non-profit rate of forty-three million dollars, which they renegotiated upwards to fifty-three million Canadian dollars; the domestic rights to Canada cost the CTV-Domestic Broadcaster (CTV-DB) \$4.5 million in Canadian funds. The domestic broadcaster was relatively free of Olympic restrictions to galvanize the sporting and promotional messages as they saw fit to

¹ My use of this phrase follows the work of Sut Jhally (1984, 1989) and Ann Hall et. al. (1992). The phrase refers to the reciprocal economic "nexus" that exists between (1) promoters of sport spectacles, (2) the executives in media organizations and (3) advertisers promoting their products and images through sports event marketing. This triplex of relationships and roles within the major spectacles of sport greatly determines the quantity and kind of media coverage a sporting event receives (1992:134-7). All parties benefit financially, albeit unevenly, from this tri-symbiotic relationship.

attract a national audience and to attract network sponsors. However, CTV was by no means the only broadcasting presence at the 1988 Winter Olympic Games. Most notably, CTV was forced to struggle for commentary elbow room with ABC. ABC was allowed to flex their media muscle during the Games because they had negotiated a world record-breaking television deal with the organizing committee, Olympiques Calgary Olympics (OCO'88), that cost ABC \$309 million^{US} for the exclusive rights to the American audience alone. These financial agreements speak loudly of the importance of Olympic sport to major television networks.

(I) A SOCIAL ANALYSIS OF CTV'S TELEVISION PRODUCTION

Sport on television has been comparatively understudied in comparison to drama, sitcoms and the news. However, over the last decade there has been growing interest in the status of Olympic television broadcasting (e.g., Gruneau 1987, Real 1989, Cavanagh 1989). Much of this work has focused on the cost of broadcast rights and Olympic symbolism. However, far less attention has been paid to the practices of production, the work relations, codes and techniques valued in televised Olympic sport. To fill this void, field studies of production and the organizational context of television sports production and distribution are required. This dissertation presents a detailed case study of television production of the ice hockey tournament at the 1988 Winter Olympics. More specifically, it examines the televisual codes and discursive practices of media personnel on the CTV Domestic crew, the labour process through which these codes and relationships materialize and are legitimated, the broader political-economic limits and pressures acting

upon the crew, and the relationships of power between the sports media and other organizations involved in staging the 1988 Olympic spectacle.

The primary focus of the research is the CTV-Domestic crew's labour to manufacture the coverage broadcast to the Canadian audience. CTV was split into two limited corporations to produce the 1988 Winter Olympic games: CTV-Host Broadcaster and CTV-Domestic Broadcaster. The labour of the CTV-Host crew was intimately connected to the CTV-Host processes and decisions; however, because it was only possible to be at one site at any given moment, the study had to be narrowed to focus upon the domestic broadcaster (CTV-DB). Wherever possible, I have incorporated a consideration of broader political and economic limits and pressures placed on CTV-DB work by their corporate siblings at CTV host broadcaster (CTV-HB). I have also included analysis of the labour process of the CTV-HB when the work of the two crews was conducted on the same site, and when CTV-HB granted me access to restricted zones for research.

Rather than presenting my research on the labour process of Olympic television production in a descriptive and chronological manner, I have opted to organize the discussion thematically into sections determined by my theoretical perspective. I argue that television production of Olympic hockey is a key process and site for the assemblage, elaboration and reproduction of relationships of hegemonic power: including economic, ideological, political and gender based power. Building on the ethnographic studies of news programming by Tuchman (1978) and Clarke (1981, 1987), I examine the production of the ice hockey for live broadcast as a *social process* of labour. In other words, the broadcast mediation of sporting events is not assumed to create neutral mechanical products

of athletic competition. Instead, my point of departure is the assumption that television broadcast production is both a human process and a cultural product. Broadcasting is both the work site and historical outcome of the cultural production of the modern Olympic Games. Moreover, as an institution, the broadcast media are analyzed as both an economic entity directing production toward the maximization of profits, and as an ideological institution for representing dominant political, cultural and gendered notions of sport.

To analyze the economic and ideological facets of sports broadcasting, a theory of cultural production is required. In recent years, researchers in media and cultural studies have argued that cultural production can be conceived of as a complex circuit consisting of related moments: the **production** of the audio-visual signal, the **circulation** or distribution of the broadcast feed, and the **consumption moments** in which the audience view and make sense out of the televisual programming. Cultural production has been conceived of as a dynamic process in which these moments are constantly engaged in the transformation and re-negotiation of media practices, ideas and products. While there has been a longstanding tradition and tendency in media studies to abstract one of these moments of cultural production for analysis, a crucial intervention in the realm of media studies recently has been the emphasis placed upon the inexorable linkages between these three moments (Hall 1980, Johnson 1983).

In this study, I focus on the production and distribution moments of Olympic television coverage. However, while I do not examine audience reception directly, I do address how the *perception* of the audience, held by the CTV corporation and by the hockey

broadcast crew members, affected the planning of Olympic programming, guided their particular use of audio-visual and graphically designed discourse, and mediated their responses to audience ratings and feedback. This is important because the business of the sport media is primarily to *offer audiences* as a commodity for sale to national advertisers²,

which means that the broadcast crews must work hard to attract a wide national audience by anticipating audience desires for offering compelling images of national life, athletic heroes, and exciting live action drama.

The conceptualization of sports production as a *social process* fosters the development of a type of media studies that addresses the complex and historically-specific social relations between cultural producers rather than a perspective that relies on “textual” study alone. In this study I focus attention on these relations by examining how sport has become both a *spectacle of legitimation* for dominant cultural beliefs and a *spectacle of accumulation* for the media networks.

Hockey had particular value as a spectacle of legitimation for CTV in 1988 because there were few practices and cherished icons in Canada that could garner as wide a sense of cultural ownership and national pride as the game of hockey. Ice hockey has traditionally been celebrated as *uniquely* “Canadian” by fans, politicians and sportswriters alike;

²The notion that audiences are commodities is a vitally important legacy of Dallas Smythe's work (1981) to the field of critical media studies, particularly to the political-economic analysis of the media. In this perspective, audiences are not primarily defined as the consumers of the television shows and of the advertisements but rather, as the product that becomes packaged by broadcast networks as ratings and demographic information and is sold as a commodity to advertisers.

moreover, the game's committed worshippers believe it to be *inherently Canadian*.³ When Team Canada failed to win an Olympic medal at the 1988 Calgary Winter Olympic Games, placing a "disappointing fourth place overall" according to CTV news bulletins, the broadcast and print media represented the loss in military terms; Winter Olympic anchor for CTV at the 1988 Games described the loss in the following way:

Hockey, that armoured clash between countries, is unlike other sports. And for the Canadians who feel passionate about it, Team Canada's fall will linger in memory like a lost war (Lloyd Robertson, 1988:132).

The 'thrill of Russian victory and the agony of national defeat for Canada' storyline was constructed carefully. When Team Canada soon began to lose "their own game" during prime time, the broadcasts were coloured through alternative discourses to maintain a sense of Canadian ownership over hockey. Furthermore, the "war" CTV Anchor Lloyd Robertson referred to, was also being fought beyond the fierce competition in the hockey arena. Ice Hockey has long been caught in the ferocious midst of broadcasting ratings and advertising battles between radio and television networks, between potential Olympic sponsors seeking

³ The myth that hockey is Canada's "national game" assumes at this sport symbolizes the patriotic associations of all Canadians to the nation. The game has successfully held a privileged position in the sporting world for most of the past century in this nation. However, it neither represents the aspirations nor matches the cultural icons of many groups within the Canadian cultural mosaic. It has traditionally been a sport for, and celebration of, white male players by white male fans; recently there has been an explosion in the growth of "old-timers" hockey and women's hockey participation and spectatorship; at the same time a significant dropoff in the number of young males entering the sport has been occurring. While hockey has served as a vehicle for socialization for males into mainstream Canadian society for males of various ethnic backgrounds immigrating to Canada throughout the last 100 years, many groups of citizens have rejected hockey as representative of their new homeland, and some groups (most notably many women, and Canadians of colour) have been actively marginalized by the organizers and participants of hockey and the sports media. See A. Metcalfe's, *Canada Learns to Play: The Emergence of Canadian Sport, 1807-1914*, (1987) for a historical overview of the struggles to contain hockey as the national game over the many possibilities such as over lacrosse and cricket that vied for this honour at the turn of the century.

exclusive contracts⁴ with sporting event organizers, as well as caught up in the cultural battle to “authenticate” the notion that hockey is “naturally” Canadian.

The growth of the television industry’s financial power in the Olympic movement has been directly related to television’s success in manufacturing the exciting images and intriguing stories to gather fans and sponsors around television’s global fire. At the 1988 Winter Olympic Games, 1438 athletes⁵ from around the globe competed in the athletic events as 390 “world broadcasting rights holders”, including CTV Domestic, hired a media team of 4900 personnel to mediate the athletic feats for fifty-two national audiences. The networks permitted three times more personnel to produce the Games for their sponsors and for their television audiences than the number of athletes producing the action on the ice and the snow were permitted by the Olympic organizers. In 1988, the sport media at the Games were well aware of their far reaching, powerful, and engaging story-telling abilities:

television has increasingly excelled at seizing, freezing, and slowing those critical moments that flash by faster than you can say, ‘WOW’, but that spells the difference between first

⁴Beginning around the 1988 Winter Olympic Games both broadcasters and potential sponsors of sporting events shifted from describing the relationship as one of “**exclusive contract**” to obtaining sporting “**properties**”. A **sense of ownership** over the athletic action on the ice, the game outcome and the hockey players has quickly been extended beyond the notion of an exclusive privilege to the exclusionary action of “blocking” competitors. Because hockey has been one of the first Olympic sports to award professional players Olympic status, and because this sport has been fully incorporated into the professional sphere of players being owned by NHL or European franchises, this shift to a sense of ownership over the media programme and over the athletes has occurred in hockey much sooner than in other Olympic disciplines.

⁵This figure of 1438 competing athletes is published in OCO’88 1988 *Olympic Winter Games Final Report*, by the organizing committee, which is a report that has been prepared for the International Olympic Committee. This figure differs significantly from the 1759 reported by the Canadian Olympic Association. The media still outnumber athletes by 280 %, or nearly three times the number accredited by the IOC for that Olympiad.

and last place -- the shot that barely eludes a hockey goalie's outstretched glove (ACCESS 1987:1).

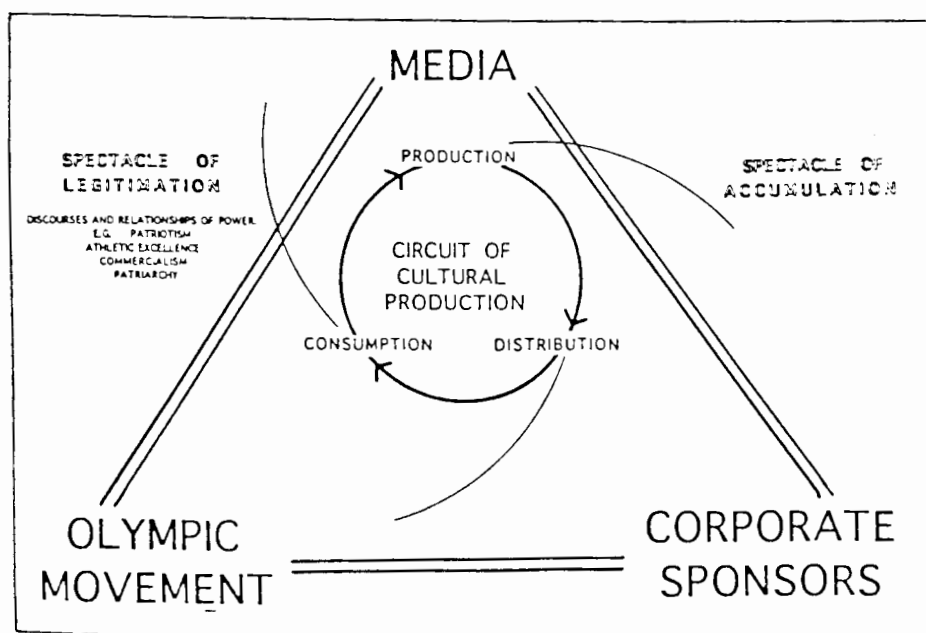
When hockey fans experienced these celebrated mass produced "critical moments" during the Games of 1988, they were often experienced as *media moments*. But these media moments were not created simply in response to the dictates of sporting action; rather, they were constructed in response to a complex of economic, cultural and ideological pressures and limits. I argue that an ethnographic study of the production process provides us with the best means of studying these complex limits and pressures. An ethnographic production study of Olympic hockey also provides important insights into the role of media in the creation and perpetuation of the place of hockey in our sporting culture, and advances our understanding of the complex structures of legitimation in and around the wide world of media sports.

It is important to emphasize here that the issue of legitimation cannot be easily separated from the issue of accumulation. For example, ice hockey was brought into CTV's corporate strategy to win a greater share of the national audience from their public broadcasting rivals at CBC. CTV had anticipated that hockey would be the linchpin in their perennial ratings war they wage with CBC and would help them to entice sponsors away from other marketing vehicles such as print advertising and athlete sponsorship. "*The Game*", as Ken Dryden (1983) has designated hockey in Canada, has enjoyed a level of *representational royalty* unmatched in this nation; however, the privileged discourses of this national game have been woven into media tapestries for purposes that go far beyond the struggle over cultural sovereignty. Before the Olympics, CTV envisioned itself as the economic and cultural saviour of Canadian amateur hockey which they saw as "drowning" in the sea of major league professional sport coverage (Eshaw, 1988), Sports Department

officials hoped the network would go on to win the exclusive rights to the *Hockey Night In Canada* from CBC (who currently have a contract with Molstar, the owners and producers of the show) so that CTV would regularly cover hockey after the Olympics.

Thus, producing Olympic ice hockey at the 1988 Winter Olympic Games was part and parcel of a number of broader power plays by this private network: power plays for ratings, profit and cultural significance in their industry. The spectacles of accumulation and of legitimation bore power from each other in this production: economic power provided the funds to purchase exclusive rights to accumulate advertising revenues, thereby enabling the power to present a selective vision of the games that would and could not be challenged on rival networks. Illustration 1.1 depicts the dynamic interaction between the moments of cultural production of Olympic broadcasting and the two linked moments of the spectacles of legitimation and accumulation within this circuit.

Illustration 1.1: THE NEXUS OF OLYMPIC SPORTS TELEVISION



(II) RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The most general objective of this dissertation is: to examine the television production of ice hockey by CTV at the 1988 Winter Olympic Games, *in situ*, as a social process of cultural and economic production and mediated communication. Subsumed within this broad objective I shall also pursue a number of more focused research objectives:

(1) to specifically examine the compositional features of the televisual production moment in order to question how the processes of television production and the related programming imperatives operate through codes of representation;

(2) to articulate a concern for unequal relationships of power by researching how broader political economic factors influencing CTV, the IOC, and the wider "Olympic family" act to structure the labour process of sports production and thus mediate the televisual representations of hockey offered by the Canadian media;

(3) to explore the mediation of ideology throughout the production and distribution moments of the circuit of cultural production. In this research, this is accomplished by ethnographic scrutiny (informed by cultural/media studies theory and categories) of actual struggles/consensus by the crew over discursive practices, and observations of the politics of signification occurring in and around the sports-media complex;

(4) and finally, to suggest a basis for the development of a broadcast code of ethics to key members of the "Olympic family", to make suggestions for improving the labour process of network sports and Olympic broadcasting.

(III) METHODOLOGICAL OVERVIEW

To accomplish these objectives I have adopted a multi-dimensional approach. First, historical, archival and current document analyses were conducted to study the political economic context of the Olympic-media-advertising nexus and to understand the historical construction of codes of sport and media traditions. Second, ethnographic field observation and interviews, employing categories and the concerns of critical media studies, were pursued at the 1988 Winter Olympic Games and structured in depth taped interviews were conducted with members of the CTV Domestic hockey television crew, key decision makers in the CTV network, the CTV-Host production team, OCO'88 network liaisons, and Canadian and International Olympic officials. I also conducted informal interviews with production personnel throughout the labour process of the Olympic Games. Finally, critical analysis of the hockey televisual texts corresponding with key moments of the case study have been conducted to study the Olympic telecast as a 'spectacle of legitimation' by critically reviewing both videotaped texts of the Games, CTV cue sheets, and production field notes.

The research was pursued in three stages. In the pre-Olympic stage a number of tasks were accomplished: (1) an extensive review of the literature dealing with the sport-television relationship and critical media studies theory was conducted (2) document analysis of government/CRTC broadcast regulations and CTV licences and hearings, broadcast association guidelines, federal sport policies and annual reports, Canadian Olympic Association and International Olympic Association media documents and Charter were reviewed. Interviews with executive producers at CTV during pre-event planning stages were completed. Observations of the International Broadcast Centre, the CTV master control

and work areas for both Host and Domestic broadcasters, and of the CTV-Host/Domestic hockey crews as they set-up and trial runs began a week before the Olympics opened. Document analysis of OCO and Sport Canada press releases, CTV broadcasting guides, commentator binders, research notes, and technical set-up were performed as the documents were released to the crews.

During the Olympic Games stage in February of 1988, I engaged in ethnographic observation and conducted group discussions and informal interviews while work was being conducted. In addition, audio-taped structured interviews were continually pursued with CTV crew members, OCO'88 personnel and volunteers, and Olympic personnel. These observations focused on a multitude of factors of investigation including: in-crew relations, inter-crew relations (such as those between CTV Domestic hockey crew, Host-BC, CTV-DB hockey mobile and master control and ABC crew), work routines, organizational structure, the social use of the media technology, the decision making process, struggles and negotiations during the production, the choice of visual/auditory/verbal codes to represent hockey, the crew's wandering consumption of the live sporting tournament on the ice, to the monitors the broadcasts they were constructing "live". In addition to the ethnographic observation of the CTV-Host Broadcaster hockey crew at the Olympic Saddledome venue, I attended and recorded CTV production meetings early each morning, observed master control and IBC work stations before the start of the hockey broadcast day, and attended practice and research sessions with the commentators between or before games, attended crew meetings and gatherings after the broadcast day was completed at the SaddleDome.

Later, in the post-Olympic stage, I completed the data gathering process of

conducting follow-up interviews with key decision makers at the 1988 Olympic games, and completed the document analysis of Olympic ‘final’ reports on the 1988 Winter Olympiad, Stats Canada, Sports Canada, the Canadian Sports Hall of Fame, and commercial media measures. I also undertook quantitative content analysis of selected aspects of the Olympic hockey tournament to compare the importance of the range of Olympic sports to hockey from off-air tapes and CTV archival cue sheets, and I conducted a more semiological analysis of key broadcasting segments and cultural themes, such as the construction of Olympism, nationalism, sporting values, the representation of athletic masculinity, and media entertainment values.

(IV) DISSERTATION OUTLINE

Olympic Power Plays is presented in three sections. Part I, *Televised Sport: Approaches of Study*, presents a review of approaches to the study of televised sport studies, and a review of the critical cultural studies approach which serves as the theoretical foundation to this research. Chapter One provides a review of the traditional scholarly approaches to the analysis of televised sport. In this chapter, I examine and critique the theories of the modern electronic sporting spectacle as an aspect of “mass society”, and examine the theory of “symbiotic relationships” between sport and the media. Chapter Two, presents a review of research more relevant to the perspective employed in the thesis. Key works from British and Canadian critical cultural studies and media studies are evaluated theoretically and methodologically in order to lay the groundwork for a rethinking of ethnographic methods and approach to the study of ideology in media.

Part II, *The Televisual Spectacle of Accumulation*, focuses on political economic limits and pressures that act on and through the CTV network, and the “Olympic Family” members (including the IOC, organizers, corporate sponsors in addition to the media). In Chapter Three, I argue that the power to construct and distribute the Olympic spectacle is an unequal relationship between the different Olympic constituents, and that these power struggles are over the control of cultural and economic capitals associated with televised hockey. This discussion of the economic imperatives of exclusive media rights sets the broader context for examining the sites of media labour.⁶ Following the earlier work of Gaye Tuchman (1978) and Debra Clarke (1981, 1987), Chapter Four provides a detailed analysis of the political economic organizational context for televising Olympic spectacle.

Part III, *The Televisual Spectacle of Legitimation*, presents an additional plane of the political-economic context of Olympic spectacle, ethnographic observation of the media labour process on the sites of production. Televising sport is an orchestrated concert of mechanically creative labour and cultural discourse production. At this level of analysis I question the conventional appropriation and legitimation of familiar notions of hockey from Canadian history and consider how these discourses serve to signify a “hegemonic” vision of gendered national life. Chapter Five begins the presentation of the ethnographic detail of the work processes and struggles. The making of the programme is studied at the level of programme flow and organization.

⁶ The process and products of televising Olympic hockey are intimately tied to the spectacles of legitimation and accumulation. I have been forced to abstract these inextricably linked moments to study and to thereby demonstrate how the labour processes and discourses mediating the sporting event which seem “natural” and “normal” are socially constructed as the commonsense actions and values of the world of hockey.

Chapter Six, presents an analysis of codes of signification negotiated by the CTV-Domestic crew. A discussion of the crew's values and codes of professionalism are related to the conventional codes of behaviour observed during the labour process. The coalescing streams of broadcasting craft, sporting codes of coverage and network style discussed in this chapter set the broader context for an analysis of dominant sporting narratives. Chapter Seven examines the three dominant hockey narratives mediating CTV's production of the 1988 Olympic tournament including: constructing codes of athletic excellence, masculinity and nationhood. Chapter Eight concludes the study by summarizing the major themes and findings of my research. Future media sports research projects are proposed. Finally, policy implications and suggestions for the construction of a code of Olympic broadcasting are offered to address the pressing shortcomings of media labour process at Olympic Games, while weaving the "official" aims of Olympism into codes of Olympic content for the television industry and for sporting governing bodies to ponder.

PART I

APPROACHES TO THE STUDY OF TELEVISED SPORT

“Forms of hegemonic entertainment do not
superimpose themselves automatically and finally onto the
consciousness or behaviour of all audiences at all times”

~ *Todd Gitlin (1982b: 431)*

CHAPTER 1

VISIONS OF THE TELEVISED SPORT SPECTACLE

There is little consensus about the nature and role of mass-mediated sport in western societies. Nor is there widespread agreement on the most appropriate theoretical perspective for analyzing the media-sport relationship. In this chapter I examine approaches to sport and the media that focus on media sports as mythic ceremonies and normative rituals, or make claims about social and behavioural effects. Classifying the work of any one writer as a person whose work falls into these categories can often be rather arbitrary, and some writers are particularly difficult to classify. Nevertheless, this chapter will locate various visions of the televised sport spectacle into a series of general theoretical traditions.

(I) SPORT, SPECTACLE AND THE CRITIQUE OF MASS SOCIETY

Since the 1970s a deeply adversarial view of televised sport and the alleged function of this spectacle for an assumed monolithic “mass” audience has emerged. The earlier theories of mass society presented by the Frankfurt School have been revisited by many scholars to address the contemporary sporting spectacle (e.g., Hoch 1972; Shergold 1979; Rader 1984; Alt 1985; and Sorkin 1987). Broadly drawing upon the discussions about the “crisis of authority” and the social decay of cultural life under industrial capitalism, sport media researchers have been enticed by the radically pessimistic ideas of

the Frankfurt School.¹ Unlike some critical theorists who have desired a return to a romantic and idealized vision of amateur sport, the deep pessimism of Frankfurt-informed mass culture theory have offered no hope for sport now or in the future. From the perspective of writers such as Guy Debord (1977), modern social life is doomed to totalitarianism because of the strength of the “consciousness industries”, such as broadcasting and mass advertising. The consciousness industries have created a sea of “lobotomic dupes” in a commercial world of increasing levels of “barbaric meaninglessness” according to this perspective.²

As television sport critics have applied these sentiments to contemporary sport the normative ritual has been reconceptualized as a hopeless and terrifying totalitarian spectacle. The “crisis of the ritual is the triumph of the spectacle” according to John Alt (1985). Under industrial capitalism, the related processes of rationalization, bureaucratization, commodification and the commercialization of social life have reached their tentacles to the world of sport; since these processes are theorized to be the root causes of a culturally reified and increasingly alienated mass society, sport falls victim as well.

Recent work on televised sport has clearly revised the earlier work of the Frankfurt School. Alt, has carefully traced the transformation of ritualized sport into a “reified commodity” and spectacle in the later part of this century. Borrowing from Horkheimer and Adorno, he has applied the theory of “instrumental rationality” to claim that a crisis of

¹Frankfurt School writers addressing these broader mass society issues included Theodor Adorno, Herbert Marcuse, and Max Horkheimer (Swingewood, 1977).

² C.F., Swingewood (1977).

sport and the moral order has occurred, and that competitive corporate life has served to downgrade modern sport into a “cult of winning” that has sanctioned cheating and winning. Collectively these transmutations have contributed to the “atomization” of individual motivation of the sportsfan, who repeatedly has viewed sanctified representations of this modern cult of winning via the televised sport spectacle.

Following along this line of argument, Goldman (1984) has maintained that this spectacle is broadly symptomatic of the privatization of leisure, the commodification of heroes, and indicative of the attempts made by fans to escape the alienating impulses of work within capitalist societies. The sport spectacle, he has asserted, offers an “ideology of reified leisure” because it has pacified millions of sports fans into a settled consciousness that has left them unaware of the structural barriers inhibiting their possibilities to engage in more substantial and fulfilling leisure, and inhibiting their ability to comprehend the alienating experiences of work. This view is limited, however, by its uncritical use of a “mirror” analogy to suggest that televised sport has become a passive reflection of an alienated society. Writers who adopt this perspective chronically underestimate how the sporting spectacle can be both a constitutive element of social and cultural life that dramatizes a wide range of meanings (see Gruneau, 1983).

A number of key elements in critical theories of sport spectacle have been derived from Adorno’s critique of art within mass societies (see Hoch, 1972; Shergold, 1979; Rader, 1984; and Alt, 1985). Mass commercial pop music, Adorno has asserted, has taken on a “fetish character” through the process of reification. The mass production and consumption of standardized forms of music and art have served as evidence that entire groups of consumers have been manipulated into believing they were free individuals.

Moreover, popular music has served as a diversionary function, which according to Adorno, has contributed to a regression in listening and to a decline in cultural taste (1982). Arguing along similar lines, Alt has professed that a regression in sport viewing and taste has occurred; he contends that the injection of commercial entertainment values and the technical fetishization of the sport have created the conditions by which “the spectacle form reduces sport to its most banal and sensational elements as standards of excellence are repressed forms of commercial norms” (1985:98). Others, such as Paul Hoch (1972), have construed televised sport to be a “smoke screen” for the militarizing, sexist and racist tendencies inherent in modern life and sport. Sorkin has taken this line of analysis into post-modern traditions, claiming that sports such as televised wrestling have secured what he has called the “hegemony of the ersatz” (1987). All of these writers tend to deny the possibility of a sports fan having any sort of enlightening, pleasurable or social experience because of the totalizing degree of alienation they associate with the commercial, political and technological undertones of media sports events in contemporary societies.

Yet, to cite Swingewood’s critique of this perspective, the available evidence suggests that a “mass culture” does not exist -- only the ideology of a mass culture exists (Swingewood, 1977). The myths of the “masses” have facilitated the legitimation of cultural authority in contemporary societies by actively constructing hierarchical levels of “good” versus “profane” pursuits. The ideological nature of these frames of thought have naturalized the image of sport as profane. The image of the mass sporting spectacle has fit easily into the myths of a monolithic levelled culture overdetermined by capitalist consumer society. However, a careful examination of any sporting event at any juncture in history will reveal the multitude of culturally variable experiences that exist within the game and between spectators of the sporting spectacle; yet, critical mass culture theories have

denied sportsfans and athletes the ability to act and think voluntarily. In general, these scathing critiques of mass culture and televised sport spectacles have been premised within elitist notions of cultural taste and of what constitutes gratifying activities.

A theory of the spectacle that considers human agency to be a constituting part of the cultural performance of sport, which in turn is historically structured within the broader limits and pressures of capitalist economics, and set within a shifting set of gendered hegemonic politics seems required. To understand the historical grounding of popular cultural struggle and negotiation, the sites of the productive activity and pleasures of consumption must be examined.

(II) THE TELEVISED SPORT SPECTACLE AS A NORMATIVE RITUAL AND CULTURAL PERFORMANCE

Sports is a drama. Its great attraction lie in the vicarious experience it imparts on the spectator. It is truly heroic -- at once glorious and tragic. Sport telescopes the human struggle for power, offering a spectacle that plays upon the emotions (Morton 1963:26).

Televised sport has often been defined as a ritual of the 'moral order' which dramatizes and symbolizes the dominant values and celebrated aspects of the culture under study; yet, the media ritual has paradoxically been assumed to be located in a special realm separate from everyday life. Many anthropological theories of the sporting spectacle have been steeped in such normative claims. The major assumption underlying this popular line of "moral order" argument has been that modern sporting events have

replaced the rituals of the past, such as religious ceremonies or civic holiday celebrations. Watching televised sport serves, therefore, to bind humanity together in relations of interdependence, just as churches served communities in the past. According to this tradition, collective viewing by sports fans in each geographically separate location has permitted fans to feel a sense of connectedness to other fans, while still maintaining and celebrating human differences between local community members and celebrating differences between nations.

The idea that televised sport can best be understood as a form of normative ritual has been adopted from a tradition of normative philosophy and sport sociology that variously looks back to Emile Durkheim's writing on ritual and Johan Huizinga's theory of play as a creator of culture. Huizinga has been particularly important in discussions of playful rituals. In *Homo Ludens*, Huizinga defined play as the very basis of civilization. He described play as "a free activity standing quite consciously outside 'ordinary life', as being not serious but at the same time absorbing" (1950:13). Play, he further suggested, has existed within different dimensions of time and space than the more serious pursuits human usually engage in during their every day routines. As a freely chosen and adopted pursuit play is described as an "activity connected with no material interest, and no profit can be gained from it" (1950:13). Instead, according to Huizinga, play has served a "ludic function", in Western cultures. He preached the philosophy that play carried the potential to demonstrate and dramatize the human spirit at its most creative and noble levels, thereby offering possibilities for cultural growth. His vision of play as a creator of culture has been reworked in many examinations of the broadcast of sport (see Lowe and Borkowski, 1974; Real, 1975; Lucas and Real, 1984; MacAloon, 1984; Greenway, 1985;

and Rothenbuhler, 1987).

Televised sport has received increasing attention by media researchers borrowing from neo-Durkheimian traditions in anthropology since the 1970s when sporting championships and Olympic festivals were considered to be a special kind of cultural *ritual* within our society. Reading Television, by John Fiske and John Hartley (1978) for example, drew upon anthropological notions of *ritual condensation* and *bardic television* to account for the role of televised sport in North America. Indeed, according to Fiske and Hartley: “television is our culture’s bard” (1978:84). Television programmes offer contemporary audiences modern minstrels and poets who condense and highlight particular themes in cultural life. Sporting highlights of a hockey game, for example can demonstrate and evaluate key elements celebrated within a culture such as the values of hard work, perseverance and accomplishment -- elements that can be experienced, for example, by the fan watching the hockey player on television breaking through the defense of his opponent to score a goal. Fiske and Hartley also suggest that telecasts serve to engage sports fans in “cultural conversations” about such moral concerns as “good and evil” which have been simplified to the level of “black and white” solutions to life via televisual condensation; the good guys always win. A sense of cultural membership, and the celebration of universal cultural concerns have been easily accomplished in this era of widespread media transmission.

There is a great deal of merit in these views of television as a bardic medium. However, I would argue that it is the *social use* of television technology and the human negotiation of meaning by those in the sports production labour process (and of course by

fan's consuming the message at home) that momentarily completes the mediation of cultural discourse presented in sport programmes. It is not the technology itself that executes the cultural mediation. The technologies of broadcasting and reception are but the vehicles of communication. Furthermore, the select messages condensed into sports programmes are not universal themes, but rather culturally privileged narratives. For example, in Chapter Six I will illustrate how Canadian hockey broadcast crews constructed discourses of masculinity, athletic excellence, competitive individualism, and visions of nationalism around and through the 1988 Winter Olympic television feed.

Modern championship sporting spectacles, such as the SuperBowl, the World Series, the Stanley Cup playoffs and the Olympic Games have often been assumed to dramatize a similar range of central sporting and patriotic themes in a "bigger than life manner" through the telecast of the "mythic spectacle". Michael Real's early work on televised sport promoted such an argument (1975). The Superbowl telecast, Real insisted, is a *mythic ritual* which has been heightened to the level of the *mythic spectacle* in the "consciousness" of the American sports fan. By tuning into the SuperBowl programme, for example, the televised mythic spectacle has both perpetuated traditional myths and reflected modern tendencies. In other words, televised sport has replaced former cultural and religious rituals as a key vehicle for reinforcing core myths within a culture and providing a communal focus for symbolic identification by serving as a forum for the creation of "heroic archetypes". In addition, Real argued that sports fans have been enculturated with the central tendencies of modern life: territoriality, labour-management relations, sex and racial priorities. Generally, the SuperBowl spectacle has dramatized a mythical battle storyline in which males employ "both violence and technology to gain

control of property for the economic gains of individuals within a nationalistic entertainment context” (1975). By consuming this display of traditional myth placed within a modern context, football fans have become involved in the strengthening of a way of traditional life, in the consolidation of major western institutions and, they have done so in a manner that has appeared to have been an “awesome” non-ordinary ritual devoid of the repercussions of actually experiencing the battle in everyday life.³

John Greenway (1985) has recapped this last argument by claiming that televised sport has developed into a secular performance permitting the experience of “ritually satisfying” violence in a non-dangerous fashion (1985). In our demythologized world, televised sport has become celebrated as the last bastion of mythical drama. Such drama provides communal energy and obligation, providing relief from the strains of modern life through the construction of “visually enlarged” heroes who can be further enlarged by the skill of the sportscaster’s narrative. For Rothenbuhler (1987), televised sport has become a “symbolically rich” modern civil religion that celebrates individualism, nationalism, humanity and cooperation. In his 1984 study of the Los Angeles Olympics sport audience’s

3 For a more recent analysis of myth and rituals reframed within cultural studies, see Michael Real’s recent book, *Super Media: A Cultural Studies Approach* (1989). The Olympic Games, he argues, are “the leading expression of an emerging form of ‘global culture’” (p. 236); cultural studies analysis of mass-mediated Olympics can, therefore, help us to understand dominant ideologies, prevailing world views and the mythic structures that symbolize various aspects of our culture (p. 237). In addition to uncovering the social functions of the “super media” ritual -- the communal, informative, and interactive functions -- Real’s ritual analysis now accounts for the broader symbiotic relationship at the economic level between the Olympic movement and the television industry, the consequences of unequal participation of the world’s cultures in the coverage of the Games, the nationalistic themes and selective coverage by media gatekeepers, the privileging of particular narratives such as the “thrill of victory, the agony of defeat”, and the potential for international rituals during Olympic ceremonies through the super media (pp. 240-247). While ritual analysis continues to evaluate the success of the Olympic coverage by the degree to which the Olympic coverage achieves a global human ritual of understanding and friendship, this analysis of the super media now acknowledges that the media text is ideologically complex and polysemic (p. 248).

opinions and affect, Rothenbuhler concluded that Olympic sport consumption through the media promoted pride in victory, disappointment in sporting defeat, patriotic sentiments and notions of fairplay in the American television audience; regardless of the medium of consumption, be it television, radio or print journalism, the media sport spectacle has served an integrative function.

Following his early work on media sport as mythic ritual, Michael Real has extended this work with John Lucas in their historical study of Olympic television (1984). The mass celebration of amateur sport broadcasts has been accorded the distinction of being the only “true” and regularly scheduled global ritual today. While Real’s earlier research noted the spectacle’s role in enhancing global interdependency, this analysis has gone one step further to examine the nature of the *symbiotic* ties between the television industry and the Olympic movement.⁴ Lucas and Real conclude that the relationship has been one of mutual benefit and interdependency; however, this global spectacle was and is, they have argued, more of a ritual than a business because billions of people around the world have been linked through the telecast and because the Olympic movement has remained in control of this athletic event.

⁴As these assumptions about the ritual of media sport began to wane in the late 1970s and early 1980s, media theorists emphasizing organic analogies have begun to acknowledge that within the relationship between sporting organizations and the television industry have become unbalanced as the television industry has gained unprecedented economic and symbolic power. In most cases of television rights agreements today, the relationship is asymmetrical. Theorists of “symbiosis” have traditionally argued that sporting organizations have control over their schedules and over the rules of the game they govern; much of the analysis has utilized this kind of criteria to demonstrate that the relation is mutually beneficial and in particular, to demonstrate that sport organizers have maintained their integrity and cultural ownership of sport. In 1988, as this research will demonstrate, the relationship was asymmetrical both economically and symbolically; for example, television rights holders at the Winter Olympics were able to extend the entire Olympiad to create an extra weekend of prime time and to adjust the sporting schedule to put the North American marquee sports of hockey and figure skating into the North American prime time.

Other televised sports analysts who have defined the Olympic telecast as a global ritual to enhance international understanding include Milshteyn and Mochanov (1976), Ughoajah (1987), and Perelman (1987). In this work, there exists an emerging sense that the political economic structure of the Olympic television spectacle does mediate the ritual. Televised sport, the argument runs, can still be considered one of the few remaining contemporary rituals retaining a potential to celebrate modern life in a positive fashion, thus retaining a potential to integrate members in a particular mode of living and set of cultural values. However, it has been only those writers with the most direct ties to the television industry and major sporting event organizers, such as Richard Perelman (who served as the press facilities manager for the 1984 L.A. Games organizing committee) who have readily admitted that the television industry has not seriously sought to perpetuate and legitimate the major ideals of the Olympism, such as to promote peace, international understanding, and friendship among sportspeople around the globe.

The emphasis on normative integration in many of these “ritual” approaches often lends a functionalist tone to the study of media sport spectacles. In *Theories of Mass Communication*, Defleur (1970:130) for example, notes the ways in which the broadcast media have exerted a historically normative pressure on the social structure of modern culture. First, the content of televised sport shows reinforce existing patterns of social life. Second, televisual content may create new “convictions” about sporting topics that the audience has had little previous exposure, or can increase the participation of ethnic minorities in athletic and coaching roles that are non-traditional roles in their parent culture.

Two other research teams that have stressed the value of the media spectacle “integration function” are Smith and Blackman (1978), and Birrell and Loy (1979). Smith and Blackman have located the ritual firmly within a symbiotic set of financial relationships (which will be discussed later in this chapter) and have offered important insights about the nature of the integrative function; media sports consumption has offered the same range of information to the sports fan community while paradoxically also restricting face to face interaction between fans. Moreover, they contend, mainly male middle class fans have been integrated into central values and norms of behaviour through viewing televised sports. Birrell and Loy describe how appealing spectacle images serve to integrate fans into society. By following a favourite team, the fan experiences social group affiliation. In addition, the sport media fulfil three other functions according to Birrell and Loy: sport media meet a cognitive need for information such as game results, an affective need for excitement and arousal which televised sport has excelled at providing, and finally, an escape function that has permitted the release of stress and the fan to be excluded from regular daily roles for the duration of the spectacle.

The ability of media sport to dramatize key elements in any culture has tended to be conceptualized within this literature in an ahistorical manner. While the notion of televised sport as a ritual or modern mythic spectacle has significant merit for the analysis of the *representational* qualities of televised sport, other theorists have argued that the cultural messages signified in media sports programmes are not universal and trans-historical as has been assumed by most writers in this tradition (e.g., Hargreaves, 1986; Whannel, 1984, Gruneau, 1989). Except for an implicit division between modern and pre-modern (presumably marked by industrial capitalism and more recent developments in electronic

communication), this literature has failed to historically contextualize the incorporation of sporting practices, athletic organizations and the television industry into the global marketplace. By contrast, a number of recent critics have emphasized that the ability of television sport spectacle to dramatize social life and struggles can be better understood within the *social processes* of institutionalizing and privileging particular sports and athletic elements into the spectacle (e.g., Cantelon et. al, 1986, 1988; Cavanagh, 1987; Gruneau, 1989). This alternative direction requires a more acute understanding of unequal power relations and resources, historical transformations, and the cultural production of gendered/patriotic ideological hegemony in the production and distribution moments and not just at the level of ritual experience for the audience.

Normative ritual perspectives on broadcast sports spectacle have also tended to over-estimate and glamorize the extent to which competitive sporting events have been able to construct close and positive human relations, and they have underestimated the representational power of the media to promote identifications that can serve to separate people locally and nationally. Within this perspective, fans have been assumed to be neatly integrated into a modern national community. And yet, current televisual representations of sport championships can also clearly serve to divide people. An illustration of this division can be found in the history of USA-USSR tensions during the Olympic boycotts of 1980 and 1984, or the tensions between nations manifested in the glorification of medal counts by the media. After the former Soviet Union entered the Olympic movement in the 1950s, the Games became the battleground for the “war without weapons” between western capitalist democracies and eastern bloc communism. After Russia invaded Afghanistan, sixty-five nations boycotted the Moscow 1980 Games including

Canada. In retaliation, the USSR and five other top medal winning Eastern block nations boycotted the 1984 L.A. Summer Olympics. To avoid military battles, the Olympic boycott has become a widely watched stage for expressing sentiments that have contradicted the ability of sport to promote normative integration. The official statement of boycott offered by the Soviet national Olympic committee demonstrated this:

Chauvinistic sentiments and an anti-Soviet hysteria are being whipped up in the United States.

Extremist organizations and groupings of all sorts, openly aiming to create 'unbearable conditions' for the stay of the Soviet delegation and the performance of Soviet athletes, have sharply stepped up their activities. Political demonstrations hostile to the U.S.S.R. are being prepared, undisguised threats are made against the U.S.S.R. National Olympic Committee, Soviet Athletes and officials. Heads of anti-Soviet, anti-Socialist organizations are received by U.S. administrations officials. Their activity is widely publicized by the mass media ... The practical deeds of the American side, however, show that it does not intend to ensure the security of all athletes, respect their rights and human dignity and create normal conditions for holding Olympic Games ... In these conditions, the National Olympic Committee of the U.S.S.R. is compelled to declare that participation of Soviet sportsmen in the Games is impossible.⁵

The media medal counts also have served to challenge claims that electronic sporting rituals have inherently fostered peaceful values and human relationships. In non-boycott years, the cold-war political strife has easily been reworked within the sport media's narrative requirements for dramatic action and fierce competition in North America. For example, since the 1984 introduction of exclusive sponsorship by the organizing committee, political competition can be reworked into commercial messages; medal counts have often represented abstractions of political tension and the growing commercial

⁵Cited in K. Reich (1986:208-9).

imperative in western life this century.

Claims about the positive integrative function of sport have often found official support in the documents and formally stated goals of sporting movements. The Olympic Charter (1985), for example, has attempted to stress idealistic goals of fairness in athletic competition and understanding by professing “the Games are not a contest between nations and no scoring by countries is recognized. The Games are contests between individuals and teams and not between countries”. However the Canadian Olympic Association’s *Quadrennial Report for 1985 to 1988* clearly evaluated the success of Canada in comparison to other nations using “performance indicators” such as the medal count and world ranking. Their hockey ranking indicated a loss for Team Canada: 1-URS, 2-FIN, 3-SWE, 4-CAN, 5-FRG, 6TCH, 7-USA, 8-SUI (1988:50). At the Calgary Olympics in 1988, the Canadian team had 19 top eight finishes and five medals. Moreover, to attract a national audience, Canadian private and public broadcasters have worked to transform the athletic event into a carefully measured contest in order to symbolically portray the relative superiority of nations pitted against each other at the games. Speculation on the outcome of medal tallies now begin long before the referee drops the puck during the opening faceoff.

Finally, the normative ritual perspective has tended to ignore the varying circumstances and contexts from which viewers of differing market demographic segments and political alliances have consumed the telecast. It is assumed that sports fans possess universal *a priori* needs and that the media have effectively transmitted corresponding and vital mythic messages to address those needs. These assumptions have ignored the ongoing

struggles over the meaning of sport that have occurred at various stages of the production and consumption of sporting spectacle. Another significant oversight by normative ritual theorists has been that differential pleasures have been derived and activated by various members of the spectating audience and by the producers. Idealist assumptions about the “essence” of the sport ritual, or the functionalist assumptions about the stabilizing norms condensed and consolidated through sport spectatorship, have not explained why *particular* norms and values have been selected and heightened as “ideals” within the media. Nor can these normative assumptions account for the historical structural change and symbolic transformation that have occurred within both worlds of sport and that of the media. I would argue that questions about the dominant moral order are better answered through a discussion of hegemonic negotiations and cultural struggle, rather than a perspective that seeks out transcendent social relations and universal rituals.

Another line of thought has considered media sportcasts to be normative cultural phenomena that have been “profaned”. There is a link here to the critical mass society perspective discussed earlier -- perspectives that view the political consequences of the televised sport spectacle in a negative light. For example, Benjamin Rader’s analysis of televised sport is representative of a “bread and circuses” model of modern sporting rituals and mass sporting spectacle:

Television has essentially trivialized the experience of spectator sports. With its enormous power to magnify and distort images, to reach every hamlet in the nation ... has sacrificed much of the unique drama of sports to the requirements of entertainment. To seize and hold the attention of viewers and thus maximize revenues, the authenticity of the sporting experience has been contaminated with a plethora of external intrusions ... such as a flood of sensations has diluted the poignancy and potency of the sporting experience.

It has diminished the capacity of sports to furnish heroes, to bind communities, and to enact the rituals that contain, and exalt, society's traditional values (Rader 1984:5-6).

In his book, *Bread and Circuses: Theories of Mass Society as Social Decay* (1983), Patrick Brantlinger has suggested that mass culture critics on both the right and the left poles of the political spectrum have exhibited a strong tendency towards "Roman analogizing". A great deal of the literature on televised sport before the mid-1980s displayed this tendency. The effects that television has imposed upon the modern sports world were frequently seen to be degenerative, a modern example of "bread and circuses". The emergence of larger scale sporting spectacles in modern media was viewed as a symbol of social decay (c.f. Hoberman, 1984). Mass culture writers addressing sport from this perspective include Stone (1955), Caldwell (1979), Halberstein (1984), and MacAloon (1984).

Anthropologist John MacAloon has presented the most extended and sophisticated model within this line of reasoning (1984). MacAloon holds the ancient Greek culture to be a positive model of classical civilization. The barbarianism of the Roman Games and the assumed passivity of the spectators of Roman circus are compared to "transcendent" Greek art, literature, philosophical debate and athletic forms from the classical period to signify "true" cultural spectacle. Greek cultural forms are romanticized as a standard for cultural excellence regardless of the historical period. In MacAloon's work, various levels of cultural performance are arbitrarily mapped out and assumed to share certain "core truths": for example, that all humans have been unified as members of one human species; that humans can discover this commonality through play and sport; that by engaging in games, sport and rituals that humans can learn to respect the differences that exist amongst people. These beliefs are depicted as weaving throughout all the performative

“genres” of the sport festival, ritual and game that collectively serve as the foundation for the *metagenre* of the Olympic spectacle. MacAloon argues that basic truth exists at the heart of the ritual: “we respect each other because we are the same in our differences”. Rituals have represented the serious elements of cultural life, festivals can frame cultural subjects in joyful happiness, and the spectacle megagenre of the Olympics has achieved a status of being “grandiloquent and alluring but merit suspicion” (1984, Figure 2).

The discerning features of the spectacle, which MacAloon has incorporated over and above all the other levels of performance, have been (a) the primacy of the visual and symbolic experience for the sports fan, (2) the grandeur of the celebration, (3) the “organically” linked roles of the spectator and the performer, and (4) the dramatic action-packed form that has inspired awe. Like the founder of the Modern Olympics, MacAloon has adopted Pierre de Coubertin’s fear of “theatrical displays and pointless spectacles” surrounding the sporting festival, particularly the “aggrandizing ethos” of the modern sport spectacle form:

‘more is better’ tends to destroy the symmetries of balance, harmony, and duration that distinguish traditional festivals. Hence the genres of spectacle and festival are often differently valanced. While we happily anticipate festivals we are suspicious of spectacles, associating them with potential tastelessness and more cacophony. We tend, for example, to associate the Roman circus games rather than the medieval tournament with the term ‘spectacle’ (1984:246).

This “more is better” ethos can be aligned with the Greek “Herculean assumption” that the *best is rare*, according to Brantlinger (1984:54). Other writers, such as Caldwell (1979), Halberstein (1984) and Rader (1984) have adopted these classical assumptions

to criticize the degree to which modern sport competition has become “mere entertainment” and has degenerated into an “appalling spectacle” as Caldwell has labelled it.

Many cultural critics have been sceptical about the ability of modern televised sport spectacles to exhibit commonality. Television viewers and the passive viewers in the arena bleachers are being entertained “distantly” by the pageantry and athletic plays. For this reason, MacAloon has argued that spectacle entertainment is a *neoliminoid activity*, that is, the sports spectacle may have had the potential for mass “communitas” in the past, but they instead have tended to separate people. This line of argument echoes Gregory Stone’s seminal essay, “*American Sports: Play and Display*” (1955). Stone argues that sport in industrial societies has been viewed as undergoing severe “massification” and eventually has become a predictable ritual of (dis)play. Massification for Stone was considered to be synonymous with commercial entertainment and therefore destructive of the underlying “essential” elements of play in our culture. The active participants in rituals of yesteryear have been downgraded in this perspective to passive observers of display. Similarly, Low and Borokowski (1974) have harshly evaluated the loss of the play element in televised sport as a “circus” has emerged thereby taking away spectator sports’ function to perpetuate industrial society’s mythologies.

For these cultural critics, the technological “pseudo-experience” of viewing televised sports has artificially constructed sporting celebrations. “Real world” experience is assumed to have been hampered by the lack of actual human interaction and the geographic distances between fans which prohibit the possibility of a media festival according to many mass society theorists. Caldwell (1979) Hocking (1982), MacAloon

(1984) and Rader (1984) have all argued that televisual technology has *distorted* the experience of spectating sport and has threatened the “authenticity” due to the loss of social interaction. MacAloon has asserted that distancing the sport from the spectators has created widespread confusion between reality and appearance. Ascertaining what is “really real” has been the major dilemma facing all men and woman he suggests. Because the spectacle has existed both an image on the screen and as a producer of cultural images of sport, MacAloon has positioned the spectacle in a triangular relationship with the event and the cultural context; consequently, the cultural performance at the level of the televisual spectacle consists of “seeing, sight and oversight” (1984:270). By contrast Hocking (1982), is not concerned about the visual transformation of sport because he considers the vision afforded by the televisual spectacle to be superior to what the human eye can see at the live event. Nevertheless, he has grieved over the “deadening” of communal experience because the sportscast fan can not hear the ambience of the arena, such as the game noises and the crowd excitement. Walsh (1982) on the other hand, has agreed with the assessment that the sports reality has been distorted and made elusive to the fan because of the electronic level of *communitas* offered by media sports programme. Electronically guided perceptions, according to Cummings (n.d.), have been similarly defined as illusory imitations of the social order of modern society that strive to deceive the television viewer.

To develop the claim that the television sport spectacle has lent itself to a confusion of reality and images, MacAloon (1984) and Chalip and Chalip (1987), have turned to the work of spectacle theorists Daniel Boorstin and Guy Debord. Although Debord's, *The Society of the Spectacle* (1977), resides in a deeply critical French tradition, it is nonetheless

loosely comparable in its condemnation of spectacle to the more conservative work of Boorstin in *The Image: A Guide to Pseudo-Events in America* (1961). MacAloon is attracted to these works because they condemn the proliferation of media images in contemporary life as the root of contemporary cultural decay. MacAloon's lament over the "collapse" of the game, ritual and festival genres of amateur sport into the spectacle parallels Guy Debord's anguish over the modern spectacle becoming a "negation of life". In observing the modern condition, Debord observed:

The concept of the 'spectacle' unifies and explains a great diversity of apparent phenomena. The diversity and the contrasts are appearances of a socially organized appearance, the general truth of which must itself be recognized. Considered in its own terms, the spectacle is *affirmation* of appearance and affirmation of all human life, namely social life, as mere appearance. But the critique which reaches the truth of the spectacle exposes it as the visible *negation* of life, as a negation of life which *has become visible* (1977:#10).

Rader's (1984) study of televised sport conveys similar sentiments concerning the transformation of the commercialized spectacle within a "rootless society". Like other mass culture critics, Rader has analyzed the negative consequences to the dramatic ritual experience of sport due to commercialization and technological presentation. Prior to the television era, the experience of sport was assumed to be experienced as a:

unique form of human drama, a drama sharply different from other forms of entertainment ... it also entailed genuine competition; there were winners and losers. But here, unlike the marketplace, competition existed under ideal conditions (1984:3).

Thus, televisual media has “contaminated” both sport and the experience of the sports fan watching the game, according to Rader, because the entertainment sensations “flatten” one’s sensibilities after viewing too many big plays too often. Shergold (1979) and Caldwell (1979) similarly have criticized what they have deemed to be the suffocation of the ‘real’ values of sport and the devastating “depreciated of real” sport when it has been broadcast. The negation of ritual life experiences into mere entertainment assumes that a universal, “authentic”, experiential mode has existed outside of current commercial culture, and that sport existed outside of market relations prior to the advent of television. To further explain the loss of authentic sporting life and values, Shergold (1979), MacAloon (1984) and Rader (1984) have extracted Debord’s contention that contemporary spectacles harbour pseudo-enjoyment. Media sports have contained the “built-in” sensationalism of mainstream television programming according to Shergold. While the earlier sports press and radio broadcasting carried elements of sensationalism, Shergold has suggested that television has had more subtle and devastating effects on sporting culture due to its ability to “falsify” the real experiences of the sporting event.

These arguments however, have the flavour of technological determinism. It is television itself that is often targeted as the major factor that has subjugated the sporting spectacle experience to mere “pseudo-enjoyment”. Not only does this perspective fail to locate television broadly in its social and political context, it also tends to disregard the possibility of polysemic interpretations among the viewing audience and thus has denied the role of human agency within the circuit of meaning during a modern media spectacle. For example, Benjamin Rader has suggested that while the televised sport spectacle has promoted the values of self-enjoyment for the sports fan, it has also enabled the television

industry to use broadcasting equipment to create instant celebrities, to falsify the fan experience of the stadium spectacle, and to invent modern “trash sports” such as ABC’s buffalo chip tossing, celebrity “Superstar” events, and roller-derby (1984). In such determinist arguments there has been no room for addressing the polysemy of the “lived” experiences of the audience consuming televised sport, no room for addressing the struggles over sporting interpretations, and little understanding of the intensity of televisual pleasures that fans of sport experience.

Some have attempted to rework the technological determinist stream. John MacAloon (1984) for example, has integrated Daniel Boorstin’s discussion of the spectacle into his genre system of the normative ritual and sporting spectacle (1961). The attraction of Boorstin’s discussion of the manufacture of sporting events into an image or “pseudo-event” is that the television fan is positioned as an *active* participant in the event. In other words, the enticing explanatory power of Boorstin’s theory is that spectators are not “duped unknowingly” by the television broadcast, as other writers often assume, but rather, the spectator enjoys being confronted with the unreality. Chalip and Chalip (1987) also have drawn upon Boorstin’s work to examine how heroes have been televisually created within the pseudo sporting event and have been “perennially replenished” by media coverage. With each new championship season in major league sports, heroes from the past season have been momentarily “emptied” and their image replaced with the emerging stars of the new season. Not all, however, have been so generous in their assessment. Thus, Rader (1984) has claimed that televised events have trivialized the experience of spectating, and flattened the audience’s levels of sensibility, perception and attention. Caldwell goes further to warn that television has hypnotized and

fully diverted the attention of the fan from their personal surroundings (1979).

Some researchers who have demonstrated a concern with the problems of media spectacle have rejected determinist arguments. They emphasize the extent to which sporting spectacles on television are a *cultural performance* that can be “read” as cultural text (see Rothenbuhler, 1982; MacAloon, 1984; Chalip and Chalip, 1987). After borrowing from Clifford Geertz’s classic study of the Balinese cockfight (1972), the sporting event has been theorized as a cultural form or text employed by spectators to “tell stories about themselves”. Thus, the televised sporting spectacle has become a modern signifying system that “speaks” to the fans about his/her culture through broadcast athletic representation. MacAloon suggests that these stories have both a particularistic and universal character. In the latter case, his suggestions that athletic achievement on television dramatizes universal truths appears to seriously neglect the historically defined codes that privilege a particular form of sport, such as the team sport of hockey, over the individual event of speed skating, and privilege a particular set of discourses about those select sports such as aggressiveness rather than skating technique. By assuming a universal truth could be read from the text, MacAloon naturalizes the historically-specific gender order of sport today.⁶

⁶Work on sport as a cultural performance that celebrates universal truths is pervaded with sexist assumptions about the abilities and representations of athletes. The Olympic games and media coverage of the Olympics have historically channelled women into gender-appropriate sports such as figure skating, gymnastics, synchronized swimming by placing these events in primetime, by celebrating the winners in these sports, and by refusing to put to the same range of contact sport disciplines and long endurance events onto the programme. Male and female athletic bodies are biologically/genetically similar, but exhibit differences of degree (of strength, flexibility, endurance etc.). However, the gender order of sport rewards males and females differently. Historically, women have been rewarded for their display of grace while men have been rewarded for strength, aggressiveness and speed -- the very attributes which receive the greater Olympic accolades in the overall Olympiad. See the work of Paul Willis (1983) for an excellent discussion of how biological differences of degree are taken up in the realm of sport and culturally widened in ways that celebrate

Theories of the modern sporting ritual, have often suggested that televised sport has become a debased spectacle which limits human possibility in a number of ways. Yet, theories that privilege the stadium event over the television event, or claim that the televised spectacle is symptomatic of social breakdown, are often limited by romantic elitist tendencies. These tendencies have romanticized an assumed non-commercial and non-political amateur sporting foundation of the past. Most of these theories have dismissed the possibility of a present day televised sport spectacle having much value.

In addition, typologies of cultural performances, such as “play-games-sport-spectator sport”, or “games-ritual-festival-spectacle”, and the universal truths assumed to lie at the heart of these models have been riddled with ahistorical assumptions. These kinds of genre typologies have naturalized the culturally produced elements of sport. These kinds of classification systems have not enhanced our sociological grasp of a complex set of relationships and practices, rather they simplify the social life of sport into neat packages. Unfortunately, the act of abstracting and reducing the degree of relational complexity in sport has served to render the social construction of sporting events invisible. For example, MacAloon has abstracted particular characteristics of the cultural performance, such as the emotions of awe and joy, and has arbitrarily assigned them within a set of theoretical “framemarkers” -- game, ritual, festival and spectacle. This has been an academic exercise which inadvertently has been part of a signifying process that has legitimated an older ideal of amateurism as the “proper” essence of sport. Such typologies can, as this example has displayed, mystify the historical grounding of sporting spectacles, the inequalities in social relationships, and the meanings that participants and

and naturalize the dominance of male sporting performance.

fans have negotiated in and through the cultural performance. When this occurs -- for example, in discussions of Olympic spectacle -- there is a tendency to ignore the struggles and accommodations through which a specific set of practices and representational notions in sport have become the conventional practices and notions.

These theories of the sporting spectacle have been limited by their failure to recognize how multiple and complex levels of power relations have mediated both cultural representations of sport in general and televisual representations of sporting spectacle in particular. While many of the writers addressing the spectacle as a "cultural performance" and "text" have not wished to return to an older idealized vision of amateur sport (as some of the more conservative of the normative theorists have wished for). This range of evaluations of the sporting spectacle have tended to downplay a number of important issues: (a) the social construction of sport as socio-physical practice and the historical construction of its mass mediated representation, (b) the class, race, ethnic, age and gender inequalities encoded into contemporary rules of sport and celebrations of victors, (c) the barriers preventing various groups of athletes from attaining high performance standards as they are currently defined, and (d) the unequally distributed opportunities for spectating sport at the stadium site and as part of a televised audience. Instead I argue that modern sporting spectacles -- both attended at the arena and spectated via electronic mediation -- are neither indicative of universal cultural performances, nor are they indicative of doomed social decay as the more pessimistic of this literature to follow has suggested. Rather, the televisual spectacle is expressive of historical struggles and negotiations around the broadcast industry's presentation of sport as a gendered-patriotic product and process.

(III) STUDIES OF MEDIA EFFECT AND PROGRAMMING

CONTENT

Two dominant waves of media investigation into sport that have been pursued, but are not necessarily mutually exclusive of the traditions already discussed, include a tradition of “effects” research and a liberal pluralist approach to the study of programming content. Between the first and second world wars before television was available in Canada, media studies tended to develop a set of observations about how the media-audience relationship was organized. The purpose was to discover the social role of the “modern mass media”, and to measure this industry’s presumed powerful effects upon society. Caught between the assumptions of mass society theories on the one hand, and functionalist and pluralist traditions on the other, the “effects” tradition has variously conceptualized the media (i.e. the radio, movies, newspapers) as trenchant tools of manipulation, purveyors of propaganda, and important agencies of socialization and personal gratification. As televised sports became a subject for scrutiny over the last two decades, the “effects” line of analysis developed as a dominant perspective, particularly with regards to the issue of violence.

The liberal pluralist approach to media sport studies, emerged after the wars when many aspects of earlier effects research were being hotly contested and occasionally condemned. Much of the early research on media effects claimed to “test” the mass society claim that the modern media audience is homogeneous and passive. Increasingly, the content agenda shifted away from the assumption of “effects” being stamped upon the audience to

and emphasis on the consumptive uses the audience makes of mass media. The liberal pluralist critique of mass society and mass culture criticism generally concluded that the media have exerted a *limited* influence on *heterogeneous* groups of consumers. Central to this tenet is the argument that there never has been one mass audience. Pluralists replaced the notion of the audience member as being a mere “receiver” of manipulative content with the title of “consumer”. Writers who adopted their perspective suggested that media effects were sufficiently plural and diverse to give empirical support to the ideal of a liberal and democratic society.

Power within this perspective was not assumed to be the property of controlling elites, as a ruling class; instead, power was seen to be diffused between the “plurality” of competing interest groups within society at any given moment. The pluralist tradition assumed a decentralized model of media power in contradistinction to the overriding manipulatory power of the media as it had been conceptualized within the earlier ‘effects’ tradition. Sources of influence and decision making abilities have been, therefore, considered to be broadly differentiated and distributed between the various social clusters that have continually struggled over the possession of these capabilities. Within the pluralist tradition, empirically based studies of manifest media content have commonly been pursued in conjunction with laboratory based studies of small group uses of the media, and/or positivist studies from sociological and psychological streams.

Audiences in this research have been considered to be part of other social groupings in which socializing influences have arisen from the social setting and personal ties to “significant others” such as family members, peers, and teammates. This intervention has

served as a useful corrective to the overwhelming manipulative power of the media assumed in the mass society traditions. However, it has rendered a number of unequal relationships of power invisible, particularly at the level of political-economic structures, gender and race relations. Consumers alone, and within local social webs, have been seen to utilize their prior dispositions to *selectively* view media messages which may, or may not, have an effect on them (Curran et. al. 1982:12). The degree of influential power contained within the media message has depended, not on something inherent to the message or to an elite and powerful encoder, but rather, it has depended on either (a) the 'uses and gratifications' notion that the media consumer actively seeks to fill personal needs by selecting a given media product, or (b) the 'cognitive dissonance' notion which suggests that an active attempt can be made by the viewer to avoid messages that may cause psychological discomfort if consumed.⁷ In recent years, this line of thought has emphasized by offering the notion of a *synthetic* relationship between the media and the audience. This has been invaluable because the notion of human agency has re-entered the theoretical understanding of the media. Thus, the audience has been depicted as bringing their prior dispositions and current needs with them to digest the media in ways that achieve their own ends (Gurevitch:1982, preface). Since the late 1970s, this approach to media studies has informed much of the work on media sports.

⁷Curran et. al. (1982:12).

(a) The Effects Tradition in Televised Sport Studies

The impact of television ... has produced more revolutionary - and irrevocable -changes in sport than anything since mankind began to play organized games (W.O. Johnson, 1969:88).

Effects research has pursued the question of how human behaviour or the attitudes of sports spectators have been altered, or how television has transformed sport itself. Institutional analyses of sport or television organizations have alleged a variety of effects have occurred from the broadcasting of competitive athletics. Some have noted the positive effects of the intrusion of television into the world of sport; Altheide and Snow (1979), Eitzen (1984), Eitzen and Sage (1989) for example, have noted how increased player salaries have resulted in an improved level in the quality of play, and league stability. Eitzen and Sage have documented the historical changes in major league sport before and after the advent of television; in the 1950s pro baseball had been a "skeleton" league of sixteen clubs which struggled to stay afloat economically. Television has now given baseball a level of prosperity that has allowed the sport to be widely followed by the fans and practiced by over twenty-six teams in North America according to the observers (1989:231). Most effects research, however, has criticized television for this industry's degree of imposition into the world of sports and for the effects upon the sportsfans (e.g. Furst 1972, Rader 1978, Alt 1983, Patter 1984).

A major set of objections about television's control over the spectacle have been directed at the scheduling changes networks have demanded in order to match primetime slots for television. This pursuit of larger viewing audiences has been conducted with

little regard for the optimal time for players to play the game according to the critics. A second line of objection stems from the pressure exerted by the broadcast industry on major league sports in North America to significantly change rules and the structure of the competition to suit broadcasting and entertainment requirements. For example, Furst considers rule changes to be manifestations of the antagonism between producing the event for the television spectator and considerations of the athletes (1972). The introduction of the designated hitter into baseball to enhance “offensive fireworks”, the 24-second rule and the slam dunk in basketball, and the transformation of golf to medal play are typical examples of the kinds of “impositions” that the sports media industry have demanded, for the purposes of what the critics have called “selfish” enhancements for television spectator appeal (Furst 1972, Altheide and Snow 1979, Synder and Spreitzer 1984, Goldstein and Bredemeir 1984, Eitzen 1984).

Some critics of the television industry’s power from this media effect tradition have expressed a more extremist stance when measuring the degree of television’s encroachment into the sporting realm of cultural life. Some have argued that it is the integrity of sport itself which has been reshaped along with the rule and schedule alterations (Alt 1983, Hoch 1972).⁸ When television’s encroachment has altered the rules to cater to mass consumption, the notion of fairplay has been effectively excluded according to Alt. This has indicated the wider patterns of cultural reification under capitalism that have seeped into sport as well (Alt 1983). Beyond reification, television producers have been accused of twisting reality. Furst, for example, has claimed that television has

⁸Both of these authors are theoretically located in a marxist perspective but are discussed here, because they focus on the effects of televised content.

predigested sporting events and presented a spectacle that has been “twice removed” from the actual event. Furthermore, as Cummings has noted earlier, the telecast has represented an illusionary and electronically manipulated false reality that has “befuddled” the spectator through such tools as the split screen and replays that have ultimately served to heighten audience anxiety and message ambiguity.

The growth of spectator sport and its “usurpation by television has been blamed for instigating two major alterations in the way that sport has been played. Bredmeir et. al. (1984) have claimed that television has formalized all levels of sport and has professionalized amateur sport. The institutionalizing pressures of television have created an overriding emphasis upon “playing to win’. What this has led to, according to these observers, has been a lack of concern for skill and style, and more crucially for these self-appointed protectors of ‘true and fair’ sporting behaviour, has been that televised sport has placed a *psychologically dysfunctionate* emphasis upon the derogation of the opponent by promoting winning at all costs and by sanctioning violence.

One of the chief criticisms of the negative consequences of televised sport has been the perpetuation of the ‘winning is everything’ attitude that has been accused of suffocating what have been assumed to be the “real virtues” of sport around the globe (Caldwell 1979). Many have suggested that the ethos of winning has lead to the breakdown of the sport ritual into “mere” entertainment (Real 1975, Alt 1983, Rader 1984, Greenway 1985); when the televised spectacle plays host to entertainment values, they have argued, sport further deteriorates as a vital human ritual when, for instance, player strikes in professional sport and boycotts become political interventions into Olympic

festivals. Yet, few have actually studied the effects upon the audience; Prisutas' survey of American high school students in 1970s has been a rare exception. He found that heavy television viewing of sports programming, particularly by white middle class males, did tend to foster authority respect, nationalism, and conservative attitudes; however, these attitudes were found not to be solely caused by television viewing alone because other agents of socialization such as teachers, parents, and peers bolstered these attitudes.

Some Marxist critics have developed the notion of 'collapsing sport ritual' further. By presenting images of cheating and by fostering the conditions for the "cult of winning", televised sport producers have been accused of encouraging similar "core" problems within corporate capitalism, because the fetishization of athletics pay checks and the displays of "violence and vengeance" (Alt 1983) have become commonplace in public discourse. Paul Hoch, has extended this line of argument, claiming the media are involved in fascist socialization. Spectator sport, he has declared, has exerted an "opiate effect" upon the athletes, moulding them into "protofascists", and that television has fashioned the mass audience with "misguided" visions of elitism, nationalism, racism and sexism in order to socialize them for consumption and mass production work (1972).

Another major criticism pertaining to the socializing effects of televised sport has been concerned with the assumed reduction in the intrinsic motivations of youth involved in sport. Goldstein and Bredemeir have offered a psychologically prompted criticism, that little league sport teams have recently placed greater emphasis on 'the win', rather than the process of playing and spectating, as the youth's television sport role models have sanctioned the infliction of violent sporting strategies (1984). Likewise, Rader has argued

that preadolescent athletes “ape” their professional sport heroes on the community sporting fields and rinks after watching television. This has resulted in a reduction of spontaneous play, fun, cooperation and athletic improvisation of action moves on the playing field. The contemporary level of mass electronic spectacle has not escaped Rader’s indictment as he has heavily criticized the creation of midget bowls and little league world championships that have transformed children’s sport into overly serious “grotesque enterprises”. They have destroyed locally based practices, he argues, and they have externalized the rewards of play (1984: 171-4). Moreover, the substantial number of programming slots dedicated to television sport, and the mass production nature of the broadcast technology employment have reduced the “uniqueness of the sports drama to little more than... the game show” (1984:137). The reach and sheer amount of televised sport programming has thus positioned the media as a primary agent of socialization, as being the root cause of passive lifestyles, and as the cause of a decrease in attendance at live sporting events according to Eitzen and Sage (1989). They have noted that over a half of the twenty-five “all time” top-rated shows are sport related, and that the amount of sports programming available to North Americans has increased from about 800 hours per year in the USA in 1971, to 1560 hours on major networks in 1988 (who offered 65 full days of sporting events), while ESPN provided 2600 hours of sports around the clock throughout the broadcast year (1989:229).

Perhaps the greatest televisual concern debated by researchers, television critics, governments and sporting organizations alike, has been the effect of television instigating violent sporting practices and levels of spectator acceptance of physical assaults in sport. The McMurtry Ontario Royal Commission report, *“Investigation and Inquiry into Violence*

in Amateur Hockey" (1974) was an illustration of the credence given to this theory at the level of public concern in Canada. In the fifteen years spanning 1961-76, McMurtry found that an average of fifteen hours of aggressive sport could be seen on television in Ontario. A steady increase in violent images occurred over this period from a low average of ten hours per viewing week in 1964 to a high average of twenty-one hours in the early 1970s.⁹ Perceptions of audience response to viewing "excessive violence" in sport was assumed by many Ontarians to have serious effects. Fourteen percent of those surveyed believed that viewing excessive violence in televised hockey was having a significant effect on the audience. Twenty-seven percent thought televised violence "may" be having an effect, while seventeen said televised images have no effect. In other words, many audience members believed that consuming violent images of sport were having a *learning effect* rather than a cathartic release of aggression (Leduc and Moriarity 1978).

Laboratory and field studies within socio-psychological approaches have explained viewer violence by employing a modelling theory in which sports fans have imitated violent behaviour witnessed on telecasts. Baron, for example, has found that: sports fans will imitate violent moves if they believed they would be rewarded, or at least not punished for the action, if violent sporting behaviour on television appeared real and not staged, if their playing environment was similar to the image of the televisual field/arena, and/or if the violent act was unique (1977). The major problem in applying these results has been that lab studies can not always be generalized to the world of community sport, and that these studies quantitatively measured the *short term* degree of imitation of violent behaviour.

⁹To be classified as aggressive sport, the game had to involve body contact and/or a high probability of injury from the nature of play.

Yet, opportunities to exhibit aggressiveness may not arise immediately after viewing television (Smith 1987: 29).

Outside of the research on violence, an economic critique has been employed by proponents of the “effects” tradition to demonstrate television’s claimed powers over the realm of sport itself. After the broadcast industry gained entry into professional and high performance amateur sport, television was able to tighten its financial grip, able to enjoy free rein over rule and schedule adaptations, and to “make or break” entire leagues and traditions such as college sports (Cricher 1987, Eitzen 1984). As major network television companies seized control of elite sport, another area of social life under monopoly capitalism has been fortified according to Hoch (1972) and Alt (1983).

The crux of many critical assessments of the burgeoning economic power of television has been the loss of controlling power by sporting organizations to stage and run sport. Some have overestimated the ability of television companies to fully control sport. Schechter, for example, has asserted that the infusion of broadcast monies has permitted a unscrupulous takeover of sport by television. Sexist analogies are employed to stress his arguments:

television buys sports. Television supports sports. It moves in with its money and supports sports in a style to which they have become accustomed and then, like a bought lady, sports become so used to luxurious living they cannot extricate themselves. So, slowly, at first, but inevitably, television tells sports what to do. It is sports and it runs them the way it does most other things, more flamboyantly than honestly (Shechter, 1970:79).

A central complaint of the economically-based critique has been the impact the medium has

made upon the ethos of sport which, according to Rader, has channelled the motivation and behaviour of paid athletes and team owners toward the production of profit and sporting events that will sell (1984). "Trash sports" like rollerderby are examples provided by Rader to stress that distinctions between traditional sporting activities and televised sports drama are becoming blurred. These "synthetic" contests, he has argued, have promoted "vulgar exhibitionism" and have led to the death of amateur sport as playing for the joy of sport has been lost.¹⁰

The commercial "marriage" of sport and television has been conscientiously analyzed for the degree of control over the media representations of sport as well. The "greedy" nature of the current union, as evident in the ratings war and struggle for advertising dollars, has harmed the artistic nature of sport coverage and is thus illustrative of the downgrading of North American culture according to David Halberstam (1984). In less than a decade, he has lamented, artistic expression in television coverage has been exterminated in sports such as basketball where increased amounts of coverage has shifted the production values to an entertainment mode.

Many audience analyses have presented mass society assumptions of media effects in the form of organic analogies. The alleged "symbiosis" between sport and television has been viewed as "unbalanced". Runfola (1984) and Eitzen (1984) have declared the

¹⁰While I would agree the entertainment codes of televised sport and the news coverage of professional sport salaries have transformed the dominant messages about sport in our culture, I would argue that there has never been one particular intrinsic joy in playing and watching sport. Joy, motivation, pleasure etc. are instead all socially constructed, rewarded and individually negotiated in social relationships. The loss of sport for its own sake, as the Victorian ethos of sport promotes, has really been the loss of a historically privileged cultural motivation and sporting pleasure.

widespread socializing influences on the mass audience to be the result of vast portions of the population receiving the exact same stimuli from sports programming. “Super-spectators”, according to this line of effects theorizing, have uncritically digested sports programming and the glorified products advertised within the spectacle, such as beer and trucks, because the economic control by television over the sport spectacle has led to narrowing range of stimuli.

Television needs sports ... as much as sport needs television, since both function as powerful socializers for the habit of passive consumption. Television sports have become an advertising medium for macho sports products like beer, cigars and men's toiletries. Sports watching has developed to such a high degree that many fans are now passive participants and super consumers of sport and sport related products (Runfola 1984:78).

For some, the transmutation of sport into electronic “showbiz” has been claimed to have exerted poisonous effects upon the audience. For example, Caldwell (1979) has claimed that sport has a hypnotizing effect on the audience. Walsh (1984) has warned that television has “criminally” obscured and distorted reality, while Critcher (1987) has claimed that viewing sport must be received as “distorted” communication because the entertainment codes flow in a one-way path to the consumer, who has little chance of feedback. Television is assumed to “trivialize” the experience of the spectator in comparison to the arena fan attending the actual game (Rader 1984). The distance between the actual sporting competition and the television fan has been a factor contributing to the “deadening” of the fan experience according to Hockings (1982) because the excitement and level of crowd arousal cannot be emulated at home through electronic channels. Many have assumed that this has occurred within the broader context of sport being remade into a capitalist novelty product; this novelty has been described as contributing to the

homogenization of cultural taste.¹¹

Since the 1970s, a number of television effects researchers have questioned the consequences of the pacifying effects of the sportfans upon broader North American social and family life, student habits, and lifestyle (Snyder and Spreitzer 1984). The reductionist critical literature of the 1970s has claimed that television has caused extremes of human passivity. For Paul Hoch, the typical American “superspectator” of televised sport has become a “docile citizen” of a racist, sexist, and militarist political world who has sought escape and pseudo-satisfaction (1972:10). Similarly, Alt depicted this alienated electronic sports fan as seeking diversion through television’s presentation of “fragmented appearances of action”. These studies are problematic because of the scope of their denial of human agency. Oppositional readings of televised sport are not possible within this framework.

A related problem inherent in much of the effects research has been the stream of technological determinism mentioned earlier. In examining Australian sport, for example, Caldwell (1977) argued that the medium of television has distorted the viewer’s experience and perceptions of sport. Regardless of cultural background, the wires of television are represented as an “octopus of sport and entertainment, which may, in the long run, squeeze the life out of both” (1977:10). The overriding technological imperative has been theorized as wholly determining how sport has been played and spectated. Technology has been presumed to be the major factor leading to the development of sport as

¹¹For demographic overviews of effects of televised sport viewing, see Kenyon 1986, McPherson 1972 and 1975, Birrell and Loy 1974, Smith 1974, Loy et. al. 1978.

an entertainment property guided by a commercial imperative. According to Rader (1984) these related imperatives have "contaminated" the world of community sport with a "plethora of external intrinsics" related to the distortions of real human distances:

Television has essentially trivialized the experience of spectator sports. With its enormous power to magnify and distort images, to reach every hamlet in the nation with events from anywhere in the world, and to power millions of dollars into sports, television - usually with the enthusiastic assistance of the sports moguls - has sacrificed much of the unique drama of sport to the requirement of entertainment" (1984:5).

Television technology has generally been argued to fall prey to political and/or commercial power brokers; Alt has claimed that television technology alters sport to display an emphasis on winning, vengeance, and excitement (1983). Givant has suggested that television technology has allowed the industry to sell sport as entertainment to enhance the sellability of the spectacle though a "hyped product" full of heightened drama, tight editing and closeups (1975). Shergold has further observed that the television industry has transformed the stadium into a huge studio that constructs a "false picture" of the sports action by over-sensationalizing the athletics feats on the field and augmenting the actual degree of crowd excitement and tension (1978).

Likewise, a great deal of effects research has been wrought with gross oversimplifications of the complexity of social development in sport, struggles and negotiations that have historically occurred within sporting competitions, within the labour process of producing sport for television, and within the context of sports fans negotiating their meaningful attachments. To reduce all communication processes to a one way imposition of overbearing commercial, violent and political messages does not adequately

account for the social processes within the production, distribution and consumption moments of sports broadcasting. Effects research from both the right and left political extremes has sometimes offered an overly simplified view of one-directional power. The left can only envision a mass of defenceless, alienated and malleable fans, brainwashed by the media, while the perspective on the right understands sporting audiences to be dislocated urbanites susceptible to the overriding influences of the commercial media (Curran et. al. 1982).

Furthermore, one of the major analytic problems with media effects research and the attendant mass society claims, are the assumptions about the elite sector of media power brokers whom *impose* information on viewers, thereby creating a flattened sense of culture in the viewing audience. However, as Bennett has observed, these claims of the effect traditions ignore the limits and pressures of the political economic structures of the media production site and downplay the possibility of alternative audiences practices and understandings when consuming programming (1982). Determinist arguments employ an implicitly "Pavlovian" approach to stimulus-response and have not dealt adequately with the historical struggles and agreements on the terrain of cultural production, and thus have remained as academic speculation. Basically, much of the effects tradition of sports media research has ignored both the internal conditions and signifying practices of production by television crews, and the making of meaning using this production by the sportsfan in the audience in their wide variety of contexts (Cantelon et. al. 1984b:13). A more compelling argument is to discuss the *effectivity* of dominant televisual images *working ideologically to prefer, promote and circulate* particular visions of sport rather than "causing" overriding effects in fans and sports organizations (Fiske 1987:20).

(b) Examinations of Televised Sport Content

Some researchers have focused their attention on the manifest content of television sports productions. Like other areas of research in television, content analyses of the broadcast sport packages have offered contradictory results. For example, the structure of NFL games were scrutinized in the 1970s by Brien Williams (1977) to visually compare the action and individual athlete performances framed by American television crews. This study found that television emphasized action in eighty-two percent of the shots, and that the individual performance of the ball carrier, rather than the teams' performances, were highlighted in the majority of the images by employing close-up shots and narrow camera framing. However, the proportional breakdown of televised football in the same era by Michael Real offers conflicting data (1975). Williams' statistical analysis of the game suggests that eighty-two percent of televised football is action oriented. Real studied the entire broadcast package, including pregame shows and commercials and found that athletic action constituted three percent of the NFL show.¹² Televised sport, Real concluded, was not about play and athletic excitement but about a "larger life game". In this *mythic spectacle* the content analysis of time segments of the televised championship, football programming revealed a thematic distribution of 39% half-time entertainment shows, 25% shots of objective scoreboard and clock time, 21% pre/post game shows, and 15% advertising content. The value of visually deconstructing a televised programme into segments is that it can demonstrate how the television industry *imposes* its own structure

¹²The vast gap between the action measurement in these two studies is due to how "action" was operationalized as a category to be counted (e.g. was action tightly defined as moments when the ball and athletes were in motion during official game time, while they were waiting for the kickoff as official game time was stopped?), and whether or not the pregame shows and advertisements were included in the calculations as they were in Real's study.

onto the broadcast product as Williams has noted.

Others have empirically examined the audio content of sports programming. Bryant et. al. (1977), for example, have borrowed from literary linguistic traditions to study the “dramatic embellishments” incorporated into television content. To fill boring lulls in sporting action and to create a higher level of interpersonal conflict between the football teams on television, the broadcast anchors’ infused dramatic verbal embellishments. The narrative structure of the NFL sample counted by these researchers counted uncovered 72% of the commentary to be of a descriptive nature, 27% were dramatic comments, and 1% offered audiences humorous comment. The descriptive presentation of the football conflict has offered the television fan a programme full of “orchestrated” excitement and interpersonal conflict through commentator narrative according to Bryant’s research team.

Another study of audio content chose categories based on typical narrative themes of Olympic announcers; Meadow’s examination of the 1984 Summer Games concluded that ABC announcers constructed the broadcasts around the theme, “an American trying to win a medal”. Their investigation disclosed 97% of all speakers to be American. The nature of the themes by the speakers included: 20% of comments contained hopeful expectations of an upcoming exciting performance, 14% commands to “watch this” as American athletes were about to compete in predicted medal winning performances, 12% military references, 10% of commentary were warnings that the network was about to jump to another athletic venue and sporting event, and 5% of the commentary contained historical background information.

Audio analysis, Meadow has suggested, has disclosed the function of announcer “chat” to be a device employed to attract a larger audience and thus it must presented in such a way as to

tell an “appealing story” about sporting drama. Narrative content analysis, as these two studies have demonstrated, can be gainfully utilized to demonstrate cultural popularity, choice and the social construction of broadcast themes.

What content studies do not consider however, is the extent to which researchers’ choice of categories to count may serve to naturalize a narrative preference also demonstrated by producers. Similarly, there tends to be little concern for the ways visual and auditory codes can mediate the signification of televisual meaning. Content analysis studies force the various aspects of television programming into *arbitrarily* defined categories. This mode of examination can fruitfully record the culturally dominant categories of sporting representation. Unfortunately, what content analysis cannot account for are the productive processes by the crew, their struggles to create and privilege particular broadcast content. This form of deconstruction of programming content has also failed to account for the way sports fans have consumed and (re)constructed the substance of televisual performance as they have viewed it in their own typical settings. The statistically significant aggregates of dramatic commentary motifs and visual stylizations measured from the surface of the televisual text have not been guarantees that the sportsfan has interpreted the game in alignment with dominant themes pursued by the media researcher. Content analysis has tended to pass over the issue of encoder intent and the polysemic nature of television viewer abilities. Numerical significance has not necessarily corresponded to the representational significance of sport held by the television fan. The absence of a theory of representation has been a central limitation with the tradition of quantitative content analysis (Bennett 1982).

(c) Studying the “Symbiotic Relationship” Between Television and Sport

Mapping the allegedly *symbiotic relationship* between television and high performance sport has been another popular line of analysis presented in both institutional studies¹³, and content analysis of sport such as Alaskiewicz (1986), Bellamy (1989), Caldwell (1979), Chandler (1983), Eitzen (1984), Eitzen and Sage (1989), Greendorfer (1983), MacPherson et. al. (1989), McChesney (1989), Natrass (1988), Parente (1974), Smith and Blackman (1978). Parente's stress on the mutual influences that have occurred when the institutions of sport and broadcasting have formed bonds has initiated a research tradition that has defined the sport-broadcasting relationship as a symbiotic alliance -- a “mutual and interdependent relationship between two essentially dissimilar entities” (1974:15). The “symbiotic” perspective has emerged, in part, as a response to the technological determinist assumptions of the effects research in order to stress that the television medium does not fundamentally alter the nature of sport, and that it has been possible for the sports industry to affect the nature and content of broadcasting to some degree as well (Chandler 1983). Some have measured the balance of the symbiotic relationship by examining what each institution has gained by the association, others by scrutinizing the degree of change caused by the partnership. Natrass' (1988) study of the CBC national public network from 1952-1982, for example, provides historical evidence that sport has benefitted from national coverage in Canada by garnering a

¹³See Johnson (1971), Parente (1974), Sugar (1978), Patton (1984), Powers (1984), Rader (1984).

larger television audience and stimulating sport at the grass roots level. The television industry has profited because sport has been relatively inexpensive to produce, has helped the CBC meet Canadian content quotas, has attracted a large viewing audience and thus has garnered advertising revenues for the networks. Natrass also demonstrates how sponsors have gained from the prestige value of being associated with the top level of sporting competition, from the profitable increases in sales, and thus from marketing savings.¹⁴ Organic metaphors of televised sport have been explored in analyses of the degrees of change occurring in traditional sport values, in studies of the degrees of commercial influence seeping into sport via television, to changes that have occurred in the rules of professional sport, and to adaptations to the use of television technology.

Like the “uses and gratifications model” of media effect, this line of investigation has assumed that television sport producers create a broadcast product they know will fulfil the popular “wants and needs” of a sports audience. Chandler (1983) for example, has argued that television sport producers must incorporate spectator attitudes about sport into the creation of the broadcast spectacle to create a product that will sell. Eitzen and Sage agree with others in this tradition that major league sports have been modified for television, but modified to improve spectator appeal and viewing excitement, such as slam dunks in basketball or “sudden death” rules to break ties in many sports (1989). The application of “uses and gratifications” theory assumptions to the study of organic symbiotic relationships between sport and television -- that is, to the study of reciprocal effects and changes to programming content -- has failed to examine how the interlocked

¹⁴Natrass has expanded the symbiotic relationship to a reciprocal *trivariate* in order to include the influences and the gains made by commercial sponsors of sports programming.

power structures have socially constructed particular representations of sport.

Some considerations of the sport-television symbiotic relationship have been curiously linked with the assumptions of the mass society theory when their cynical understandings of the symbiotic relationship have placed the balance of power in the hands of the television industry who have been able to create a “partnership of oligopolies” (Bellamy 1989:132). In a historical analysis of the mutual interdependence of sport and television, Greendorfer (1983) has emphasized the power of television over sport. While both institutions have profited financially from the association, and television can bestow status on particular sports, greater stress has still been placed upon the influences of “mass media phenomena” on sport and their overriding “effects” on American life. Another example of an “asymmetrical” symbiotic relationship study has been presented by Alaskiewicz in his Olympic television study (1986). In his analysis of the exchange of resources between the Olympic movement and the media, Alaskiewicz found a global balance of power to lie with American broadcast networks, who have not been dependent on Olympic revenues for economic survival and prosperity. In addition, because television broadcasting has served as a medium for advertising in the U.S.A., and because the International Olympic Committee now financially depends on television revenue, the Olympic ideals of amateurism and internationalism have been eroded according to this critic.

The economic power of the media networks allow them to emphasize their commercial slogans. Similarly, Meadow’s content study of the “architecture” of Olympic programming concluded that the power of commercial forces over sporting organizations has been significant. His study of the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics found that a quarter of all programming contained commercial messages. Similarly, after measuring the content of

the 1976 Olympics, McCollum and McCollum (1980) also noted the Olympic programming on television to consist of over 15% commercial messages. MacPherson et. al. (1989) have attempted to redress the economically-reductive assumptions presented when analyzing the symbiotic relationship between sport and media industries. Instead, they have suggested that the media have become “middlemen” for sport and advertisers.¹⁵

The reciprocal nature of power in the symbiotic relationship theory has been an improvement over the determinist beliefs of effects research; however the numerous moments of resistance and negotiation that do occur during the production and reception of sports programming have been obscured in the research of this tradition. This line of thinking has tended to be prone to liberal pluralist tendencies; that is, there is a tendency to ignore social blocs created by differences of class, gender, and race relations, as well as unequal access to financial and signifying resources. Furthermore, these assumptions about the recipients of the symbiotic product have failed to consider the differing frames of reference, social positions, and varying sets of hegemonic beliefs about sport that mediate the consumption of media messages by sportsfans.

In response to the limitations of pluralist explanations, a series of debates have been stimulated about the production and consumption moments of broadcast programming, and about the profound lack of concern for the inter-connectedness of these moments of cultural

¹⁵ Paul Hoch agrees with the unbalanced and exploitive nature of the relationship suggest by these symbiotic theorists. When sport is produced within the monopoly capitalism structures of broadcasting, television has the “upper hand” over sport according to Hoch. Television buys, supports and changes sport. It “controls not just when it’s played, but whether it’s played and how” (1972:143). Both sport and television help to sell each other in this symbiotic relationship because they “stimulate hyperconsumption and fronting for mass advertisers ... monopoly capitalism needs monopoly capitalist sport and visa versa” (1972: 144-145).

production (Cantelon and Gruneau 1984). The prevalence of one-dimensional mass society arguments, and conversely of pluralist conceptions about the role of the media society where power is allegedly decentralized have been notable features of research on sport and the media. Both of these perspectives have often embraced a view which adopts a "symbiotic" approach to the sport-broadcasting relationship. These "symbiotic" studies are often valuable because they address some of the broader economic pressures structuring televised sport spectacles. (Still) I want to argue that a broader series of investigations into the historical and culturally-specific limits and pressures acting upon the television-sport-advertising relationship, as well as further analysis of the processes of televisual signification (to account for the struggle over power and ideology by the crew and by the viewing audience) are required to understand televised sport spectacles. To address economic capital while ignoring the cultural economy of televisual codes of meaning has rendered the analysis of the institutional relationships, the structures and meaning systems of sport broadcasts incomplete.

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CHAPTER 2:

CULTURAL STUDIES APPROACHES TO THE ANALYSIS OF TELEVISED SPORT PRODUCTION

Contemporary cultural studies is an interdisciplinary perspective that binds a number of critical traditions. As a broad area of study the cultural studies network has consciously avoided being confined within narrow boundaries of one paradigm. The cultural studies *movement* has instead preferred to call itself an expansive *theoretical network*. It has provided a comprehensive framework for the study of televised production within political economic structures of the media institutions, and the operating codes and signifying traditions of the sport media. Because I have drawn heavily on insights and arguments from cultural studies in the design and implementation of the study at hand, it is useful to examine the Cultural Studies perspective in more detail.

(1) THE CULTURAL STUDIES PERSPECTIVE

The antecedent roots of contemporary cultural studies can be found in such diverse sources as sociology, anthropology, history, political theory, literary linguistics, semiology, and psychology. While contributions to cultural studies have not been limited to any one political stance, many of the central issues have been linked to Marxist and feminist approaches and debates. This has lent a self consciously "critical" edge to contemporary Cultural Studies. Cultural Studies have also been characterized by ongoing self-reflection

concerning epistemological origins, theoretical and methodological approaches, and shifting agendas for study.

As a broad movement, cultural studies defy easy description or classification. It can be arbitrarily limited to a variety of post-war intellectual currents in western society, with a growth of interest in popular cultures and the mass media, with the making and remaking of cultural meanings, and the relationships between culture and history, and cultural and power. Nonetheless, the research agenda of cultural studies has often been understood to be largely influenced by a set of theoretical developments that coalesced in British research during the 1970's and 1980's. In the formative years, the "original curriculum" that forged the foundation for British Cultural Studies included Richard Hoggart's *The Uses of Literacy* (1958), Raymond Williams *Culture and Society* (1961), and E.P. Thompson's *The Making of the English Working Class* (1963). Some of the most notable theorists to emerge in Britain and North America since these seminal texts were published, and who have been central to the development of the above key areas of endeavour, are the works of Raymond Williams (1974, 1977, 1981), Stuart Hall (1976, 1980, 1982), Richard Johnson (1983), Dick Hebdige (1979), Barrett et. al. (1979), Tony Bennett et. al. (1981), Curran (1982), Willis (1978, 1980), Hobson (1980, 1982), and Gitlin (1982, 1983, 1986).

The work of these individual scholars can be situated within the various pockets of cultural studies centres, and within wider debates within and between "Marxisms". In the early years of this critical approach, The Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS) in Birmingham England emerged as the leading centre in the 1970s. The CCCS focused

upon a number of special interest areas including media studies, subculture studies, issues of race, and feminist research. Elsewhere, the Open University's approach to teaching "Cultural Studies" and "Popular Culture" courses has been a pivotal point in the Critical Cultural Studies network. Other major centres include the British Film Institute in London where the seminal periodical *Screen* has been produced, Manchester, Leicester, Glasgow, Sussex, and an emergent number of pockets in Canada and the USA have developed in recent years.

Within cultural studies, a few media researchers have begun to combine an analysis of televisual signifying systems, the political economy of the media with on-site observation of the processes of production. This focus on the labour process, in a manner that has been sensitive to the social construction of the telecast, has permitted the analysis of the way codes of representation and hegemonic ideologies mediate forms of popular culture and structure cultural knowledge.

(II) ETHNOGRAPHIES OF TELEVISION PRODUCTION

Ethnography, as it has been utilized within the Cultural Studies perspective, has not been narrowly defined as singular *method* employed by researchers to observe one moment of cultural construction. Rather, ethnography has been considered to be a *constellation* of reformed techniques borrowed from a number of fields and informed by critical theory insights. Popular methods employed by media studies researchers include: participant observation of media workers or of the audience, recorded focus group

discussions, in depth taped interviews, document analysis, photographic and video recording. Central methodological tenets regarding the employment of any combination of these methods within a cultural studies ethnography include the notion that methods of research “work on meaning” and that ethnographic observation and recording constitute a form of production (Willis, 1978:194). Observations are made, recorded and collected through the framing of categories guided by the key concerns and assumptions of theoretical perspectives. Both the ethnographer’s interpretation of the observation, which provides a selective account of the lived culture and a text for academic perusal, and the presence of the ethnographer on the televisual field sites are “*productive of knowledge*” ... “what the researcher sees and understands is a product of who s/he is, ... and what is selected as important to describe” (Roberts, 1975:247).

Another major premise that has emerged from critical cultural studies approaches has been the argument that the practice of observing humans within their “naturalist” settings should be constituted within an “engaged” relationship between the researcher and the observed social actors rather than a “distanced” relationship. Rather than creating a false space in understanding, the ethnographer seeks to uncover the meaning of cultural forms and practices from the residents’ perspective, and becomes submerged in day to day activities to understand the “lived culture”. Cultural studies researchers such as Paul Willis have taken the position that “distancing” oneself as an “objective and unbiased” non-participant observer can neither provide deep insights into struggles, contradictions in the cultural labour process, nor to subtle historical shifts that continually occur during cultural (re)productive processes. Unbiased distancing is impossible. Immersion in an actual subculture necessitates some degree of involvement or “closeness” to the social

order under study. Moreover, the ethnographer's self-reflexive location and sense of understanding of the site/group promotes a more empathic and sympathetic understanding of the people and cultural processes under study. Ethnographies of the production of television programming and of the consumption and viewing practices by the audiences have rarely been undertaken by cultural studies researchers.¹ This is due, in part, to the difficulties in obtaining access to the private domains of family television viewing (although there are some public spaces available to observe sports audiences, such as pubs, dorms, hospital common rooms etc.), to the limited access to network production sites.

There exist a limited number of television ethnographies that loosely fall within a cultural studies approach, or else anticipate cultural studies problems and issues, thereby contributing to a reformed methodological foundation for media studies. Most have examined the production of news and have demanded an adaptation of earlier mainstream theoretical premises. For example, Gaye Tuchman's *Making News* (1978) presents a groundbreaking ethnographic study of the work of television news crews during the moment of production. Erving Goffman's (1974) notion of the "frame", a strip of every-day life, was theoretically employed by Tuchman to consider television news primarily as a *social* institution. In her study, news producers were found to gather, actively construct and disseminate a particular *frame of reality*. In other words, news producers and anchors actively selected the political agenda and re-produced news information through this agenda. Over the span of a decade, Tuchman observed (a) how the organizational needs of the workers, (b) the resources available, and (c) the negotiating procedures and, (d) how

¹The two exceptions being Dorothy Hobson's study of women's consumption of soap operas (1982), and David Morley's studies of the *Nationwide* audience (1980) and of family television and domestic leisure (1986).

ideologies of professionalism (such as the web of facticity and objectivity) served the wider interests of both the media industry and broader social-political interests. Basic assumptions about television production being a *social process* set within institutional settings, and the categories for ethnographic observation employed by Tuchman are useful starting points for future ethnographies of the media; some of these categories have been adopted by other critical media studies researchers such as the Glasgow Media Group (1976), and Canadian news production studies by Debra Clarke (1981, 1989).

Utilizing a framework of critical media analysis, the Glasgow Media Group (GMG) has executed vitally important interventions into the vast field of media studies by scrutinizing how media personnel socially construct televised news. Their numerous studies of the news (1976, 1980, 1986) can be noted as commendable attempts to link the representations of news and the signifying practices to the broader political economic limits constraining television reporting and production.² In their first volume, *Bad News* (1976), the GMG performed an ethnographic observation of the newsroom to supplement the major content analysis base of the study. The central purpose of their observations of the production site was to establish exactly how the news was “artificially shaped” in practice (1976:ix). While news professionals were found to continually assert and defend the code of “objectivity”, a code which guides journalistic work practices and the presentation of the news itself, this ethnography successfully demonstrated how television crews *actively selected* particular aspects of everyday British life, and sifted through the

² Unfortunately, the GMG's notion of televisual representation is flawed because of its association with the “conspiratorial” thesis of the media, which contends that consumers of television news programming are inoculated with a regular dose of “distorted” news created by the television crew. The idea of “distortion” is challenged by a view of news as a form of cultural discourse: the production of signification (Bennett, 1982).

elements of daily news events to consolidate a filtering process. In this study, the notion of objectivity was found to be directly related to four main cultural filters: (1) the constraints of the television medium (or constraints of the “moment”) such as time, financial resources, the geography of the territory where the news story “broke”, (2) the traditions of news values and the selection of what was “newsworthy”, (3) televisual values concerning what was “good television”, and (4) the cultural and ideological atmosphere that created the “pressures toward the status quo” (GMG 1976:X). Aside from this filtering process, other important elements that shaped television news which the GMG have observed were the authoritative hierarchy of the crew, the physical structure of the newsroom and their daily routines.

These elements and filtering processes observed by the GMG constructed and shaped the news of the day into a televisual commodity. The researchers contended that televised news had “closed” off agendas and tended to reinforce the British status quo. A major contribution by the GMG, in addition to their ethnographic evidence, has been their claim that televised news programmes were not *neutral* representations of the current affairs of the world, but rather were highly *mediated* products. The filtering process of television news production, they claimed, led to the routine production of “bad” news. The major limitations of this closing remark to their study and their notion of the filtering process of objectivity are that power, information and decisions are assumed to flow from the top of the network organization down in a conspiratorial manner, imposing practices and beliefs on media workers and selectively imposing “bad” news on consumers. This understanding of the media funnelling process, akin to Ralph Miliband's “*gatekeeping*” thesis of media power (1969), is hampered by the fact that *enabling and creative*

possibilities of media work cannot be conceptualized. Thus, the full complexity of the broader limits and pressures of media production and of the wider cultural politics of signification cannot be accounted for in this perspective.

Still, the value of this television ethnography and their theoretical writing on the labour of television workers cannot be overlooked. The notion of mediation is an extremely valuable intervention into media studies. The GMG stressed the importance of studying television crews and their production work, with stated ethnographic intentions, to examine how ideology, codes and values of media professionalism and journalism mediated the selection and the (re)production of preferred aspects of a nation's social life. Furthermore, this research has provided some useful categories for studying television production sites such as technological factors, daily work routines, views of the audience, and crew hierarchies. A major limitation was, however, the conceptualization of both media structures and traditions as being *constraining*, rather than being considered as potentially *constituting and enabling* of the process and product of media signification. It has been the emphasis upon constraints that has encouraged these ethnographers to claim that the production of television news they examined was a biased pursuit. This stress on the "constraining" nature of labour process structures of the media industry has guided the work of Debra Clarke as well.

Debra Clarke has inaugurated a critical vein of media ethnography of televised news in Canada. The central thesis of her 1981 and 1989 studies of news broadcasting, following the work of Tuchman and the GMG news studies, stressed that news production must be understood as a social process. And, this social process can be understood as existing in

relation to larger structures of the broadcast industry and network institutions, which are all interrelated and reflections of wider socio-historic relations. It is only through explicitly making these connections, according to Clarke, that the dual economic and ideological roles of the television media can be understood (1981:21). An important contribution to our understanding of television programming offered by Clarke, which affects the way one observes media practices during ethnographic research, has been that the “essential character” of the news production process is similar to the other manufactured products of capitalist systems. In other words, television ethnographers must begin to conceptualize television production as being structurally defined through its economic base, technical schemes, bureaucratized organization, a strict division of labour amongst media personnel with varying degrees of skill and codes; and most importantly, Clarke has demanded that structured television production be conceptualized as a social process that transforms raw cultural material into a commodity (1981:23).

Moreover, Clarke’s research has usefully demonstrated how to link the signifying practices and day-to-day struggles of the crew to the broader labour process of media work. However, her theoretical orientation is limited in her earlier work (1981) by the use of the economically reductive base-superstructure model of capitalist society. Gramsci’s notion of hegemony has been employed to stress the importance of ideological institutions such as the press in civil society in her more recent work (1987). While these studies have recognized the “double articulation” of media processes, in terms of addressing both economic and ideological operations of the media, the earlier research relegated the “ideological” elements to an epiphenomenal position separate from the economic base. Even in the later work, she has assumed that powerful links with the

economic base and production exist, but ideology has continued to be associated with *reproductive* activities in capitalist societies. Emphasizing Marxian categories, Clarke has located media activities both within the base and the superstructure, but she fails to demonstrate how ideology mediates all levels, and that ideology is in itself a constitutive element in the process of cultural production.

Nonetheless, Clarke's discussion of constraints on production can be gainfully employed in media studies to structure the observation portion of television production ethnographies, if the notion of constraint is dialectically expanded to conceive of structures as enabling of practices and of signifying meaning. In Clarke's study, the three major structuring elements of television production are time, money and technology. In summary, both Tuchman and Clarke alert us to a number of important elements of television production. In addition to the pressures and limits of time, money and technology, their research alerts us to: the operation of institutionalized news values and "good television" values, the "showbiz" visual imperative from the entertainment industries, the compartmentalization of news items and the ranking of news items importance by topic, the social control of production, the role of managers, the nature of sources, the influence of other media, the rules of broadcasting and journalism and the historical legacies of past media structures, routines and codes on the television industry today.

Following the emergence of ethnographies of Canadian news, similar ethnographies of sports broadcasting on the CBC were undertaken in the late 1980s. For example, Gruneau (1989) pursued fieldwork with the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation to examine their construction of World Cup Downhill Ski racing in 1986 for a regular network

showcase programme, *Sportsweekend*. His dual examination of (a) the political-economic, technical and organizational context of this event. while questioning (b) the representational practices and production values employed by the CBC ski crew to make “good sports television”, has contributed to critical media sports research in a number of ways. Methodologically, this case study represents the first ethnography of a Canadian sports broadcast crew. Secondly, his political economic analysis revealed how “allied interests”, between national networks, the ski industry and breweries, have financially supported this large scale production while “billboarding” their commercial interests via signature sponsorship. Thirdly, the technical and organizational limits and pressures on production presented by Gruneau illustrated how the “elective affinity” (the alignment of beliefs and common interests) between the television crew, sponsors, racers and World Cup organizers has created a context in which the broadcast crew pursued sports production in a manner in tandem with the interests of other stakeholders of the event. Finally, this ethnography provided the first inside glimpse at the range of production values mediating the work of sports broadcast crews in Canada, and at the array of representational practices employed (for a later study see Cavanagh, 1989). Overall, Gruneau’s ethnography demonstrated that sports productions are not constructed freely by network directors, since they and their crews operate with particular political-economic, technical and organizational contexts.

There are a number of useful precedents set in these early ethnographies of news and sports production that can be adopted and reworked for a more developed analysis of television sport production. First, the limits and pressures of advanced capitalist production and attendant social relations can be conceptualized as setting the broad

parameters within which televised sport production may be situated. Secondly, both news and sports production occur within media corporations that are (a) organized about the search for expanding markets and/or profits, (b) are engaged in ratings wars both internally with other network departments and externally with other media networks and , (c) are organized through a particular division of labour. Only through an interrelated stress on the processes of television production and larger social structures of broadcasting institutions can critical analysts begin to understand the dual economic and ideological roles of the media, hence productive and reproductive roles in culture (Clarke 1981:21). Thirdly, these early studies emphasize how labour processes of television production are essentially *social processes*. Historically constituted sets of professional ideologies, codes of broadcasting, conventionalized work routines and required skills are all elements of an important fourth consideration.

Finally, television crews do not package and transmit neutral coverage, but instead actively work on and transform “live events” into media commodities. These emphases provide useful points of departure for additional ethnographies of media production. Many ethnographers of media production are, however, quick to assume a total *reproductive* effect will result when viewers consume dominant messages, and that organizational structures of media institutions are only constraining. However, ideological hegemony, television codes of representation, and institutionalized broadcasting structures, need to be reconceptualized as being both enabling and constraining, if we are to grasp the meaning of mediated sports in our culture.

(III) REFINING ETHNOGRAPHY: EMPLOYING CRITICAL SOCIAL ANALYSIS

There are a number of problems facing the media researchers wishing to employ ethnographic methods. Willis has noted a number of key areas of methodological misgiving: (1) how social science will deal with the preconceptions held by the observer, (b) the artificiality of the observer's presence in the cultural situation, and (c) the partiality and representation of self-knowledge by the group being observed (1978:194). Similarly, Roberts (1975:245) has noted that the close proximity of the ethnographer and the observed social actors runs the risk of creating a "Hawthorne effect", that is, the researcher's mere presence may cause cultural changes to occur as the observed characters respond to the researcher. For example, in a family television viewing ethnography, the family may cease their regular arguments over the control of the remote control and over whose favoured choice of programming wins out in any particular programming slot when a researcher is present. The conduct of ethnography may put the observed peoples on their "best behaviour". As an "insider-outsider", the ethnographer has to be careful not to get "over-involved" or to be so obtrusive that the usual landscape of the group being studied is altered (Cole 1980:92, Lull 1985:84).

Not my experience

Furthermore, Roberts has observed that there is an added ethical burden which requires the continual evaluation of both "tact and tactics", and notes the ethical difficulty of achieving rapport with a culture without compromising yourself or "being taken for a ride". Positivist researchers insist that many of these "errors" or limitations inherent to ethnographic methods refer back to the problem of "objectivity". However, the problem of "objectivity" becomes less pressing when confronted with theoretical premises informed

by semiotic insights about symbolic representation, and constructed within critical theoretical frameworks seeking to explicate unequal relations of power within social reproduction.³ Butters has also argued that methodological myths of objectivity within positivist social science have led social scientists to make “unwarranted” claims about the “nature” of social reality awaiting to be recorded (1975:254). During ethnographic observation, there are a number of ways to improve the study; as suggested by Emerson (1987); they are to spend more time immersed in the field, to specify the theoretical issues explicitly before entering the site, to pay close attention to the members’ categories structuring their space and their meanings, and to specify your interactional and textual writing practices that impinge on the ethnography.

There are many ethnographic techniques and strategies that can fruitfully service the pursuits of Cultural Studies researchers. First, one can “hold onto the natural” (Butters 1975, Willis 1978, Emerson 1987). While on site, the researcher can strive to be continually reflexive of his/her general theoretical orientations when recording the “natural” environment of the group and event under study.⁴ Initially one can try to “suspend” strict adherence to particular theoretical propositions (such as economic determinism), so that the complexity of the lived experiences and of the cultural product (e.g. the Olympic Games) are not overly simplified and abstracted from the multitude of meanings and power systems that may exist within the groups of people under investigation.

³Hall (1980) suggests that “inferential frames” of understanding reorient media research away from positivist notions of “bias” informing content analysis.

⁴ Perhaps it would be better to substitute “lived” for “natural” when reworking anthropological traditions for critical Cultural Studies research. By a cultural studies interpretation of this phrase would be to “hold onto the lived meanings and definitions” as they are expressed by the people under study.

In other words, a commitment to be “sensitive” to indigenous understandings and empathetic to the social relationships and people being studied is required in a cultural studies framework. This will enable the continual incorporation of subtleties, surprises, shocks into the overall phenomenological insights of the observed subculture (Willis 1980). Ethnographies are never fully reducible to the “natural” meanings described in field notes or recordings, because informants and members of the culture often have differing interpretations, and because social relationships are continually undergoing struggle as understandings of cultural forms are re-negotiated. Moreover, the ethnography itself is not a record of “the natural” since it has been filtered through the researcher’s concerns and academic baggage; the ethnography presents the voice of the researcher and not always the voice of the subcultural member “speaking” for him or herself (Willis 1978). Ethnography, like all research methodologies, is always already a *representational practice* (Johnson 1983). The rule “hold onto the natural” should be reformed to “hold onto the cultural and the historically specific”.

Secondly, a comparative technique can be employed to continually crossgrid data gathered. Information from observations, interviews, group discussions, etc. should be continually scrutinized for emerging patterns and contradictions, and unique occurrences (Butters 1975, Willis 1978, 1979, Christain and Carey 1981, Emerson 1987). This cross gridding or triangulation may also be broadened to include a comparison with research data and conclusions from other investigations within reasonable historical limits. Within cultural studies this also involves a historical contextualization of the patterns and contradictions, and a consideration of the codes of language employed by the researchers and the observed, to more closely represent the actual materialization of the culture under study

(Willis 1978:196). For example, in my own research, I have triangulated ethnography with document analysis and interviews with media, sport, and Olympic officials to confirm the status of dominant practices, hegemonic understandings, and conventional relations.

Finally, the researchers(s) must continually be self-reflexive of research techniques, theoretical orientations, the act of analyzing, and one's own personal history. This is of quintessential importance, because the outcome of ethnographic research is mediated by the "intersection" of theoretical paradigms and the cultural alliances and practices in the existing field that the ethnographer is attempting to understand; Willis calls this a "collision of meanings" (1978:197). The importance of theoretical self-reflexivity cannot be overstated because ethnographic research is still susceptible to "purely formalist accounts", particularly in post-Althusserian and post-Gramscian ethnographies according to Grimshaw et. al. (1980:74). All research projects run the risk of "theoretical violence", Willis (1978) warns, if the process of determining theoretical codes and categories of analysis are consolidated uncritically. Furthermore, ethnographic writing within the cultural studies tradition has tended to foreground its discourse on social commentary and discourse on reflexivity (Tolson 1986:148) and should continue to do so as ethnographic methods are further expanded into to the study of television production.

There are a number of fertile directions for television ethnographies to consider. At a theoretical level, incorporating this qualitative method into a theory of the circuit of cultural (re)production is critically important. This will necessitate the consideration of the broader political economic limits and pressures affecting both the production and consumption moments of television programming, while simultaneously considering the

politics of signification. In addition, the development of semiotically informed ethnographies could lead to a more comprehensive understanding of television production work and viewing. This will help close the gap in our current understanding of the circuit of cultural production. In the case of live broadcast programming, such as news and sports programmes, these developments will require research teams, not solo efforts, to simultaneously study the various moments and multiple sites of broadcasting. A *semiotically-informed* ethnography can enable the theorization and observation of the politics of signification, and the struggle over the televisual sign. Because there is often a “disparity in language of struggle and actual experience” (Caughie 1986), television ethnographies should continue (i) to stress the earlier anthropological and culturalist legacy of “thick description” at the same time that a constant effort is made to maintain critical self-reflexivity, (ii) to reformulate methodological techniques, (iii) to critique theoretical questions and assumptions, and (iv) to highlight how the resulting knowledge about televisual products and practices are politically situated. It is to critical Cultural Studies that I have turned to help reform the tenets of ethnography presented here, and to theoretically inform this study.

(IV) CRITICAL CULTURAL STUDIES APPROACHES TO THE ANALYSIS OF SPORT

There are a number of important analytic considerations within cultural studies that are significant for the critical cultural studies of sport in the media. These considerations can be summarized as follows: (a) media workers actively engage in the social process of making and remaking representations of sport; (b) media personnel are engaged in active struggle and negotiation in the production process over the nature of

professional practices and codes; (c) these human agents are engaged in struggles over the nature of the sportscast itself; and (d) media producers contribute to the construction and reproduction of ideology and broader structural relations be they political, economic, or gender relations. One of the key aims of critical media-sports research, which has borrowed heavily from semiological and/or cultural studies based insights, has been to demonstrate how the production process *mediates* the sporting event and *re-presents* the game for television audiences (Buscombe et. al. 1975, Clarke and Clarke 1982, Cantelon et. al. 1984, Hargreaves 1986, Critcher 1987, Cavanagh 1987, Cantelon and Macintosh 1985, Cantelon and Gruneau 1988, Gruneau 1989, Real 1989).

Buscombe et. al. for example, have compared the representational emphasis in the football telecasts by British and German broadcasters (1975). British Film Institute (BFI) researchers revealed that the two national broadcast styles were significantly different because the telecasts had been composed in vastly different ways; e.g. the British shot the visual images tighter, made greater use of close-ups, and “cut” the cameras at a more rapid pace than the German crew. These technical decisions, in addition to narrative interventions and the broadcast of pretaped material accompanying their live coverage of sport, attested to a very high level of mediation and not to mere mechanical recording of the sport. The televised picture, the BFI researchers concluded, was a cultural-material object that has functioned as a “system” of codification” at a level of construction and has differed vastly from the level of the game of the field. Moreover, continual technical developments have permitted television crews to exert greater control over their sports material, particularly with regards to heightening the sense of immediacy and realism mediating the sportscast (Whannel 1986).

Some researchers have emphasized what they have considered to be “distortive” aspects of the technological mediation. For example, Peter’s study of the 1976 Olympiad noted how distances between actual sporting action and spectators have been altered by media technology, while Critcher (1987) claimed that televisual codes were imposed over the sport codes and distorted the live game by virtue of precluding the audience from the communication process. Critcher has made an important point in his suggestion that production studies of other types of television programming, such as those analyzing television news, may not be directly transferable to sport programming. Indeed, live sport coverage has been mediated through some very different production and commentating ideals and codes, and different technological considerations historically. Still, Critcher ironically uses “news values” as a category to be analyzed in studying sport, and he tacitly assumes that sportscasting has been a uni-directional technically communicated message. A preferable explanation of televisually mediated sports has been provided by Cantelon and Gruneau (1984) and Hargreaves (1986). They note how television crews have actively represented sport in terms of their own inferential frames of reference, occupational structures and political-economic constraints when they have transformed the game on the field into a televisual event⁵. Three such practices of media intervention observed by Whannel (1981), have been frames of journalistic codes in the commentary, entertainment codes of television, and dramatic codes. In addition, the technical wizardry of special effects have been described as having an important ideological effect by “marginalizing, trivializing and fragmenting” the ideology of the sport presented on television (Rowe and McKay, 1987:258). Thus, high levels of image manipulation have been intricately tied into hegemonic claims that television merely records and transmits

⁵Hall (1980) had suggested that “inferential frames” have served to reorient media research away from the positivist notion of “bias” informing media studies using, for example, content analysis to equate quantified measures with bias.

the real game into your living room (Cantelon and Gruneau, 1984b).

The notion that television relays an “objective” broadcast of the “real game”, has been closely associated with an idealist and taken-for-granted view of what sport in general is considered to “be like” in our culture. Lodged within pronouncements of what sport “ought to be like” have been a series of claims regarding the apparent “separateness” of sport from everyday life, or assumptions concerning how sport is part of a liberal social contract (Cantelon et. al. 1984). Realist preoccupations by media workers and media analysts around the notions of “actuality coverage” and unparalleled “immediacy” are mythical constructions in themselves (see Gruneau, 1989; Whannel, 1984; Clarke and Clarke, 1982; and Buscombe et. al., 1974). Classical notions of sport, according to Cavanagh (1987) have infused the television producers’ working view of what makes “good television”, such as shooting the individual athletes tightly with the camera frame, rather than choosing a wide angle of the team. Tight framing emphasizes competitive individualism over team play as a whole. Assumptions about what makes, and has made “good television” entertainment have been tied to historical notions of what makes “good sport”. For example, the action packed battles, the pursuit of higher records, parity between teams, the tension between “pure amateurism” or the pursuit of sport for ‘its own sake’ are examples of the elements traditionally debated around what constitutes “good sporting” competition for North Americans. But “pure amateurism” or the “ideal of good sport” are cultural fictions, as Tomlinson reminds us, because there are no “pure” cultural forms. Indeed, television has its own frames of reference that have remade sport according to the historical privileged ideals and ideas of television production teams (1987). The analogy of the “*cloudy mirror*”, rather than the distorted or the clear mirror analogies, offers a

better explanation of the sport media today. Michael Real's (1989) theory of the "super media"⁶ as being a cloudy mirror is a better metaphor for explaining the power, reach, and mediating effects than claims about the media simply being "mirrors of society" or neutral communication vehicles. In other words, both our theories of the media and the representation of social life provided by the mass media, present "blurred and smudgy" windows of understanding (Real, 1989:250).

John Hargreaves has noted that the media-sport alliance has been "impregnated with commonsense" and therefore has been a chief cultural apparatus for achieving hegemony (1986). Seemingly innocent of broader ideologies, media-sports have "normalized" heroes, perpetuated and normalized gender differences, and may have accommodated the various audiences to discourses of national identification and disciplined work relations etc. Hargreaves has argued that the hegemonic character of sport has been one of the reasons why the entire topic of televised sport has been absent in most critical analyses of contemporary western cultures.

The battle to historicize representations of contemporary sport has been a central aim of cultural studies perspectives on sport and media. The analyses of mediasport, as a mode of self-conscious "actuality coverage" has been a focal questions raised by

⁶Michael Real's notion of the "super media" conveys the complexity of the electronic media and their prominence in modern daily lives. While the mass media are quantitatively ranked higher in rank than non-technological forms of communication (in terms of the amount of time and content, and the degree of reach across geographic space), the "super media" refers to *qualitative* way in which the media express, reflect, and produce culture (1989:18-20). Moreover, the qualitative manner of the super media, according to Real, includes the individual and collective employment of the media as technological "extensions of the human sensory apparatus", and the ability of the media to raise certain experiences such as Olympic myths and rituals to a "hyperreal" level of intense emotions and human understanding (1989:19-20).

Buscombe et. al. (1975), Whannel (1981, 1984), Clarke and Clarke (1982), Cantelon et. al (1984 b) Hargreaves (1986), Cantelon and Gruneau (1988). The gist of this literature, has been that television production is first and foremost a social process, not wholly technological in nature, and that the particular use of media technology, and its inter-relationship to the historical construction of the narrative of sport, are all the end results of “active choices” made by human agents working within and around the structuring limits and cultural pressures contextualizing these choices⁷. For instance, past televisual coverage of the Grey Cup, the championship for the Canadian Football league, has not been a mere technical reflection of the goal posts and sporting tackles on the field, according to Cantelon and MacIntosh’s (1986) study of the Canadian government’s use of sport and leisure as political rhetoric during the coverage of the Grey Cup in the mid 1980s. Television graphics were utilized in this important Canadian championship in such a way as to accommodate the audience to the ideology of “national unity”, the sponsor’s commercial imperative, and to accommodate the network’s self-promotion ventures by technically intermingling graphics of a spinning maple leaf, with the network’s logo for the championship, and with a brewery logo by the sponsor of the show (1986). These kinds of *active choices*, adapted in the production process, have been guided by historically defined televisual languages and associated set(s) of codes (see Fiske, 1987, for a discussion of the various levels of televisual codes). Codes of representing sport on television are not structures that exist on their own, but have come into being as the conventions of media production have been consolidated, in negotiation with the pressures of hegemonic notions about high performance athletics.

⁷See Gary Whannel’s 1987 discussion of the “selective tradition”.

O'Sullivan et. al (1983) have suggested that there are codes of behaviour and codes of signification. Translated into television production codes, behavioral codes are sport broadcaster's codes of ethics (both written or informal), their sense of craft, traditional media practices, and shifting signifying codes, such as camera auditing and editing styles for various sports, narrative themes such as physical excellence or national rivalries, the crew's view of the sports audience "taste" in sports and motivations for watching, official network and sporting codes, as well as alternative codes that arise in response to these conventions.

Furthermore, structures of codes and the media labour relationships in which these codes are put to use, can be observed as both "enabling and constraining" of the social process of making meaning and not as only constraining as media studies of sport and news have often assumed. The notion that coding can be *productive* of meaning and culture was initially advocated in the studies conducted by Buscombe et. al. at the British Film institute (1975). Coding as "productive" is an assumption that has allowed this research to display how televisual structures and the process of coding sport for transmission has created another web of meaning that has been built upon the already culturally encoded phenomenon of the sporting event.

Following these line of analysis, critical media studies since the late 1970s have addressed the processes of *preferring* particular codes of understanding and preferring particular media behaviours over other possible forms of interaction. The arbitrariness of encoding meaning has been foregrounded to dismiss the notion of broadcasting being a neutral mechanical reproduction. Generally, the emerging strand of critical mediasports

research pursued under the rubric of Cultural Communication Studies has maintained a narrow focus on textual analysis. Critical analysts have often espoused the necessity of making vital connections between all of the moments of cultural production and examining the connectedness between televisual form/practices with broader political economic considerations. Yet these interrelationships are typically “read off” the text, thereby leaving the in depth analysis of other moments during the circuit of cultural production to “further research”. Rather than textual analysis alone, concrete studies of the production moment of sportscasting, such as qualitative ethnographies informed by critical theory, need to be addressed in order for Cultural Studies researchers to achieve a full circle of research on the circuit of cultural production. With the exceptions of Cantelon et. al. (1984b), Gruneau (1989), and Cavanagh (1989), critical researchers have tended to transfer their analysis of the textual or audience consumption moments to their understanding of the production moment without ever studying the actual process of making the television spectacle.

Textual analysis under the aegis of the cultural studies tradition has been instrumental in demonstrating that the particular employment of visual camera techniques and narrative anchoring can illustrate the arbitrary “work” of the media to contain and prefer privileged views of sport when a wider range of choices has been available. Raymond Williams’ observation that television networks typically take a *stance* on the way that programming is defined can be applied to sport (1977:148). Buscombe’s comparative analysis of British and German national styles of football coverage, mentioned earlier, has represented one of the most obvious examples of how media crews cultural produce particular styles of coverage within historically set network stances. Yet, the

processes by which these stances have been negotiated, such as news updates adding traditional elements from entertainment programming to become “infotainment”, or the decisions that have constituted the making of the programme, or the range of codes activated by the sports fans when they have spectated the show, cannot be fully derived from deconstruction investigations of the media-text alone.

Textual analysis of televised sport can often be situated within structuralist theoretical frameworks that critically address language, codes of signification and ideology. The dominant aspects of media programmes have applied literary-linguistic techniques to get at the construction of meaning. Often the multi-faceted nature of the television text -- the formal use of spoken language and music, and the visual codes of composition interwoven into the fabric of these sportscasts have been abstracted into a few categories for analysis. These categories usually include visual codes of representation, narrative themes, and/or formatting and programming flow. The highly mediated nature of television representations of athletic competitions and a denial of the myth of television being a reflective mirror have been textually demonstrated through these kinds of categorical analysis in the work of Williams (1977), Clarke and Clarke (1982), Cantelon et. al. (1984), Whannel (1981, 1984), Cavanagh (1987) Real (1989).

At a broader ideological level, Clarke and Clarke have argued that televisual representations have tended to concentrate on four cultural values; (a) the spectacle status of sports television, (b) the dramatic value of sport with reference to what is “good television”, (c) the personalizing thrust, and (d) the notion of televisual immediacy to the live event (1982: 71-72). Arguing from a somewhat different perspective, Birrell and

Loy (1979) have similarly listed a number of technical procedures conventionally exercised by the media in order to create what they have deemed to be “good television”; these have traditionally included style, variable image sizes, compressing time into highlights, altering time by slowing and quickening or stopping it, isolating key moments in the play, and providing additional information. According to Cavanagh (1987:28), these kinds of ideological and technical tendencies conscripted from the text are an attempt by the producers to make the sport product more consumable, and to establish points of identification for the audience with such key national sporting heroes (Whannel 1984). Furthermore, these tendencies have helped to mobilize a sporting hegemony, that is, to put certain ideological beliefs and practices on the central plain of cultural and political agendas (Rowe and McKay 1987).

Ideological themes prevalent in sports programming have often addressed the commitment and courage of the athlete and discourse about the masculine body. Gender differences and the “naturalization” of particular uses and understandings of the human body have been major ideological themes examined in recent media studies. Willis (1982), Whannel (1984) and Fiske (1987) have regarded the particular presentations of gender in sports and sports programming as constituting the central sites for the hegemonic construction of gender differences and hierarchical positioning within power relations. Likewise, Clarke and Clarke (1982), Cantelon et. al (1984b), Rowe and McKay (1987) have all briefly noted that the construction and reproduction of a culturally assumed “superiority” of males in sport over female athletes and their events have fostered the

naturalization of the gendered ideologies mediating sport⁸ and, as Critcher (1987) has argued, that the media has done so in a manner that have been recognizable to the television audience.

Visual codes of representation have been the focus of the vast majority of research projects that draw on a cultural studies perspective. Two major claims include: (1) the mechanical reproduction of visual images of the game seem “neutral” thereby camouflaging the cultural production of discourses in the television text, and (2) the visual codes of sport are refunctionalized by television crews to suit the changing needs of their industry (Williams 1977, Whannel 1984, Cantelon et. al. 1984). Brien Williams (1977) for instance, has argued that the ‘nature’ of sport on television is unique to the medium, not to the stadium event: “television imposes its own structures and ideological viewpoints, points of reference, and unity”. More specifically, Whannel (1984) has observed that the major ideological viewpoint of the television industry has been to impose a “position” for the televisual spectator. Television crews work to usher the televisual fan into “the best seat in the house”, or that of the “ideal spectator”. Whannel has noted that this ideal spectator demands that continued application of realist conventions such as the “180° degree rule” which demands the camera action during live play be limited to a 180

⁸When women do struggle for access and recognition within non-traditional sport for females, such as the struggle to put women’s ice hockey onto the Olympic programme, or the 1992 public debates surrounding Manon Rheame becoming the first female in history to play in a regular season Professional National Hockey League game. She has since been signed to the Tampa Bay Lightning’s farm team. When a wedge is driven into culturally naturalized versions of a homo-social sport, non-sport codes are brought into play; for example the masculine gender codes of hockey were difficult for the media to construct Manon, thus the sexist codes were pushed to the level of sexual when Playboy asked her to pose, a story which dominated early coverage of Manon’s ice-breaking attempt to play hockey at an elite level. In 1992, her tryout was voted to be the “oddest” sports story by the Annual Sports Editors Awards in Canada: rather than constructing her as a “breakthrough” story, she was marginalized as an oddity.

degree swivel. What has been understudied, however, has been the non-realist elements of the visual codes such as slow-motion replays, split and spinning screens of action and the relationship between the commentator's narrative and the visual text (Cantelon et. al. 1984, Whannel 1981).

The study of the verbal codes of narrative has recently begun to achieve greater recognition within media and cultural studies. Many have recognized the important role of *drama* to have been a key entertainment code in television production and to have been a dominant sports spectating code (Williams 1977, Bryant et. al. 1977, Cantelon et. al. 1984, Critcher et. al. 1984, Whannel 1981, 1986, and Tomlinson 1987). Sportscasters have generally been found to work to create the most entertaining and dramatic narrative possible using verbal codes of commentary. Brien Williams' content analysis of televised football, for example, has tended to overemphasize the visual elements of the sportscasts, but he has acknowledged that the audio component has served to "manipulate" or at least "orchestrate excitement" for television fans. Likewise, a study of narrative code by Bryant et. al (1977) has displayed how a number of dramatic motifs or verbal "embellishments" such as raised voices and action phrasing have served to heighten the excitement of football beyond a level actually transmitted visually. The "superspectator" has been served a broadcast buffet of many descriptive action themes by weaving in dramatic motifs of glory, competition, aggressive words and phrases championed by the announcers (1977).

Gary Whannel's contributions to sport media studies have been instrumental in addressing this oft-forgotten issues of verbal anchorage and narrative. His work has been

particularly insightful for discovering how broadcast commentary has contributed to *position* of the viewer in the “ideal” seat. Codes of commentary, he has argued, have represented a privileged assemblage of cultural connotations derived from what Whannel has called the “selective tradition” (1987). Whannel argued that the major entertainment narrative of televised sports has been typically lodged within the “Big Question”, “*Who will win?*”. He has also argued that televised sport is laden with selective highlights of the action which have often displayed battles between sport superstars or national teams. The television workers’ selection processes have created a “thematically meaningful narrative”. In other words, those working within the broadcast medium have been able to create their own sporting history by foregrounding winners and by condensing certain cultural themes. To structure coherence into the telecast, Whannel has noted that a number of narrative codes have typically provided this coherence, such as the signifying codes of “hierarchy”, “personalization”, “narrative story telling” and contextualization”. When coupled with the realist techniques that “deny” the very existence of these codes, these codes have become legitimated as the culturally “proper” visions of sporting action on television. Whannel has claimed that televised production crews do excel at creating vital points of identification for fans around star athletes or “the nation” (1986:136).

There are still some resounding silences in the literature dealing with narrative codes. These include: the analysis of links between the visual and narrative segments, with respect to the meaning of the entire telecast), the contextualization of the sporting event within a wider range of cultural codes, how narrative codes of personalization or hierarchy have demonstrated the meritocratic ideals, and analysis of what kinds of athletic superstars have been dramatized (Cantelon and Gruneau 1984). I targeted these categories prior to my

research as broadcasting codes to be observed at the 1988 Olympic Games.

The major limitation of critical textual analyses of the sports media has been the lack of intricate connections to the other moments of the sportscast. Moreover, this absence has been at odds with the critical studies theoretical agenda to spin a wider web of cultural-historical ties. Television sports production and the moment of viewing by television audiences are integral elements of cultural production. Televisual representations of sport are constituted by, and constitutive of the social relations and the commonsense ideologies mediating the other cultural moments. To fully comprehend the historically negotiated nature of this cultural form, including the contradictions, all moments of the sportscast from production to distribution of the signal, to the consumption, need to be explicitly incorporated into the full circuit of cultural production to revive the full complexity of this topic in academic work.

(V) IDEOLOGY AS THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF MEANING

The study of cultural hegemony demands attention to ideology, a term which has enjoyed multiple meanings in various theoretical perspectives. Definitions of ideology tend to fall into one of three categories: (1) a *system of beliefs* representative of a particular group or class, (2) a *system of illusory beliefs* or false consciousness or incorrect beliefs, or (3) a *general process of producing meanings*, sense and ideas (Williams 1977). This dissertation employs the last definition of ideology. Many critical cultural studies projects have framed ideology in a related manner, and have begun to provide more compelling insights into social communication within and as result of historical relationships of power.

The third definition of ideology focuses on the process of constructing meaning and commonsense, as opposed to a focus on a system of ideas emphasized in the first two senses of the term. This stress on the process does not ignore the products of signification. However, by abandoning the emphasis upon a “true” or a “false” consciousness, ideology can be examined in its full complexity as changing sets of relations and ideas that are indissolubly connected to social and material processes (see Williams, 1977; Hall, 1982; Fiske, 1982; and O’Sullivan et. al., 1983). Ultimately all values, ideas, discourses and ideologies are the product of, and political resource for, human agents.

As various writers and researchers within the cultural studies network began to combine Marxism with semiotics (primarily by drawing on the key works of Barthes, Althusser, Volosinov and Gramsci), the emphasis upon the *materiality* of ideology has had a

significant impact upon media studies, feminist studies, subculture research, and theoretical excursions into ideology and cultural politics. This critical synthesis, allowing the materiality of ideology to be fused with a stress on the (re)production of meaning, draws on Marx's claims that "social being determines the consciousness" (1977:176), and that "men make history but not in conditions of their own choosing".

The third category of ideology as a process has been developed in close association with the notion of cultural production. The circuit of cultural production may help to link the products and processes of ideology together. For example, Richard Johnson (1983) suggests that the central moments of cultural production are production-distribution-consumption. Stuart Hall (1980) has employed a similar circuit (encode-text-decode), as has Todd Gitlin (1986) in media studies (production-signification-consumption). Overall, understanding ideology at the level of discursive structures and material social practice has permitted a more rigorous conception of ideology to emerge in critical studies recently. Furthermore, it has become imperative that ideology be viewed as both constituting and constitutive of social processes and products (Williams 1977) if cultural studies are to offer a more substantial understanding of our changing social life.

Antonio Gramsci's writings on ideology and commonsense have fruitfully been taken up in the Cultural Studies network over the past two decades. While Hall (1977, 1980F), Lumley and McLennon (1978) argue that Gramsci himself rarely employed the term "ideology" in his theoretical excursions, he did expound upon non-reductionist formulation of "philosophies", "conceptions of the world", "systems of thought", "forms of consciousness", and "commonsense". Furthermore, although Hall et. al. (1978) have

presented the argument that Gramsci's writings lack a systematic account of "ideology", Gramsci's work is nonetheless firmly located within a framework of historical materialism and understood through his key concepts of "hegemony", "commonsense", "intellectuals" and "civil society". Thus, the study of ideology via Gramsci cannot be divorced from considerations of social and political processes and struggles.

Gramsci's works have been cited as moving contemporary Marxist and feminist studies in promising and compelling directions. Chantal Mouffe (1981), for instance, has commended Gramsci's radical critique of economism for helping to tear down the reductionist base-superstructure model, and permitting an anti-reductionist problematic of ideology and political struggle to emerge in Western Marxism. Her in depth analysis of Gramsci's contribution have sought to replace the reductionism of earlier Marxist models of ideology, with a stress upon ideology as inseparably connected to social processes and struggles. Gramsci's "Marxist hook" into the problematic of ideology can be found in the passage from the *Prison Notebooks* "men gain consciousness of their tasks on the ideological terrain of superstructures" (1971, p. 365 cited in Mouffe 1981:226) thereby echoing Marx's contention that "social being determines consciousness".

Gramsci's anti-reductionist problematic has sought to reinsert humankind as *makers* of their own history and as "philosophers" in order to critique the undialectical notion of "false consciousness". Commonsense is better conceived of as an *alliance* of interests and beliefs that are historically negotiated. While "commonsense" ideologies do not always serve the best interests of those holding and remaking them, commonsense essentially has served to cement various factions of the social order together. Gitlin

(1982) has reiterated this kind of Gramscian claim that ideology is not imposed against one's will, but it is a collaborative process "pursued unevenly" by member of a culture.

This organic notion of ideology or *commonsense* has been described by Gramsci as a:

conception of the world that is implicitly manifest in art, in law, in economic activity and in all manifestations of individual and collective life. This problem is that preserving the ideological unity serves to cement and unify (1971:328).

Moreover, "commonsense" is not a singular concept (as the notions of "dominant" or "false" ideology perspectives have tended to emphasize) since, according to Gramsci:

every social stratum has its own 'commonsense' and its own 'good sense' which are basically the most widespread conception of life and of men. Every philosophical current leaves behind a sedimentation of 'commonsense': this is the document of its historical effectiveness. Commonsense is not something rigid and immobile, but is continually transforming itself, enriching itself with scientific ideas and with philosophic opinions which have entered ordinary life (1971: 326).

Within the developing field of cultural studies, there have been numerous repercussions resulting from a theoretical engagement with Gramsci's work. In terms of debates over ideology, Bennett (1982b) has reinstated a dialectical analysis of ideology as being both material and historically specific. This reinstatement of popular beliefs as material forces has been picked up in studies of media "audiences" and in studies

investigating the “use” of popular cultural forms. Secondly, Gramsci’s writing on commonsense, struggle and popular culture forms of his day (popular magazines, novels, etc.) “anticipated” Althusser’s stress on ideology as a material force, as existing at all levels of social formations, as producing individuals as social subjects⁹. Both Gramsci and Althusser privileged ideology and the cultural realm of social life; both also conceived the role of commonsense/ideological state apparatuses as important aspects of the maintenance of relations of reproduction, at the same time that commonsense/ideology was always discussed with a sense of “relative autonomy” (Golding and Murdock: 1979:204).

Placing ideology firmly on the battleground of culture and social practices has signalled an emphasis upon struggle and resistance, on concession and accommodation, on articulation and disarticulation: all of which have permitted compelling analysis of non-dominant or marginal areas of popular culture. For example, this perspective has recently opened up space to examine youth subcultures, in research on race and feminist research such as the work of Willis 1977, Hall 1976, 1978, Hobson 1980). The amalgamation of Gramsci’s notion of ideological struggle with Volsinov’s writings on language and discourse, have permitted an examination of struggles over meaning, and a consideration of discourse to be a site of resistance and containment. This development has been taken up, for instance, in the semiotic work of Hebdige (1979), Leiss et. al. (1986) and Seiter (1987), and in recent critiques of popular culture (e.g. Chambers 1986).

The French philosopher, Louis Althusser has also figured prominently in cultural

⁹See Mouffe (1981: 227) for a more in depth discussion of this.

studies debates over ideology. The insights of Gramsci are readily evident in Althusser's work, particularly in his essay on ideological state apparatuses (ISAs). However, his work on ideology must be seen against a structuralist background that insists upon economic determinism "in the last instance". Althusser saw his work as a break with "prescientific" trends in Marxist analysis, and is influenced by Saussure's systematic analysis; Althusser was less concerned with the "constituting subject" making both history and social structures, and more concerned with the constitution of the subject located in the social formation.

Basically, ideology for Althusser is defined as "a 'representation' of the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence" (1971). This clearly indicates a break with other conceptions of ideology as being "false consciousness" (McLennan et. al. 1981, Molina 1977). Moreover, the relationship between ideology and the social formation, including the relationship of theory and the reproduction of capitalist relations of production and mode of production, have been of great concern to Althusser. The first two definitions of ideology, discussed earlier, have tended to condense ideologies into systems of formal beliefs; thus, the work of Althusser has permitted ideological analysis and theorization to move beyond the material levels of practice, relationships and institutions (Golding and Murdock 1979:205, Williams 1977:13). The key components of Althusser's theory of ideology lie in (a) the relative autonomy of ISAs such as the media, school systems and churches, (b) the material existence of ideology at all levels of the social formation and practices, (c) in the conception of ideology as a system of representation, (d) in the "profoundly unconscious" nature of ideology, and (e) the work of ideology to interpellate subjects.

Althusser has been a central figure in Marxist writings recently attempting to rethink the relationship of ideology and the social whole, and to rethink the complex relationship between the state and ideology. While retaining the classical base/superstructure model of the capitalist social totality, Althusser has attempted to overcome classical mechanistic conceptions of ideology by advocating the reciprocal action of the economic base and superstructures on each other, and by stressing the essential relative autonomy of ideological state apparatuses from the repressive state apparatuses (police, army, etc.). The contradiction inherent in his attempts to forge a notion of relative autonomy with “overdetermination” and with “determination in the last instance”, have been critically assessed recently. The latter two notions can not provide a concrete level of analysis, due to the high level of abstraction in this theory, and because these notions assume a “status of *a priori* truths” according to Johnson (1979:67). One of the most obvious problems is that the role of the state and ISAs were defined by Althusser in a functionalist manner that served a reproductive role by “recruiting” all aspects of the social formation to serve the needs of economic determinants (Johnson 1979, Bennett 1982, McLennon et. al 1981). Related to this problem of assuming a one-dimensional reproduction of the dominant ideology, has been a disregard for concrete political economic analysis (Golding and Murdock 1977).

Althusser’s insistence on the *materiality* of ideology has been the cornerstone of his theory. Ideology is a “system of representation” that has mediated absolutely all levels of the social totality. Ideology is thus located in the realms of everyday “lived” experiences and modes of thought (Hall 1977b); however, the materiality of ideology has been actualized in the reproduction of “imaginary relations to the real”, which have suggested

the *reproduction* of alienating relations and of false consciousness, and has denied the possibility of humans making conscious articulations of systems of representations. The notion of ideology as “profoundly unconscious” can be usefully adopted in cultural studies in order to examine cultural reproduction, and to examine the “taken-for-grantedness” of modes of expressing, thinking and acting while still being careful to not ignore the possibility of struggle and possibility of conscious attempts to produce cultural practices, beliefs and forms.

The process of *interpellation*, whereby individuals are “hailed” by social rituals and conventional relations in order to be produced as ‘subjects’ and to recognize themselves as such, is a process closely related to the above problem of assuming the nature of ideology to be “imaginary” and wholly “unconscious”. The notion of social subjects “bearing relations” has been extremely attractive to film study theorists, particularly to those engaged in the debates in and around the journal *Screen* in the 1970s and 1980s concerning the positioning of the viewer in realist versus radical/revolutionary films (see, for example, McCabe 1974, Mulvey 1975, Kuhn 1982). Recently, the ‘subject as interpellated’ has been incorporated into discussions within television studies of the audience (Morley 1980, Cantelon et. al. 1984, Fiske 1987). This positioning and interpellation of the subject in Althusserian terms is often theorized in the overtly deterministic manner criticized above. Still, Morley (1980b) has astutely regarded the notion of interpellation as one possible way to solve the homogenizing assumptions associated with the dominant ideology thesis by permitting the theorization of many and contradictory subject positions. However, Morley goes on to warn, that if one is “always-already” a subject, then the degree of determinacy in Althusser’s formations are left in a

highly ambiguous state. Althusser's subjects, as bearers of ideology, are neither conceptualized as "makers" of their own history, nor as makers of the systems of representations through which they communicate and understand the world around them. "The lonely hour" of unitary, cultureless interpellation "never comes" according to Johnson (1979:75).

Finally, there is no room for opposition in this conception of ideology; Hall's advocacy of the notion of the *polysemic* nature of cultural codes of representation corrects for Althusser's reductionist interpellation of subjects by theorizing subjects as "spoken" by historical systems of representation, but never fully determined. Althusser's notions are not audience-sensitive. Early studies in British Cultural Studies, such as *Resistance through Rituals* (Jefferson, Hall and Clarke 1975) and *Subcultures: The Meaning of Style* (Hebdige 1979) did not whole heartedly accept Althusser's notion of ideology. Rather, a synthesis of the notion of the "imaginary relation to production" and his theory of positioning was combined with a culturalist emphasis on struggle. Feminists have further altered the notion of interpellation of the subject, by reintroducing Brecht's notion of "refunctioning" the sign. Audiences of popular culture products and texts can interpret messages in ways not intended by the producers and on occasion can "refunction" the sign by performing a cultural "cut and paste" and combining different messages together.¹⁰ Althusser's work has offered significant contributions to the debate on ideology through his emphasis on ideology as a system of representation and his stress on its materiality.

¹⁰Such as Kipnis' example of women pasting "rape" stickers on stop signs to politically re-articulate an re-interpellate subjects in relation to common discourse (1986).

Another line of French Structuralist thought that has accomplished an important intervention into Marxist theories of ideology have occurred through language theory . Most significant are the semiotic writings of de Saussure, Levi Strauss, and R. Barthes who all insisted that ideology be understood at the level of discursive structures. For Barthes, the highest level of signification, connotation, is the level at which *anonymous ideology* performs its 'normalizing' work. The notion that ideology is somehow anonymous correctly suggests, I believe, that ideology does in fact exist at all levels of the social formation. Furthermore, the anonymity of ideology is crucially related to another central premise advocated by Barthes, that being that *myth is depoliticized speech*. However, one needs to be wary of Barthes' formalist nature; Hebdige (1979) has reminded us that the major limitation of Barthes' structuralist account of ideology is that his work has lacked a consideration of "lived relations". Ideology can, and does exist beneath social relations and forms, can be invisible or taken-for-granted, but ideology can never be wholly anonymous (the possibility of repossessing cultural forms and meanings demonstrated by Hebdige's subcultural study of style (1979).)

Barthes' formalist legacy in Cultural Studies has been due, in part, to the concurrent development of semiotics and debates about ideology in the 1970s, and the ease at which the two have been discusses collectively. For example, Woollacott, in "Messages and Meanings" (1982), has traced these areas of inquiry, noting that Barthes' *Mythologies* (1972) developed and employed semiotics as a way to study the internal structuring of messages and as a "preamble" into his greater concerns with myth and ideology. The legacy

for media studies left by Barthes' essay "Myth Today" includes the idea of "mythic ideology" as being discursive, a theory of pleasure, and a concern for the naturalization of everyday forms and practices. Another instance of the articulation of semiotics with ideology provided by Woollacott is the work on film and television by Umberto Eco, who's concern has been to locate "reading within social and ideological practices. Still, a great deal of the work following Barthes and Althusser have suffered from being highly formalistic and ahistorical forms of analyses. The historical circumstances surrounding both the production and reception moments usually have been ignored, while textual searches have attempted to de-construct myth and the signifying mechanisms in isolation from broader processes and structures (Bennett 1982).

(VII) THE RE-DISCOVERY OF IDEOLOGY

Gramsci's concern with ideology as the "cement" that unified a social formation, and his emphasis on historical struggle, has permitted the notion of social production and the reproduction to be a "way out of" the formalist tendencies in Cultural Studies. Stuart Hall, the 'Vice-Roy' of British Cultural Studies, has figured prominently in the "re-discovery of ideology". His early work, such as *Encoding/Decoding* (1980E) contained keynote themes that have been threaded through subsequent cultural studies work on ideology: themes such as the stress now put upon the conventionality of representation, the cultural "work to prefer" and privilege particular significations over other alternatives. Later, in his seminal piece, "*The Re-Discovery of Ideology*" (1982), Hall reevaluated his earlier position concerning the encoding-decoding relationship and admitted that his earlier work had suffered from an insensitivity to contradictory codes, and marginalized codes (such as

codes of gender following criticism from his feminist colleagues Hobson 1981 and McRobbie 1981), and the political-economic conditions within which these codes are made and remade. Elsewhere, he has demonstrated a greater degree of theoretical awareness for the privileging of particular accounts of the social world as “*the accounts*” due to the active marginalization and delegitimation of alternative accounts. (e.g. Hall 1977).

Hall’s engagement with Gramsci’s *relational* formulations of commonsense and hegemonic structures, and with Althusser’s accounts of the “unconscious” nature of ideology have infused his discussion of the media and its assumed “ideological effect” (1977b). One of Hall’s key arguments has been that communication occurs *between* people, which has raised questions of the relationships of ideology, power and struggle. Central to his notion of ideology has been the polysemic nature of cultural codes and the ability of ideology to demonstrate “where things fit” on the social terrain. The “wisdom” of any particular historical epoch has been discussed in the following manner:

It is precisely its ‘spontaneous quality’, its transparency, its ‘naturalness’, its refusal to be made to examine the premises on which it is founded, its resistance to change or to correction, its effect of instant recognition, and the closed circle in which it moves which makes common sense, at one and the same time, ‘spontaneous’ ideological and *unconscious*. You cannot learn through commonsense, *how things are*; you can only discover where they fit into the existing scheme of things. In this way, its very taken-for-grantedness is what established it as a medium in which its own premises and presuppositions are being rendered invisible by its apparent transparency. (Hall 1977b:325).

The recovery of Volosinov’s writings (reprinted 1973), especially the

reintroduction of his stress on the *multi-accentuality* of signs, has been directly related to Hall's recognition of the polysemic nature of signs: both have permitted struggles and a limited range of "accents" to be fought over within the arena of language and signification. In other words, the 'play' of signification always occurs within a sphere of structured ideological relations (Bennett 1982b), but that play/struggle actively confirm and legitimate, transform or contradict the range of current cultural codes and meanings. There have been numerous examples from sport and cultural studies projects that have attempted to examine the construction of commonsense and collaborative establishment of rules of discourses (see Hargreaves 1982, Cantelon et. al. 1984), or that have attempted to illustrate that ideology is not abstract but materialized and legitimated (Helmes 1978, Clarke and Clarke 1982, Hargreaves 1982, 1985, Real 1989).

One of the most significant breaks from earlier formulations of ideology used in cultural studies, has been the increasing interest in *ideological power*. The active privileging of particular significations stressed in Hall's work in the 1970s, has been more adequately theorized in the 1980s, when he had stressed struggles over signification. The "re-discovery" of ideology in recent cultural studies analyses has occurred after the question, "how does ideology actually work?", has been posed as well as the question, "how ideological practices differ from other kinds of productive practices in cultural settings?" (Hall 1982). Ideology has been conceptualized in this tradition now as the engagement of struggles in and through language and discourse. Thus, ideology into all levels of signification, including ideology as being "underneath" commonsense understandings, and most crucially, that the ideological dimensions of signification have the power to organize and distribute meanings. The task of critical subcultural work must, according to this

researcher, “disentangle” the very codes of signification by which meaning has been selected and organized. Music, fashion, and subcultural modes of slang are amongst some the signifying vehicles with which the struggle over the “possession of the sign” have occurred.

In Iain Chambers’ post-modern work on popular culture (1986), struggle has been upgraded to all-out “warfare”. This battle has been assumed to signal the “end of meaning”. Chambers examined the employment of ideological processes that have sought to “pacify” a culture or subculture. Hebdiges’ claim that ideological process have attempted to “normalize” has been a more promising direction for cultural studies ideological analysis than Chambers’ emphasis on pacification. There are two central problems with Chamber’s argument. While the codes and signs of contemporary popular culture may be disarticulated and rearticulated from their traditional ideological structures at a rapid rate, they do not signal the “end” of meaning in our culture. Rather, they indicate a transmutation of meaning into the beginning of an alternative expression. Secondly, the basis of his argument has been wrought with a fundamental contradiction between a stress on all-out warfare, which has required tremendous effort and creatively active subjects, and the pacification of cultural subjects on the terrain of ideological processes.

Notions of ideological power and struggle have come to figure centrally in cultural studies of the media (e.g. Gitlin 1982, 1982b, Cantelon et. al 1984, Mellancamp 1986, Modleski 1986, Fiske 1987, Real 1989). Gitlin, for instance, has examined the dynamic and contradictory nature of ideological processes in his examination of the hegemonic transformation of “television screens”. Popular culture, such as television sitcoms, have

been seen as part and parcel of a collaborative effort to define the “terms of domination” by ideology and its transformation. In other words, ideology has not been imposed; moreover, ideological hegemony probably has had the greatest impact upon the most powerful group themselves (1982). Gitlin has demonstrated the embeddedness of ideology in popular television formats, character types and development. His analysis of television series and the television industry has illustrated the need for analysts to recoup some sense of political economy when discussing ideology. He has displayed how the corporate ideology has mediated and set the limits for popular struggles. Unfortunately, he has often placed too great an emphasis on hegemonic domination rather than “direction”, and too much emphasis on the reproductive role of popular culture and the limits to ideological struggle, without paying sufficient attention to the enabling pressures and productive abilities of ideological processes.

Morley (1980b) and Fiske (1987) are two examples of studies that have acknowledged the possibility of empowering roles of television viewers. Different sectors of the “Nationwide” news audience in Britain, according to Morley’s study, have demonstrated that varying discursive strategies have been brought into play when “decoding” the British news that are not wholly dependent on class positioning. In other words, gender, education, occupational locations also have figured strongly in the processes of audiences decoding meaning from television. Likewise, Fiske’s review of the field of television studies (1987), has pointed out that ideology can empower viewers of television to “make sense” out of the television programmes. Much of this empowerment has been located at the level of pleasure, although pleasure has often built on “hook of hegemony”. Moreover, the pleasures offered by television programmes can be employed by the audience to “evade” and

even “scandalize” both ideology and associated systems of power (1987: 240-250).¹¹

In critical examinations of cultural life the varying notions of ideology have contained underlying assumptions pertaining to social life and social actors. The movement away from conceptualizing ideology as a system of either group or false beliefs has been a key element in recent cultural studies of subcultures, media studies, feminist work and studies of race and ethnicity. Instead, ideology as the process of making sense and as a struggle over signification has restored a greater degree of complexity to cultural studies by according ideological beliefs and practices some degree of relative autonomy and levels of mediation. A dialectic of containment and resistance within unequal relationships (be they cultural, economic and/or political relations) has been restored: thus, outmoded notions of complete determinism or complete voluntarism can be put aside.

(VIII) HEGEMONIC POWER, IDEOLOGY AND THE STUDY OF MEDIA SPORTS

As noted earlier, one of most important breaks from earlier theories of ideology, has been the cultural studies interest in ideological power. Even though it is not always discussed explicitly, the concept of *power* figures prominently in cultural studies perspectives on television sport. It also plays a major role in the research reported in later chapters. Because of the multiple levels of economic, political, subcultural, and discursive analysis conducted in this study, it is imperative to define power as a multi-

¹¹See Morley 1980, Mercer 1983, Modleski 1986, Caughie 1986, Kipnis 1986, Frith 1987 for further discussions of pleasure and empowerment.

dimensional concept. I have blended Gramscian notions of ideology and hegemony with feminist thought in order to accomplish a multi-dimensional approach.

Following the work of Max Weber, Tom Bottomore defines power as “the ability of an individual or a social group to pursue a course of action (to make and implement decisions and more broadly to determine the agenda for decision making) if necessary against the interests, and even against the opposition of other individuals and groups” (1979:7). But power is more than an ability of human agency to pursue action, and it is more than the possession of the resources needed to pursue that line of action. Power is also a relationship. Power is constituted in and through the experience of and use of systems of discourse which are all subject to historical transformation (see Bennett, 1982). The concept of hegemony addresses these levels of historical transformation.

Gramsci's concept of hegemony meant both domination or ruling leadership, and the process of achieving rule in a culture by consensus formation (Brantlinger, 1990:98). By addressing the politics of social process and meaning, Gramsci offers cultural and media studies a useful explanatory framework. Gramsci believed that entire societies, local cultures, ideologies and power are always being negotiated in the process of establishing consensus, and that both leaders and subordinate classes participate (although unequally) in this struggle. Raymond Williams defines hegemony as:

a whole body of practices and expectations, over the whole of living: our senses and assignments of energy, our shaping perceptions of ourselves and our world. It is a lived system of meanings and values -- constitutive and constituting -- which as they are experienced as practices appear as reciprocally confirming. It thus constitutes a sense of reality beyond which it is very difficult for most members of the society to move, in most areas of their lives. It is, that is to say in the strongest sense a 'culture', but a

culture which has also to be seen as the lived dominance and subordination of particular classes (1977:110).

Adapting Gramsci, we can see that hegemonic power is both a culturally saturating *practice*, a widely accepted and taken-for-granted *consciousness*, and a consensual experience of containment in unequal *social relations* that all appear to be legitimate: that is, legitimate ways of acting, thinking, relating and expressing.

In addition to the Gramscian consensual notion of hegemonic power, I will still retain a notion of power as having the potential to be *coercive* since the dynamic of *containment-resistance* demands a way of describing how various media workers can and do *resist* the dominant ways of producing sport when, for example, they try to change the shape and substance of programming, or for describing how media agents can be *contained* or mobilized in the dominant work and signifying structures of the media sport crews despite their conscious attempts to do otherwise.

The metaphor of *cultural capital* is a particularly intriguing concept because it helps to tie power and ideology into the analysis of hegemonic relationships of power (including gender based power), and it encapsulates the sense of power I wish to convey as *mediating* the spectacle of legitimation rather than “imposing” or reflecting key visions of sport. Furthermore, cultural capital permits links to the economic relationships of power structuring the media spectacle of accumulation. According to Pierre Bourdieu (1980), cultural capital is the equivalent of the unequal distribution of material wealth in a society, except that it refers to the unequal distribution of knowledge, prestige, pleasures, social worth and significance materialized in human relationships. A certain sense of cultural taste

comes to be recognized and occasionally naturalized as “the” epitome of cultural excellence. Cultural capital can become a power chip of position, used for recognition, and strategically employed for positioning in relationships between individuals and social groups. Thus, in the case of hockey’s location of cultural importance in Canada as the unofficial “national sport”, knowledge about this sport by media crews and by the audience carries significant social currency¹². The production of this sport by CTV as a marquee event at the Olympics and as a game “hailing” a male audience, attempted to reproduce and bolster the depths of patriarchal-patriotic currency of the game and the network.

Whether coercive or hegemonic, power continually shifts between different blocs of human agents, is continually negotiated, accommodated or resisted. To understand the processes of power, the consequences of its unequal application (economically, politically and discursively) required close study of the social actors involved in the struggle and experience of power. In later chapters I will show how ideological streams of power served to unite or separate various constituents of the CTV television crew in relation to each other, to the Olympic family, and to the broader Canadian audience at large. I will show how the maintenance of cultural hegemony is inextricably tied to the ability of Olympic and media power blocs framing the vast number of competing definitions of Canadian life and hockey discourses within their own range of understandings. Power does not exist without being exercised; hence, the call to study the relationships of power (rather than the resources of power alone) from within the contexts of the application and negotiation of power frames the agenda for conducting my research.

¹²The crew believed the event of hockey could only be celebrated and shared between males, indicating a highly gendered social currency.

PART II

OLYMPIC TELEVISION AS A SPECTACLE OF ACCUMULATION

THE MEDIA - WRITTEN, SPOKEN, PHOTOGRAPHIC, AND ELECTRONIC - IS AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE OLYMPIC MOVEMENT AND IN EVERY SENSE IS A MEMBER OF THE OLYMPIC FAMILY. THE IOC PLACES THE GREATEST IMPORTANCE ON WHAT WE NOW CALL COLLECTIVELY, THE "MEDIA".

J.A. SAMARANCH (introduction to the IOC Media Guide, 1987:1)

CHAPTER 3

SPECTACULAR RETURNS: THE POLITICAL ECONOMIC IMPERATIVES OF OLYMPIC SPORTS TELEVISION

We took a hard look at our options and decided to focus on the best financial hope we had -- television rights ... For the first time, the Winter Games were being packaged as a marketable product. We developed clear specifications for what we were offering. We added every possible feature so that the networks would bid higher than ever before.

Frank King, Chair of OCO'88¹

CITIUS, ALTIUS, FORTIUS, the Olympic motto “faster, higher, stronger” has framed elite amateur sport throughout much of this century; but this motto has recently taken on new meaning within the evolving commercial structures of the modern Olympic movement. Cities of the world now manoeuvre *faster* in the bidding wars to host the Games, corporate sponsors now seek *higher* profit margins to justify their exclusive association with the cherished symbols of Olympism, and television rights holders have continued to seek *stronger* ties with multi-national corporate sponsors and the International Olympic Committee (IOC). These transformations do not necessarily indicate the corruption of “Olympism”. Instead, they reflect the changing nature of the global marketplace and the associated re-organization of traditional sporting events into a grand *spectacle of accumulation*, and a spectacle of corporate and political legitimation. This chapter examines the political-economic context of television production at the 1988 Winter Olympic Games and it examines the relationships between key Olympic family power brokers -- such as between CTV and OCO'88, the IOC, the Government of Canada, and ABC -- in order to later question the degrees to which the commercial imperative and government

¹King, F. (1991: 124, 129).

intervention into the realms of communication and high performance sport influence the labour process of making television programming.

TABLE 3.1: COST OF OLYMPIC TELEVISION RIGHTS IN U.S. DOLLARS

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>NETWORK</u>	<u>COST IN \$US</u>
1960	SQUAW VALLEY	CBS	50,000
1960	ROME	CBS	394,000
1964	INNSBRUCK	ABC	597,000
1964	TOKYO	NBC	1,500,000
1968	GRENOBLE	ABC	2,500,000
1968	MEXICO	ABC	4,510,000
1972	SAPPORO	NBC	6,400,000
1972	MUNICH	ABC	13,500,000
1976	INNSBRUCK	ABC	10,000,000
1976	MONTREAL	ABC	25,000,000
1980	LAKE PLACID	ABC	15,500,000
1980	MOSCOW	NBC	85,000,000
1984	SARAJEVO	ABC	91,500,000
1984	LOS ANGELES	ABC	225,000,000
1988	CALGARY	ABC	309,000,000
		CTV DOMESTIC	*4,500,000
		CTV HOST FEE	**53,000,000
1988	SEOUL	NBC	300,000,000

• CTV figures are in Canadian dollars. The ABC fees, by comparison were the equivalent of \$326 Canadian (Sources: *CTV's Guide to the Olympics*; OCO's *Facts and Figures*; and Alaszkievicz, 1987).

** CTV Host Broadcaster was originally awarded the host rights over CBC because they presented a more cost efficient proposal of \$43 Million Canadian dollars to produce basic multi-lateral feed for the extended Olympic festival. They later renegotiated this fee up to \$53 Million. While all the other world broadcasters paid the 1988 Olympic organizing committee (OCO'88) for the right to exclusive broadcast of Host feed, including CTV Domestic Broadcaster, CTV Host Broadcaster has been paid by OCO the renegotiated fee out of the revenues OCO generated from the other rights generated; thus money from American networks in 1988 and throughout the history of televised Olympics programming, has underwritten the costs of producing of the host feed for the world and, 1988, also created the profit margin eventually enjoyed by OCO'88.

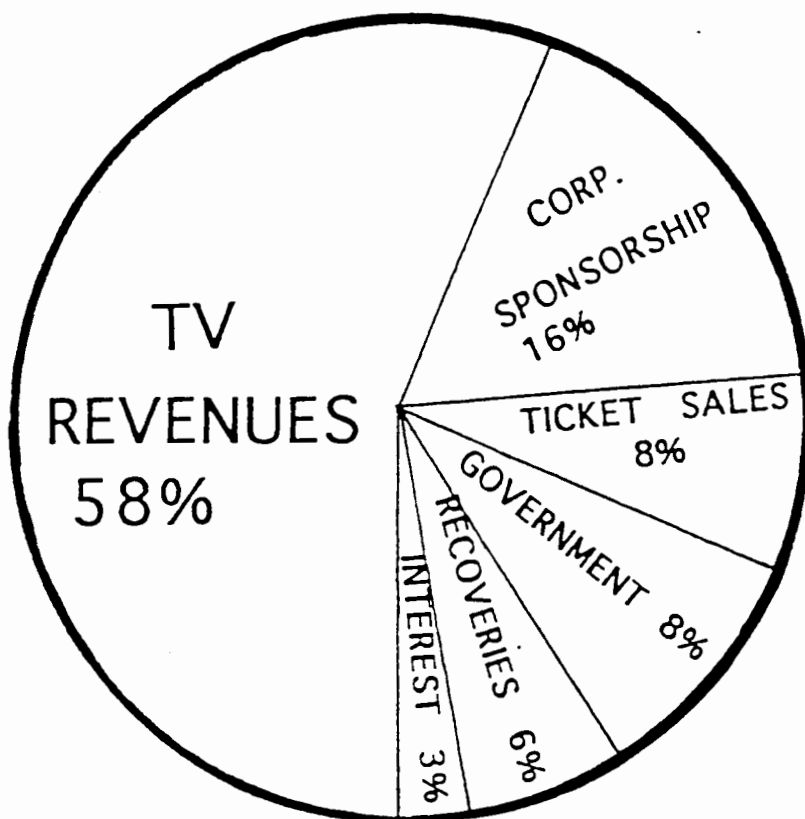
(I) SPECTACULAR RETURNS

Media and corporate sponsorship rescued the International Olympic Committee (IOC) from the threat of looming bankruptcy in the late 1970s and rejuvenated the fiscal picture for the IOC during the 1980s. Exclusive television rights for the Games have steadily risen from CBS' payment of \$50,000_(US) for the rights to the 1960 Squaw Valley Winter Games, to NBC's \$401 million_(US) bid for the 1992 Barcelona Summer Games. (See Table 3.1). This movement has been successful in mobilizing television and sponsorship profits and redistributing its income to its various constituents, such as each organizing committee for Olympiads and the numerous National Olympic Committees. Despite the financial successes of the Olympic spectacle since the 1984 Los Angeles Games, the IOC has continued to claim that it is simply a non-governmental, non-profit, international organization promoting high performance sport in a wide array of disciplines.

Over the commercial "lifespan" of the Calgary Winter Games Organizing Committee, OCO'88 spent an estimated \$527 million to produce the games and raised \$559 million in revenues to generate a \$32 million profit. The "OCO'88 Marketing Program" had been premised upon a commercial mission to finance the Games and to derive a substantial profit, while promoting the Olympics. Broadcasting came under the aegis of this Marketing Program. Corporate relations and ticketing departments for live events were the two other arms of the Marketing Program. Collectively the marketing triad raised \$454 million in revenue by 1988. OCO'88 generated \$326 million from television rights. After paying CTV-Host Broadcaster (CTV-HB) the fee for producing the visual and natural sound feed for all world broadcasters, and then dividing the shares with the IOC, OCO'88 profited

by \$106 million from broadcasting fees alone. Were it not for broadcasting fees, OCO'88 would not have produced the \$76 million profit above their original budget forecasts for the Games (OWGOR, 1988). Chart 3.1, "OCO'88 Revenue Generating Partners", illustrates the majority revenue-generating role played by television in the production of the 1988 Winter Olympic spectacle. Television revenues built a strong structure of financial opportunity for OCO'88 very early in the preparatory stages for hosting the games because all sizable broadcast contributions precipitated a flowering of OCO'88 revenues due to matching expenditures. The other major supporters generating revenue for OCO'88 included three governmental "partners" (at federal, provincial and municipal levels), which accounted for nine per cent of revenues, ticket sales accounted for eight per cent, and interest on OCO'88 cash balances accounted for three per cent according to OWGOR (1988:83).

CHART 3.1 OCO'88 OLYMPIC REVENUE GENERATING PARTNERS



Spectators of CTV's Olympic 1988 programming may have assumed they were simply consumers of the pageantry. But, as Sut Jhally has argued (1984), the media typically work to parcel the sport-audience into a bundle of demographic information, project a quantified rating onto this package, and then offer sports fans as a commodity for sale to national sponsors. Jhally argues convincingly that spectators have become the 'property' consumed by corporations wanting to associate themselves with the event receiving the greatest global visibility. Thus, the Canadian advertisers seeking an audience did not merely purchase advertising *time* from CTV, they also bought the national *audience* itself.

Obtaining exclusive Olympic media rights have brought unprecedented corporate prestige, power and profit to the media in recent years because few television events have had a comparable ability to hold the attention of diverse cross sections of national populations. The IOC's goal to reach the "widest possible audience", according to the Olympic Charter, has fused well with the media's quest to accumulate maximum profits and market visibility through record audience ratings. According to the Charter:

in order to ensure the fullest news coverage and the widest possible audience for the Olympic games, all necessary steps shall be taken by the IOC to facilitate the work of the different mass media in covering the Olympic Games (1990:4.49:28).

However, this global mandate to reach the widest audience possible is framed by a concern for revenues. In this research, OCO'88 noted that the sale of broadcast television rights to the American audience was "the first and most important agreement concluded"

(OWGOR, 1988: 345). IOC member to Canada, Richard Pound also acknowledged that for the 1988 Winter Games, “the process for bidding for the US networks was far and away the greatest financially supported process” (July 10, 1992). Indeed, the organizing committee in Calgary gave much greater priority to fashioning a strategic plan for the lucrative American market than to their negotiations with Canadian domestic broadcasters or those of other nations. According to the OCO'88 final report, the key steps in their media strategies were to:

- a) determine which organizations were potential rights buyers; that is, whether cable or pay-per-view organizations were candidates;
- b) determine whether the “product” could be improved; that is, whether the Games activities could be modified in such a manner that their broadcast could be made more valuable while still keeping with the provisions of the Olympic Charter;
- c) specify as accurately as possible the negotiation for goods and services between the Organizing Committee and the rights holders;
- e) identify the rights prices that would be affordable to a U.S.A. network;
- f) set up a competitive atmosphere between the U.S.A. networks;
- g) be fair to all candidates (OWGOR, 1988:345).

The OCO'88 media plan to extract maximum profits from an American spectacle of accumulation on Canadian soil was successful in terms of the profit projections of both the Calgary organization committee and IOC projections. This media plan had a number of significant consequences for Games organizations and scheduling, including:

- (a) the extension of the Winter Olympic Games to a 16 day event including an extra weekend of prime time (three weekends in total);
- (b) the addition of three demonstration sporting events;

- (c) shifting the dates of the Olympiad to coincide with the February 1988 American ratings "sweeps";
- (d) the scheduling of priority events into time slots corresponding with the American eastern seaboard prime time.

The OCO'88 media strategy also led to meetings of potential rights holders to decrease the number of candidates, and to present the American bidders with the precise range of services and facilities to be provided by the 1988 Winter Olympic "family" (OWGOR, 1988: 345). Prior to the bidding for the American rights, a legal contract between members of the "Olympic" family -- including the IOC, OCO'88, TWI (media consultants hired by OCO'88), and CTV Host Broadcaster -- was ratified. This agreement specifying exactly what broadcasting equipment and services would be bought was in place before the bidding contest.

Technical ability combined with profit projections, and the broader 1980's political climate favouring deregulation and free enterprise, helped CTV win the domestic television rights bid for the Winter Games away from CBC. Both IOC member Richard Pound and CTV Vice President Johnny Eshaw agreed that the revenues that could be accumulated through this arrangement was the deciding factor. OCO'88 received \$61 million for the Host Broadcaster contribution ², according to Pound, "and it didn't cost that much for CTV to produce their Games coverage, so OCO made money" (July 10, 1992). Eshaw had brilliantly laid out a strategy whereby the best technology could be rented, rather than purchased in the traditional CBC scheme of Olympic production. This meant that CTV could

² The IOC contributes a portion of revenues from the sale of domestic rights to the host broadcaster to cover production costs.

offer highest level of technical presentation but, after the cost of rent, OCO'88 would only pay for the work of the CTV Host crew, rather than stocking the CBC with additional technologies for post-Olympic sports programming.

The shift from public to private broadcasting of a major national event and international spectacle represents a significant political juncture in the history of the television industry in Canada. As the recession of the late 1980 began, the growth of jobs, investment and growth of capital became fundamental considerations which took precedence over the protection of cultural sovereignty (which had been previously accorded to CBC). At the time of the negotiations, the CBC had a huge budget deficit and was under pressure from the Treasury Board. Thus, according to Richard Pound, the timing was right to shift to a private venture. Yet, the negotiators were laden with residual notions of who "ought" to cover the game, prodding Pound to check with federal ministers in Fitness and Amateur Sport, broadcasting and culture departments to "make sure no one's nose was out of joint" (July 10, 1992). Eshaw summed up the factors which coalesced to shift the rights to private broadcasting:

OCO saved money with CTV. OCO didn't want to be told by a government bureaucracy and crown corporation that it must do this or it must do that. OCO was comprised of absolutely free enterprise thinking people. We are a free enterprise network. OCO took that into consideration, and the philosophy of the new IOC under Samaranch is 'if you're good enough to make money, you're good enough for us to want'" (Feb. 15, 1988).

In January of 1983, before the opening of the 1984 Sarejevo Games, the bidding

contest for 1988 rights became the main Olympic event; ABC outbid NBC and CBS with a \$309 million(US) offer that set an Olympic rights record for both Summer and Winter Olympic Games coverage. At the 1988 Games, everyone I interviewed in the OCO organization and in the networks refused to describe the controversial process of bidding for the games. The executives at CTV simply fumed “they were unfair”. After the games, one of the members of the IOC negotiating team described the rationale and process of the “field auction” they had used in 1988:

for 1988, it was a long bidding process. The escalation of television rights started with the games in Moscow. What was done until 1988, was that the organizing committee for the Games would negotiate the contracts. By 1988, the IOC realized the IOC should step back in and take control. This had an important effect financially on the IOC and the Olympic movement.

The process for bidding started about late 1983 and it concluded in 1984 in the January before the Sarajevo Games. We had to overcome suspicion on the part of the networks that ABC had an inside track on the bidding for rights. We had to make it fair so all other networks wouldn't leave the playing field. We told the networks there would be no special deals.

The IOC sent out contracts, which were identical, they were to bid against the contract to get into the room. They had to sign the contract to get into the room and they had to leave the amount blank. They delivered the contract to the chairman of the commission and he fills in their amount and then gives the contract back to the losing networks.

It is a field bid auction, a straight process. We got more than was prudent. We had hoped for anything over 200 million, but there was a fight between NBC and ABC. By \$275 million the IOC tried to get out of the field auction. It was too much money. The IOC likes to leave some money on the table so we have happy broadcasters rather than them losing money (Pound, July 10, 1992).

The corporate relations and advertising agreements of CTV, OCO'88 and the new IOC “The Olympic Programme” (TOP) also contributed to the Olympics as a spectacle of

accumulation. OCO's corporate relationship programme for "category exclusivity", involving twenty-one official sponsors, thirty suppliers, forty licensees and other donors, raised \$90 million in revenue, more than \$40 million above their original target. Part of OCO's agreements included giving corporations priority choices to Olympic event tickets and accommodation in Calgary. These corporations then employed these "Olympic perks" in their own corporate relations strategy, hosting business partners and establishing contacts, employee relation programs and consumer incentive advertising. The oil industry, in collaboration with the COA and OCO'88 for example, promoted "Team Petroleum'88" to boost the industry profile. This programme gave the petroleum industry access to seating in the Olympic Saddledome Lounge for viewing the popular hockey and figure skating events, and priority access to other venue tickets. A \$4.8 million fee was paid by this "team" of forty-four corporate oil company cartel members. Their monopoly status bought them monopoly passage into the live Olympic spectacle even though the original philosophy of OCO'88 (and promise to the local community) was to provide modestly priced tickets on an equal-opportunity basis to all levels of spectators. This push for *market exclusivity* programmes created a scenario at the Olympics in which the spectator of the event was not necessarily a fan of the sport. A separation of fan and the sponsor as event consumer occurred.

Hockey and figure skating fans wishing to see the Olympic spectacle, but who were not associated with a "corporate team" such as the oil cartel, suffered the greatest difficulties trying to purchase Olympic seats. Demands upon OCO'88 for tickets snowballed into one of the biggest public relations and legal fiasco's for Olympic organizers. OCO'88 seriously underestimated the early demand for prime events. This resulted in aggravating

delays to sports fans and event consumers awaiting confirmation for tickets ordered due to the inflexibility in the ticketing system: computers and people were not authorized, for example, to make alternative decisions about popular events. In addition, a mail order ticketing fraud scam within the OCO ticketing department caused OCO a great deal of trouble in assigning tickets democratically as they had promised, and caused a public relations calamity.

Most troubling to the local fans and visiting tourists to the Calgary Olympic Games was that "Olympic Family" members (the IOC, the national Olympic committees, the media and the corporate supporters) were given priority access to event seating. The system was not the "first-come, first-serve" structure that OCO'88 had promised. OCO originally assumed the "non-public" sector would only require ten per cent of the seating. However, as much as fifty percent of the seating was demanded for some premium events, such as hockey by the 'non-public' sector or the "Olympic Family". Knowing that hockey and figure skating tickets would be coveted by Olympic family and public fans alike, extra seating added to the top of the Saddledome increased the number of tickets by 100,000. OCO also renegotiated the pressing demands for tickets from members of the Olympic Family down to twenty-one percent of the seating (OWGOR, 1988:335). Still, my informants on the CTV hockey crew claimed the percentage of tickets given to the Olympic Family for Saddledome events was greater than this figure for key events. This was particularly evident when the entire section of the lowest rink side seating was empty at the beginning of hockey games, while other important events were ending and the privileged "nabobs of Olympism" as the crew called them, were in transit. The crew kept opening television shots tight when the golden seats of hockey viewing were empty. Whenever this situation arose, the crew set

the “context” for the upcoming game by the pre-recorded image of the Olympic Saddledome set against the panoramic skyline of the City. The slow gallop across town and late arrival of the Olympic Family spectators meant that the usual telecast of a live signal of crowd noise and excited faces anticipating the action had to be carefully edited using a panoramic shot of spectators seated higher in the arena.

The promise of healthy television revenues has restructured the Olympic Movement in significant ways over the past decade. As the IOC has increasingly recognized the economic value of the media spectacle to commercial media networks, the IOC has sought ways to make the exchange of Olympic audiences for rights monies more attractive and manageable. The decision to rotate the cycles of Summer and Winter Olympiads reflects this guiding economic imperative of the IOC’s commercial structure. In the Autumn of 1986 the IOC decided to separate the Winter and Summer Games by two years to allow the networks and the exclusive sponsors in the TOP programme to spread out their investments into the Olympic movement. The rationale behind this decision, is to make the Olympics more visible more often, and to make the payment plans more manageable for the networks (who are thus expected to bid more fiercely in the competition to win exclusive media rights. The IOC wants to enhance the success of the exclusive sponsor programme and discover new sources of financing so that the IOC is not so overwhelmingly dependent on television revenues and beholden to their demands.

Spectacular returns on the Olympic spectacle of accumulation were cultivated from Canadian and U.S. based multi-national corporation sources. OCO’88 garnered 66% of its corporate advertising and relations revenues from Canadian sponsors, and the IOC’s *TOP*

Program brought eight multinational corporations and one official supplier to the 1988 Winter Olympic Games³. The North American sport cliché, “winning is not the only thing ... it’s everything”⁴ rings loudest for exclusive rights negotiations, be they for corporate sponsorship or broadcasting rights.

(11) CTV TELEVISION RIGHTS AGREEMENTS

The 1988 Winter Olympic Games binding agreements between the IOC and CTV were primarily economic and technical in nature. Agreements on broadcast content, except regarding the use of official symbols and registered trademarks for the purposes of advertising, were wholly absent in all agreements. *CTV Limited* acquired the Host Broadcast rights in December 1983 to produce 550 hours of live coverage. The relationship between CTV and OCO’88 was based on the *1982 Olympic Charter* which, under rule 51, stipulated that all broadcasting agreements had to be negotiated jointly by the IOC and the organizing committee for the Games. OCO’88 enlisted the consulting services of Trans World International of the International Management Group to bolster its participation in these negotiations with the major networks and the IOC, to learn specifically about the American television market, and to strengthen contacts with the weaker European and Asian broadcast markets for the 1988 Games. Following the economic and technical consultations, CTV was chosen as the joint “Host” and “Canadian Domestic”

³ OCO’88 claims that the TOP Programme brought in additional foreign marketing revenue to the Olympic spectacle that might not have contributed otherwise according to OWGOR (1988:331)

⁴This famous professional sport motto is often attributed to Vince Lombardi who actually said, “Winning is not everything but making the effort to win is”. “Winning is not the only thing ... it’s everything” was actually espoused by Red Sanders, a Vanderbilt football coach.

broadcasters following a decision that ranked CTV on par with CBC technically, and ranked CTV in first place in the bidding war on the economic plane because CTV's Host Broadcaster proposal would save OCO'88 \$6.7 million dollars according to their Official report to the IOC in 1988 (OWGOR). Originally, CTV was contracted to build the International Broadcast Centre, to design the media requirements in each sporting venue, and to hire the personnel for the Host crew for a total of \$43 million.

The broadcasting agreement between CTV Limited and OCO'88 was blueprinted to guarantee that the network met a number of standards and objectives such as:

- (a) to ensure that host coverage met Olympic standards;
- (b) to specify detailed broadcast configuration and costs;
- (c) to specify procedures for design change and cost control;
- (d) to integrate planning processes between the Host Broadcaster and the Organizing Committee; and
- (e) to develop procedures for the provision of service to broadcast rights holders⁵.

CTV cleverly negotiated a contract in which the CTV domestic broadcast rights to Canada were promised, in that 1983 contract, as a bonus to the Host Broadcaster rights package. John Eshaw, the head of CTV sports and the network negotiator for Labatt's Blue Jay rights, Canada Cup and figure skating rights, put together the bids proposal. He took his bid to the CTV Board of Directors, whom he said didn't ask him the cost, but urged him to capture the rights for the 1988 Games (Eshaw, Feb. 11, 1988). CTV demanded this concession so that it would not have to compete against CBC again in a separate round for domestic rights holders. All other potential domestic world broadcaster holders from other

nations had to wait until early 1984 to bid and negotiate rights. The early negotiations of these contracts one full Olympiad before the 1988 Winter Games, together with the economic value of these contracts, served to position the television revenues programme as the “financial backbone” for the development and the hosting of the entire Olympic spectacle. In total, national television rights, including CTV-Domestic rights, generated 58% of the total revenues accumulated by OCO'88 for the Games. Sponsorship of the Olympic movement has been steadily increasing since the 1980s. Still, corporate sponsorship of OCO constituted 16% of the total revenue sources, which is significantly less than broadcast revenues.

Later CTV Host Broadcaster renegotiated the fee from \$43 million to \$53 million to cover a number of modifications to the sporting competitions such as: the extended schedule, the expenditure increases due to inflation, and building an extra broadcast facility to house ABC beside the IBC. Where ever possible, CTV shifted all expenses to the Host corporation -- with its \$53 million budget funded from all other rights payments -- while planning for skeleton crews and minimal technology on the CTV Domestic side of the “official Olympic network” to recover the Canadian national broadcast rights costs of \$4.5 million and produce a profit. Furthermore CTV negotiated a frugal agreement with the French language network TVA in Quebec to produce domestic feed in French because CTV Domestic didn't want the task and expense of providing coverage to those francophone communities across the nation whose language was not English, the working language of the CTV network. CTV Domestic Broadcaster provided the visual feed to TVA for free. However, OCO'88 did have to pay the CBC network, who had Francophone affiliates and developed audiences across Canada, \$500,000 to cover the expense of producing highlights for the Francophone feed.

\$500,000 to cover the expense of producing highlights for the Francophone feed. CTV was neither willing nor able to produce Francophone feed in 1988.

The look, feel and message of Olympic televisual content were not considered to be matters for legal agreement.⁶ The media were relatively free to present hockey and all sports in the manner they deemed necessary to garner the largest market share. They were not, for example, legally bound by their contracts to infuse the central philosophies proclaimed in *The Olympic Charter*. These are:

1. To promote the development of those physical and moral qualities which are the basis of sport.
2. To educate young people through sport in a spirit of better understanding between each other, and of friendship, thereby helping to build a better and more peaceful world.
3. To spread Olympic principles throughout the world, thereby creating international goodwill.
4. To bring together the athletes of the world in the great four-yearly sports festival, the Olympic Games (The Olympic Charter 1988).

Most notably, the private appropriation of Olympic spectacle by television has arguably played a major role in marginalizing some of these Olympic ideals. In any case, as television networks have gained economic power and developed greater “reach” throughout the latter half of this century, the “supreme authority” of the IOC has been somewhat

⁶However, the unexpectedly high American television rights agreement created a healthy financial picture for OCO’88 which pressured them to improve the production quality of the spectacle. Thus the legal agreement with CTV-Host was renegotiated to pay the \$53 million costs incurred.

diminished.⁷

The IOC has refused to consider requiring broadcast content regulations that would reflect these official Olympic Aims because of the fear of being accused of censorship especially by the American network paymasters who stand behind their “First Amendment” constitutional rights to free speech. Yet in Canadian law, censorship occurs when material prepared for broadcast or print distribution is prohibited from being released. Therefore, applying content regulations or a set of codes to guide the production of Olympic programming would not classify as censorship. Nevertheless, prominent lawyers in the IOC, such as Vice president Richard Pound the IOC member to Canada and Chair of the IOC’s “Commission for New Sources of Finance”, continue to support rejections of requests for content codes and journalist/broadcast codes of behaviour and “anti-censorship” sentiment has remained strong in the Olympic broadcast philosophy. This issue was difficult to raise in interviews with Olympic and network officials because they categorize the lobbies for change and questions as something of an insult. Yet, the level of opposition to proposed broadcast codes for Olympic telecasts is clearly evident in threats by US networks to pull their funding of the Games if such codes are implemented. The U.S. networks fear that regulatory codes would hamper their ability to mould the Olympic television spectacle into the kind of entertainment and commercial vehicle necessary to extract maximum advertising revenues in the U.S. market. The legal basis of free versus

⁷ At the first Olympic Paris Congress held in 1894 the IOC claimed it was the “supreme authority” on the Olympic movement. The IOC has a number of obligations and roles including: “to encourage the organization and development of sport and sports competitions; to inspire and lead sport within the Olympic ideal, thereby promoting and strengthening friendships between ‘sportsmen’ of all countries; to fight against all kinds of discrimination within the Olympic movement; to ensure the regular celebration of the Olympic Games; to make the Olympic Games ever more worthy of their glorious history and of the high ideals which inspired their revival by Baron Pierre de Coubertin and his associates” (COA 1992).

fair or regulated speech is a separate issue from unbridled commercial license, but these issues became intermeshed in the 1980s as the IOC adopted a commercial structure and became increasingly dependent on American television networks to grow financially. As a result, the unstated codes of commercial sports entertainment have enjoyed unquestioned free reign during recent years of Olympic broadcasting, as arguments for freedom of commercial speech have created a monopoly situation for advertisers, rights holders, and corporate sponsors.

Content expectations of broadcasting the Olympics remain linked to “standards” defined in terms of technological sophistication and “high production values”. Host Broadcaster at the Calgary Games, CTV-HB was expected by the IOC and OCO’88 to provide technologically- sophisticated feed and to capture every moment of competitive sporting action within their “clean feed”. The unofficial working motto of production for the CTV-HB crew was to broadcast *“from world to world, start to finish”* (Mellanby: Feb. 9, 1988). In other words, CTV was simply expected to cover each moment of competitive action and provide at least one glimpse of each athlete or team entered into each respective event. The broadcast messages articulated through the spectacle of legitimation are left wholly to the discretion of the host broadcaster and official television rights holders from each nation.

However, despite the assumption of “unbiased” coverage entangled within the label “clean feed”, CTV-HB feed of the hockey “sights and natural sounds” was produced for broadcast in Canada with the stamp of a distinctive North American televisual style. While the network complied with its mandate to capture every competitive moment of each sport,

all events and all athletes were not considered equal. In other words, “better” athletes and teams (as determined by dominant North American entertainment codes and sporting codes of excellence, such as predicted medal winners or newsmaking world record possibilities) “deserve better coverage” according to the executive producer of CTV Host Broadcasting (Mellanby: Feb. 9, 1988).

At the Calgary Games, the ice hockey tournament was the primary example of the wider political-economic agenda of the CTV network: CTV Host Broadcaster claimed that they presented “sanitized clean feed” by producing visual feed and “natural” game sounds for all world broadcasters, including their corporate sibling CTV-Domestic, without adding verbal commentary. But the feed was not crystal clear; rather, it presented a distinctive set of North American styles and conventions for capturing sport with broadcast tools. In hockey, the Host crew built on well established North American traditions for covering rink sports. For example, the Olympic Saddledome Hockey arena was outfitted with comparatively more cameras than other Olympic venues in order to cater to the Canadian love of hockey and as a response to ABC’s technical demands on CTV-HB to create the broadcasting conditions they required to try to “paint” the Host feed with the memories of the 1980 American gold medal hockey performance. ABC consciously set out to construct the narrative, look and feel of the “miracle on ice”. If Team USA was to beat the Russian team and win the gold medal in 1988, reliving the 1980 Lake Placid Olympics victory, CTV-HB was expected to be prepared to tell the story from every angle, including the tradition of six North American National Hockey League (NHL) camera angles.

This last point may require clarification. In the past, televised NHL hockey games

and international tournaments in Canada have typically been televised from six camera positions. In Calgary, the CTV-HB camera crew camped in up to twelve possible camera locations and the CTV-DB crew added three extra camera positions. This allowed CTV Host Broadcaster to provide the raw materials that would allow the national broadcasters to “colour” the games by adding “extra” Canadian (or American) content such as close-up shots of the goalie’s face responding to the referee’s call, or a behind-the-net glance at a goal during a replay series. The differences in the way various athletes and sports are covered through the CTV-HOST camera positions suggests that the “clean feed” did not represent equal treatment “from world to world” (nation to nation), and that it did confer differing degrees of importance upon a few athletes and marquee sports from “start to finish”. CTV-Host crews ardently asserted that they provided only “unbiased” coverage of all Olympic sights and sounds to the 390 World Broadcasters⁸ present; yet, the extra camera close-ups and expensive super slow-motion re-visions made pertinent cultural statements about North American and Canadian sporting values by repeating particular elements of performance on the ice, for all the world to experience a celebratory double-take.

While Olympic media agreements have tended to stress the monetary exchange for a guaranteed world-wide audience, these agreements have not firmly stipulated (a) how individual networks, such as CTV-DOMESTIC, choose events for prime time spots (b) how networks pick the angles of camera presentation for typical sporting manoeuvres, or (c) how sports are verbally “personalized” by commentators in a manner that would take into

⁸“World Broadcaster” is the IOC’s word for any domestic media rights holder of exclusive coverage to a particular nation.

consideration the values of the Olympic movement. To sell a televisual package of the Games to the Canadian audience, the CTV media merchants were well aware of the need to tailor the product to the national market by adding dashes of flag waving, by closely following popular home town heroes. The degree of patriotism presented by Canadian broadcasters in past Olympiads has often been related to expected medal counts. Before the Calgary Games, when the sport visionaries within the COA announced poor medal predictions for Canada, the CTV-DOMESTIC began planning how they would package the CTV-HB "clean feed".

These plans began with the development of what the key producers called an "attitude" toward packaging their product. An attitude emerged in this Olympiad which intended to display less cheerleading for Team Canada than their competitors at CBC had done in past Olympic broadcasts to the nation. The executive producer summed up this attitude, "*CTV-Domestic will cover the world's best, top to bottom of the event while seeing Canada compete as much as possible*" (Merzel: Dec. 1987). The latter part of this production mission loudly speaks the fundamental contradictions laced throughout production planning and media work. CTV did not want to be categorized as a cheerleader. Yet, they knew Canadian audiences often tune in precisely because they want to cheer on "their" national athletes. Capturing a sense of cultural ownership of athletic glory can be profitable. With its long history of international success, Canadian hockey was an able candidate to serve as a buffer zone between these competing interests. This unofficial 'National Game' for Canada promised enough of a threshold of excellence in sporting competition to justify a degree of broadcast 'cheerleading' that could be muted in coverage of other Olympic events. Moreover, the vast number of hockey games scheduled throughout the 1988 Olympiad assured CTV of quality Canadian content on a regular basis throughout

the two and a half week festival. When other events on the Olympic schedule (e.g. biathlon, cross-country skiing) received predicted "boring" ratings by CTV producers trying to cater to Canadian tastes, the CTV-DB master control crew would often cut over to the SaddleDome venue to catch a hockey game or the figure skating programme with very little warning being sent to the venue crews on duty.

At the time of the original television rights negotiations during the 1984 Winter Olympic Games, only the American market was presented by OCO'88 with an opportunity for competitive bidding. CTV had eliminated a Canadian bidding war for the domestic rights to Canada when it won the Host rights a year earlier. The rest of the world was represented by single dominant networks or organizations and the lack of broadcast competitors -- EBU for Europe, OIRT for Eastern Europe, NHK for Japan, and only one organization in Australia -- meant that international rights would not be an important revenue generator. This unbalanced scenario and the resulting competitive nature of the negotiations between the big three U.S. networks for American rights (ABC, CBS, NBC) affected the work site and economic relationships of all broadcasters producing broadcast spectacles at the 1988 Olympics due to ABC demands.

(III) CTV-ABC NETWORK RELATIONS

The spectacle of economic accumulation is not separate from the televisual spectacle of legitimation; CTV-DB worked hard to design a televisual package of favourite Canadian winter sports and to legitimate certain storylines in order to draw a discerning national

audience that could be sold to sponsors. Exclusive media rights offered the CTV Network an unparalleled promotional opportunity to attract national sponsors, increase ratings and viewer prestige. In exchange for the media's economic patronage of the Olympics, some national networks at the 1988 Winter Olympics demanded major favours from the IOC to guarantee profitable ratings.

Ice hockey was pulled into the midst of one such demand for special treatment. For example, after paying a record \$309 million^(US) for the broadcast rights to the American audience, ABC Network from the United States had successfully lobbied the IOC and OCO '88 to extend the length of the Games from two to three weekends.⁹ Because of the extremely lopsided balance of television rights payments, ABC was awarded exclusive radio rights to the Olympic games for one dollar to help the network partially recoup its investment into television rights (OWGOR, 1988:347). ABC powerfully flexed its corporate muscle during negotiations to re-organize the spectacle of consumption directly into the American "sweeps weeks". The quest for top ratings during this week have traditionally been sought after by the networks because the winner of sweeps week has usually been rewarded with setting the highest advertising rates in the following season. The final report of OCO'88 to the IOC acknowledged that all event schedules were developed:

with the major prime-time U.S.A. television audience in mind. Events were scheduled to occur on certain days -- consideration was give to February 15 - a national holiday in the United States [Heritage or Presidents' Day]. Major events were also spread out over the entire sixteen days of the Games

⁹There is some controversy and confusion about when the decision to extend the length of the Winter Olympics occurred. OCO claims the extension was included in the bids presentation package to all the networks before the 1984 competition for rights after receiving advice from the TWI media consultants to do so (OWGOR 1988 , Frank King 1991).

in order to maintain the interest of television viewers (OWGOR, 1988: 423).

Table 3.2 reveals the important role played by ice hockey in filling the extended prime time slots in the broadcast schedule. The extension of the Olympic schedule also enabled the American broadcast rights holders to successfully position Team USA games into prime time slots for that nation, and to expand the medal round tiers from four to six teams. This increased the total broadcasting schedule for the media and playing schedule for the players from the regular thirty-six game tournament to forty-two in Calgary. The International Ice Hockey Federation (IIHF) struggled to restrict this expansion of the tournament because in catering to North American broadcast revenue potential, players from Western Europe and the teams for whom they work, would lose regular season revenues from their leagues. OCO'88 shifted the decision to the IOC who supported the notion of the expanded tournament and Olympic festival. To convince the IIHF to permit players to be released for the length of the games the IOC allowed OCO'88 to determine which of the three hockey venues would be most appropriate to schedule games to showcase European teams, for the best possible viewing times of these teams in their homelands. Because all events had to be completed by 21:00 Calgary Mountain Standard Time, numerous negotiations over scheduling resulted in games starting at awkward times (10:00 a.m.) for players and/or inconvenient times for some viewing audiences abroad. The IOC was also left with the task of negotiating financial dispersement to the European leagues and the revenue sharing plan with sporting federations.

Table 3.2 Calgary 1988 Winter Olympic Games Schedule

FEBRUARY

EVENT	VENUE	13 SAT DAY 1	14 SUN DAY 2	15 MON DAY 3	16 TUES DAY 4	17 WED DAY 5	18 THURS DAY 6	19 FRI DAY 7	20 SAT DAY 8	21 SUN DAY 9	22 MON DAY 10	23 TUES DAY 11	24 WED DAY 12	25 THURS DAY 13	26 FRI DAY 14	27 SAT DAY 15	28 SUN DAY 16
A	1								TWO MAN	TWO MAN						FOUR MAN	FOUR MAN
									10 00	10 00						10 00	10 00
B	1		MEN'S 1 & 2 RUN	MEN'S 3 & 4 RUN	LADIES 1 & 2 RUN	LADIES 3 & 4 RUN		DOUBLES 1 & 2 RUN									
			10 00	10 00	10 00	10 00		10 00									
C	1		70 m			90 m TEAM			90 m								
			13 30			13 30			13 30								
D	1 2											70 m TEAM	3 x 10 km TEAM			70 m	15 km
												13 30 C.O.P.	10 00 C.N.C.			13 30 C.O.P.	10 00 C.N.C.
E	3 4 7		PAIRS SHORT PROG 18 45 S.C.		PAIRS FREE SKATE 18 15 O.S.	MEN'S COMP 08 00 F.O.B.	MEN'S SHORT PROG 18 30 S.C.		MEN'S FREE SKATE 17 15 O.S.	DANCE COMP 08 00 S.C.	DANCE DSP 18 15 O.S.	DANCE FREE SKATE 17 30 O.S.	LADIES COMP 08 00 F.O.B.	LADIES SHORT PROG 18 30 O.S.		LADIES FREE SKATE 17 45 O.S.	EXHIBITION 18 00 O.S.
F	3 4 7	18 30 14 30	10 30 14 30 18 30	14 15 18 15	10 00 14 00	14 15 18 15	14 15 18 15	14 15 18 15	13 00	13 30 18 15	10 00 14 00		20 30 14 30 18 30	13 30	20 30 14 30 18 30	13 00	20 00 14 00
		18 30		18 00	18 15	14 00	14 00	14 00	14 15 18 15	17 00							
											18 30	14 15 18 15					
G	5		MEN'S DOWNHILL	MEN'S COMB DOWNHILL	MEN'S COMB SLALOM		LADIES DOWNHILL	LADIES COMB DOWNHILL	LADIES COMB SLALOM	MEN'S S.G.	LADIES S.G.		LADIES G.S.	MEN'S G.S.	LADIES SLALOM	MEN'S SLALOM	
			11 30	11 30	10 30		11 30	12 00	10 30	12 30	11 30		10 30	10 30	10 30	10 30	
H	8		MEN'S 500 m			MEN'S 5 000 m	MEN'S 1 000 m		MEN'S 1 500 m	MEN'S 10 000 m	LADIES 500 m	LADIES 3 000 m			LADIES 1 000 m	LADIES 1 500 m	LADIES 5 000 m
			17 00			11 00	18 00		17 00	12 00	18 00	18 00			18 00	17 00	15 00
J	2		LADIES 10 km	MEN'S 30 km		LADIES 5 km	MEN'S 15 km		LADIES 4 x 5 km	MEN'S 4 x 10 km					LADIES 20 km		MEN'S 50 km
			10 00	10 00		10 00	10 00		10 00	10 00					10 00		28 30
K	2								MEN'S 20 km			MEN'S 10 km				4 x 7.5 km RELAY	
									11 00			11 00				11 00	
L	1 5									AERIALS	MOGULS						
										13 30 C.O.P.	13 30 NAT						
M	8									MEN'S 1 500 m	LADIES 1 500 m	MEN'S 1 000 m	MEN'S 3 000 m				
										LADIES 500 m	MEN'S 500 m	LADIES 3 000 m PR	MEN'S 1 000 m RH				
										18 00	10 00	18 00	18 00				
N	8		ROUND ROBIN	ROUND ROBIN	ROUND ROBIN	ROUND ROBIN		SEMI-FINALS	FINALS								
			15 00	08 30	08 30	08 30		18 00	13 00								
O	1 2						CROSS COUNTRY 5 km										
							11 30 C.N.C.										
										GIANT SLALOM							
										12 30 C.O.P.							
P	9	13 00															
Q	9																9 30

EVENTS:

- | | | |
|-------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| A Bobsleigh | G Alpine | M Short Track |
| B Luge | H Speed Skating | N Curling |
| C Ski Jumping | J Cross-Country | O Disabled Skiing |
| D Nordic Combined | K Biathlon | P Opening Ceremonies |
| E Figure Skating | L Freestyle | Q Closing Ceremonies |
| F Hockey | | |

In sport, there are no guaranteed victories. ABC strenuously worked to improve Team USA's chances for qualifying for the final round, which was necessary to keep the American viewers tuned in to an ABC channel to boost ratings during sweep weeks. For example, OCO'88 redesigned the tournament to include six teams, rather than four in the medal rounds (Wallace, Feb. 29, 1988:22). If ABC could increase the chance of Team USA making the medal round, which would increase their chances of holding the prime time audience, then they would be tougher bidding competitors for the media rights. However, despite the network's efforts to ensure their market placement, they could not enhance the U.S. team's actual performance on the ice, only their description of it. Team USA did not qualify for the final round, winning two games and losing three games in the opening rounds. ABC had to be successful in getting all five of these first round matches for Team USA in primetime (Wallace, Feb. 29, 1988:23). Furthermore, ABC wanted to guarantee that the first game played by Team USA would be victorious to start the Olympic broadcasting week off with a celebration; Team USA had originally been slated to play the 'Czechs' but, according to one CTV camera operator, ABC was able to convince the organizers to reschedule the tournament to have the USA face off against the weaker Austrian team in their pool (Murphy, Feb. 29, 1988:33). ABC executives knew that after the U.S. team failed to make the finals of the 1984 Sarajevo Winter Games, American audience changed channels, and they were determined that history would not repeat itself in 1988. Still, ABC's organizational efforts were to little avail. The very source of sport's uniqueness as an entertainment property for television, that is, its ability to create a live drama without a predictable ending, is the very element the media cannot legally control.

The wide range of advertising revenue losses estimated by ABC (which they

released to the press), indicated they would lose between \$30 million(US) and \$65 million(US) because of paybacks owed to sponsors who did not receive the promised ratings (Swanson 1988, Broadcasting May 30, 1989). In addition, inestimable millions of dollars in future advertising were claimed to be the predicted losses resulting from the lack of expected ratings. Yet immediately after the games, both ABC and some advertisers expressed their pleasure with the 19.3/30 prime time share in 1988 which was a higher rating than the 1984 Olympic share of 18.4/30 (Broadcasting March 21, 1988). During some 1988 prime time slots, ABC more than doubled its normal share and beat the extremely popular "Cosby Show". For the first time in four years, ABC won sweeps week. Claims of financial loss were part of negotiating tactics on the part of ABC for future Olympic Games. Frank King, the Chairman of the 1988 Winter Games organizing committee (OCO'88), believed that ABC's deficit claims were "more than made up by affiliate revenues and future returns on network ratings" (1991:140). Moreover, the nation's undivided attention on Olympic broadcasting also gave ABC, the exclusive rights holders, an unmatched vehicle to promote the release of new midseason shows on the network.

The record setting rights agreement between OCO'88 and ABC was employed as a power resource throughout the games. While CTV-Host posted a "world to world" mandate, the Managing Director of Host continually reminded OCO that they had to service the \$309 million ABC contract (Switzer, Feb 1988), and the Chair of OCO later admitted that they "bent over backwards to make up for the fact that ABC paid too much" (King, 1991:140). As the Olympic media gatekeeper for the world, CTV Host was pressured to create a visual spectacle, based on the working slogan of "going for the goosebumps" up the spines of

American viewers, according to one senior producer at CTV Host Broadcaster.

CTV-Domestic broadcaster did not initially challenge the power being exerted by the American Broadcasting Company. Existing within the same range of time zones as American media, CTV believed, that it too, would reap the economic benefits of an expanded spectacle of media accumulation, since they would be awarded with an expanded Olympic festival, which opens a greater number of spaces for commercial slots, more prime time and more weekend hockey. CTV did not initially view ABC as competitors, because Olympic audiences have historically tuned into their own national coverage during this unique sporting festival. Rather, they believed ABC to be friendly colleagues who had helped to put the Canadian unofficial national game into a primetime marquee position. CTV-HB was able to renegotiate its non-profit fee of \$24.5 million to \$44 million, to (a) produce the multi-lateral host feed for the world because of the addition expenses of the Olympiad schedule expansion, to (b) enhance technical quality, and (c) to build a broadcast facility for ABC. CTV was reimbursed for production costs on the Host side through its agreement with OCO'88, while CTV Domestic Broadcaster was given an extra half week of spectacle and thus bonus advertising slots for the same \$4.5 million pricetag. However, CTV did not anticipate that in the era of remote control viewing at home, Canadians 'en mass' would begin what broadcasters now call "comparison shopping" or "channel surfing"; when CTV wasn't broadcasting the hockey games to the satisfaction of regular NHL fans, this segment of the audience would flip between TVA's French broadcast and ABC's "tele-version" of hockey.

Furthermore, CTV underestimated the continued power of the "ABC paymasters" over the IOC and OCO'88 *during* the games. Team Canada was not scheduled to play as many

primetime games as CTV assumed they would be awarded, and Team Canada games were denied extra primetime spots during the medal rounds when the American team failed to qualify. When CTV failed to win favourable broadcasting primetime spots for the Canadian team, to play in front of the home audience, the Vice-President of CTV-Sports publicly criticized ABC's continued strangle-hold over OCO-88's scheduling decisions:

We [CTV] were treated unfairly because we weren't treated equally. ABC had primetime every night -- I thought we should have got a break as host country in the medal round (Eshaw: Feb. 24, 1988).

We, as host broadcaster had one preliminary round game at primetime, and one medal round game. I feel Canadians shouldn't be forced to watch a 10:30 game of our team. It's a disgrace to Team Canada, our fans, our viewers (Eshaw:Feb. 24, 1988).

Ironically, this same Canadian media power broker, had counselled ABC during the 1980 Lake Placid Olympics, to offer a substantial amount of money to the International Ice Hockey Federation (IIHF) in exchange for their agreement to alter the Olympic schedule to pit Team USA against the Russian team during American primetime (Dunell: Feb. 24, 1988).¹⁰ Money was able to buy a staged version of the political "Cold War" between the western and eastern blocks in 1980: by 1988 a media cold war between networks emerged from the unequal mists of power.

¹⁰In 1988, the IIHF bitterly criticized the power of ABC over the Olympic organizers in forcing a lengthening of the Olympic schedule for their own gain. The IIHF demanded \$2.1 million to compensate the various professional teams across Europe who would be losing key players for an extended period during the Olympics.

Few involved in staging the Olympic broadcast spectacle had thought carefully about what the consequences of the made-for-television scheduling would have for athletes and venue crews. For instance, having the two North American winter glamour sports under the same roof meant that scheduling ice hockey and figure skating events was a nightmare for OCO'88. All competitors complained about not receiving adequate practice time on the competition ice surface. Many athletes and teams were forced to practice on substandard ice rinks around the city. Primetime also had to be shared. Because the two big marquee events of the 1988 Games were held in the same venue, crews also struggled for adequate time to set up and complete their tasks. What little time existed between the events was often reserved for transforming the facilities and the ice to meet the requirements of the next event. Neither broadcast crews nor athletic contenders ironically received adequate practice time or rest.

The network liaison for OCO, Dean Walker, claimed that the 1988 Winter Games represented the first time in Olympic history, that major compromises had been made by the Olympic movement to cater to the economic imperatives of the television industry (Walker: Feb. 11, 1988). And indeed, the need for a liaison between OCO'88 and the wide array of world broadcasters, including CTV and ABC, can be seen as a poignant illustration of how the current Olympic Movement has been constantly wracked with a host of contradictory tensions. It is important to note here that OCO'88's media liaison was assigned to deal with the financial rifts and logistical requests around televisual labour and technology, *but not content concerns*. The IOC has been steadily losing power to the media networks, who in turn are losing sight of the Olympic vision, while the IOC and OCO'88 were also celebrating the fact that the Calgary Games were a "marketing triumph" for the entire

Olympic “family” (Walker: Feb. 11, 1988); Olympic kin have been bred through commercial relationships. Clearly, the media industry’s cliché that, “TV is the tail that wags the sports dog” rang true for the Olympic movement in 1988. After proclaiming itself to be the “supreme authority” on the Olympics the IOC’s quadrennial lease of the television rights indicated how they sublet their authority over the way the spectacle was to be organized and telecast.

During my interviews most media administrators verbally denied the power of ABC over the broadcast spectacle. Only those intervening to negotiate media relations, such as the OCO network liaison or the CTV-Host Broadcaster managing director would admit that ABC was the catering focus of CTV Host OCO’88 and therefore “had to be kept happy”. However, resentments over ABC’s power was clearly evident on the production site. There was constant friction when ABC and CTV crews were in close contact. Jealous snubs, pausing mid conversation when crew members walked by, snarling glances, and the tension felt during CTV’s press conferences indicated that the CTV-DB crew experienced frustration and a lack of “corporate esteem” while working within a broadcast structure of disempowerment in comparison to the ABC crew’s structure of entitlement.

It was not until after the Olympics were over and the American based television rights revenues were clearly demonstrated to be the key reason for the financial success of the 1988 Games that OCO’88 organizers would admit their indebtedness to ABC. Moreover, *The Winter Olympic Games Official Report* (OWGOR, 1988) clearly outlined the deep concern the organizers shouldered while catering to ABC. OCO’88 was terrified by their financial accountability for ABC’s \$309 million contract, should OCO’88 do something

that would lead ABC to not honour their contract. The record-setting bids negotiation with ABC was greeted simultaneously with an aura of celebration and trepidation: television rights agreements for the 1988 Games represented both the potential for the richest games in history and the greatest financial risk that an Olympic organizing committee had ever had to manage.

OCO's fear of financial "impairment" originated in the special cancellation and revenue reduction provisions in their contract with ABC. ABC negotiated the right to cancel (a) if the Games were cancelled or delayed until after March 1, 1988 sweeps season, (b) if the Games were moved outside the Calgary area, (c) if there were structural failures in any facility, (d) if a major boycott of nations occurred, (e) or if Team USA did not attend the Olympic Games for any reason. ABC could also reduce instalment payments to OCO if CTV-Host Broadcaster, a key arm of OCO, failed to provide the broadcast signal or facilities, if a few countries boycotted, or if there was a "force majeure". To reduce the potential for economic disaster, OCO carefully planned a comprehensive risk management program, including a \$100 million^(US) income replacement insurance contract on ABC revenues. The original host city agreement between the IOC, the Canadian Olympic Association, the city of Calgary and OCO'88 relegated moral but not financial liability for the Games to other parties; OCO'88 was legally liable for its financial contracts. ABC eventually paid all instalments of the \$309 million in full by the last day of the 1988 Winter Olympics (OWGOR, 1988: 87).

On a broader plane, there are other elements in the political economic structures of the broadcast industry and in the Canadian high performance sports system that have

contributed to CTV's powerful ability to turn Olympic hockey into a spectacle of consumption. OCO'88 signed more than 1700 legal documents to stage and protect the interests of parties involved in the production and funding of the Olympic spectacle. That included governments and sports governing bodies in addition to broadcasting agencies, sponsors and rights holders. It is to these other parties to Olympic spectacle that I now want to turn.

(IV) THE ENABLING CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE GOVERNMENT TO THE FINANCIAL SUCCESS OF THE OLYMPIC SPECTACLE

In its final report to the International Olympic Association, OCO'88 claimed that the relationships between the various levels of Canadian government, the private enterprise base of OCO'88, and additional private sector involvement formed the "cornerstone of the financial success" of the 1988 Winter Games (OWGOR, 1988: 81). Borrowing a number of ideas from Leo Panitch (1977), it can be argued that the Canadian State assisted the production of the televisual spectacle for the Calgary Olympics in at least three major ways: by fostering capital accumulation, by legitimating the consumer-capitalist mode of production, and controlling the coercive mechanisms of law and order utilized during the event.

Through the legal structure and government licensing of the broadcast industry in Canada, the State has created the basic conditions for private enterprises such as CTV to broadcast nationally across public airways. This enabling role, granted by the state, allowed CTV to make a profit from the sale of advertising time. CTV's production of

Olympic hockey was carried out within capitalist market pressures and requirements of state regulation. In 1988, the CTV Network was the only private *national* television network, with stations spanning from CHEK in Victoria B.C. to NTV in St. Johns Newfoundland. In addition to broadcasting from sixteen affiliate stations and six supplementary stations, CTV distributed various programs for airing in the United States, the United Kingdom, Japan, Finland, France, Germany, Russia, New Zealand, Australia and Latin America, thereby extending the consumption of its nationally broadcast packages to global markets.

Within Canada, the shared monopoly position awarded to CTV and CBC (the private and public broadcasters respectively) has historically enabled them to obtain national advertising contracts from national and multi-national corporations, and to obtain exclusive rights to events such as the Olympics, which regional media networks and local stations cannot afford. These *enabling capacities*, secured by their state broadcasting licence, have permitted CTV to garner handsome profits from the sale of advertising time. Yet, the contradictory situation of having the state support a media/advertising monopoly environment in an “open” and “free-enterprise” consumer marketplace, has served to actually stifle media competition by suppressing the emergence of other national networks, thereby permitting the accumulation of significant profits by advantaged media corporations.¹¹ Moreover, in the decade leading up to the 1988 Games, the CTV network was able to win Olympic broadcasting privileges away from CBC who had traditionally

¹¹For almost a decade, for example, the Global Television Network in Canada has been seeking a national licence from the CRTC to create a second private national network; thus far, their bids have been unsuccessful. The decisions by the CRTC to deny Global this licence, has helped to consolidate CTV's monopolistic position as the only private national broadcaster.

broadcast all previous Olympiads. This development occurred partially because the broadcasting climate in Canada was shifting toward privatization and because of the trend to deregulate government agencies. The CTV private sector makeup coalesced smoothly with the entrepreneurial spirit of the OCO'88 organization.

Sport bridges the crevice between Canadian viewers preferring to watch American television programming and the network's requirements to fill mandated Canadian Content quotas. In exchange for the privileged position as a nationally licensed network, CTV's programming had to consist of 60% Canadian content overall, and 50% Canadian content during prime time -- a condition they viewed as a disabling contingency in all network programme areas except sport and news. The year before the Games, the average Canadian viewed 23.7 hours of television a week, which decreased in 1988 to 23.5 hours and further to 23.4 in 1989 (Stats Canada: BBM measurements). The network was well aware of the majority proportion of these average viewing times being spent consuming American content.

Sport programming has usually served to fill part of CTV's licensing stipulation. As host and national Olympic broadcaster, CTV's coverage was considered to be "100 percent C.C." (Canadian Content) since the crews, the locations and the substance of the programme had Canadian ties. Live, pre-taped and syndicated sporting events have been one of the cheapest forms of programming to produce for the networks, and these events attract home audiences, who often prefer to consume American programming in the other categories of

entertainment programming such as sitcoms, drama and game shows.¹² CTV executives and senior sport producers begrudged the “motherhood mandate”, that was stipulated in their broadcast license as part of their promise of offering Canadian content and to foster the development of amateur sport (Eshaw, Feb. 11, 1988). Yet, this mandate has rarely resulted in economic loss; instead, through the 1980’s CTV discovered that by fostering the development of certain glamour sports, such as amateur figure skating and international hockey, it was able to cultivate new audiences during a decade of audience fragmentation due to cable television and an overall increase in Canadian television consortia.

In the period immediately before the 1988 Games, CTV was a very profitable national broadcaster. To renew their licence in 1986-87 hearings just before this Olympiad, CTV gave the Canadian Radio-Television Telecommunication Commission (CRTC) a “promise of performance”, to increase their spending over five years to \$403 million, to meet the CRTC’s demand they “contribute substantially more to the broadcasting system” (Raboy, 1990:313). The CRTC was, and continues to be, the regulatory body for Broadcasting in Canada and is an “arms-length” public agency for the federal government. The CRTC has shifted its mandate from a regulatory to a supervisory role in the 1980s according to Raboy (1990:338). Despite this fundamental transformation in broadcasting regulation, the CRTC has continued to maintain the CTV network in a monopoly position within the commercial sector of national broadcasting. The CRTC has, therefore, bolstered

¹²As the average total number of hours of television viewed each week by Canadians increased throughout the period spanning 1977 to 1988, there has been a steady decrease in the number of hours of Canadian content viewed by anglo-Canadian audiences. In 1984, english language viewers spent 30% of their viewing time consuming Canadian content; by 1987, this average dropped to 26%. The consumption of Canadian produced sports programming decreased in this period. The viewing of foreign produced programming increased in all categories except drama. (Source: Statistics Canada, Catalogue 87-208, 1988:8).

CTV's ability to win the monopolizing rights to sport championship spectacles and other media properties. Overall, the Vice-President of CTV Sports claimed that the chance to broadcast the Olympics provided the network with an opportunity that succeeded in helping "CTV climb a few notches in the minds of Canadians (Eshaw, Feb. 11, 1988).

There are other vitally important ways the Canadian State has contributed to sport broadcasting as a spectacle of accumulation. In 1988, CTV benefited directly and indirectly from the contributions to high performance sport made by the many levels of government. Local, provincial and federal strata of the Canadian government, for example, provided the grants necessary for funding the construction of Olympic facilities. Public monies given to OCO'88 provided the necessary amenities for the live sporting event, which in turn is the raw sporting material needed by the television crews to produce their entertainment product. Table 3.3 presents the funding sources and amounts for the 1988 Olympic venues. Under the *Canada-OCO'88 Umbrella Agreement*, the federal government committed itself to provide \$200 million in direct funding from revenue-generating schemes, such as the sale of Olympic coins and stamps, as well as partially funding the Saddledome.¹³ Specific to the sports broadcasting corporations, public monies also constructed the state-of-the-art broadcast facilities within the Olympic venues. Olympic hockey games, for example, were played in the world's first made-for-television hockey arena at the Calgary Winter Olympics.

¹³Federal contributions were not charitable contributions to the overall Olympic spectacle because in return Federal Members of Parliament were given a pool of 8500 tickets to Olympic events by OCO (Calgary Herald, Feb. 13, 1988) for buying their place in the Olympic Family.

Initial efforts to fund the Saddledome hockey arena involved a collaboration between the NHL's Calgary Flame franchise and the Calgary Olympic Development Association (CODA). After CODA won the right to bid for the 1988 Games (the Canadian Olympic Association chose Calgary over the City of Vancouver in 1979) the Federal government of Canada promised \$200 million to help with development and operating costs of the Games should Calgary successfully acquire the Games. This government support enabled CODA to successfully bid for the Games with a proposal that focused on the building of "leading-edge" international sports venues. At the XI Olympic Congress in Baden-Baden (FRG), Calgary beat Falun Sweden and Cortina d'Ampesso Italy in the competition to become Host Olympic site in 1988. The \$200 million government promise represented one half of the CODA operating budget for the entire Olympic spectacle at that point in 1981 (OWGOR, 1988:51). This commitment to amateur sport ironically benefited professional hockey long before the Games of the XV Winter Olympics began. When the Saddledome officially opened in the autumn of 1983 it was not only celebrated as the first Olympic venue to be opened prior to the 1988 games, the arena was billboarded as the "home of the Calgary Flames National Hockey League Franchise". Later, it also became the home of the Canadian Olympic team and the International Centre for Hockey Excellence.

TABLE 3.3 CONSTRUCTION AND RENOVATION COSTS FOR SELECT VENUES OF THE 1988 WINTER OLYMPIC GAMES

<u>VENUE</u>	<u>COST</u>	<u>SOURCES OF FUNDING</u>
Saddledome	97,700,000	OCO'88, Government of Canada, Province of Alberta, City of Calgary
Father David Bauer Arena	2,900,000	OCO'88, Government of Canada, City of Calgary
MaMahon Stadium	16,300,000	OCO'88, Province of Alberta

After the Games had been awarded to Calgary, the Saddledome's \$97.3 million pricetag was paid by the City of Calgary, the Province of Alberta, the Government of Canada and the 1988 Olympic Organizing Committee. Originally the arena and land site was budgeted to cost \$83.4 million, but they suffered a cost overrun of thirteen per cent due to an inflationary economy, construction problems and accelerated completion dates for the NHL season. Funding for this hockey mecca and oversized television production site had been obtained primarily from public funds¹⁴, while private television and professional sport interests, who have been the beneficiaries of the rink, were able to guide the design and utilize the facilities for private gain.¹⁵

The Saddledome has earned the architectural distinction of being the world's largest suspended concrete roof. Being modelled after a shell, this creates a spectacle venue with unobstructed vision for all, reduces building space by 55 per cent over other hockey arenas, and reduces the cost of heating and lighting. This multipurpose coliseum has been symbolically shaped like a western saddle for a horse, a design which permitted approximately 20,000 hockey fans to watch a game within sixty-one metres of the ice.

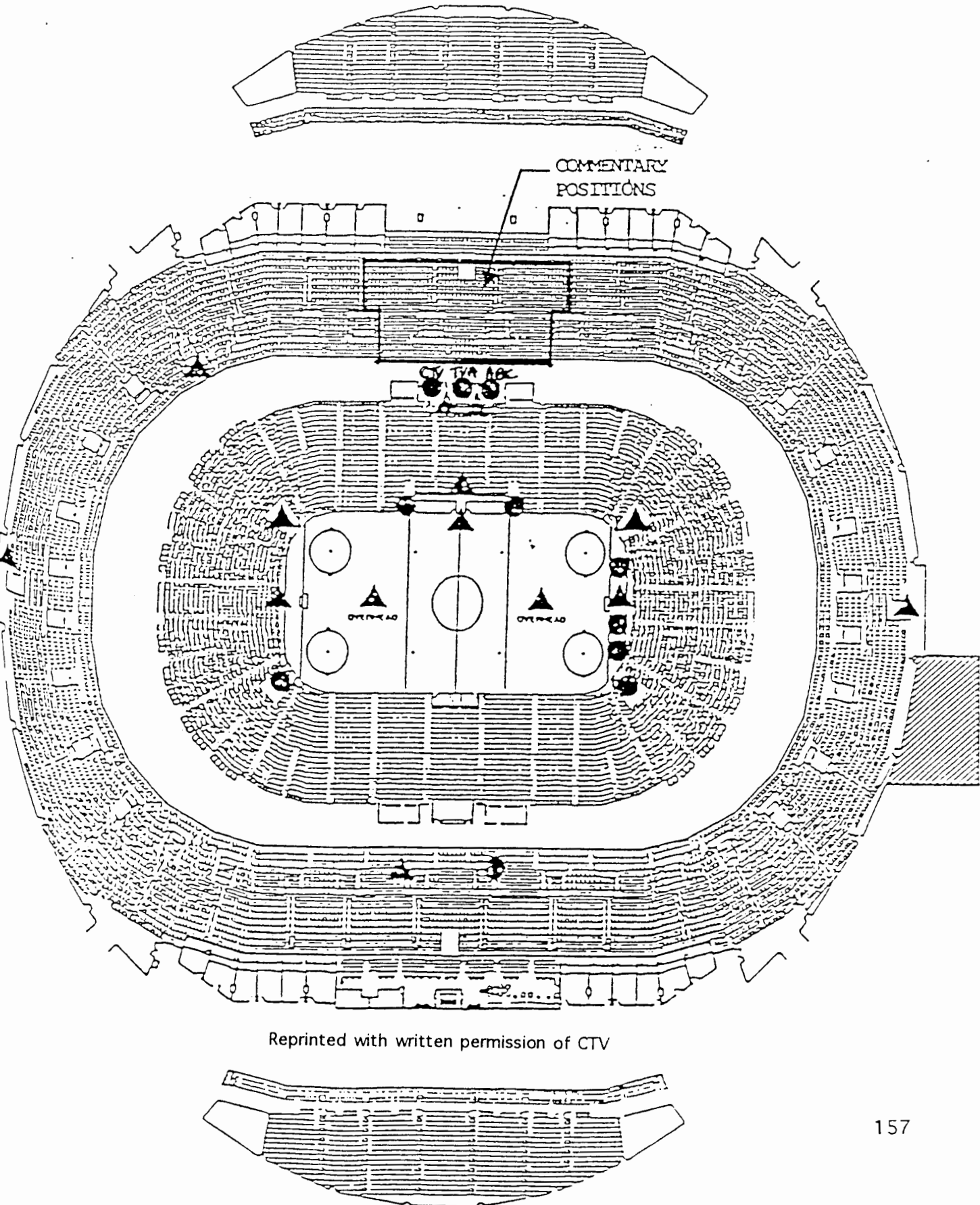
¹⁴In addition the 13% cost overrun was paid for by the Province of Alberta, the City of Calgary and the OCO; although the latter had no legal obligation to help pay for the overruns. This decision was vital to saving the upcoming 1988 Games both in terms of public trust and economically because public and media criticism forced OCO to investigate internally. The organizing committee board of directors was soon expanded to include seats for all three levels of government in Canada and community groups. As well, government representatives, the IOC, the COA, sports groups and business representatives were awarded decision making seats on the OCO executive board. (OWGOR, 1988:57).

¹⁵A year after the opening of the Saddledome, the arena had generated \$121,000 in profit which was divided between the City of Calgary, Hockey Canada, and the Calgary Olympic Development Association. Before the 1988 Olympics and continuing today, the Olympic Saddledome is rented at reduced rates by the NHL's Calgary Flames franchise, and by Team Canada. The Saddledome has been designated as the Canadian International Hockey Centre for Excellence.

While these facts have served the venue well in marketing campaigns directed at the arena fan, the arena was primarily designed with the television spectator in mind.¹⁶ Prior to the Olympics, CTV-HB's executive producer and the venue producer for the Saddledome had to choose eleven camera positions that could cover both NHL standard rink play (25.9 x 60.9 metres) and the larger international spectacle on an ice surface of 30 x 60 metres, consider the lighting needs and ice-surface reflection level for televisual enhancement, and carefully test the acoustics in order to construct an arena designed to meet the needs of television spectacle first. Three hundred and ninety commentating positions were chosen in key spectating positions behind the traditional location for the press box (see Illustration 3.1) to provide the world broadcasters, owning exclusive rights to their respective nation's airways, to be exclusively seated in the arena where they would add verbal and musical "colour" to the CTV-HOST feed with little regard for the optimal viewing positions for the "live" fan presiding in Calgary. The concrete arena had been transformed into a televisual edifice for an electronic spectacle to reach the far corners of the nation and of the world Olympic audience.

¹⁶In 1981 when CODA bid to host the 1988 Games, the SaddleDome was the only sporting facility built. At the same time, Calgary was trying to acquire a NHL franchise. CODA (later to incorporate as OCO'88) believed the arena added substantial credibility to Calgary's candidacy in the eyes of the IOC.

ILLUSTRATION 3.1: OLYMPIC SADDLEDOME
BROADCASTING COMMENTARY POSITIONS FOR WORLD BROADCASTERS

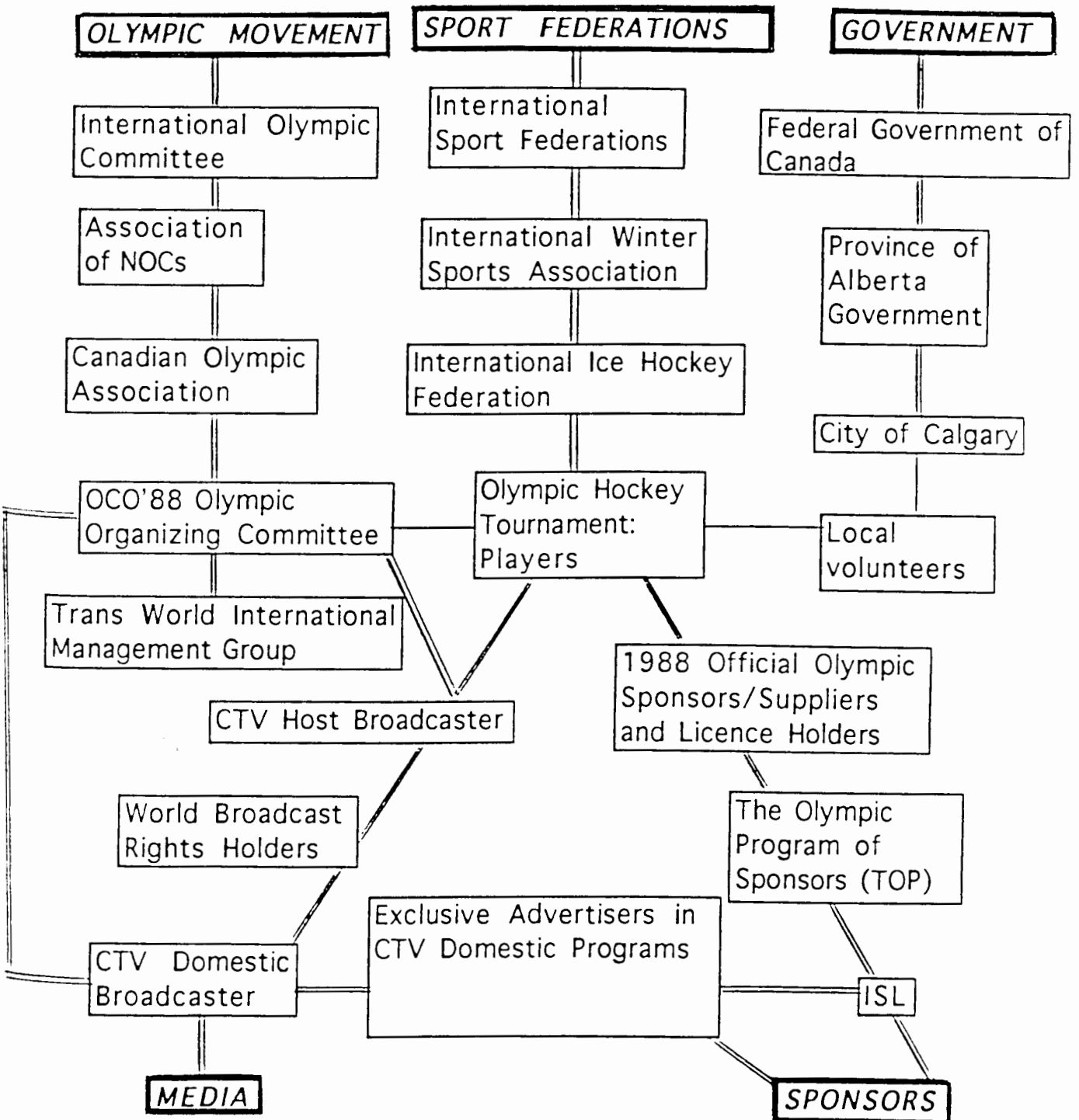


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While the ceremonial venues for the Olympic Games have traditionally been the pivotal location of the spectacle, at the 1988 Winter Olympic Games and in the preparation period leading up to the opening of the Games, the Olympic SaddleDome became the focal venue for many of the key players in the spectacle of accumulation -- the federal government, OCO'88, and the media (see Chart 3.2, 1988 Winter Olympic Key Players). This may be partially due to the fact that the SaddleDome had initially been slated by OCO'88 to be the site of the closing ceremonies. Another explanation is that key decision makers in the 1988 Olympic family had previous ties to earlier campaigns to build a new professional hockey arena for Calgary. Bill Pratt for example, the second president of OCO from May 1983 onwards, had previously been employed as the project manager for the construction of the SaddleDome and then general manager of the Calgary Exhibition and Stampede. The exhibition grounds served as host to two of the three hockey venues for the 1988 Games, as well as the location for the Broadcasting (IBC) and the Press Centres. Under Pratt's tenure according to the organizing committee's final report to the IOC (1988:55), OCO'88 continued the development of Olympic venues, successfully identified and negotiated sources of revenue including television rights, and negotiated important Olympic family "partnership agreements" with all levels of government, the IOC, and the COA. Among these partnerships was an agreement that transferred the responsibilities outlined in the Olympic Charter from the City of Calgary to OCO'88 in February of 1983, and another agreement with the Canadian Olympic Association (COA), which officially entrusted the OCO'88 with the responsibility to organize and stage the Games including television coverage (OWGOR,1988:55).

CHART 3.2:

1988 OLYMPIC SPECTACLE KEY PLAYERS



Donations of security and police forces is the second way the Canadian State assisted and protected the accumulative dimensions of the Olympic festival.¹⁷ The RCMP security for the 1988 Winter Games cost Albertan taxpayers \$3 million. A cavalry of Olympic volunteers helped to reduce the potentially high costs of security in comparison to the \$100 million cost for the 1976 Montreal Olympics, when 9000 Canadian Armed Forces troops were garrisoned in Quebec to protect the Games. By the close of the 1988 Winter Games, no major display of coercive power had been demonstrated to maintain peace and order during the games -- although street people and prostitutes were quietly "cleared" out of the central downtown Calgary areas before the Games began in order to "clean" up those locations where Olympic spectators would congregate to watch medal ceremonies, trade pins under the Coca Cola tent, and shop at stores such as *The Bay* (that had a temporary broadcast studio for CTV in the display window). These coercive actions sanitized and legitimated the image of the city as being prosperous and improved the image of the city to visiting fans and television crews shooting location clips. In addition, out of the monies provided by federal contributions, OCO'88 purchased a number of discretionary services from federal departments that the government did not have to constitutionally provide. These included the hiring of National Defense personnel to warehouse, inventory and distribute important materials, as well as providing linen for the media village, borrowing the jet team "Snowbirds" for the opening ceremonies, hiring the chief interpreter and linguistic services from Secretary of State, hiring RCMP security for the torch relay and the Musical Ride for the opening ceremonies, and meteorological personnel from the Ministry of the

¹⁷ Television technology was also utilized by OCO'88 to enhance security at the games. State-of-the-art technology such as closed-circuit surveillance cameras, high-powered remote control telephoto cameras were placed in and around major venues and critical points in the city of Calgary. Video images of security points and events could be transmitted on broadband to security command centres in and around the games.

environment and postal services.

The presence of uniformed RCMP officers in the opening ceremonies and around town, suited up in their official scarlet pageantry wear, served as visual icons legitimating state power and authority. The Government of Canada provided RCMP security; *Employment and Immigration Canada* provided services to monitor the entry of media, athletes and tourists into Canada; and *Revenue and Customs Canada* provided services to regulate the official supplier and sponsors revenue and/or movement of products in and out of the nation -- all under essential services legislative mandates. The province of Alberta assumed responsibility for the policing of the games (as opposed to the security) by the provincial police force, the RCMP, at venues and the Olympic village. The display of the RCMP may have prevented criminal activities and demonstrations, but for CTV there was an added bonus because the OCO volunteer force and official government controlled security forces literally fenced out the media competition. CTV benefited financially and symbolically by having exclusive protected access to athletes and coaches for interviews and the right to package the live competition on ice. No additional venue for press was constructed into the Olympic Saddledome because the arena was beside the Main Press Centre; geographical proximity and media rights access were not, however, one and the same thing. The written press had substantially less access to the spectacle and to the players to gather information and get interviews than did the privileged broadcasters. Exclusive media rights to the Olympics have become barricaded rights.

The final budget estimates calculated by OCO when the Olympics were staged in February of 1988 indicated that the Winter Games were indeed a spectacle of accumulation

for Canada. Over \$1.4 billion dollars were estimated to be infused into the Canadian economy as a result of the preparation and presentation of the Games, with significant economic benefits impacting positively on the Calgary area after the Olympiad. The bulk of the revenues were derived from capital projects and enhancements (\$506 million), locally area induced economic effects such as expanded business (\$424 million), operations and planning work contributed an estimated \$310 Million while Olympic visitors spent an estimated \$150 million. OCO'88 claimed that the province of Alberta profited from approximately 70% of this revenue as 27,400 person years of employment were created by Olympic needs. Organizers claimed that significant value was gained through Canada's enhanced international image, heightened local reputation, the promotion of active lifestyles, improved national unity, the promotion of the arts and local businesses and encouraged volunteerism. Excluding the post-Olympic operating funds, OCO's financial "legacy" from the Games was more than \$269 million. This revenue was divided between a number of key partners in the 1988 Olympic Family: a surplus savings of \$85 million was partially divided between Calgary Olympic Development Association as an endowment and to the Government of Canada, \$56 million was given to the Canadian Olympic Association and its fund-raising arm Olympic Trust from the marketing revenue and OCO surplus savings, and many sports organizations received donations totalling \$2 million. Outside of Canada, sports organizations receiving a share of the \$269 million Olympic "surplus" included the International Olympic Committee who accepted \$110 million from the television and marketing revenues, the US Olympic Committee received a \$7 million kickback for rights to broadcast in the USA, and all NOCs collectively received \$3 million to refund

accommodation costs of competing in Calgary (OWGOR, 1988:120).¹⁸

Finally, the state's legitimizing function was evident when the Canadian government's involvement in high-performance sport and in broadcasting was considered. Federal campaigns have promoted sport as a vehicle of national unity and as model of healthy lifestyles. Massive amounts of funding have been invested by the federal government into Sport Canada to create winning Olympians and to thereby improve the nations image abroad and within Canada. Since 1961, the various levels of government have historically invested even greater amounts of public monies when Canada has played host to international competitions.

The *Ministry of Fitness and Amateur Sport* (FAS) has been one of the Canadian state's many agencies of legitimation. In 1961, the federal government created FAS by passing the *Fitness and Amateur Sport Act*. Sport Canada, a key division within FAS has a mandate laid out in the 1961 Act, to "provide leadership, policy direction, and financial assistance to the development of Canadian sport at the national and international level" (1961: Ministry of Supply and Services).¹⁹ Both high performance sport and television

¹⁸Federal monies donated to high performance sport programmes and to special events to foster social harmony and create the conditions for capital accumulation are derived from taxes. One month before the games began taxes were suddenly shifted from being a gift to a levy on the spectacle. Prior to the Olympic Games, the Finance Minister announced a new set of taxes that applied to services, including "communication services", but not including broadcasting equipment. At the Calgary Games, IOC president J.A. Samaranch bickered with Minister Micheal Wilson over the \$2 million new tax the Canadian media would have to pay in taxes; Samaranch defended the Olympic media, reminding the government that corporations such as CTV had set their budgets long before the Olympic Games and this was an unexpected cost (Monsebraaten, Feb. 28, 1988:G4).

¹⁹It has been suggested by Kidd (CAHPER monograph) that the main thrust of this 1961 Act has been to help Canadians develop a sense of national pride in a period governed by a nationalistic government that firmly understood the value of sport to the nation. In addition, Kidd has claimed that

shows have proven to be excellent vehicles for the Canadian state to promote a sense of national culture and government concern for well-being of its citizens.

In 1986 during the Calgary Olympiad, *Sport Canada* created the *Sports Marketing Council* at a time when federal grants for sport were stagnating rather than rising as fast as the costs of running national sport programmes. Prior to 1986 the federal government shared the burden of the 75-25 funding split for national sport organizations. By 1989 the government reduced the ratio to a 52-48 ratio. The council's mandate was to "package their properties (events, teams and programs) as viable cost effective additives or alternatives to traditional advertising, sales promotion and communications media". Amateur sport, therefore, had been reconceptualized as a "property" of the federal government which could be transformed into a product of "mutual benefit" to the national sport organizations and the corporations involved. To ensure success, business "heavyweights", including CTV vice-president for Sport (John Eshaw) serving as chair, were brought on board to help recruit sponsors after the demographic and lifestyles of fans from each sport had been tracked (Grignon, 1989:53-55).

In addition to the \$200 million invested into the 1988 facilities and the \$45 million contribution for post-Olympic venue operating costs, the federal government has invested an extra \$50 million into the "Best-Ever Program" to promote the chances of Canadian national team members winning more medals than past Olympiads over and above

the government was well aware of the national embarrassment felt by Canadians after television arrived in Canada in the late 1950s, in time for us to watch our national hockey team get beaten at our own game by the Russians at the 1952 Olympics.

the regular funding budgeted for Sport Canada yearly. In an effort to improve the chances of winning an ice hockey medal, the 29 hockey team members preparing for the Games had been awarded a "C" card. In total, the Canadian Olympic Association (COA) choose 117 athletes for the official Olympic event roster. Almost all of these competitors had been prepared as high performance athletes within an FAS national programmes run by the federal government; 23 of the 117 member Canadian national Olympic team, or approximately 20%, were hockey players (COA 1984-1988 Quadrennial Report). The \$50 million figure to fund the 'Best Ever' programme represented \$20 million more funding than had be promised by the state in the earlier 1984 *Canada-OCO'88 Umbrella Agreement*.

The point is that Olympic Games have been appropriated by the federal government to boldly advertise the state's financial and ideological support for elite sport, and to remind Olympic sports audience's of the government's contribution to their "glowing hearts". The following full page print advertisement is a poignant example of this: in 1989 the Minister of State responsible for FAS wrote us:

O Canada ...

***With glowing hearts we see
thee rise ...***

We all feel a thrill of pride when Canadian athletes achieve personal best or international victories. Behind their achievements lie stories of commitment and sacrifice that set examples for all of us. Our goal, at Fitness and Amateur Sport, is to provide support for amateur athletes and to encourage the development of competitive excellence as well as increased participation.

The Government of Canada is the major financial supporter of national sport organization programs in addition to providing national policy and program development leadership.

We believe a strong and successful amateur sport community is beneficial to all of Canadian society.²⁰

(Hon. Jean J. Charest, Minister of State, Government of Canada, Fitness and Amateur Sport: a full page advertisement in *Champion* Sept. 1989).

The performance-bias of the government's pursuit of national glory around the 1988 Olympiad was fully compatible with CTV's pursuit of national ratings since better medal counts have typically translated into better audience counts in past Olympic Games.²¹ Television revenues have circulated back into sport to some degree; the profitable legacy from 1988 television rights was partially distributed back to the Canadian Olympic Association, which allocated various grants to each of the National sport governing bodies. The quadrennial grant for 1989-1992 to hockey was \$265,423 of the total \$12,000,000 legacy to be distributed to all Olympic and Pan-American sport teams (COA 1985-88 Quadrennial Report).

To consolidate the state's legitimating function through sport, Sport Canada and other arms of government have provided athletic spokespeople and politicians for CTV. The network helped to circulate the government's official images of the nations back to the people of Canada and outward to the world. An illustration of this national rivalry occurred

²⁰In Canada, the largest advertiser is the federal government.

²¹ CTV's use of political figures such as Prime Minister Brian Mulroney and FAS Minister Otto Jelinek as official voices of authority during the broadcast of 1988 Olympic ceremonies and live coverage of hockey games will be addressed later in Chapter 7.

during the opening ceremonies telecast by CTV-DOMESTIC on Feb. 13, 1988. Prime Minister Brian Mulroney, in an interview during the opening ceremonies with the national news anchor Lloyd Robertson, told the Canadian nation that he'd like the world to

see the youth of the country as representative of the kind of country that we are, and are trying to become - tolerant, impressive, dynamic nation -- that welcomes people with warmth and generosity, and I think that's the kind of country that we are This is Canada - this is a little bit of nation-building and it's very impressive (Feb 13, 1988).

OCO'88 believed the reason for the Canadian government's investment in high profile sporting events through facility contributions and programs such as "Best Ever" to be located in high performance sport's ability to act as a vehicle for enhancing international prestige and national unity. OCO'88 believed this symbolic profit to be so great for the state that OCO'88 banked on federal bailout if Olympic financial disaster had ensued: the "governments would probably have intervened in an extreme emergency ... the greatest financial risk of all was television" (OWGOR, 1988:85). The government funded arena did impress both the media, fans and teams from around the globe. However, some lamented that the government's contributions fostered best-ever performances by athletes from nations other than Canada. Jean Grenier of the Canadian Olympic Association and the Chef du Mission for the nation team in 1988 complained, "After some early disappointments, the expectations and hopes of some would be shattered. In spite of the excellent preparation with a team which was without a doubt our 'best ever', the medals were still a long time coming. ... The fantastic facilities provided by Calgary brought triumph mostly to foreign athletes" (1988:43). At the close of the Games Roger Jackson, the president of the Canadian Olympic Association noted that the 1988 Games had indeed been

the best ever Winter Games for the nation, with twenty top eight performances (Miller, Feb. 29, 1988:17). Otto Jelinek, the Minister of Fitness and Amateur Sport during the 1988 Games, gushed that the nation's sporting successes were "the greatest thing to happen to Canada since sliced bread" (Miller, Feb. 29, 1988:17).

(V) PRIVATE SECTOR PLAYERS IN THE OLYMPIC SPECTACLE OF ACCUMULATION

Political economists argue that sport has been integrated into a *universal market* over the past century as the mode of capitalist production has gradually taken over more and more realms of social-cultural life, and as private sectors markets have continually expanded in pursuit of higher profit (Gruneau 1983). Similar to other areas of the capitalist mode of production, sport has increasingly been commercialized and rationalized as the rules of games have been codified, as sports-labour on Olympic teams has become divided into specialist roles, and as organizations have become rigidly bureaucratized into federations, leagues and clubs. These changes in the power structures of sport have lead to other kinds of historical transformations in sport, such as the introduction of clock time, contemporary training procedures and player specialization and so on. All of these changes have recently culminated in the development of a particular kind of high performance sport system that is aligned with the requirements of (inter)national broadcasting. In the case of Olympic hockey, the raw material of international competition, with its dramatic plays, uncertain outcomes, national symbolism and timed intervals have easily worked into the televisual labour process. In an era of heavily mediated entertainment, these transformations have been "necessary" to produce sporting excitement and a sellable television package.

On the accumulation side of televised sport, some of the pressures facing CTV in their attempt to hold the audience ratings included: (a) the inability to guarantee sponsors (who paid \$20,000 per thirty-second commercial) an exact audience ratings level for those sports not normally regularly seen on television such as the luge event; (b) a lack of scheduling influence over OCO'88 which would allow them to promise prime time Team Canada games to the audience and prime time commercial slots to the sponsors if the Canadian team succeeded in winning a medal round berth; and (c) a prohibition on network wiring of Olympic referees (which is normally done in the NHL to signal officials when to stall breaks in play to create a broadcast slot for insertion of a commercial break. In 1988 the CTV network simply relied on the consumer index to categorically target audience segments for advertisers; Eshaw stated that men eighteen to forty nine were the biggest spenders in Canada and were targeted by breweries, while females in the same age group were not assumed to be members of the hockey audience. But as part of the larger Olympic audience especially for figure skating events, the network could attract big sponsors like Proctor and Gamble who sought this second biggest groups of spenders, female audience members (Feb. 11, 1988).

Most of the CTV-HOST and DOMESTIC crew members believed that Olympic programming was "first and foremost a financial game". This was a popular slogan of the CTV domestic technicians. However, it was only at the highest levels of media personnel that a keen sense of the economic imperative driving the Olympic programming was fully understood by media workers. During pre-Olympic broadcast set-up in early February, the CTV-Domestic hockey producer-director bemoaned the fact that:

CTV has a mandate to earn 200% profit or they don't do an event. They always pay for a Volkswagen and then expect a Cadillac -- I use to give them the Cadillac, but now if they give me money for a Volkswagen, a Volkswagen is what they get. And that's what they are going to get here at the Olympics (CTV Domestic Hockey Producer: Feb. 15, 1988).

The imposing presence of advertising slots that had to be worked into the live telecast was a frustrating constraint on the craft of production for master control at the International Broadcasting Centre and for the CTV Domestic hockey crew producer-director. During the first week of the games, the master control line producer who orchestrates the prime time show, targeted commercials for complaint in an interview:

MM: What constraints are imposed on your work here at Master Control?

TM: Commercials. Its structured a little differently here. In my regular job as a baseball producer, we put a commercial in after every half inning and its simple. Here we have to create positions for them. You can't have 5 major events because you've got to get in seven commercials. We've got to get in 31 commercials in three and a half hours at the Olympics. They have to be separated by something - you can't run ten commercial together. That's bad programming.

MM: Is that frustrating?

TM: Definitely. I never do that. I never cut out [of a game during play], but what you do is plan ahead. For example, we don't go to our first live event tonight for half an hour. We're on the air for thirty minutes tonight before we hit our first live event - so we try to get in as

many commercials as we can during that first five minutes while we are doing a recoup of what happened earlier today. Off video tape we try to get in a lot of commercials. My main restriction is to get in a Texaco ad near 10 p.m. Eastern before our news update because they sponsor the news update and we have to counter the CBC National at that time. (Mckee, Feb. 18, 1988).

In addition to the cost-saving measures by the network on the CTV Domestic Broadcaster side of broadcasting, particularly at the level of broadcast technologies and work site amenities, the key decision makers were primarily guided by the network's profit imperative. At any time during the broadcast production of the live hockey game, the CTV-DB hockey producer could immediately announce a *commercial score* of the broadcast hour, to the line-producers in CTV-DB Master Control at the International Broadcast Centre; but he could rarely tell anyone the score of the actual game when asked by a crew member or the researcher. The commercial score represents the ratio of the number of commercials inserted into the telecast at a specific point in the hockey show compared to the maximum of twelve minutes of commercials demanded by the network for each hour of broadcasting.²² Despite being a avid fan of professional hockey, the hockey producer was usually unaware of the specific hockey score, because his role in commentating CTV's economic play-by-play was foregrounded in the labour process of producing the hockeycast. Olympic television in 1988 was clearly driven by economic nexus (television-advertisers-OCO) that sought to attract known sets of demographic constituents to the advertising lineup.

²²The CRTC permits broadcasters to telecast a maximum of twelve minutes of advertising during each hour (1988 licensing stipulations).

The Olympic Movement as a whole has been gradually drawn into the universal market due to the pressures from the broadcast media, which have both saved it from bankruptcy and an early demise, as well as transforming the IOC's central quest from the celebration of athletics to a spectacle of accumulation. While television rights have steadily grown since the 1972 Munich Olympics, the IOC announced during the planning of the 1988 Games another strategy to guarantee continued profit growth. In 1986 just prior to the Calgary Games, the IOC announced that it would split the Winter and Summer Games into two staggered quadrennial Olympiads. After the 1992 Winter and Summer Games, the Olympics will no longer be held in the same year. The Summer Games will continue on the traditional calendar, and the Winter Games will follow a new four year calendar cycle beginning at the 1994 Lillehammer Games. The primary motive for this decision is to allow the US-based television networks and official sponsors to invest more money into the Olympics at more manageable intervals and to possibly cultivate global competition for media rights as the number of European broadcasting outlets grow.

During the 1988 Winter Games, the ice hockey tournament was primarily watched and consumed by the Canadian audience through the medium of television. While each game at the Olympic Saddledome in Calgary hosted a maximum of 20,000 fans, up to seventy-five per cent of the arena stands were reserved for the "Olympic Family" for games when traditional hockey or political rivals were slated to play: such as Team Canada versus Russia, or Team USA versus Russia. While this Olympic clan (whose kin included members of the International Olympic Committee, accredited media personnel and exclusive corporate sponsors) filled the Saddledome's coveted seats, many local sports fans and Olympic tourists wanting to attend the games were left to their own devices --

broadcasting devices. The forty-two hockey games, out of the grand total of 120 Olympic events offered at the 1988 games represented thirty-five percent of the number of events on the competition schedule for the 1988 Winter Olympic spectacle.²³ The 484,800 tickets sold to the forty-two hockey games constituted 77.7 percent of a possible total sellout; fans desperately sought tickets to rival matches between Canada and Russia, any Canadian game, or Russia and the United States. These marquee tickets were simply not widely available to the general population, whose only recourse was to watch the games on CTV, TVA, ABC or listen to the radio. Demands for tickets within the Olympic family caused administrators and the organizing committee major headaches, but the Olympic clan was easily accommodated as many reports by the Olympic Family members indicate, partially because the Olympic family members were hoarding more tickets than individuals would consume. For example, Jean Grenier who was Team Canada's Chef de Mission in 1988, reported to the Canadian Olympic Association that

the only big problem during the last few days was the insistent requests by the mission members [COA] for tickets to attend events in other than their own sports. That problem ... seemed insolvable at first ... this brought about a demonstration of resourcefulness that only hockey people can muster ... through purchase, exchange, promises, options, pressure, manipulation, and other methods, requests were almost always fulfilled and sometimes even exceeded (COA, 1988:42).

It was readily apparent that attendance at the actual Olympic sites and prime events has largely become a privilege of the world's corporate, media and sporting elite. Their

²³In total, the 120 Olympic events had a capacity to accommodate 1,936,330 spectators to the events at the 1988 Winter Olympic Games: OCO'88 successfully sold 1,507,376 or 77.8 percent (OWGOR, 1988: 339). What is not clear is the percentage available on a "first come, first served" basis versus the percentage of tickets available for members of the Olympic family to purchase or obtain through their exclusive agreements.

business focus was, however, the televisual event; the 1.5 million ticket sales only accounted for eight percent of OCO's total revenues while television revenues accounted for fifty-eight percent of the total revenues generated by OCO'88. In 1988, the Olympic spectacle of accumulation was a product of televisual success.

Overall, the use of major league and Olympic sporting events by broadcasters to fight their ratings battles, combined with the sporting federations and organizations' financial needs, have firmly consolidated sports and national networks into the universal market. OCO's notion of the Olympics as an event capitalizing on "asset marketing" (OWGOR, 1988:5) certainly guided the decisions all major constituents constructing this spectacle of accumulation. The founder of the Modern Olympic movement once claimed that, "Olympism is not a system, it is a state of mind. It can permeate a variety of modes of expression and no single race or era can claim a monopoly of it" (Pierre du Coubertin). Within the commercial structures of this era's Olympic movement, the Games have clearly become a state of television. Without an expressed concern for what broadcasters are producing and legitimating in their programmes with regards to Olympism, the mode of expression is clearly mediated by commercial imperatives of media corporations and not Olympic aims. Athletic spectacles have become very desirable commodities to acquire for hosting privileges by local²⁴, regional and national governments, by corporate sponsors

²⁴There are numerous reasons why cities want to host the Olympic games. The organizing committee for the Calgary Winter Olympic Games, OCO'88, has admitted that the four major incentives for wanting to host the games changed as the games moved to the later stages of preparation according to OCO's XV *Winter Olympic Games Official Report* to the IOC. William Pratt the President and Chief Operating Officer of OCO'88 has reviewed the hosting history and claims that Calgarian boosters for the Olympic bid initially sought to fill a void in local sports facilities as their population grew; Calgary shifted from upgrading its "inventory" of sporting facilities to become the "world's leader" in 21st century international calibre winter sporting venues. Secondly, knowing that the Olympics were primarily a media event attracting viewers from around the globe, host cities have pursued the "international stage" to enhance local tourism by showcasing their 'down-home' friendly images of

and certainly by national media outlets for commercial and/or cultural-political reasons that are far from aligned with the “universal essence” de Coubertin assumed would bind the games together forever. But there are not universal essences surrounding human movement, only historically privileged and socially constructed traditions, meanings and rewards. The Olympics as a contemporary spectacle of accumulation have outgrown what de Coubertin sought to legitimate in his day. Having set forth some of the broadest parameters affecting televised sport, the actual labour process of the Olympic hockey television production and the contexts of media work will now be specifically addressed.

themselves within the Olympic profile. Thirdly, Calgarians initially sought the Olympic hosting role to foster the financial growth of the region; however, the rapid expansion of the city in the 1970s shifted the focus on the Olympic spectacle to eventually become the economic saviour of the recession of the 1980s by increasing spending by the federal and provincial governments on facilities, increasing spending on Olympic products and Calgarian goods and services, and decreasing unemployment rates. Finally, the hosting job was initially acquired to serve as a method to enhance local recreation, to heighten participation in local/national sports and to enjoy healthy lifestyles - this assumption was later upgraded to building a legacy of future Albertans and Canadians succeeding at future Olympics. (OWGOR, 1988: 4-5). Thus, many of the reasons for hosting the Games were recast in the process of preparing for an Olympiad that was constructed and offered to corporate North America as a marketing opportunity.

CHAPTER 4: THE LABOUR PROCESS OF OLYMPIC TELEVISION PRODUCTION

The political-economic *spectacle of accumulation* set the broadest parameters within which media workers produced Olympic sport for television in 1988. As a trend toward exclusive ownership of media rights to major sporting events has emerged, this monopolistic arrangement has greatly enhanced the profitability of championships events (or “properties”) for sports organizations and it has enhanced the revenues of media organizations by attracting advertising revenue. At the same time that monopoly ownership of sporting spectacles has become the dominant business arrangement for international events, “a” distinctive way of organizing the broadcast work site and crew organization has developed in concert. This chapter examines the contexts of media labour, crew organization and the employment of broadcast technology to inspect how television sports production both constitutes the elements of the spectacle and is constitutive of broader relationships of political-economic power.

(I) OLYMPIC TELEVISION PRODUCTION AS A LABOUR PROCESS

Sports broadcasting practices and products can be usefully viewed as a form of late industrial-electronic manufacturing. Obviously, there are real differences in the labour processes between (a) producing live televisual programmes in the CTV mobile production truck outside of the Olympic Saddledome and (b) building other forms of material products such as a radio on an assembly line at a Panasonic plant. Different contexts require

different forms of organization of personnel, communication, corporate climate and symbolism, and demand different technical skills, codes of behaviour, levels of resistance to work etiquette and the nature of the task. All of these different aspects of the media labour process have been mentioned in other media ethnographies (Tuchman 1978, Clarke 1981, and 1987, Gruneau 1989) to demonstrate the unique work of media production crews. Nonetheless, regardless of the context and the product being manufactured, whether material and/or ideological, media labour processes share one feature with all other labour processes: all human labour is a *social process* (Clarke 1981).

Cultural studies recognizes television programming as an industrial form fully integrated into the capitalist mode of production (Ellis, 1982:221). With this recognition, media research has begun to examine the labour process to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the historical nature, social location and cultural products of broadcasting. In the case of sport this has led researchers to try to account for the way media workers *actively engage* in (a) the social process and struggles over making and remaking representations of sport, (b) engage in legitimating cultural discourses association with such dominant themes as competitive individualism and masculine athleticism etc., (c) engage in (re)negotiating professional work practices and journalistic codes, and finally (d) to consider the contributions by media workers to the construction and reproduction of dominant ideologies and broader relations of social power (see Cantelon and Gruneau, 1984; Gruneau, 1989, and Cavanagh, 1989).

To explore CTV's production of Olympic ice hockey for national broadcast in Canada, I have borrowed from and adapted elements of Marxist economic theory, feminist theory,

and Gramscian cultural theories of power, ideology and hegemony. As a first point, I am persuaded by Marx's argument that labour, not capital, is the *prime productive force*. While the production of Olympic sports at the 1988 Winter Games involved a multi-million dollar structure of rights payments, advertising and public relations, the opportunity for the CTV network and the Olympic "family" to produce both economic value and ideology could only be realized through the labour of the media crews and athletes, and through the interpretation of broadcast messages by the audience.

A concern for the labour process in the production of culture has been a notable legacy to emerge from Marx's philosophical writings: in particular, adopting his insistence that humans are *historical beings*. Indeed, it has been argued that Marx's historically oriented "socio-analysis", which attempted to examine the double-nature of the commodity (the use-value and the exchange-value) (Heilbroner 1980;93) can be applied to communication studies. For example, O'Sullivan et. al. (1983) tacitly use Marxian language when they introduce the concept of *cultural production*, by which they mean "the social production of sense, meaning and consciousness. The industrial production of cultural commodities." The analysis of cultural production is closely linked to a concern for cultural reproduction. *Cultural reproduction* can be defined as the

overall process by which a social formation attempts to maintain and perpetuate structures, formats and established corpus of sense-making: the effort to capture and fix the future representations and discourses of a society so as to reproduce its existing power relations ... Cultural reproduction then, is the process of attempting to naturalize and legitimate the social authority of dominant interests (usually understood in class/race/gender terms) ... What is reproduced is not a foregone conclusion ... cultural reproduction also includes responses and resistances to, and

departures from, the legitimated forms and practices of sense making. (O'Sullivan et. al, 1983: 63-64).

But Marx's discussion of capitalism was limited by class-based assumptions of a capitalist society that relegated cultural production of meaning to a secondary position of importance. The introduction of Gramscian theories of alliances (or historic blocs of power) has represented a significant development in critical studies of the labour process -- developments that bring the question of gender into the discussion and allow new forms of service based or electronic work such as broadcasting to be more adequately addressed. Feminist research has added a vital dimension to the analysis of the labour process since the 1970s. As human beings have engaged in the labour process they have not just constructed and reproduced unequal relations of class power in society. However, in studies of media sports as a labour process, gender has been routinely ignored or downplayed. In this study, the question of gender has been broadened conceptually from a consideration of the cultural assignment of masculine/feminine attributes to an examination of unequal relationships between social actors. At the 1988 Games I examined the homo-social labour processes of an exclusively-male television crew constructing the homo-social Olympic game of hockey for broadcast to an audience the crew assumed to be exclusively male¹.

As an institutional set of relations between males and females, males and males, females and females, *gender* is defined in this study as a set of power relationships in which

¹While the CTV network attempted to maximize the audience for Olympic programming; the hockey crew perceived the "real" audience of hockey to be "purely" male. It was this image of an assumed audience of regular hockey fans that determined the range of production techniques and codes of commentary employed to depict the international hockey tournament.

men, as a social group, have more power over women than women have over them; they are not fixed, rather they are subject to historical change and they can be transformed (A. Hall 1990:226).

At the 1988 Winter Olympic Games the CTV Ice hockey television crews were almost one hundred percent “female-free”. The exception was the occasional appearance of a female floor manager who worked in the SaddleDome studio; her chores included preparing hosts and guests for interviews, doing such chores as attaching microphones, serving water in Coca Cola cups to interview guests, coordinating personnel and cueing count-downs to post-game interviews. There simply were no women serving as regular television crew members in decision making or creative roles to make or remake the game. The environment of gender exclusivity easily bent itself to envisioning an exclusively male audience.

At this time in Canadian history, the male preserve of Olympic hockey production was reflective of the national broadcasting scene. For example, a 1988 study revealed that Canadian women did not occupy key decision making and creative roles in the broadcast industry as a whole: women comprised thirty-five percent of those media workers available for work in the public and private sectors of film and television broadcasting. They occupied eighty-four percent of the clerical positions yet achieved only nine percent of the upper level managerial positions and fourteen percent of the creative positions such a producer or director (*A Statistical Profile of Women in the Canadian Film and Television Industry*, 1990:7-8). For most of the hockey games at the 1988 Winter Olympics the CTV Domestic hockey broadcast crew simply reflected these broader patterns of inequality in the industry.

It is sometimes noted that television sport production is immensely creative -- all the stop actions, replays and slowmotion suggest high levels of artistry in the labour process. But in reality the artistry is heavily constrained. The roles of each person on the broadcast crew have been so tightly structured into formal organizational hierarchies and stringent work roles that the rationale for producing sport in a traditional manner tends to be naturalized as well. (See the Charts 4.1 and 4.2). I found that CTV Domestic and Host Crews were highly aware of the tight administration of the network, the narrow structuring of their labour tasks and their relative degrees of power on the crew: all jobs and their accompanying responsibilities were stringently documented in crew manuals, broadcasting books, or commentator binders, and were reinforced via on-going socialization during broadcast work and production meetings. Charts 4.1 and 4.2 summarize the relevant hierarchies of control and responsibility.

Chart 4.1: CTV HB AT THE VENUE

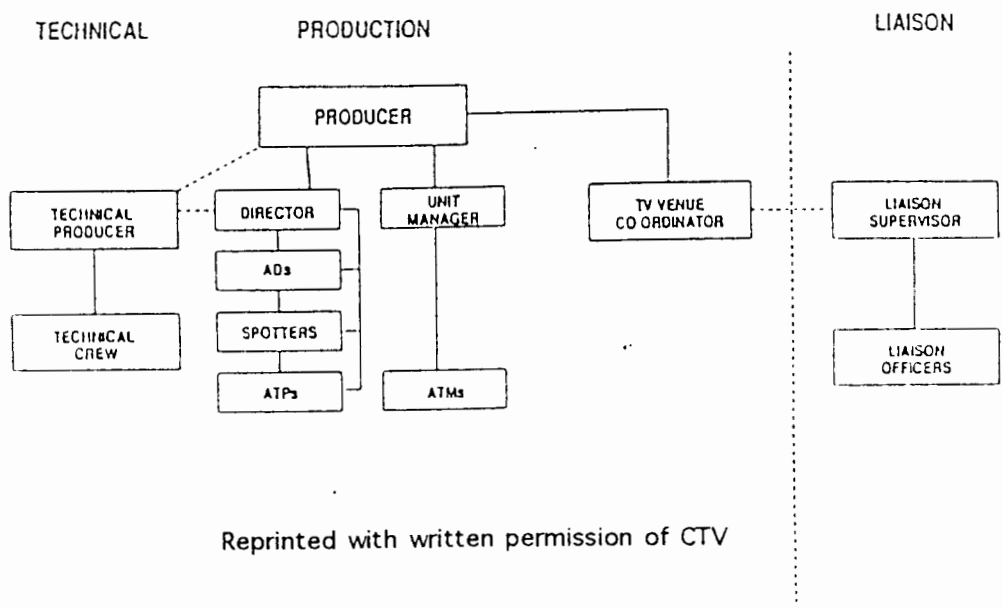
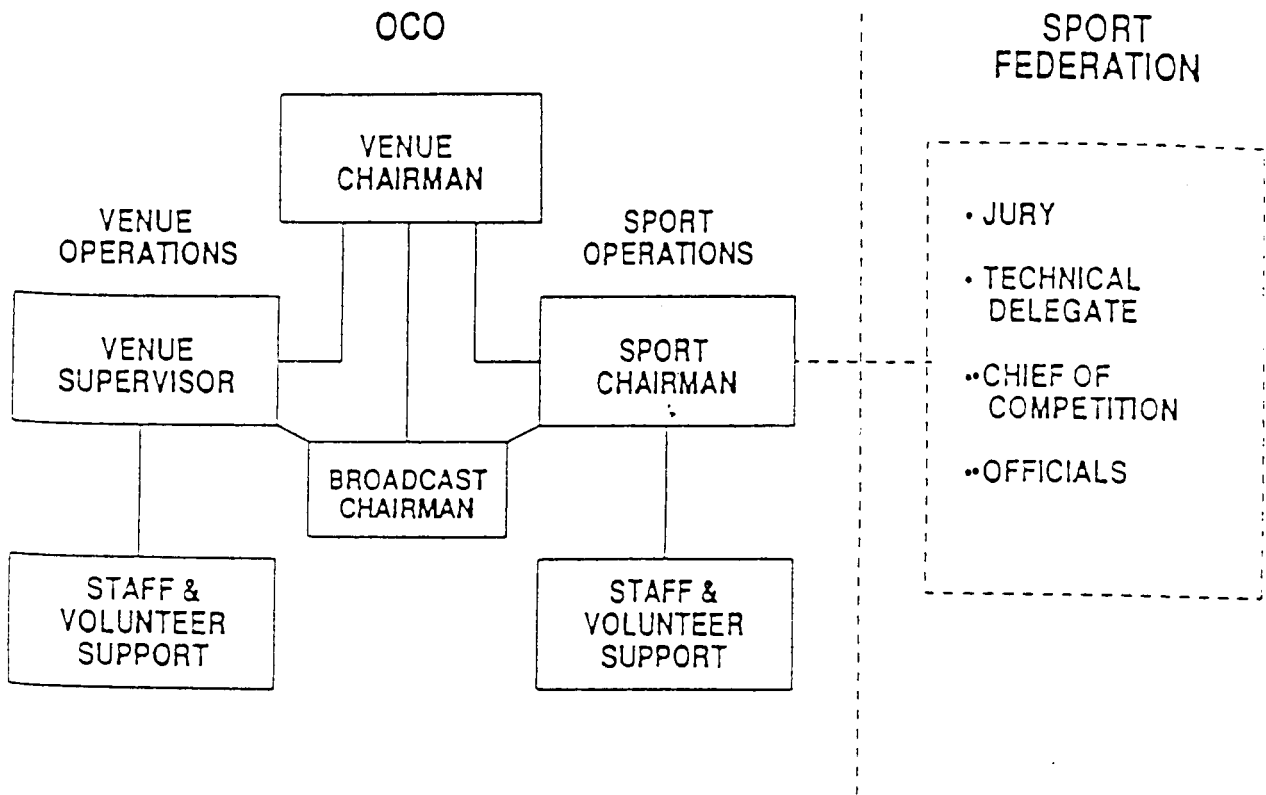


Chart 4.2: MANAGEMENT OF THE SADDLEDOME VENUE

THE VENUE



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The following is a sample of the formal and narrow range of broadcasting tasks assigned to "Venue Personnel" working in the SaddleDome by CTV executive producers (CTV Commentator's Manual, 1988).

TELEVISION CREW

Producer in charge of the overall production from the venue, coordinating all aspects of the production into a finished product;

Director in charge of the hands on coverage of the event;²

Assistant Directors (AD's) AD's are assigned to one of three areas:

- a) **Tape** - to coordinate the tape operation of the venue, including logging of VTR items, maintaining proper stock, and assisting in replay selection.
- b) **Chyron** - in charge of the graphic operation of the venue, including pre-loading and graphics during an event. Responsible to maintain graphic format consistency and accuracy.
- c) **Script** - at certain venues to assist producer and director in production of event;

Camera Operators (See Chapter 5 for the assignments of each).

Spotter works as producer and director's "eyes and ears" during the event to provide information as required. Will, at applicable

²On the CTV Domestic hockey crew, one man was assigned to be both producer and director for the entire Olympics. Since much of the visual production is simultaneously produced by the CTV Host crew in the adjacent truck, the CTV Domestic producer-director was expected to handle the double role.

events, monitor the course control circuit;³

Assistants to the Producer production support personnel to assist as warranted at the venue; ⁴

OCO '88 PERSONNEL

Unit Manager the business manager of the venue from television's perspective;

Technical Producer oversees the technical and engineering areas of the television operation at the venue;

Assistants to the Unit Manager support the unit manager at the venue as warranted;

Liaison Supervisor/Chief responsible for the smooth operation of the broadcast booths, assisting world broadcasters as required;

Liaison Officers work under the Liaison Supervisor to assist world broadcasters at the venue;

TV Venue Coordinator is the problem-solver for television at the venue. Works closely with OCO's representatives to rectify any problems as

³Only CTV Host engaged the use of a "spotter" to call the play-by-play to the Host crew to help the camera men anticipate the game and thus anticipate the use of their camera.

What is missing on this list is the CTV "talent" or the commentators and on-air hosts, working for CTV-DB who occupied a precarious position in the labour process. In dividing up the labour process, CTV considered them to be part of the "meat" of the spectacle and not technical employees of the network. They will be discussed in further in Chapter 6 and 7.

⁴As the enormity of the task facing the CTV-Domestic producer-director for ice hockey was realized during the first day of work, he tried in vain to get CTV-Domestic to hire an assistant for "gopher" for the crew. Not understanding that I was not an official crew member there to do production work, but rather to observe the process as an outsider with a high level production pass, the hockey producer nevertheless tried to convince the executive director of the network to hire me to perform the numerous tasks accumulating (such as redesigning the stats sheets, paper runs, equipment requests, scrounging basic materials such as video and duct tape). In the first few days, my presence provided an added level of frustration for the producer who could see the solution to the building pile of "gopher work", but could not negotiate my paid inclusion onto the expanded labour force (the CTV Domestic Executive Producer rejecting the requests of the hockey producer, was the network official who had granted me the permission to do the research and was the only person at the Olympics who had read my full research proposal).

soon as possible;⁵

Broadcast Relations Representatives represent OCO's various departments as they apply to television. Works as a problem solver to rectify any problems as soon as possible;

Sport Chairman oversees the actual running of the sport competition at a venue. Is the contact for the TV venue coordinator if there is a problem involving the sport;

Venue Chairman a volunteer in charge of the overall venue operation;

Venue Manager an OCO employee responsible for the day-to-day operation of the venue;

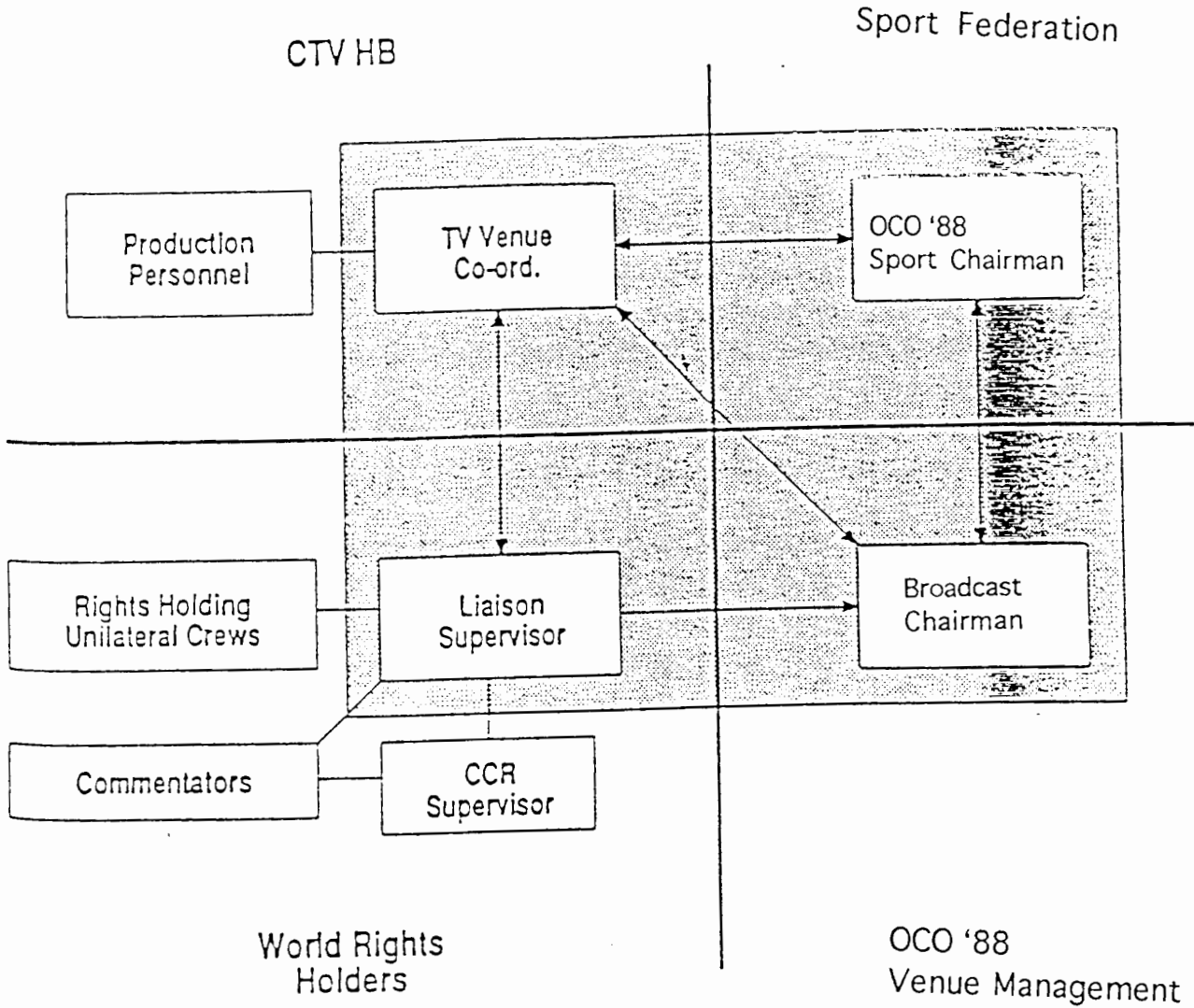
Security Commander oversees all aspects of security at the venue;


Access Control Supervisor oversees all aspects of access control at the venue, (Source: CTV Domestic Commentator Binder, 1988).

In the process of making live television, knowing your exact position on the trellis of network relations was essential for accomplishing the spectacle of the live broadcast. "This is a one-shot gig - *expediency* is the name of the game", the "A.D" remarked. The Host broadcaster chose media personnel based on their past experiences with championship events, a their high level of expertise, and for knowing the sports broadcasting "system" well (CTV-HB producer. The CTV-DB team for hockey was chosen for having a basic level of experience covering sport, preferably hockey and, unlike the Host Broadcaster, for being affordable. The Host crew was stacked with world class producers, camera operators and engineers. However, high levels of broadcasting performance and international experience were not key requirements for hiring onto the CTV Domestic crew. Known maverick producers of hockey, and renegade crew members, were generally excluded from the creation of the live 1988 hockey telecasts.

⁵For a graphical overview of the TV Venue Coordinator assignment see Chart 4.3, "Problem Solving at the Saddledome".

Chart 4.3 Solving Problems at the Saddledome



 denotes problem solvers

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Raymond Williams has argued that the labour process should be viewed as both *constitutive* and *constituting* of practice, ideologies and relations of power (1977). According to Williams (1977), the major limitation of the base-superstructure model of society and culture inherited from Marxian historical materialism has not been *materialist enough*. The point is to see cultural production as an example of material production. We can extend this insight into the analysis of television sport by noting that the forces of production (such as the camera equipment and editing machines) are *elements* that should not be considered separately or as distinguishable from the *relations* of production. The forces of media production at the 1988 Olympics were intricately linked to particular uses and modes of organizing the television crew into the relations of production. In the last instance, the labour processes of television programming at the 1988 Winter Games were materially productive activities, in which the CTV hockey crews were engaged in assignments, that transformed the sporting event into a broadcast commodity for the air, and engaged in the process of (re)producing social relations and meanings. Chart 4.4 provides an overview of the official assignments and crew list of the CTV domestic broadcasting crew.

Chart 4.4: CTV Domestic Personnel

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Tom Hodge

ASSISTANT TO THE EXECUTIVE PRODUCER
Denise Tunnicliffe
UNIT MANAGER
Oliver Bahirad
VENUE

HOSTS: Lloyd Robertson, Dan Matheson, Terrilyn Joe
P.A.

VENUE	PRODUCER	P.A.	TALENT
FIGURE SKATING	Cam Rourke	Kim Drouwer	Johnny Esau Debbie Wilkes Brian Pockar
HOCKEY	Dave Mait	Ross Francoure	Dan Kelly Ron Rensch Brad Park
ALPINE (MEN) NOGULS	Steve Lanthier	Stephanie Williams	Al McCann Steve Podborski Jim Hunter
ALPINE (WOMEN)	Steve Lanthier	Stephanie Williams	Cathy Sproule Gerry Sorensen Jim Hunter
X-COUNTRY BIATHLON	Fred Voss	Colette Aubin	Bernie Pascall Jarl Omholt-Jensen
BOB SLEIGH	Tom Keller	Cynthia Ann Gregg	Jeff Hutcheson Brian Vachon Vic Emety
LUGE	Tom Keller	Cynthia Ann Gregg	Marilyne Vestergom Jeff Hutcheson
SPEEDSKATING SHORT TRACK	Sandy Armstrong	Liz Weber	Ken Nowans Tom Overend
SKI JUMPING	Bill Elliott	Diane Darlington	Paul Menier
III LITES	Don Niedmann Ann Marie Bergeron	Sue Drophy Janni Barry	Terrilyn Joe
FEATURES	Brian Wayne	Retta Jex	Jerry Dobson Terrilyn Joe Vic Grehan

The broadcast commodity is an unusual and multidimensional product and process of cultural production. At the 1988 Games, the hockey commodity was broadcast live in a seemingly “non material” format, yet it was converted to an entertainment commodity when it materialized on the television screens of Canadian viewers or was video taped as an archival text. Moreover, this product was (and still is) a process because it was (and can now be) endlessly replayed, dubbed, altered and/or reinterpreted by television personnel and the home viewer who has taped it. Human productive labour and social relations are embodied within the television show. Yet, recognition of the show as the product of human labour is downplayed when the Olympic “family” focuses attention on the facts that: (a) CTV’s exclusive domestic “right” to produce and broadcast championship games were exchanged for television rights payments of \$4.5 million, and (b) network time and Olympic prestige were exchanged for advertising money. The “objective” relations of exchange involving commodities, time, and money in these instances deflect attention from the objective and subjective relations *between* people on the crew.

It is important, here to note the limits of purely Marxian analyses of the labour process in media production. One of the central insights of Marxian analysis is that commodities, including human labour power, are not “things”; rather they represent congealed human and social relations. But Marxian analysis focusses on class relations to the exclusion of everything else. This emphasis leaves a great deal out of account (see Smith, 1981). For example, in Calgary the CTV Domestic crew worked to produce an audience-commodity that was wholly male. This reflected preconceived notion of the male production crew -- notions constructed more on past “experience” than research -- with the result that the “perceived audience” was positioned in their working beliefs as the

“actual” audience. The assumption of a male audience also allowed the crew to exchange the notion among co-workers that only male Canadian media workers could inject the “proper” symbolic hockey value into the televisual product required to produce the ratings (or rather to “produce” the audience) expected during Olympic programming.

The point is that sports media labour does not produce a commodity that is gender-neutral. While women have developed the technical skills, administrative, managerial and directive abilities in other areas of broadcasting such as news and current affairs programming, they have always been marginalized in sports media production. For that reason, it is important when studying the labour process of sports media production to go beyond an Marxian analysis which focuses only on the production of surplus (economic) value and the creation of commodity fetishism. While conducting the research at hand I repeatedly encountered patriarchal assumptions in the production process and it became apparent that gendered human labour on the media site, and not capital investment into the Olympic spectacle alone, was a *prime productive force* influencing the production of Olympic spectacle.

The Olympic television crew worked hard to transform the abstract rights to this “media property”, into a dual commodity: the televisual form of the athletic competition/entertainment contributed to produce/attract the Canadian audience(s)⁶, and

⁶The Olympic audience is actually a collection of many different segments of the Canadian viewing public: over the two and a half week period that Calgary played host to the games, different groups of Canadians tuned into coverage, some to watch their favourite sports, others for the entertainment and artistic value of certain sports (the industry has discovered that some consider the ice dancing programme, for example, to be a “high cultural” performance or a form of drama), and some to watch out of curiosity.

the televisual carriage for the advertisements the network has contracted to carry exclusively. Because the financial value of televising the Olympics is extracted from the sale of Olympic audiences to an advertiser, the labour process of the hockey production crew as the network executives organize was been designed to *socially produce consumers*, often in a specifically gendered manner.⁷ The live and the broadcast Olympic spectacle were strongly pressured, although not completely contained, by the quest of corporate sponsors to purchase a berth in the broadcast feed that formatted the prevailing symbols and images of Canadian consumer life.

(II) THE CENTRAL SITES OF SPORTS TELEVISION LABOUR

Media coverage of live sporting events demanded a “tightly run ship” according to the upper levels of the CTV Olympic sports crew (Esaw, Mercel, and Wait). Organization, coordination and control were key elements of media decision making, which occurred on a hectic site for a sport that had high degrees of unpredictability. A serious problem facing the analysis of the labour process of televisual production was the vast number of separate sites of production that were all involved in hockey programming. Olympic spectacle production involved numerous kinds of labour, which were eventually encapsulated in the final telecast. The “Key Players Chart” in Chapter 3 (see Chart 3.2) displays the numerous organizational participants such as the OCO’88 committee and Olympic volunteer

⁷See Stewart Ewen (1976: 36, 54), and Robert Goldman (1984: 84-86) for further discussions about the social production of consumers.

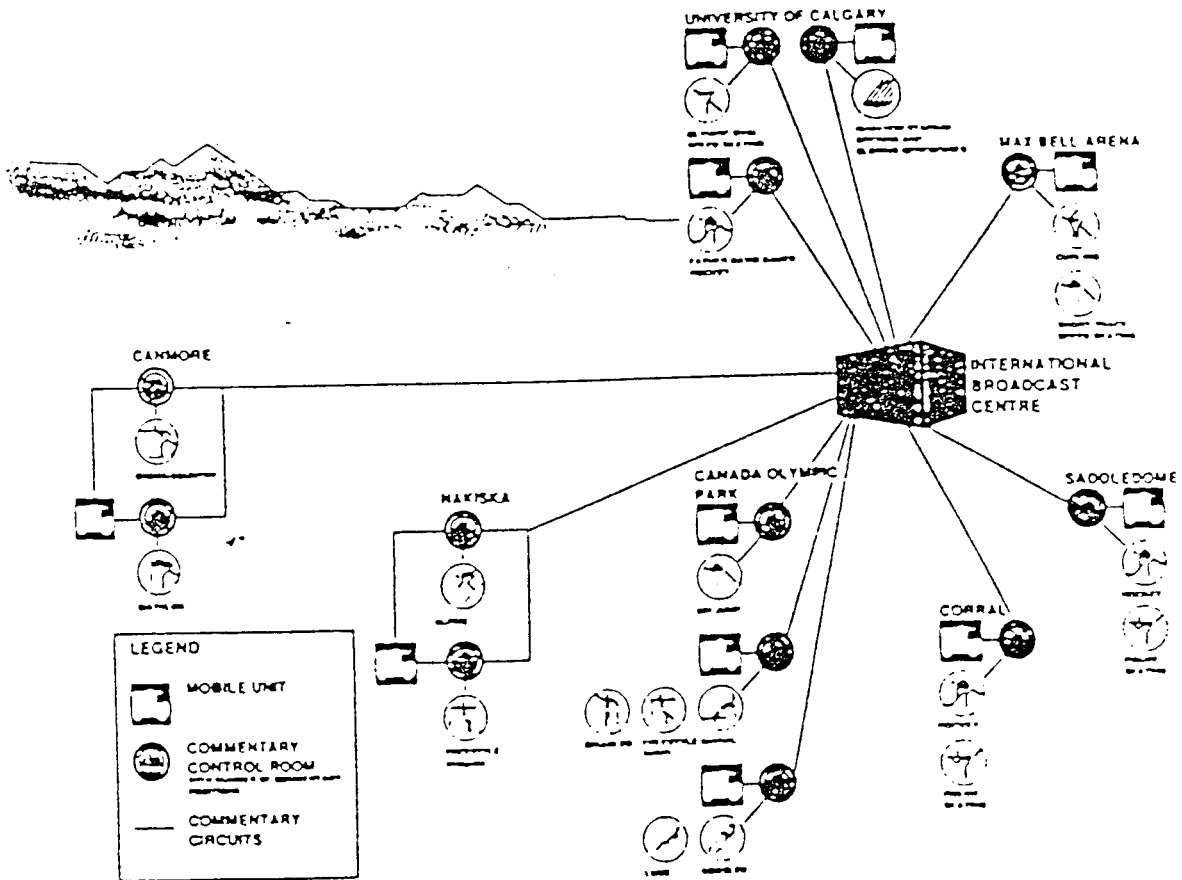
force⁸, the labour and lobbying of sport organizations and federations, the athletes on the ice, the sponsors. The CTV domestic television production crew was, however, spread out into electronically connected but geographically disparate areas such as the Saddledome hockey venue, the two CTV mobile production units outside of the arena in the media compound, the Host and Domestic master controls in the International Broadcast Centre (IBC), the IBC work stations for each sport crew, the press centre, and CTV network headquarters in Toronto (see "Broadcasting Commentary Signal Distribution", Illustration 5.1, for a diagrammatic overview of the Calgary media geography). While the costs of constructing so many sites and coordinating the labour at these sites was high -- \$53 million for the CTV-Host Broadcaster alone plus \$9.7 million for the construction of the SaddleDome -- the value extracted from such a large collective of Olympic television labour sites made the logistical nightmare a worthwhile economic venture. CTV-Domestic, for example, entered into the Olympic labour process in 1988 asking \$20,000(CAN)⁹ per thirty second commercial to reach approximately 12,000,000 viewers across the nation knowing they were allowed a maximum of 12 minutes of advertising for each of the 118 hours of planned broadcast. The economic forecast for their labour was approximately \$56,640,000.

⁸The IOC and the written press noted the significant level of contribution the "friendly" OCO'88 volunteers made to the spectacle labour process and community dynamics during the 1988 Winter Olympics. Calgary has a long history of volunteer support which has provided major events such as the annual Stampede with free labour and cultural support. Most were white middle class Calgarians who could afford to perform unpaid work; while many felt overworked, some received bonuses such as tickets to the ceremonies or parties, and sixty percent said they would volunteer again for the chance to be associated with the Olympics. Their labour also served to support the infrastructure of media labour sites as extra security, lounge hosts etc.

⁹The American network, by way of contrast to the Canadian scenario, was charging approximately \$285,000(US) for thirty second commercials in 1988.

Illustration 4.1: OLYMPIC COMMENTARY SIGNAL DISTRIBUTION

Commentary Signal Distribution



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¹⁰Source: CTV Host Broadcasters's, *General Broadcaster's Handbook* (1988).

Furthermore, the relative cheapness of producing sport programming, in comparison to other forms of television such as drama, and in combination with the unique ability of sporting event organizing committees to coordinate unpaid volunteer labour forces, created a very profitable venture at the expense of those donating their time and labour. It has been estimated for example, that the Calgary Olympics generated a profit of \$112 million(CAN) from sponsorship rights and ticket sales; and yet approximately 1555 athletes and a volunteer workforce of over 9400 "Olympic evangelists" (a self-proclaimed title by Calgarians) were organized to work in exchange for a Sun Ice uniform and for the opportunity of associating themselves with the Olympic movement.

(a) Ethnographic Research Sites and Schedule

To observe the various work sites of production and the dynamic interactions between the various actors producing the spectacle, I gave priority to the hockey venues' television production sites within a larger fairly regular rotation schedule of observation locations. Most Olympic broadcast days I moved through a circuit of broadcasting locales associated with CTV hockey coverage: my daily routine included observations and interviews at (1) the International Broadcast Centre (IBC) where production meetings for directors were held daily and the master control was situated, (2) the Olympic Saddledome, (3) the Corral Hockey Arena if CTV was covering a game, and (4) to non-broadcast sites. Prior to the on-air broadcast of Olympic programming, I observed the general worksite, crew interaction, control room and production meetings of CTV Domestic at the IBC's master control centre, as well as the interaction among world broadcasters in the common areas of the building and CTV-Host master control from 8:00 to approximately 11:00 a.m. each

morning.

The second and longest segment of the observation schedule often lasted from 11:00 a.m to as late as 11:00 p.m depending on the number of games out of a maximum of three the network had decided to cover that day (see Table 4.1, “1988 Calgary Ice Hockey Schedule”). Within the time frame of a single game I would rotate between the key sites of production in the hockey venue. The three sites of production for the SaddleDome crew were in the mobile production truck in the broadcast compound outside of the venue (which had four separate rooms for each technology unit), the commentator’s booth where the announcers, the play-by-play cameras, the TVA and ABC crews were located, and the SaddleDome studio for post-game “wrap-up” shows.

Table 4.1 1988 Calgary Ice Hockey Schedule

Calgary '88

TV Olympic Winter Games

TV Jeux Olympiques d'Hiver



ICE HOCKEY
SCHEDULE OF GAMES

HOCKEY SUR GLACE
CALENDRIER DES MATCHS

MM-DD/ MM-JJ	TIME/ HEURE	POOL/ POULE	VENUE/ EMPLACEMENT	GAME NO./ MATCH NO	TEAMS/ EQUIPES
02-13	14:30	B	SADDLEDOME	1	TCH : FRG
02-13	16:30	B	CORRAL	2	NOR : URS
02-13	18:30	B	SADDLEDOME	3	AUT : USA
02-14	10:30	A	SADDLEDOME	4	SWE : FRA
02-14	14:30	A	SADDLEDOME	5	POL : CAN
02-14	18:30	A	SADDLEDOME	6	SUI : FIN
02-15	14:15	B	SADDLEDOME	7	NOR : FRG
02-15	18:00	B	CORRAL	8	URS : AUT
02-15	18:15	B	SADDLEDOME	9	USA : TCH
02-16	10:00	A	SADDLEDOME	10	SWE : POL
02-16	14:00	A	SADDLEDOME	11	CAN : SUI
02-16	18:15	A	CORRAL	12	FIN : FRA
02-17	14:00	B	CORRAL	13	FRG : AUT
02-17	14:15	B	SADDLEDOME	14	TCH : NOR
02-17	18:15	B	SADDLEDOME	15	URS : USA
02-18	14:00	A	CORRAL	16	FRA : POL
02-18	14:15	A	SADDLEDOME	17	SUI : SWE
02-18	18:15	A	SADDLEDOME	18	CAN : FIN
02-19	14:00	B	CORRAL	19	TCH : AUT
02-19	14:15	B	SADDLEDOME	20	FRG : URS
02-19	18:15	B	SADDLEDOME	21	USA : NOR
02-20	13:00	A	SADDLEDOME	22	FIN : SWE
02-20	14:15	A	CORRAL	23	CAN : FRA
02-20	18:15	A	CORRAL	24	POL : SUI
02-21	13:30	B	SADDLEDOME	25	URS : TCH
02-21	17:00	B	CORRAL	26	AUT : NOR
02-21	18:15	B	SADDLEDOME	27	FRG : USA
02-22	10:00	A	SADDLEDOME	28	FIN : POL
02-22	14:00	A	SADDLEDOME	29	SWE : CAN
02-22	18:30	A	FATHER BAUER	30	FRA : SUI
02-23	14:15	FIN.	FATHER BAUER	31	B6 : A6
02-23	18:15	FIN.	FATHER BAUER	32	B5 : A5
02-24	10:30	FIN.	SADDLEDOME	33	A3 : B2
02-24	14:30	FIN.	SADDLEDOME	34	A2 : B1
02-24	18:30	FIN.	SADDLEDOME	35	A1 : B3
02-25	13:30	FIN.	SADDLEDOME	36	B4 : A4
02-26	10:30	FIN.	SADDLEDOME	37	B1 : A3
02-26	14:30	FIN.	SADDLEDOME	38	B3 : A2
02-26	18:30	FIN.	SADDLEDOME	39	B2 : A1
02-27	13:00	FIN.	SADDLEDOME	40	A3 : B3
02-28	10:00	FIN.	SADDLEDOME	41	A2 : B2
02-28	14:00	FIN.	SADDLEDOME	42	A1 : B1

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Almost every Olympic day, the domestic hockey crew was scheduled to produce two of the three games thereby freeing up one game where I could either observe the CTV HOST hockey crew in the adjacent production truck, or the CTV Domestic crew subculture in its leisure zones within the arena. During off-air working hours, crew members could be observed interacting with OCO'88 volunteers, RCMP security or the hockey teams playing soccer in the bowels of the arena. Crew members did not usually leave the production site during off-air hockey games because if an Olympic event was cancelled due to poor weather the hockey crew had to be available to broadcast an unscheduled hockey game as the replacement programming. Occasionally, a third rotation replaced my regular game schedule in the SaddleDome when the CTV crew was ordered to shift to Corral Arena to produce a game, or when the commentators went to the Corral to observe national team practices and to conduct research sessions.

Finally, at the conclusion of the broadcast game, observations of the CTV domestic crew subculture in their leisure time were conducted; the crews were often bused to such locales as restaurants for dinner, media Bar-B-Qs, or to special media gatherings at local entertainment sites where famous retired Russian, Canadian or American hockey players were being honoured as the celebrity guests (dinners often doubled as informal production meetings with the hockey crew since it was often the only time each day the crew saw each other face to face). In addition, CTV ski trips were organized on days off after many resorts offered free skiing to groups with media passes. These situations provided invaluable opportunities for the crew to reflect on their day's work and provided insights for my knowledge of how the crew addressed each other, in addition to yielding self-critical observations by the crew that they hadn't divulged when describing their job on site

during taped interviews. Crew gatherings yielded some of the most evaluative comments about the labour process and about the quality of their telecast. They also provided opportunities to record the negotiation of conflict resolution between crew members, new rules of behaviour, and suggestions for enhancing the production of the hockey games. Most of this negotiation was contained within the officially written “laws” of problem-solving and the chain of command that had been institutionalized by CTV Host Broadcaster (See Chart 4.1 “CTV HB At The Venue”). An elaborate set of rules and flow charts had been established long before the games commenced to ensure maximum security for the athletes and crews, while reducing the potential for problems that could possibly erupt when hundreds of world broadcasters with varying traditions of work arrived to work on the same event. (See Chart 4.3 “Solving Problems At A Venue”).

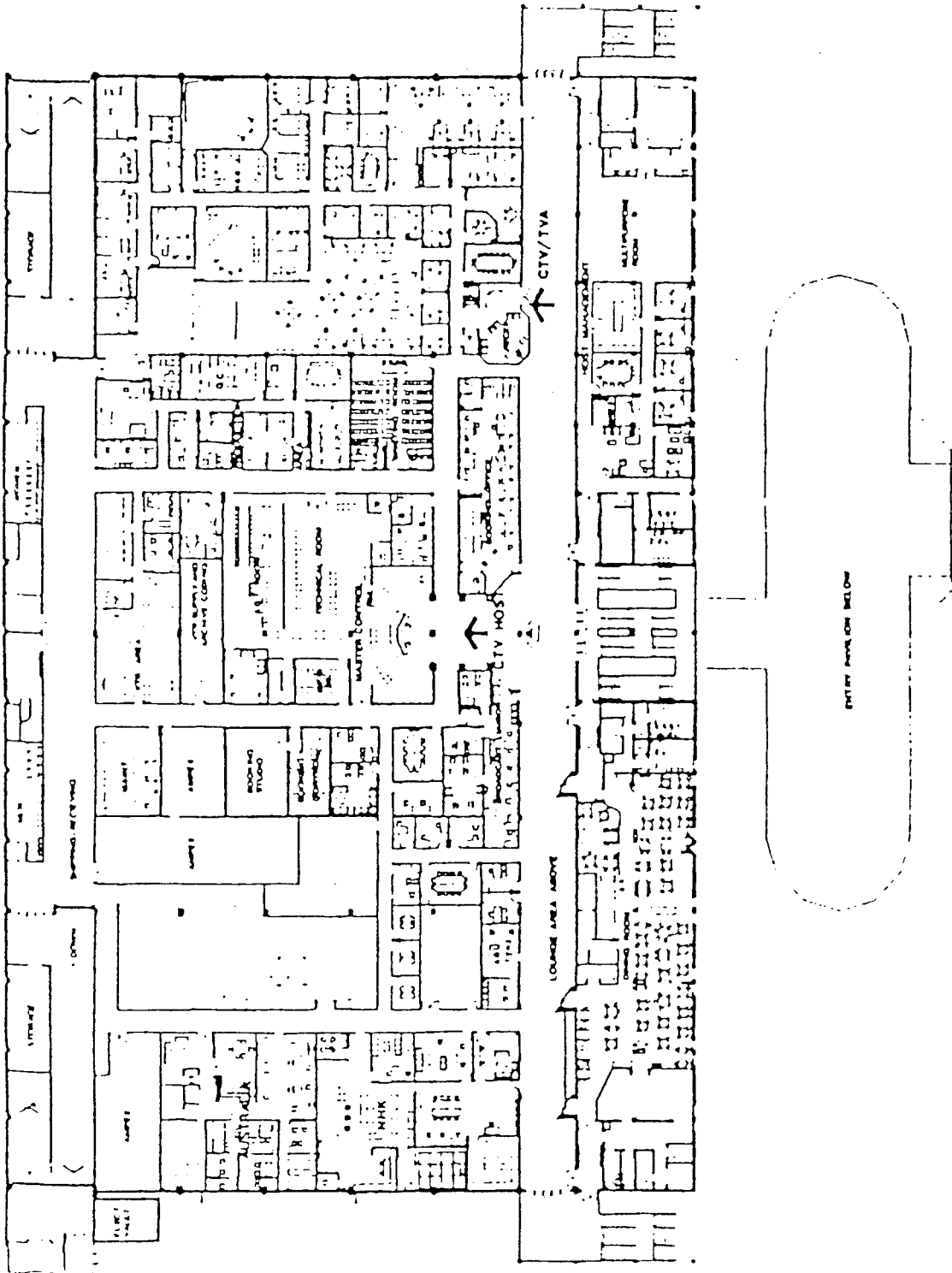
(b) International Broadcast Centre

The International Broadcast Centre was the hub of control for over 3000 personnel working for the 390 World Broadcasters at the 1988 Winter Olympic Games, including CTV Domestic and the televisual chief actuary for the Games, CTV Host Broadcaster. All overriding structuring decisions, whether financial or symbolic, emerged from the people and broadcasting units working in this building. Clear guidelines for crew decision making structures and technical setup were established years before the games by the Host Broadcaster.

As Host broadcaster, it was CTV's duty to construct the IBC and each of the spots

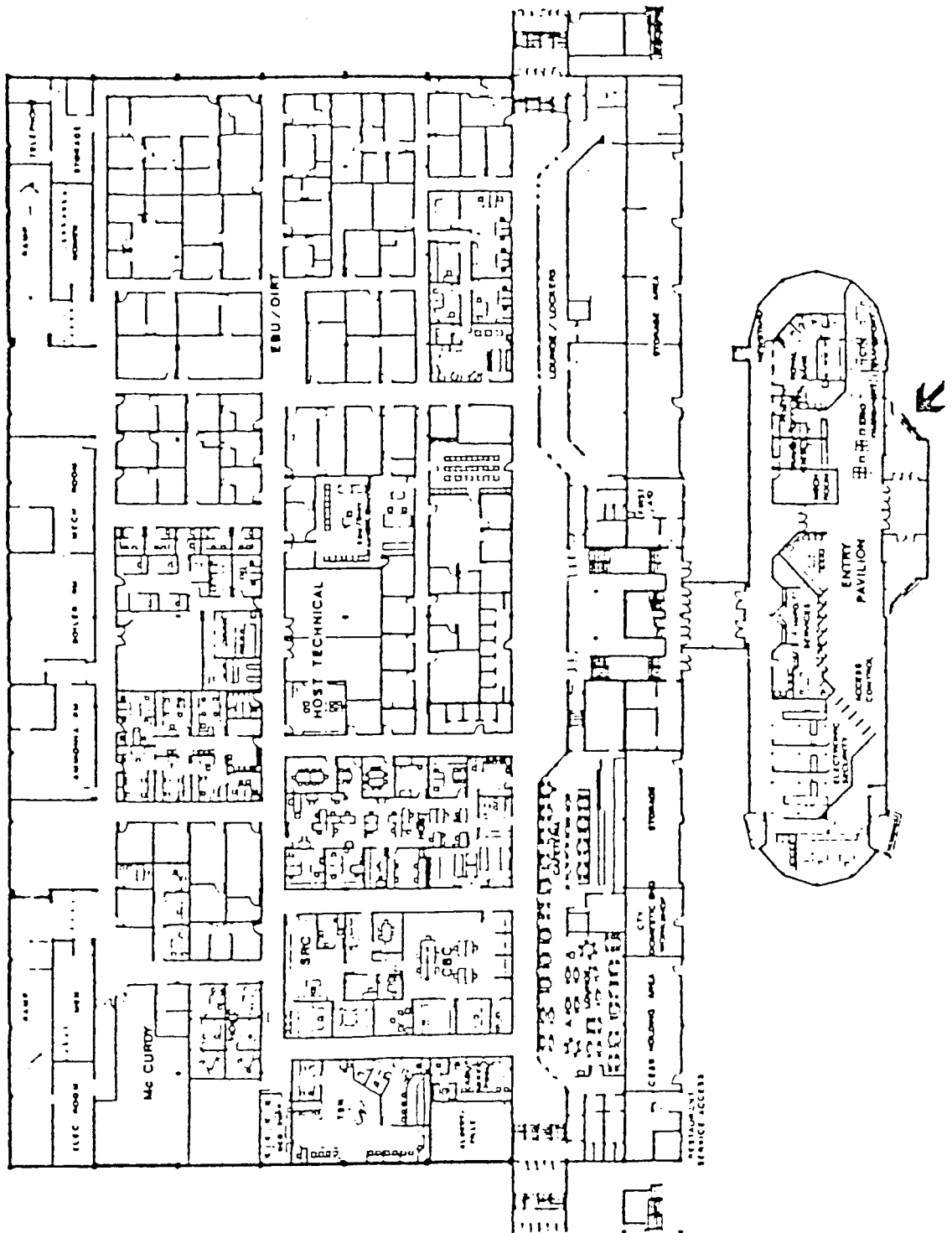
allocated for rights holder's within this temporary institute within the budget of \$53 million dollars negotiated with OCO'88. This included the cost of labour power. CTV Host Broadcaster converted the world's largest curling rink on the Stampede Grounds site, where the SaddleDome is also located, into a temporary broadcast base for all networks. It had to be able to withstand maximum traffic twenty-four hours per day for over a month. In addition to the 11,148 square metres of space allocated for CTV Host and unilateral broadcasters, CTV-HB had to change its initial plans and build an extra 4,646 square metres broadcast centre for the ABC network adjacent to the IBC. Knowing they were underwriters of the Olympic Games, the ABC network was able to pressure OCO'88 and CTV-HB to cater to its labour site needs. While the added expense on one network indicated the power of this corporation, they unwittingly improved the conditions of the other world broadcasters because more space was freed up in the IBC for rights holders outside North America. Illustrations 4.2 and 4.3 display the IBC work stations and master control centres for CTV Domestic Broadcaster and CTV Host Broadcaster respectively.

Illustration 4.2 IBC MAIN FLOOR - CTV DB AND TVA MASTER CONTROL AND WORK STATIONS



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Illustration 4.3 IBC LOWER FLOOR PLAN - CTV HB MASTER CONTROL



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(c) Crew Relations in the SaddleDome

Throughout the tightly structured broadcast venues, most television "teams" within the CTV Host Broadcasting and Domestic Broadcasting units were well aware, as mentioned earlier, that the network's involvement in the Olympics was "first and foremost a financial game" (Wait, Feb. 13, 1988). In keeping with the widely held public understandings of the economic structure of the Olympic Games -- largely conveyed to audiences and television crews alike via news reports on the financial planning of the organizers, the television bidding wars, sponsorship negotiations, etc. -- the crew readily acknowledged that CTV stood to gain significant financial profit from the commercials broadcast during and around the Olympic programming. No one however, was willing to offer a "ballpark estimate" and the network did not allow this information to become public knowledge. At the commencement of the 1988 Winter Olympics, most CTV hockey crew members and network officials believed that CTV would enhance its corporate prestige through its "service" to the world and to the Olympic movement by providing the host broadcast feed.

The television crews, especially at the control-technical and administrative strata, considered themselves to be well paid for the labour they performed. By "Day Three" of the Games, however, this demanding "remote shoot" at the Saddledome was reevaluated by the tired crew as being an experience that they could never be adequately compensated for due to the extreme frustrations and exhaustion that had taken hold of them during the labour process. "No amount of money is enough for this pain", cried the assistant director for hockey assigned to the truck, "Look at the number of tapes I'm supposed to use for two and a

half weeks of this party ... its a classic case of the *Grinch who stole Olympics*":

Its just, it seems that Domestic feed is too much on a shoestring budget ... It affects the domestic crew as they were given maybe second rate equipment, not enough logistics for facilities, not enough tape. I just got a call from IBC, they have one tape, and they want me to release some. Well, we don't have any to release so we have one tape to use today - at every venue (Francoeur, Feb. 23, 1988).

Despite the general sense amongst the Crew that CTV would profit significantly and would achieve their anticipated ratings gain in the industry, the specific criticisms by the CTV-DB hockey crew focused on their immediate concerns for achieving the technical requirements and support services, that were either missing on site, or had been inadequately provided for them. It was difficult to complete their broadcast work tasks at the level of quality they knew from personal experience that they were capable of if they had the resources and the state-of-the-art equipment their cohorts at CTV-Host were using. One of the technical engineers overviewed the Olympic technical experience for CTV Domestic:

We were brought in only two days before to set up for the Olympics. It wasn't enough. Unfortunately, the problem we had getting into the building - the security - we had the wrong accreditation which took four to five hours to rectify. Then, no one could tell us where the stuff goes. Most of the planning time was spent determining where stuff goes. Monitors? Do intercoms have talkback? We had no information or diagrams to work with, plus I spent alot of time looking for keys to get into the studio. We had no runner so it took an hour. Its tight, but we screwup at the wrong time. A lot of the problems wouldn't have been there if we had more time to set up. We were rushed in to set up. Even the audio guy was making

cables. We're over-extended. (Ludvinka, Feb. 26, 1988).

Interestingly, the focus of financial complaints did not centre on their level of personal compensation in relation to CTV's overall gains as a business, but mainly on their resources of labour. What they produced seemed to be more consciously important than how they were rewarded.

The two and a half week Winter Olympic period was an endurance event for both the athletic teams and the television personnel alike. The strenuous nature of the media work was particularly evident in the hockey scheduling. On average, three hockey games were scheduled per day throughout the tournament, for fifteen of the sixteen changes of the Olympiad. Before 1988, the Olympic hockey tournament was traditionally a ten day event, with six games per day every second day. The thirty-nine game schedule for the 1988 tournament was required due to the increased number of medal round contenders, which had been increased from the traditional four team final to a six teams competition. Most members of the CTV hockey crew were assigned to broadcast two of the three daily games, with four days off over their entire stay in Calgary. The hockey crew worked extremely long days, averaging fourteen hours, although unexpected technical breakdowns, arrangements for studio interviews, research by announcers, etc. usually extended one day into the next. In addition, the technical crew were often informed at the last minute of their working day, that they were to remain at the Saddledome to replace an ill crew member for the figure skating team.

Crew members huddled and commiserated with each other during broadcast "down"

periods (off air breaks for the hockey crew), “anyone got some Kleenex or some Halls?”, “these have been the sickest Games in history” complained a senior cameraman, who recalled covering the 1976 Summer Games for CBC under warmer circumstances, and wetter CFL Grey Cup finals in earlier eras. “We thought the Sarejevo Games would be the worst for the flu bug”, the producer recalled. While the International Winter Sports Federation complained about the gruelling and unfair schedule for the hockey players prior to the Olympics, the schedule, the working conditions were a “non-issue” for the Games’ organizing committee and for the networks, who were concerned with the maximum extraction of surplus value during the sixteen day Olympic period.

While the production costs of the CTV-HB crew were in excess of \$50 million (which were paid for by OCO’88 through the sale of feed to 390 broadcasters from various nations around the world) , the CTV Domestic crew worked within a very tight budget. They packaged the hockey games for domestic feed with *sub-state-of-the-art* production facilities and equipment. CTV assumed the clean visual and sound feed from their Host Broadcaster sibling would ensure the domestic coverage had a glow. While the CTV Host crew’s technical set-up and preparation were internally viewed as “badly overdone” by both crews, the Domestic crew often struggled desperately with last minute details: such as attempting to hook up video lines five minutes before airtime of the opening ceremonies, soothing angry “talent” or sportscasters, whose cough button was inoperable, soldering cables borrowed from ABC, scrambling to fix audio headsets and inoperable video replay machines in their undersized production truck (which they alternately called the “shit-wagon” while within it, and the “milk truck” while near CTV officials at the International Broadcast Centre hockey work station beside the executive offices). As the

assistant director for hockey evaluated the truck, the mobile crew in the tape and audio rooms nodded in agreement:

We should be able to walk in and get on air, but the truck was not ready. When you're travelling a truck a couple thousand miles there are a lot of things that happen on the way here. I'm sure it went into the ditch when it got here -- the machines are shaking. It's just a matter of time. We should not have to check it out (Francoeur, Feb. 23, 1988).

The powerful sense of craft that each Domestic crew member felt towards "his" task was ultimately articulated as each man's personal responsibility to "get the job done with any equipment under any conditions" (Ludvinka, Feb. 15, 1988).

There still existed some degree of awareness of the disabling contingencies mediating their work due to the network's frugal production cost balancing. This too was awarded an official working network slogan by the crew as one way of psychologically defusing the disheartening job contingencies, which they couldn't control, but which did negatively affect the quality of the work they knew they were capable of; CTV's acronym was thus boldly redefined by the technical end of the crew, from the "Canadian Television Network" to "Cheap, Tacky and Vulgar" (CTV-DB soundman, Feb. 20, 1988). What began as a humorous aside and comic relief for the crew, became a working slogan for the team to help "blow off steam"; yet the net effect of this level of symbolic resistance neither changed the circumstances of the labour site that hampered the completion of their assignments, empowered their creative licence, nor improved the quality and quantity of technical resources allocated to them.

It was only at the producer-director level that media professionals in the temporary CTV Olympic corporations had a relatively clear sense of the economic value extracted from their labour. Knowing the level at which the network would profit from this event, the CTV Domestic Producer for hockey had developed a “give and take” attitude toward the preparation of production budgets. He seemed to possess clear knowledge of his present worth on the freelance broadcast labour market, and a sense of his actual level of relative experience and talent within the television industry overall. At the Games, he was constantly frustrated about not having enough personnel on the crew; but, as mentioned earlier, the producer was not aiming for a technically perfect hockey broadcast because the network had “not paid for top of the line equipment” on the domestic side in order to squeeze out a 200% profit.

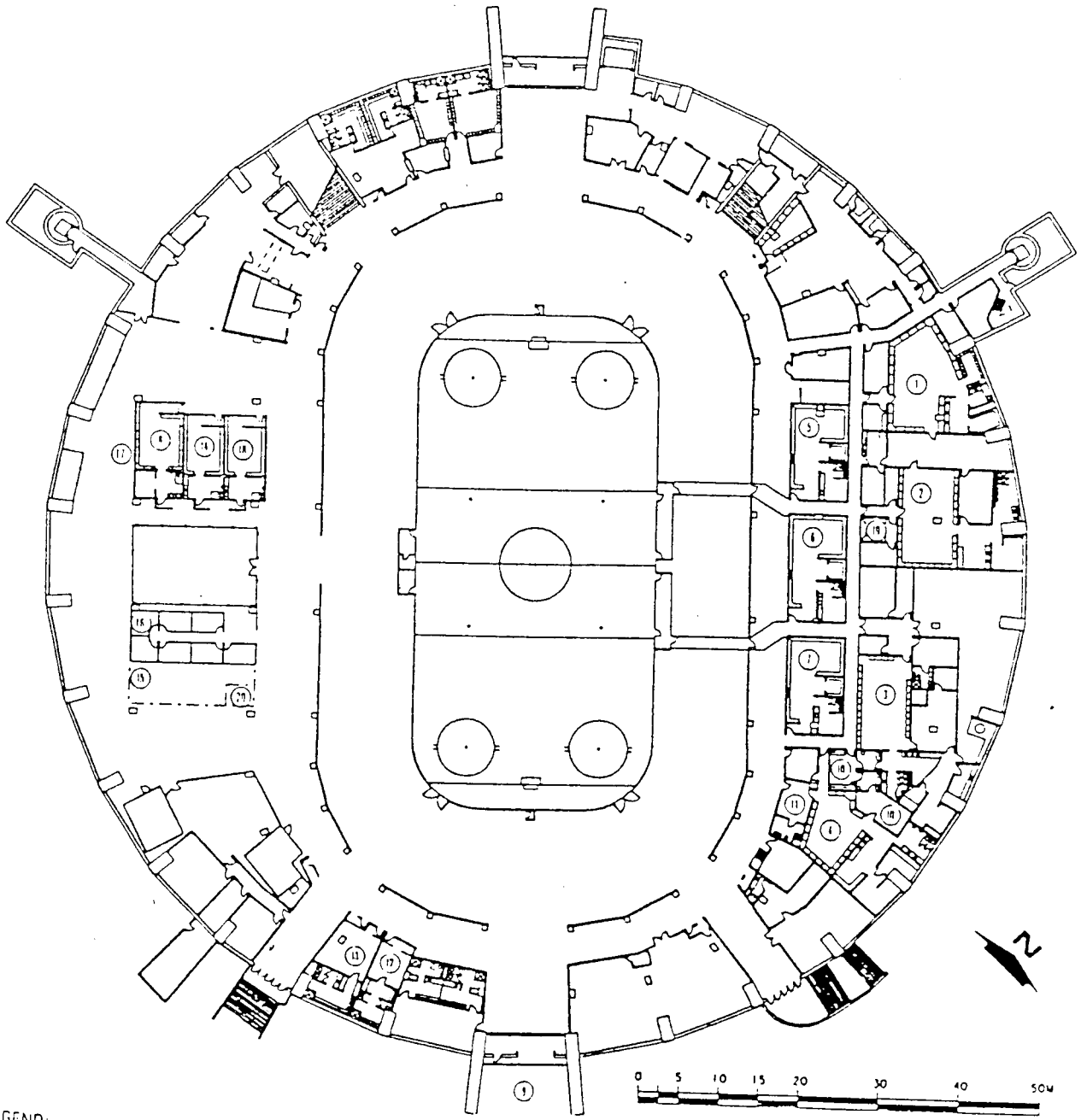
The hockey teams, whose physical beings and actions within the games became the “raw material” of the crew’s labour, and the television crews themselves expended a tremendous level of mental energy in their preparations and physical effort to technically produce Olympic broadcasts. As well, the television “talent”, as the announcers and on-air hosting personalities were officially labelled, were all acutely aware of their abilities to generate huge revenues for the CTV corporation through their culturally informed presentation of ice hockey. The “talent” were also keenly aware they took home a substantially greater proportions of the broadcast revenues than the other media labourers; but the announcing team also knew their merit was only judged and rewarded in accordance with how “good they were in the last game they called” (Kelly, Feb. 23, 1988). Most of the technical crew had been hired on a contractual basis for the Olympics from a huge pool of workers from networks around the world and from the pool of freelancers (although the

CTV Host and Domestic hockey crews were all Canadian); most had not achieved a powerful enough position to negotiate greater remuneration, except in the skilled computer positions and the on-air roles. The “talent”, as veteran news anchor Lloyd Robertson called himself, hockey play-by-play announcer Dan Kelly, and former superstar athlete-analyst Brad Park had been able to negotiate their contract due to the “signifying” power they yielded in the positions of authoritative news and sports anchors. Since the broadcast entertainment industry believes that magnifying personalities can draw an audience, their negotiating power was directly related to the value they could inject into the commentary to draw audience ratings. Nonetheless, the high salaries paid to announcers for helping to boost ratings, tended to be seen in an everyday sense as an *objective exchange* of fees for elite announcing performances and billboarding, rather than the social relation *between people* in this broadcasting worksite and their relationship with the audience.

The star announcers, and popular athletes such as former NHL player/Team Canada goalie Andy Moog, or Fetisov, the captain to the Russian team, all became commodities at the 1988 hockey tournament both culturally and economically. They had been offered for auction to agents, sport organizations, advertisers, and the media. The end result was that the social relations and conditions of the media-sport worksite were marginalized in order to transform the television commodity into a more profitable product to sell advertisers to the nation of fans (or vice versa, fans in the form of audience ratings to sponsors). For example, as noted earlier, the \$309 million(US) Olympic television rights contract obtained by ABC from the IOC, compelled all networks, who have traditionally relied on hockey to fill many Olympic programming slots, to rearrange and intensify the labour process of their athletes and their television crew.

In Canada, winning exclusive rights to broadcasting the Olympic Games to the nation live in our time zones guaranteed winning the ratings war and the big national/multi-national sponsors because all broadcast competitors are blocked and the special symbolism of the Olympics as an international event and the pinnacle of sporting excellence served to intrigue the fans and the corporate sponsors. Further, following suit with the sponsors, the network believed that its corporate prestige was deepened by its association with Olympism; CTV's vice-president of sports, Johnny Eshaw, stated that the status and prestige of the network had "climbed a few notches in the minds of Canadians" because of their host broadcaster contributions, and their domestic broadcaster accomplishments (1988).

Still, inside of this industry financial steep climb, the CTV Domestic and Host Broadcast crews for ice hockey at the Saddledome venue consciously pursued and thought of their labour primarily as a *technical venture*. For most, crew members adjusting the broadcast picture meant conferring with the electronic routing maps for Olympic venues to complete assigned tasks: adjusting the process of production or the division of labour was not a conscious possibility.

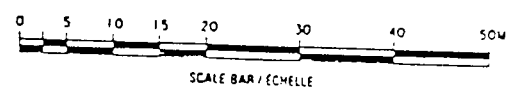


- LEGEND:**
- Assigned Dressing Rooms
- ① Sweden
 - ② U.S.S.R.
 - ③ Czechoslovakia
 - ④ Canada
 - ⑤ ~~USA~~ Federal Republic of Germany
 - ⑥ Finland
 - ⑦ ~~USA~~ FRG
 - ⑧ Poland
 - ⑨ Athletes' Entrance
 - ⑩ Athlete Medical

- ⑪ Medical Control
- ⑫ Officials Room
- ⑬ Minor Game Officials
- ⑭ Hockey Dressing Room
- ⑮ Athletes Lounge
- ⑯ Team Service Providers
- ⑰ Drying area above
- ⑱ Sport Administration Room
- ⑲ Hockey Equipment Room
- ⑳ Info R&T/Transportation

- LÉGENDE :**
- Vestiaires assignés
- ① Suède
 - ② U.R.S.S.
 - ③ Tchécoslovaquie
 - ④ Canada
 - ⑤ République fédérale d'Allemagne
 - ⑥ Finlande
 - ⑦ É. U.
 - ⑧ Pologne
 - ⑨ Entrée des athlètes
 - ⑩ Services médicaux aux athlètes

- ⑪ Contrôle médical
- ⑫ Salle des officiels
- ⑬ Officiels adjoints
- ⑭ Vestiaire - hockey
- ⑮ Salon des athlètes
- ⑯ Services aux équipes
- ⑰ Aire de séchage à l'étage
- ⑱ Salle de l'administration - sports
- ⑲ Salle de l'équipement - hockey
- ⑳ Info R&T/transport



(IV) TECHNOLOGICAL MEDIATIONS OF THE LABOUR PROCESS

CTV brings the excitement of the XV Olympic Winter Games through miracle of modern technology (CTV'S Guide to the Olympics, 1988).

Technology is a *cultural* form, an application and a tool. Broadcast technology, including remote control cameras and computer software, are always employed in historically specific ways. Televised sport programming at the 1988 Games then, was neither miraculously determined by the camera, nor was it a neutral reproduction of the 'reality' of hockey somehow independent from any of the work activities by the crew members mediating the television production labour process. The various pressures and limits upon the Olympic spectacle discussed so far, such as the commercial imperative imparted by the Olympic organizers, the division of television labour and professional broadcasting ideals, all played a role in shaping the television spectacle. Attendant to this, the prevailing uses of technology by the crew in 1988 had emerged from within the institutionalized settings of North American television production.

In addition, the social use of broadcast technology can be considered to be the result of the particular ends sought within the limits of existing technological developments, technical possibilities, and the priorities of those who employed the technology (see Williams, 1975:134). Under the legal agreement CTV-Host Broadcaster signed with OCO'88, who in turn had been entrusted by the International Olympic Committee's basic broadcast requirements, the media crew had to be meticulously organized to technically produce three hundred hours of live and very unpredictable hours of sporting competition, plus approximately two hundred and fifty hours of ceremonies, press conferences scenic

pictures, pre-event presentations and post-event highlight packages. As many as eight 'live' events had to be produced simultaneously by the broad collective of CTV Olympic event crews. The CTV Host Managing Director, Phyllis Switzer, said the Host service at the 1988 Games was the most ambitious and technically complex project the CTV network had ever undertaken (1988).

All venue crews and technical equipment had to be borrowed or leased from major Canadian broadcast and film companies. In total, the CTV-Host Broadcaster required 12 mobile units, 150 cameras, 675 technicians, 43 videotape operators, 46 miles of camera cable, and 15 miles of audio cable. Eleven to twelve of these cameras were utilized in the Olympic Saddledome by the CTV-HB crews, while the CTV-DB supplemented this visual coverage with two more cameras, one for the post-game studio interview or rinkside Canadian content, and the other ENG hand-held camera for the commentator's booth to capture CTV Domestic Broadcaster's hockey talent. The bulk of the technology was supplied by CTV affiliate stations and production companies from across the nation; some equipment had to be leased from independent stations and their national rivals at CBC. In addition, arrangements for leasing four Satellite connections and twenty-three terrestrial connections had to be negotiated for a temporary monthly basis.

At the 1988 Games, it was CTV's technical objective to produce the best possible international feed for pictures and sound, but the discrepancies in resources between Domestic and Host broadcasters made the chore more challenging for the national broadcaster. CTV adapted the North American standard of producing a televisual signal of 525 lines (NTSC) and 60 hz. (See Table 4.2 "Equipment and Facilities Totals"). The CTV

Host Broadcaster's state-of-the-art technology were set up weeks before the Games began allowing the CTV hockey crew for Host Broadcaster to experiment with new cameras and to familiarize themselves with their broadcast gear. CTV Domestic Broadcaster, on the other hand, arrived hours before the opening faceoff, struggled to "fire up" the old equipment which didn't quite fit into the old production truck, required more cables than supplied to make all the necessary connections. Their sole objective in setting up their "junkyard media heap" was to survive technologically to end of the Olympic event where they felt immediately underfed and underwired. Many on the Domestic crew, both talent and technician ranks, felt frustrated in having been located in a "technical shantytown", as one engineer called it as he peered over at the sparkling Host mobile unit in the parking lot. Play-by-play announcer, Dan Kelly, was perpetually frustrated throughout the games over technical glitches and worried his reputation was being harmed by the technical standards:

I know what I'm doing, and I know how it should be done, and when all of that goes smoothly. My biggest problem here has been the technical, and I am not used to that. I'm used to first class headsets, because the games are hard enough to do. As I tell people, I can screw the game up quite simply without any help from you or him. After these games, I still have to work. Next time I bring my own headset" (Feb. 23. 1988).

Table 4.2: CTV EQUIPMENT AND FACILITIES TOTALS

CTV HB EQUIPMENT	CTV HB IBC	CTV HB VENUES	CTV HB TOTAL
MOBILE UNITS	-	12	12
PRODUCTION CONTROL ROOMS	1	15	16
PRESENTATION CONTROL ROOMS	-	-	-
CAMERAS (PRODUCTION)	2	144	146
CAMERAS (ENG)	-	4	4
VTRs 1" C FORMAT	24	39	63
3/4"	1	-	1
1/2" BETACAM	1	6	7
ZEUSS (IMPROVED SLO-MO)	2	12	14
SUPER SLO-MO (SONY)	-	2	27
CHYRONS	3	15	18
DUBNERS	-	2	2
SYNCHRONIZERS	15	12	27
ELECTRONIC EFFECTS	-	3	3
RADIO STUDIOS	2	-	2
RADIO STUDIOS (OFFICE OPERATIONS)	-	-	-
LOCAL VIDEO CIRCUITS - VENUES TO IBC	-	-	-
- SATELLITE	-	-	4
- TERRESTRIAL	-	-	23
COMMENTARY POSITIONS:	5	383	388

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The introduction of increasingly sophisticated technology into the industry, often heralded as an innovative step forward, was not necessarily a progressive occurrence at the 1988 Olympics. History has supported the observation that technology can be enabling and disabling of the production of meanings and of profits. For example, in the 1950s, the introduction of "public television" typically involved large screen film presentations of

¹¹Source: CTV Host Broadcaster's, *General Broadcaster's Manual*, (1989: 6).

sporting events projected at local cinemas (Williams 1975). Enlarging the images enabled viewers to keep up with fairly current affairs, however the projection also increased the spacing between the vertical linebars across wide and tall screens, thereby creating a poor quality blurry image of sport and world news. Top producers in sports broadcasting today believe that they have historically “re-invented the wheel” of television technology for the whole industry (Mellanby: Feb. 9, 1988).¹² For example, after sports producers have continually experimented with new technology and successfully broadcast sport programming over the past few decades (such as the introduction of split screen simultaneous images and instant replays), the rest of the television industry have been forced, or opted, to adopt the new technology and the new techniques to the demands of their type of programming be they drama, news, or other programme genres. Sports broadcasting has become primarily encapsulated within entertainment standards of production at the same time its experimentation with the equipment is ongoing to shift the boundaries of the entertainment genre. New technological “toys”, such as the computerized dubner or the chryron graphics generator were chosen by the CTV Host and Executive Domestic producers to make the hockey games “more exciting for the viewer at home” (Mercele, Dec. 29, 1987). Technological enhancement has typically been viewed as an evolutionary force in the broadcast media whose introduction at world events has produced an impressed and

¹²Although Ralph Mellanby, a pioneer in the televised sport industry, was one of the very few who understood the *social use* of technology, and clearly was aware of its development in response to changing economic demands and entertainment requirements. He believes that the history or current analysis of sportscasting had to be framed through technology. “Your research, Margaret, should be about technology, and not just one chapter devoted to it”, he tried to convince me during an interview. After living through the experimental stages of applying decades of broadcast technology to the making of sporting spectacles, having the power and resources to play, he approaches technology with a glowing appreciation that adds creativity to is normally a conventional job, and as a toy. Ironically, Mellanby also stresses a belief that his new equipment serves him as more than tools to work with. Perhaps what this executive director could not pin point, was the symbolic worth of the technology; new technology with new capabilities confers status within the industry between peers and it offers the potential for creative endeavour.

gratified audience. Moreover, the Olympic Games have generally been viewed by the television industry at the showcase event for its technical achievements and innovations. This technological extravaganza was often promoted by CTV at the 1988 Games as an exciting display of network developments; "technology has always taken a forward leap at the Olympic Games".¹³ So, while the social use of broadcasting equipment has fashioned meaning for the Olympic spectacle, the world of media technology is indeed a fashion industry in itself.

The paradox of new technological evolutions structuring opportunities for network placement and professional recognition, has been that technical breakdowns trigger professional embarrassment, fear, and economic loss. At the level of conscious labour strategies and chores, Olympic hockey coverage was considered to be predominantly a technological task by the domestic crew, not symbolic or representational. Announcers argued that the verbal "colouring" of their commentary has become "more scientific"; before the replay technology was available, for example, "colour had to talk a lot more, now half of what your colourman is doing is dictated by the replay and we've got so many more replays at the Olympics than I can remember. More time is spent analyzing not colouring" (Kelly, Feb. 23, 1988). This emphasis on technical matters is the result of a number of social factors: (a) production personnel used broadcast technology in most of their broadcasting tasks and were constantly dealing with equipment malfunctions and failures; (b) they view broadcasting to be "ninety percent technical preparation" (Francoeur, Feb. 23, 1988) such as equipment setup, facilities checks, and backup planning for technical glitches; and (c) they understand hockey production, which was firmly

29 Cited in ACCESS. Roizen, J. (1987), consultant and president of Telegen California.

conventionalized in the 1950s and 60s, as one of the “easiest” sports to cover because of technical familiarity and conventions (Merce, Dec. 29, 1987). Innovative measures in television technology, such as reduced equipment and camera bulk, increased efficiency through computerization and automation, and new digitized graphic abilities, have reduced the physical strain on the technical crew and permitted the production crew to insert “enhanced” views of hockey; for the most part, however, these were changes of degree and not considered to be complete re-inventions of technical traditions in the hockey coverage. At the conscious working level, therefore, broadcasting live Olympic events were viewed as a technical task within a larger financial game for the network according to the Domestic hockey crew.

Technological innovation has been an important element which networks have drawn out to promote the corporation and to engage in inter-network competition: “*CTV Shines: The Network’s Technical Facilities Are An Envious Achievement*” . For the 1988 Games, “CTV decided that a state-of-the-art computer animated introduction to each broadcast was the only way to let viewers know they are watching a first-class operation”¹⁴ One key example of the promotion of industry technology development and usage was the celebration of the “reverse angle” and panavision shots, the former being borrowed from recent American football coverage which was adopted for the first time in hockey coverage by CTV at the 1988 Olympics. The purpose of the reverse angle shot was to determine through the assumed “objective eye of the camera”, *why* the puck missed the net, or how a player was hurt. Ironically, while live action sports coverage usually adhered to the “180 degree rule”, non-realist mediations of the sportscast being constantly employed after the major

¹⁴M. Morais cited in Davis (1988).

breaks in play, offered extraordinary feats of athleticism or blunders with the technological application of action replays and slow-motion. These have enabled the “critical” moments of the play to be recounted by the experts as they analyzed the segment of play, “as you can see Dan, Shervon comes behind the net, but the puck just misses as he is checked” (Park, Feb.18, 1988). But “slo-mo” replays have become such standardized and taken-for-granted aspects of the play that seemingly more “progressive” technological devices have been introduced in order to claim the “best” coverage of all the competing networks.¹⁵

The “reverse angle” shot and “super-slow motion” replay are two such “improvements” to the game of televised hockey that, in the case of the reverse angle, required a graphic label and commentator’s explanation in order to avoid confusing the television viewer. Confusion can arise when the scoring team is suddenly replayed as skating in the opposite direction to live play, seemingly toward their own net. Thus, the changes in televised sports production that producers see as technologically “innovative” are not necessarily accorded the same merit by the audience. Still, even within the broadcast media culture, warnings accompanied innovations. Ralph Mellanby, the executive director of Host Broadcaster reminded this CTV Host Broadcasting crew that 390 world broadcasters had different audiences with different tastes and that they should “use broadcasting gimmicks judiciously” (Feb. 9, 1988).

¹⁵ While crew talk endlessly about the exciting capabilities of “modern” broadcast technologies, the contradictions between “quality” coverage plans by CTV, technological possibilities, and decisions to keep production costs minimal on the Domestic Broadcasting side heightened crew frustration and anger. The assistant director for Domestic hockey complained, “This truck is not suited for the work we are required to do ... We are dealing with very old machines of questionable quality ... for what we’re doing these machines are too slow, the control box is a ridiculously slow control box that doesn’t have the shuttle versatility we need to do hockey” (Francoeur, Feb. 23, 1988).

Changes on the domestic-home technological frontier have created pressures for the production team to deal with as well. The complex integration of digitized multi-media, interactive home video and stereo technology now require that the product within the encoding moment of production -- the moment of encoding -- to be of the highest quality possible. Distorted reception, typical of the coverage in the 1950s and 1960s, did not create any pressures toward improved audio-visual capacities for the producers of television programming at that time. But the recent introduction of stereophonic sound and high-definitional visuals represent new pressures and new opportunities for television producers. Furthermore, the integration of the VCR with other broadcast reception technology and stereo equipment, has altered the viewing habits of the sports audience. The ability to tape a show for latter viewing at the fan's discretion, enables the viewer to fast forward or "zap" commercials. This has pressured advertisers and the networks to devise new strategies to produce *into* the programming of sports; illustrations of this, include having the broadcaster put the commercial logos onto graphics such as the medal standings chart, inserting three second commercial moments, involving sport celebrities so that live sport performances can be woven into taped commercial plugs featured the same athlete. During the Olympiad under study in 1988, CTV inserted 30 second commercials between the plays on the ice, so that little time would be lost and the spectators would not have enough time to leave and return to their seat without missing coverage. Technology was employed to offer them the "best" seat. What has become evident is that the employment of technology by sports broadcaster and by the audience is not necessarily progressive or neutral, but has been generated out of a "general process of social development, growth, and struggle" (Williams 1975:136). Bringing Olympic sports to air was a Herculean task.

Having set forth the broad political economic and labour contexts of broadcasting for the televisual production of Olympic hockey, the notion that the act and product of media telecasting was also a spectacle of legitimation, can now be addressed. I have stressed the social processes of media labour and the historically defined structures of economic power that allow the 1988 Calgary Winter Olympics to be understood as a spectacle of accumulation. It should be noted that it is only in the viewing of broadcast programming that the media labour process was completed and the spectacle of accumulation is achieved. The audience labour to complete the cycle of cultural production is an integral part of the labour process not studied in this project, as it was impossible for me to ethnographically study two sites concurrently. However the CTV domestic crew members' view of the audience, and what they assumed the Olympic hockey fan would prefer to see and hear in a telecast will be discussed. Clearly, the crew's assumptions powerfully mediated how technology was used to construct Olympic spectacle in ice hockey. What became increasingly apparent throughout my fieldwork, was that as the technical processes and problems of broadcasting labour became the overwhelming and outwardly expressed affair of the crew, the spectacle of accumulation (or the "financial game" as the crew called it) became the subject of daily struggles and consciously expressed negotiations. Meanwhile, as we will see in the next section, the dominant discourses of patriarchal hegemony and patriotism in the spectacle of legitimation found a comfortable current through which to flow.

PART III

OLYMPIC TELEVISION AS A SPECTACLE OF LEGITIMATION

Hockey began here, in the mythic...

Hockey is an allegory of our life in Canada as Canadians and of our role in society and our role in the role. We are in between the world's superpowers, skating circles at centre ice ... The game is the real national anthem of Canada.

(Doug Beardsley, 1987:36-37).

“The Olympics are about media and publicity”

*Ken Berry, Team Canada Hockey Player
(cited in Quarrington: 1988:260)*

CHAPTER 5:

TELEVISUAL TRANSFORMATIONS: THE ORGANIZED WORK OF MAKING MEANING

Producing ice hockey for a national television audience was an organized social process of legitimating dominant network messages and the traditional patriotic mythologies of Canada's hockey past. Although broadcasting technology was assigned to the centre stage of the labour process by the crew at the conscious level of endeavour, I shall argue that the transformation of hockey into an Olympic spectacle has been guided first and foremost by human agents. The CTV crew did not simply respond passively to electronic capabilities and technical imperatives, the crew actively entered into and reproduced a gendered division of labour and made countless decisions to employ select broadcast technology in conventional and occasionally creative ways to capture hockey live in a meaningful manner. Visions seemed to flow effortlessly from the technology, but careful observation noted how hard the crew had to work to select traditional codes of hockey commentary, and to meld these to the exclusively mandated commercial messages for cars, film and beer while pushing alternative visions of hockey out of the frame.

One of the key advantages of ethnographic research is that this mode of inquiry can reveal how dominant or taken-for-granted ways of thinking and behaving within the broadcast crew setting are organized or resisted. Ethnography can examine how the central messages of the broadcast are limited by, yet not merely reflections of the broader political-economic structures. This Olympic field study exposes the relationships between

people -- in the CTV network, between CTV and the Olympic Family, and with their broadcast product -- that are part and parcel of producing those wider structures of power. In other words, human agents on the television crews, not the technology, have figured prominently in constituting and reconstituting dominant cultural discourses about Canadian sport, culture, and athletic masculinity, which the crew legitimated through their broadcasting. Because the game of hockey has enjoyed long standing acclaim as *the* totem of Canadian culture, it was easily taken up, retooled, and adapted metaphorically to suit the marketing needs of the national private broadcaster.

Hockey has long enjoyed the most privileged position amongst the wide variety of sports played and celebrated in Canadian society. It has been culturally sanctioned as “the” symbol and practice of national culture; yet, it is not universally accepted as the “Canadian specific” as the sports media have often led fans to believe. Certainly, hockey has not spoken of, or to, the lives of all people within the nation. Historically, it has been a game organized and played mainly by white males. The masculine euro-centric tradition reproduced in CTV’s televisual work was permeated and guided by what Mary O’Brien has called “malestream thought” (1976). While the tag of “national game” has successfully been used in struggles to culturally assimilate various groups of males immigrating to Canada through out the past century, as can be illustrated through the continuing success of such organizations as the Italian Hockey League in Toronto, and while hockey has been partially claimed as a game for females to play¹, the game is not a *national game* for all

¹ In 1988 women’s hockey was not on the Olympic programme; now that it has been accepted for the 1998 Games in Japan, new groups of woman may attempt to redefine what the “national game” means to them as players, coaches, fans and possible media personnel. However, at the 1988 games the hockey crew members either refused to discuss the topic of women playing hockey at any level, or shrugged off the topic as a “non-issue” during taped interviews and informal discussions.

Canadians, especially in the multicultural Canada of the 1980s and early 1990s. Nonetheless, lovers of hockey have successfully marketed hockey as “The Game”.

Historically, hockey has carried a variety of symbolic meanings and has been enjoyed as a variety of activity practices (e.g. industrial hockey, non-contact hockey, old-timers hockey). CTV Host and Domestic hockey crews had to work hard in 1988 to frame “a” certain *sports quo* of Canadian hockey. The sports status quo had to serve a wide Olympic audience searching for an exciting competition, while carefully melding commercial messages into the programme in a seamless manner. In this section of the dissertation, I examine the making and remaking of discourses of hockey and Canadian culture by the CTV Domestic crew as they manufacture a broadcast spectacle of legitimation. Discussion begins in this chapter by examining how CTV Olympic hockey programmes in February of 1988 were the result of a complex process of crew labour, coordination, and creative and planned work carried out within a production process that was highly institutionalized and featured high levels of labour discipline. The greater the potential margin of error in broadcasting events, the stricter the formulas are applied in pre-event planning, claimed a veteran CTV producer and announcer before a production meeting. Before the opening of the Olympic Games in Calgary, a strict strategic plan and set of cue sheets had been scripted for the live programme. Similar to other modes of industrial labour, the particular organizational matrix of the hockey crew was designed through a hierarchy of job responsibilities. The organizational hierarchy was based upon: (a) producing maximum efficiency within the major limits and pressures of network programming needs and formatting, time, technology and money; (b) the distribution of specialized skills required for television broadcasting; (c) the dynamics of OCO-CTV Host-

CTV Domestic management strategies and crew interaction; and (d) the professional ideologies and interrelated styles of sports broadcasting that have developed historically and are now widely shared in the North American television industry. To study the social processes of producing Olympic hockey as a spectacle of legitimation, ethnographic inquiry into the sites and interactions of televisual labour was necessary to inspect: (I) the particular nature of the crew's division of labour, (II) the production skills and conventions of producing sport for national broadcast, (III) the ways in which human relations between crew members became reified, and (IV) the pre-planned formatting of the Olympic telecast and the daily programming flow.

(I) THE MENTAL-PHYSICAL DIVISION OF CREW LABOUR²

The exact organization of the broadcasting division of labour tended to follow some of the basic patterns of other forms of industrial labour. Similar to the mental/physical division of labour uncovered in the production sites observed by Willis (1977), and in the media production discussions of Ellis (1982), the Glasgow Media Group (1976) and Clarke (1981, 1987), divisions in CTV sports production labour exhibited the same sorts of cleavages. Mental work was assigned to the managerial, creative and “talent” (hosting) strata of the crew. A stratified hierarchy of decision making and authority located the “executive producers” in the crowning position. Below them, the producer-directors for particular sports were situated in positions of power over the technical crew covering the event: it was the event producer-director who possessed the greatest degree of actual decision making power and creative input to the overall televisual product on the CTV Domestic television crews. Editors in the hockey venue normally occupied a role wavering

² While the crew acknowledged a mental-physical separation between various roles in the division of labour, they viewed the advent of automated and computer-based digital broadcasting technology as bridging the gap. Moreover, media labour cut across a number of sites which produce both economic and cultural capital. In addition to the multitude of sporting event sites -- such as the International Broadcast Centre, the mobile truck, the Saddledome studio and booth, the hockey game on the ice, the advertisers focus groups for audience research -- media labour cuts across the sites of the *audience* labour as well. The fans of the televised sport rework and complete the hockey codes they are presented with.

It is only in consumption moment of audience viewing that the labour process of the Olympic spectacle of accumulation and legitimation is momentarily completed, that the circuit of cultural production comes full circle. The particular “use” of the television product by the Olympic audience may be aligned with what Stuart Hall calls the “preferred reading” (1982), but the audience interpretation and cultural use of the encoded discourses can never be fully contained or “closed” by the crew: all communicated discourses can be read in an alternate or “oppositional fashion”.

While this ethnography does not include study of the audience, the crews perception of the audience while conducting their work has been taken into consideration. In general, the crew believed that the manner in which it was producing the Olympic ice hockey tournament for television was a manner expected by the regular fans of hockey, and that it would excite the broader Olympic audience; this assumption served as uncritical confirmation of the quality of their work and reinforced the conventional nature of the organization of the work.

somewhere between the creative levels of the upper production ranks and the technical work levels of the CTV-DB. They basically performed a techno-electric “switching” job during action replays of hockey goals when they were requested by commentators, the producer-director, or infused by the Host broadcaster. Crew roles of the physical-technical nature ranged from camera, sound and lighting specialists, to special-effects and graphic experts, to assistants and runners. The lone female, the studio floor manager, was separated from the live hockey action and served to direct traffic by transmitting visual cueing messages such as the count down to the start of the interview from the producer-director in the mobile truck to the announcer in the studio and the cameraman. The gender division and separation of labour sites was striking: her chores when she was assigned to the crew, such as “suited-up” the on-air guests with microphones and serving water to hockey players in the studio, were quite “domestic” in comparison to the technical-physical and creative endeavours of the rest of the crew.

This last observation points to the necessity of examining the labour process in terms of a gendered division of labour. Insights from both feminist labour theory and ethnographic studies have been incorporated in this study to help explain the complex nature of the media labour process. An important observation of the capitalist labour process in recent feminist work, has been that the labour process cut across a multitude of sites. Central problems in traditional labour theory and within actual labour contexts, have been that gender differences in physical and mental capacities for labour, skills, and attitudes toward production have been widely accepted without question or challenge (Armstrong and Armstrong, 1990:15).

The traditional nature of the sports covered during the 1988 Winter Olympics imposed a crew division as well; each role on the crew was associated with different geographic considerations and climatic conditions. For example, the controlled climate of the indoor Saddledome arena created a comfortable temperature in which to work, but permitted the tightening of security and secluded crew members to particular work zones of the Saddledome. Outside in the mobile truck, the conditions varied dramatically: the CTV domestic producer and mobile production truck crew were seated uncomfortably in the chilly Domestic hockey truck; some members, such as the roving electrical technician and the mobile's engineer had to squat on their hind legs because some areas needing technical repair in the mobile simply didn't have enough room for a chair. The technology did not fit the truck. John Grimes the owner and engineer of the mobile, worked in isolation in the tiny electrical hub of the truck that he simply called "the box". While the hockey crews were separated by their satellite work stations around hockey arena and in the three compartments of the truck, the venue did offer spaces to escape to relax or socialize with other crew members, such as the lunchroom and lounge. By way of contrast, this work site was significantly more comfortable and social than the CTV ski sites, where some workers were stationed high on a mountain to shoot the runs and suffered from the windy and cold mountainous terrain and the isolation of sitting alone for hours. Thus, the required use of broadcasting technology under varying geographic and climatic conditions, and the associated mental-physical division of labour, affected the crew placement, degrees of crew interaction or lack of direct social contact. Since television was first introduced to Canada in the 1950s, the work of sport production teams has become sedimented into standardized sets of work habits, routines and crew organization, and use of the technology. There were a limited number of producers and directors at the 1988 games who have been, and continue to be, key actors establishing the traditions of sports coverage. It soon became obvious at

the 1988 Games that only the senior sportscaster on the CTV domestic crew had conscious knowledge of the historical roots of these traditions and was able to articulate the reasons for currently preferred modes of sports production. Ed Mercel for example, the Executive Producer of CTV Domestic Olympic Sports coverage, was keenly aware of the extent of his innovative input into sportscasting over the last two decades. Having developed the style of Olympic alpine ski coverage that has been adopted by Canadian sports crews for the nine Winter Olympiads before 1988, and having designed the format for Grand Prix Auto Racing recently established in the sports television marketplace, he has long felt a “a great sense of satisfaction” when reminiscing about his career contributions to the consolidation of sports coverage standards. Most important to Mercel, was the fact that his televisual “packages” are still being used by those who now cover those sports (1987).

On the CTV Host Broadcasting side, Ralph Mellanby and Ron Harrison are other cases in point. Mellanby served as the executive producer for *Hockey Night in Canada* for 18 years, and served as CTV’s executive producer for the Host Broadcaster signal at the 1988 Winter Olympic Games. Mellanby also looked fondly back to the changes he claimed to have introduced into sports broadcasting, such as new camera positions for hockey in the Olympic Saddledome. He also recalled his memories of skating with the Montreal Canadiens NHL team in the early days of television broadcasting in Canada, in order to capture a “feel” for the real speed of the game, and recalled his experiments with camera angles so that he could translate the speed of hockey into a compelling television programme.

Mellanby’s reflections on the history of sports broadcasting conveyed some interesting paradoxes between claims of personal interventions into the use of broadcast

technology, and how technology has influenced television sports production. "Technology", Mellanby claims, "is just a tool to be creative ... the better camera angles take work" (Feb. 9, 1988). He claimed that after the game had "stagnated" visually for many years, he was involved in two new developments introduced at the Olympics: the addition of a wider lens camera behind the net in a plexiglass port cut out of the boards, and the placement of the overhead camera with 360 degree rotating power. He suggested that these developments represented his final success in shifting the televisual "best seat in the house" from the spectator's viewpoint to the best view of competition on the bench *with* the team or beside the CTV announcers. "Now we audit the game. I've tried lenses with good resolutions so I don't have to cut all over the place. With basically one camera with a good lens we audit the game. There's less editing". Mellanby not only had the power to use the technology as a creative tool, he had the power to decide the continued use of the broadcasting equipment necessary to get hockey games to air. Planned innovations were mechanically previewed in the CTV Host Broadcaster's Handbook to ensure instant global use in a standardized way. He enjoyed the power to set the craft, but wavered in his proclamations of technology as mere tool versus the view that technology was the motor of the broadcasting industry and the element in the making of global sporting spectacle.

Ron Harrison, who served as the Host director of the ice hockey tournament and the director of the opening ceremonies was the another CTV member who had witnessed and been involved in hockey's evolution as a spectacle for television. He was cognizant of the human decisions and traditions that had been negotiated. He observed that these elements of the broadcasting craft had become so naturalized for the other members of the CTV Host and Domestic hockey crews that they "accepted them as gospel". At the 1988 Games Harrison

was largely responsible for calling the camera cuts between shots and calling occasional changes to how the “game cam” was to audit the image. With a two to three decade generational gap between senior crew members and the technical broadcast and camera crews, these differences in knowledge were understandable. It was interesting, nonetheless, that personal style was still regarded as an instinctual gift not a developed craft. Still, the seniors had clearly “learned the ropes” by apprenticeship, trial and error and imagination; the majority of technical-engineering and camera ranks had learned the conventions and the craft in community college.

The following is an excerpt from an interview with Ron Harrison about the history of hockey broadcasting craft and tradition:

MM: Is there a sense of craft among hockey directors?

RH: Oh, it's very competitive. It's terribly competitive. In fact, it's the ol' cliché - you steal from other people.

MM: In what ways do you compete?

RH: Style. Style of directing. You know, if you do something in one telecast you can guarantee with the next three games, on some other network or station, you'll see the same thing. It's very competitive - much like Variety is. Somebody sees an idea, they take it, so there you go. So you know, you trick em, you come up with a new one the very next game. That's the whole story, you try to keep up with the Jones' when you get to remodel.

MM: How would you describe your style of directing?

RH: I don't know - that's a really tough question. You do what's instinctive to you... you take the critics' opinions after a while, and you try to adapt them depending on who's saying it. Discipline is the real tough one. It all depends who you are doing it for. It is really difficult. Like a guy, like Ralph Mellanby, who I admire very much, he doesn't like camera cuts in the offensive zone. So you have to be aware of that when you're doing it, especially at the Olympics. Ralph's in charge so you have to be aware of that. So you have to discipline yourself to do something you would not normally do in 23 games.

MM: Have there been changes in the way that hockey has visually been covered since the 1950s?

RH: Oh absolutely. When I first started, how it was covered - it's mind boggling to me. Fortunately or unfortunately you're too young to really know. I remember before the instant replay came along how we put replays on. In the old days, we had two inch tape, we had no system of slowing it down so they just created a delay pattern. Some genius person came up with a series of arms which basically just delayed the tape from getting from one machine to another in 15 seconds and that's the only replay we have. Well, then we subsequently went to the slow-motion disc and now it's all these wonderful one inch machines, slowmos, super slomo, super super slomo. I mean, the technology in 18 years is mind boggling... in the early '70s there were only two slow motion discs in Canada, one in Montreal and one in Calgary -- and they would rent them out to all the networks both for football and hockey - there's only two. Can you believe that? And then, slowly but surely, in the mid-70s these networks starting buying their own... Now everything is one inch.

MM: How about camera placements?

RH: Placements really haven't changed alot. We've modified them a little bit. But for the most part, camera placements remain fairly status quo because in the average hockey game - the Olympics are different in as much as it only happens once every four years and we're doing it here with 12 cameras. I don't want to say its overkill, but you wouldn't normally do a hockey game with 12 cameras. Normally, its with six to seven. I mean budgets play a big part of your telecast, it's quite a few thousand dollars out of your budget. And for the most part, you can only do a hockey game with six cameras- truly do a hockey game.

Now, the isolation factor is where you can add onto the six. My coverage is basically two camera coverage. That's simple, I don't care if you have twenty cameras, your lead camera and your tights, or in some rinks you have a high and a

low. So for the most part, like in Calgary here, we're using three cameras, the two that are side by side [in the commentating booth] and one low one. Once the whistle stops, you've got unlimited use of them, but, the key point is the isolation - there are so many variations in an isolation and that's really a camera's commitment... You can't rehearse a hockey game. You have to rehearse your mobile. Because every mobile is different. In the course of an NHL playoff, I could use up to 20 different mobiles. Every one is different so you've got to go in and memorize the monitor wall, and figure out where every thing is so when the game comes on its all second nature to you.

MM: How were the early decisions about the use of the camera determined?

RH: I think it was basically a combination of what a rink would allow you to do and trial and error for the most part. Nobody knew exactly the best way to cover it. A gentleman by the name of George Retzlaff, who started with *Hockey Night in Canada*, and he was the pioneer for television coverage of hockey.

MM: Are there any differences between how Canadian and European television crews cover hockey?

RH: Yah, their camera positions are much different than ours, they like to put their camera at the blue lines as opposed to centre ice. It's just a preference, but I'll tell you, very honestly, the country that has probably observed the Canadian style of doing hockey more than any other European is Russia... they copy us, they watch us, and they try to put alot of our style out there and you can see it.

Younger crew members believed you either "had" the ability to capture this style, or you didn't. Unlike the creative ranks of the broadcast industry, most of the young 1988 technical crew were unaware of the history of their highly conventionalized practices and unaware of the culturally inscribed nature of the broadcast codes they had inherited from crews before them. Tradition was employed uncritically in their work at the Olympics. Unlike the senior producers with experience in early hockey broadcasting, many of the

“little leaguers”³ on the crew assumed that “you either have *the touch*, or you don’t” according to the roving ENG camera man (Murphy, Feb.17, 1988). The male-dominated crew created a context in which the patriarchal foundations of this “gift” were easily reinforced. There was nearly unanimous agreement amongst the “techies” and cameramen that one had to be a male by birth to “truly understand the game” (Franceour, Feb. 23, 1988). If you didn’t understand the game, you couldn’t possibly have the “touch”. Camera operator Ted Perrotta’s framing of the live action, for example, was a response to his vision of the game as a fan; as the operator of camera one (game camera for tight follow) his audited flow of hockey plays, body checks and live action goals received the lion’s share of airtime:

first of all, it helps to be a fan of the sport because then if you’re a fan of the sport, then you know when you’re following the play - you can see where the guy is going to pass the puck and you know what should happen. Anticipation is a key to covering this. You know, also if your a fan and they say ‘give me so and so on the whistle’ you don’t have to go down and see what number he is. If you’re a fan you can recognize his face already, as soon as the whistle goes you can go to him, you don’t have to peak around your camera three or four times to see if you can see a number. You’ll recognize a guy’s face. You can only do the game if its inside you.

³ While the theoretical notion of gender is often assumed to be applicable to the study of women’s subordination or to the unequal relationships between men and women, gender relations do affect the relations between men. The mixture of the overriding power of the producer upon the broadcast team and the male-dominated character of the hockey telecast crew coalesced to construct patriarchal hierarchies within the crew. The producer-director of CTV Domestic hockey coverage called his crew the “little leaguers”. It’s a term, he later explained after the Games closed, that he applied to his management role as head of the crew; in an affectionate way he envisioned himself as a coach over a community soft-ball team. During the Olympic Games during moments of technical failure or crew fights, however, “little leaguers” became a derogative term for perceived lack of abilities and poor broadcast craft. The affectionate intonation was never publicly articulated in the crew’s presence. Instead, it was employed during production meetings, announcer’s meetings and during the interviews for this ethnography when members of the crew were absent.

For many on the crew, sports production was so routine that covering ice hockey is just a “natural thing to do” (Perrotta Feb. 23, Shannon Feb. 10, Murphy Feb. 17, Fox Feb. 9, 1988). “You get to know the technical end of this business ... get the mechanics down. From then on it’s all reflexes”, said camera operator Fox (Feb. 9, 1988). A pattern of assumption was clearly evident from the interviews and informal discussions as they worked: they believed that some Canadian males working on sports broadcasting teams have been “naturally endowed” with broadcast hockey skills, touch and immanent knowledge of the game. It was observed, however, that the senior producers in CTV set clear limits on the nature of Olympic telecasting and the style of product by the assignment of their crews to specific positions. Each role had been clearly bounded with a list of required skills and expectations. So despite long standing notions about the “touch”, the “storyline”, and the unwritten rules for the use of the technology, creative exploration was minimized in a tightly-formatted division of labour.

Illustration 5.1: CTV BROADCAST TEAM: THE "TALENT" STRATUM 4



Lloyd Robertson



Terrlyn Joe



Dan Matheson



Liz Grogan



Don Chevrier



Gerry Dobson



Johnny Esaw



Jim Hunter



Jeff Hutcheson



Dan Kelly



Al McCann



Paul Mennier



Ken Newans



Jarl Omholt-Jensen



Tom Overend



Brad Park



Bernie Pascall



Brian Pockar



Steve Podborski



Ron Reusch



Gerry Sorensen



Cathy Sproule



Brian Vachon



Marylene Vestergom



Denbi Wilkes

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4 Source: CTV's, *A Guide to the Olympics*, (1988:8),

(II) HOCKEY PRODUCTION SKILLS AND CONVENTIONS

As a game with its own set of traditional rules of play and conventional codes of representation, hockey has become so deeply engrained within the mythologies of “Canadian culture” and of sports-lore that the televisual codes of sports coverage employed by the CTV crew were also highly conventionalized. The technical crew adamantly professed that hockey was being televised in the manner that “it ought to be” at the 1988 Games. The conventions of televised hockey coverage, in other words, have been so deeply naturalized that they are uncritically considered to be virtually universal.

The senior hockey production personnel discussed the broadcasting traditions of this game with a curious mix of claims of “universal essence” and apathy toward innovation.

The production of hockey turned “stale” many years ago for the Domestic and Host CTV producers of hockey. They admitted that Olympic hockey was generally seen to be produced:

“the way hockey production has always been done. Hockey production is hockey production. Its one of the easiest sports to do because there’s nothing to prepare for and the individual producer can only inject small differences in taste by the pace and flow of cutting and commentator colour” (Ed Mercel, CTV Olympic Domestic Executive Producer 1987);

“every producer does it the same. If your watch it on t.v. I can’t tell the difference between different producers unless it’s really bad” (Dave Wait, CTV Domestic Olympic Ice Hockey Producer-Director, 1988);

“hockey is conventional -- I don’t think we give an opinion” (John Shannon, CTV Host Olympic Saddledome Venue Producer and Molstar Executive Producer for Stanley Cup Finals, 1988).

“hockey has stifled. After 18 years as executive producer of *Hockey Night in Canada* I left because I had dried up for hockey” (Ralph Mellanby, CTV Host Executive Producer, 1988).

Basically, the number one rule for producing hockey at the 1988 Games and in NHL coverage, was to *follow the puck*; changes in the broadcasting codes of hockey coverage have, therefore, been determined by the CTV crew making minor alterations in the way the puck was followed electronically:

The basic changes in hockey coverage over the years have been minor such as the increased use of personality, the high angle camera, less colourman off the top, better angles such as the wide angle behind the net, and the overhead panavision, and better quality chat time. The '88 Olympics marks, for the first time in five years that hockey has changed; viewers will see wider net lenses, 360 degree panavision, and the increased use of natural sounds (Mellanby, 1988).⁵

Thus, there is a general sense that televisual codes of covering sports have been transformed in response to technological innovation. The codes of the game of hockey, such as emphasizing the hard-hitting physical side of the game, have become so highly conventionalized in North America (to the point of “naturalization”⁶) that the CTV crews

⁵ I would argue that these are fairly significant (rather than “minor” changes) that have occurred as the commercial structures of the television industry have pressured crews into a programming format of the North American entertainment genre. Since these changes have been gradual, and have been negotiated within the sports crews, I would argue the crews have *consented* to these rather dynamic alterations. The improved zoom on the cameras and SaddleDome's unobstructed camera angles, for example, permitted the network to further reinforce the symbolism of “competitive individualism” by focusing on the play makers and the heros, rather than focusing on the team and players setting up the play. This will be discussed further in the next chapter.

⁶By ‘naturalization’ I mean that the phenomenon or practice or idea *seems* universal and ahistorical, but more likely represents the end result of unquestioned institutionalization and convention. It is at this stage of taken-for-grantedness that cultural hegemony is established.

believed it had become impossible to alter the televisual form, except to make broadcast hockey more exciting for the viewer at home by “augmenting and enhancing” with more colourful graphics, by creating new statistics and infusing new human-interest anecdotes. The numerous crew members situated in non-decision making roles, such as those without the structuring power to decide the daily format of coverage or to call the shots, included the cameramen, video operators, and technical directors. On the skeleton crew of CTV-Domestic Ice Hockey decision making power was awarded to the producer-director at the Saddledome and the master control line producers at the IBC. The lack of access to signifying power amongst most crew members contributed to their boredom and their general lack of awareness of the production traditions employed in sports broadcasting. They had entered into these traditions on the Olympic site and continued to uncritically reproduce them through their labour. In sum, the CTV-DB crew often claimed they simply had a “natural feel” for the game, a feel they argued which could neither be learned nor taught. Thus, the craft of broadcasting hockey appears to have lost its historical lore because “hockey is produced for television in much the same way as it was captured in the 1950s and new guys don’t know about the early days” (Mercel Dec. 29, 1987).

While the distinct habitual and conventional nature of hockey production seems to lend itself to a *reproductive* situation as Mercel’s observation assumes, there were both instances and multiple opportunities for creative license, subversion, and crew resistance. As Paul Willis (1977) has noted, within all subcultures, there are always real “spaces” and “freedoms” to be found on any site of cultural production. For example, a “switcher” in the production truck who was bored or felt underemployed, could play with the digital effects machine and create new patterns of imagery from the Host and Domestic hockey feeds

that could be merely “play-time” or could go to air if the producer beside him was suddenly intrigued by the work. Still, this was a rare occurrence. While waiting to go to air, cameramen could zoom in and out rapidly on a fragment of a body. For example Terrilyn Joe, the female host at CTV master control anchor desk, was a popular target by anchor desk crew who often zoomed in on her lower lip. Bald spots on coaches gave the crew many opportunities for comic relief. They also enjoyed a sense of voyeuristic power derived from the technology and their abilities to intimately intrude into the space of sporting/television celebrities while working off the tedious lulls in their *hurry-up-to-wait-business*. Higher levels of creativity were displayed by individual members orchestrating practical jokes during this formatted show: “every job has its power and every job has its creativity” according to Ross Francoeur the CTV assistant tape director:

I don't have a great deal of creativity, I'm short on packaging, but sometimes as switcher I have controlled more of the production. I actually choose the input with - lets say we are putting together a highlights package after the show. Brad Park our analyst will tell us what replays he wants us to put together when we have time, and he might even tell me particular action he is looking for. If he wants to show a play developing he might go for an endzone wide angle which shows the whole players coming up and the formation of the play, but if he doesn't say anything, then I have to choose what I think is appropriate, judging what I know about him and what I like (Feb. 23, 1988).

Input was never fully denied. Contrary to widespread belief by the crew, their work conventions and media skills were neither technologically imposed nor naturally encoded. The production of hockey for national broadcast was the accomplished through reified human action, thought and process, a process described in more detail below.

(III) REIFYING THE LABOUR PROCESS OF SPORTS PRODUCTION

As production traditions and the division of labour of televised sports production have become firmly established, the highest degrees of innovation and resistance have been successfully contained through the process of partial alienation⁷ and reification. Lukacs' notion of *reification* is especially pertinent to the labour process of sports production. Reification can be described as the historical process by which the "relation between people takes on the character of a thing and thus acquires a 'phantom objectivity', an autonomy that seems so strictly rational and all embracing as to conceal every trace of its fundamental nature: the relation between people" (Lukacs, 1971: 83).⁸ The breakdown of the television production process into units of specialized tasks, in order to create a work setting which was organized for the efficient use of time and maximization of scarce resources (such as blank video tapes for replays, cough boxes, and microphone headsets for commentary), served to solidify relationships of domination-subordination between crew units.

The labour and mediated products of the cameramen working for CTV at the Olympics

⁷While the strict division of labour of the television crew served to alienate the media workers from others on the crew, particularly between the decision making production crew and the "techies", and alienated from the economic value they injected into the telecast with their labour, I have preferred to use a less determining adaptation of this theory. Stephen Lukes' notion of power as "enabling and constraining" permits the examination of relationships between people and the products of their labour in a more dynamic fashion.

⁸ This term is a combined revision Marx's notion of alienation and the fetish character of the commodity and Weber's discussion of rational calculation as determining elements of the contemporary labour process.

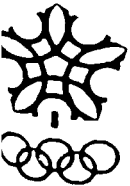
provided a poignant example of this. The increased use of technology, along with its automating and de-skilling tendencies, have had significant consequences on patterns of professional esteem, and the range of creative practices of the television crew. The camera men, once alone and out of earshot of their crew mates, lamented during interviews about a loss of power and an industry stonewalling of creativity. Harry Braverman (1974) has presented similar arguments concerning how the capitalist division of labour leads to the disempowerment of workers in general. As television cameras have been continually refined through computerization, the former adjustment skills of the cameraman "with a good eye" or the elusive "feel" for the game are no longer required and as openly celebrated as they were in earlier generations of televisual workers. At the 1988 Winter Olympics, the sport producers called the cameramen "pointers", a term never used in their presence, but as a term that empowered the producers sense of importance to the Olympic spectacle because it added to the technical decisions being made in the production trucks by them electronically. The greatest fears of the cameramen were shifting from the dread of becoming puppets of directors in the truck (their camera assignments had been reduced as more cameras were added to the arena), to the horror of being eliminated completely by innovations in remote control. "The guys in news are scared of losing their jobs, maybe some of us should be too", observed the main cameraman Ted, " but right now at the Olympics, with this many cameras, just about every one feels under-used ... It probably does create a little bit more hustle among the camera guys. It keeps you on your toes, it keeps you in the game, it keeps you watching all the time. If somebody else finds the shot before you do, they get on" (Feb. 18, 1988).

The job of the dubner/chyron operator, a position that entailed adding the special

digitized effects, the computer graphics and the “hero-notes”, represents another case in point of this de-skilling process. When one worker was assigned the task of “putting up” the standardized graphics and vital information on the star performers (which were researched and chosen prior to the games), or to display tournament results after they had been computer tabulated by OCO; it resulted in far-reaching consequences for the rest of the crew. For example, one such consequence was that the broadcast titles served to separate the crew members by official titles. The elite-subordinate designations of “Host” versus “Domestic”, “Executive Producer” and “Line Producer” versus “assistant-director”, “Technical Director” versus “Tape Operator”, “Floor Manager” versus “runner” implied strict hierarchy. These titles, used on the air and behind the scenes, divided the crew by expertise, power and professional prestige. Within the confines of the broadcast itself, the deskilled range of tasks decreased the ability of crew members to impart their version of how hockey could be represented. An illustration of this can be found in the world of the graphics operator, which has been a recently established, but widely praised position on the crew; according to David Moir the Chyron ‘A.D.’ operator, this new position required technical computer skills, “knowing the game” to be able to anticipate a penalty call and when the producer will likely ask you to “punch up” a name. It required an assumed degree of artistic ability according to the other crew members. Ironically, while the rest of the crew assumed that the computer whizzes were taking over the creative positions and leading the technical innovations, the chyron operator thought he was “just pushing buttons like everyone else -- the graphics and information are already loaded in”. The graphics were standardized due to the network’s need to align CTV Host, CTV Domestic and all world broadcasters to the host style; ice hockey games had been strictly formatted, “by the book”. As Moir noted, “we go by this bible developed by Doug Beeford and Ralph Mellanby at Host: the only graphics you’ll see in hockey are name, number,

country, flag, the roster roll, scoreboard updated, and not a lot of stats in comparison to football and it will lack hero notes". The graphics were designed on software prior to the Olympics to be generated instantly and with strict use during the Olympics. "We can't do a lot of 'cute' stuff like we'd like to", (Moir, Feb. 10, 1988). Moreover, while the graphics operator and some of the replay tape operators wished to occasionally stress the graceful athletic qualities of a Swedish Defenseman skating backwards while intercepting a puck shot directly on net, the higher-ranking broadcast personnel were more concerned with the offensive manoeuvres of the athletes and the speed at which the television crew could post the statistics recounting the number of shots on goal from that particular position. This occurred because of a self-conscious decision by CTV Host to present a "North American" style of hockey coverage. The quantified codes of representing hockey success and degrees of excellence provided by OCO'88 and the network set limits on alternative visions held by the crew members in technical roles. For instance, OCO regularly supplied the crew with statistical game summaries, (see Illustration 5.3 below). The real relations between crew members at the Games came to be set within seemingly *objective* categories of the CTV network's labour needs of programming to attract a wide Olympic audience. However, these categories were wrought with "traditional" ways of representing hockey on television and with the economic imperatives of the network.

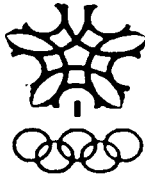
Illustration 5.2: STATISTICAL GAME SUMMARY



**XV OLYMPIC WINTER GAMES
GAME SUMMARY**

Game No.: 11 Date: 1988-02-16

Result: Team A: CANADA 4
vs Team B: SWITZERLAND 2

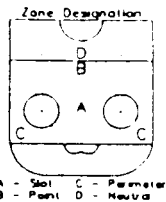


SHOT STATISTICS

Team A: CANADA

Type Zone	Slap		Snap		Wrist		Backhand		Deflection		Total Shots		Goals
	On Goal	At Goal	On Goal	At Goal	On Goal	At Goal	On Goal	At Goal	On Goal	At Goal	On Goal	At Goal	
A	3	5	2	2	15	19	2	2			22	28	3
B	9	12			1	1					10	14	
C	5	6	1	1	6	8	1	1			13	16	1
D		1				2						3	
Total	17	24	3	4	22	30	3	3			45	61	4

Blocked Shots
2
2



Shots On Goal

	1	1	Percent of Total		
			Left	Right	Total
Upper			2.2	2.2	4.4
Middle	8	4	17.8	8.9	26.7
Lower			44.4	22.2	66.7
5 Hole			11.1	11.1	22.2
Total	20	10	64.4	33.3	100.0

Shot Type

	% Of Shots On Goal	% Of Shots At Goal	Accuracy Percent
Slap	37.8	39.3	70.8
Snap	6.7	6.6	75.0
Wrist	48.9	49.2	73.3
Backhand	6.7	4.9	100.0
Deflection			
Total	100.0	100.0	70.8

Shot Location

	% Of Shots On Goal	% Of Shots At Goal	Accuracy Percent	% Of Goals Scored
Zone A	48.9	45.9	78.6	75.0
Zone B	22.2	23.0	71.4	
Zone C	28.9	26.2	81.2	25.0
Zone D		4.9		
Total	100.0	100.0	73.8	100.0

Individual Player Summary

Player Number	Name	Shots On Goal	Shots At Goal	Accuracy Percent	Goals Scored	Scoring Percent
2	WATTERS, Tim	1	1	100.0		
3	ROY, Serge	4	4	100.0		
5	YAWNEY, Trent		1			
7	SCHRIEBER, Walter	3	3	100.0		
8	BRADLEY, Brian	4	4	100.0		
9	BERRY, Ken	3	3	100.0		
10	SHERVEN, Gord	3	5	60.0	1	20.0
11	TAMBELLINI, Steve	1	1	100.0		
12	BOISVERT, Serge	6	11	54.5	1	9.1
13	YAREMCHUK, Ken	3	3	100.0	1	33.3
14	HABSCHIED, Marc	4	5	80.0	1	20.0
16	MALINOWSKI, Merlin	1	1	100.0		
18	VILGRAIN, Claude	1	1	100.0		
19	KARPAN, Vaughn	3	3	100.0		
21	GREGG, Randy	2	4	50.0		
24	PEPLINSKI, Jim	3	3	100.0		
25	ZALAPSKI, Zarley	3	8	37.5		

The social relationships of the media labour process were predominantly technologically structured at the conscious level of organization and programme planning. The introduction of increasingly sophisticated production equipment with each new Olympiad this past half century has required the introduction of new job categories. However the equipment has changed in response to new network demands and creative input. Computer software innovations provide the most cogent example of the technical labour process having become standardized as “*user-friendly*”; this requirement for simplification is also a factor of producers struggling to speed up the labour processes of live broadcasting and a factor of networks seeking ways to pare down the size of the crew. This has meant that the rationalizing tendencies of the software design and the traditional ways of editing replays, have reduced rather than enhanced, the creative input of these workers. Moreover, most forms of resistance to traditional representations of sport intended for broadcast by the hockey producer and master control line producer at the IBC, or complaints about crew organization and lines of power, were easily stifled when the crew felt compelled to blame the equipment that was programmed to make certain decisions and hence determine the crew setup. This meant that the social use of broadcast technology and hockey producer’s decisions made during the pre-Olympic planning stage, were abstracted from the site of labour relations. The equipment generating computerized hero-notes and statistics, for example, were often viewed to be the broadcast toys of the producer-director, but were automatically superimposed onto action replays after goals without the added interpretation of the operators who were simply told *when* to “punch it up”. After a goal, the producer-director would call the number and order of replays to be edited into the telecast, “goals 5, 6 1 ... play it for me, roll 5, roll 6, roll the first goal” ; in the mobile truck, Wait’s hand would swirl into towards his chest and his hand would clench shut, like a conductor at the end of his sheet music closing off a musical phrase. The movement was so familiar to the

switcher beside him, he watched for the cue in his peripheral vision. While they danced, the tape room bolted. The assistant director for tape stated that the two pressures in doing replays is that, "first you have to get it done fast, and second is that we really only have two machines, sometimes three to play it back" (Francoeur Feb. 23, 1988). Furthermore, some of the CTV hockey feed arrived already stamped with the chyron graphics and national symbols imposed by the CTV-Host crew as Moir described earlier, thus the information Moir would normally anticipate and prepare to insert into the feed was already there. Many on the Domestic crew felt creatively underemployed, technically deskilled, and physically overtaxed.

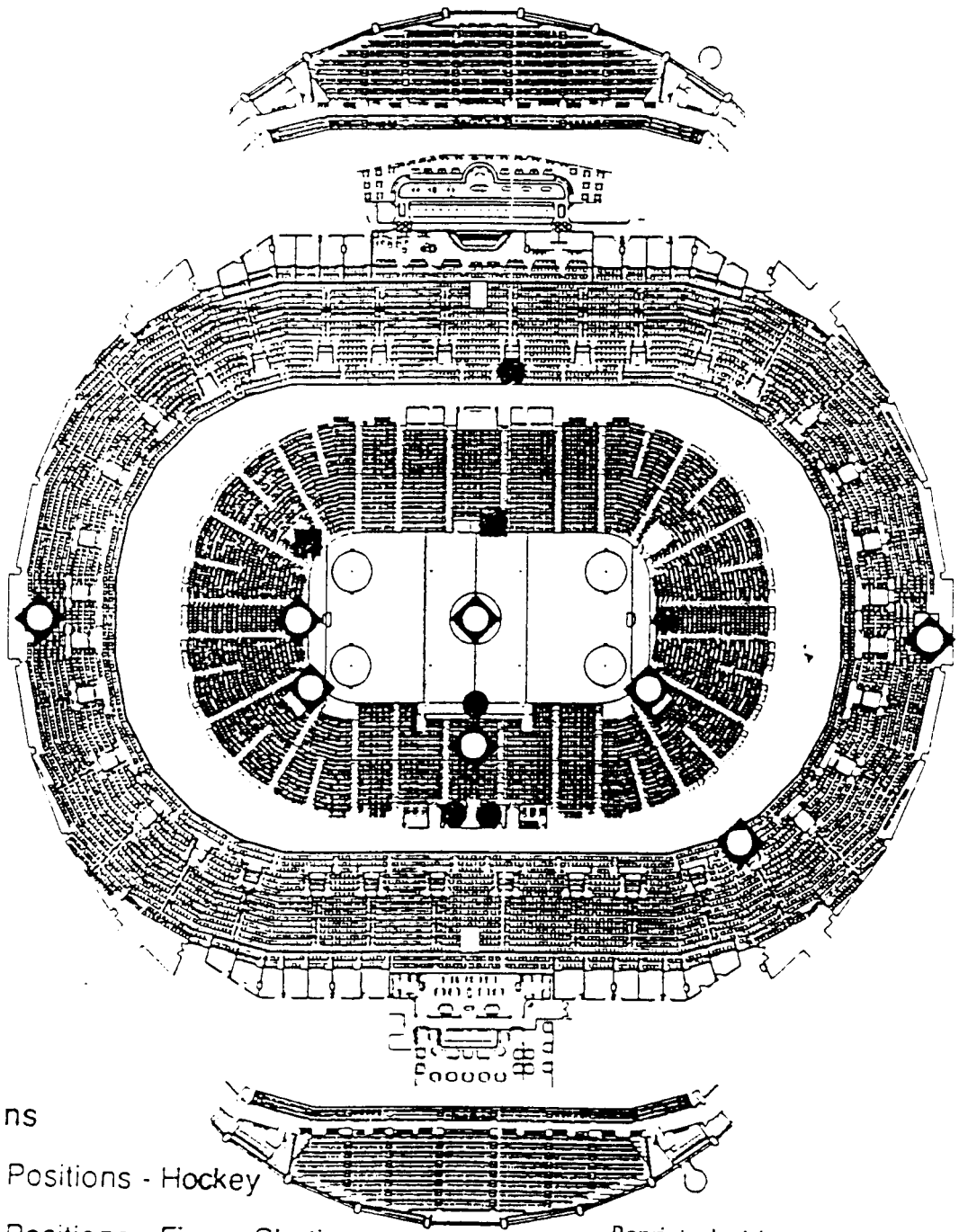
A telling example of how new broadcast technology has deskilled and disempowered the television crews is evident when one considers historical changes in the labour and crew position of the cameraman. At the Winter Olympics in 1988, the hockey crew used highly automated cameras for the first time in their sportscasting experience. The camera crews were simultaneously excited about being assigned to the state-of-the-art technology, yet consciously fearful of how this technology would threaten the future of their careers. Many cited their colleagues working across North America in the news departments who, as studio cameramen, were losing their jobs to fully automated cameras that were "push-buttoned" pointed by directors behind the glass at master control.⁹ The increased automation of the Olympic cameras, such as the auto focus, eliminated the special skill or

⁹Decisions by the CTV Domestic and Host hockey producers in the production trucks outside of the Olympic SaddleDome, and by the line producers and directors at CTV master controls in the IBC literally called the shots for each of the cameramen. Each camera had been allotted to very narrow assignments to begin with. The producers were further constrained to work within the agreements for Olympic broadcasting that were legally documented and agreed to by CTV, OCO'88 and the IOC concerning the live broadcast and the technical set up of Olympic broadcasting.

“touch” the sports cameramen have long been immensely proud of and recognized for by peers within the industry. Automation has also eliminated many opportunities for creative venture on the job. If a camera operator decided to shoot the faceoff as an extreme wide angle, to display every players in their positions on the ice and the anticipatory faces of the front row of spectators, for example, the director could simply adjust to a tighter frame from the control panel within the truck, or could choose to send to air one of ten other cameras.

During this Olympiad, each camera operator was allocated to a narrow range of two or three typical kinds of plays within International hockey “traditions”. With the aid of engineers and a list of the traditions of hockey coverage for typical coverage, Ralph Mellanby the CTV-HB executive producer for all sports at the 1988 Winter Games and his elite production crew, chose the eleven host broadcaster cameras for the Saddledome arena. The role of each camera-operator was explicitly defined in writing and reinforced at production meetings prior to and during the Olympic games. At the same time that the CTV network exists without a formal sports broadcasting policy and code of sportscasting standards and ethics, it did have a formal statement of camera usage determined by CTV Host Executive Producer Mellanby and his prodigy SaddleDome Venue producer John Shannon. That statement served to define a particular way to “cover” hockey visually. The following overview of the camera positions and crew assignments (Illustration 5.4) indicates the narrow tasks expected of each camera operator.

Illustration 5.3 CTV-HB BROADCAST CAMERA POSITIONS AND ASSIGNMENTS FOR ICE HOCKEY¹⁰



Camera Positions

- Camera Positions - Hockey
- Camera Positions - Figure Skating
- ◊ Camera Positions - Common

□ ENG Positions

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¹⁰ Source: CTV Host Broadcaster, *General Broadcaster's Handbook*, (1988).

<u>Camera 1: Tight Iso:</u>	shoots the goal scorer in and out of replay, on penalties shoots the referee for the penalty call, and after the replay shoots the player in the box, if a coincidental is called he shoots the player in the left side of the box.
<u>Camera 2: Game Cam:</u>	shoots all the faceoffs wide, follows the puck and the surrounding players.
<u>Camera 3: Tight Game Cam:</u>	(for super-slow motion): shoots the goal scorer in and out of the replay, on penalties he shoots the player in tight in and out of replay, if a coincidental is called he shoots the player on the right side of the box, does hero shots on whistles, during faceoffs he shoots the opposing center in tight.
<u>Camera 4: Tight Profiles:</u>	shoots tight profiles of the coaches and the players at the bench, after a goal he shoots the scoring team's coach, on faceoffs he does near shots, and shoots hero shots on whistles.
<u>Camera 5: Medium Iso¹¹:</u>	plans crowd shots after goals and beauty shots.
<u>Camera 6:</u>	no assignment
<u>Camera 7: Reverse: Angle Replay</u>	shoots the goalscorer after the replay if he goes to the bench, tight shots on the coaches and players at the bench, and shoots beauty shots.
<u>Camera 8: Lo Left Iso:</u>	shoots the opposing center for faceoffs.
<u>Camera 9: Lo Iso:</u>	tight crowd shots after goals, opposing center for faceoffs, with move to beauty shots, unilateral.
<u>Camera 10: Panavision:</u>	under the scoreboard for iso.
<u>Camera 11:</u>	locked off . ¹²

The processes and consequences of the broadcast standardization was logistically

¹¹ "ISO" is the abbreviation for isolation.

¹²Source: T. Fox: Host Camera man assignment sheet: CTV Host Broadcaster, 1988 Olympics.

important for the CTV Host crew since 390 world broadcasters tapped into the same visual and sports sound feed. The CTV Domestic hockey crew theoretically should have had greater latitude in designing their show for the Canadian audience. However, because all visual feeds (except for two hand held cameras) were piped in from the Host Broadcaster, and most replays momentarily “archived” by CTV Domestic were created from Host feed and occasionally from a domestic camera pointed at Canadian content, the domestic hockey producer-director Dave Wait proclaimed his role simply to be that of a “relay” for Host feed and CTV Domestic master control. Thus, the Olympic division of labour, limited range of raw material, and tightly structured social relations of the crew were objectified and reified into a “thing-like exchange” of broadcast labour for a wage. The automating deskilling tendencies of the labour processes of broadcasting under advanced capitalist conditions led to the development of a rigid CTV “house” style of broadcasting sport, to an increased sense of labourer anonymity within the collective creative process, and to the promotion of increasingly complex management structures, similar to those that Ellis has claimed are characteristic of the modern broadcast industry as a whole (1982: 219-220).

In spite of these developments, resistance pursued at the site of television production were neither fully contained by the management, nor by the self-imposition of conventions that crew members had inherited from broadcast predecessors. Investigators of the labour process in waged work settings have tended to ignore this essential point. As mentioned earlier, relationships of power and production can be simultaneously enabling of human action and thought and constraining. At the same time that the new automated abilities of the camera technology, the computer generated graphics and effects equipment have deskilled workers, and disabled their span of creativity (in comparison to past degrees

of leverage held by workers in these technical positions, automation has also created the context and tools for new forms of resistance. Within all electronic and digital information industries, including the broadcast industry, computer hackers and saboteurs have been a serious security concern and logistical nightmare for media corporations. The protection of exclusive rights and broadcast quality now constitute added economic burden as security and insurance costs rise. Some crew members fantasized about inserting not-so-heroic “hero notes” about the athletes into the computer software package, which would not be discovered until broadcast live on air as the athlete to compete was introduced into the broadcast package by commentators. Still, for the 1988 crew, this form of guerilla attack remained at the level of imagined empowerment. Many of these ideas were exchanged as humorous banter in the production truck by sound and video “techies” who had closer interaction in a crowded truck with lots of time to kill, yet neither had real access to the computer software and few possessed the computer software writing/hacking skills to carry out this mission. While framed in comic relief, it helped to blow off the disempowerment of living in a physically cramped and mentally unstimulating environment for a month. Humour, particularly subversive ingenuity, was a valuable form of cultural exchange between the technical crew members.

During the off-air segments the cameras were used in a number of playful ways to ease the tension and boredom of long days, or to reinsert creative control over automated equipment. Cameramen, for example often shot hockey players or practicing figure skaters from new frames, or zoomed in on female spectators to create a scorecard of possible “dates” for particular members of the crew, or to display an extreme closeup of those in powerful positions, such as a CTV anchor fidgeting before air time; they would then all

laugh at the clandestine display of the bigger-than-life television celebrity. While the intercom and phone system coordinated the dispersed hockey crews,¹³ and permitted the domestic producer to keep tabs on his “pee-wee” team, and to link the announcers in the booth with the rest of the crew, this audio connection also served to create private spaces and freedoms for the crew, as well as a major vehicle of resistance. A light hearted example were the non-hockey related conversations occurring during work: social engagements were often arranged during work, “nice shot, and by the way, Dave doesn’t know it yet, but the party’s in his unit tonight”. Gossip about other crew members, jokes about the physical attributes of spectators, and mocking the announcers at the CTV anchor desk continually mingled with broadcast commands, inquiries and complaints on the crew’s internal broadcast system: “Fetisov winds up, he shoots.... he fucks up!” (G.S.). Crew communication was a myriad of voices, shouts and sighs, and was often an exercise in subversive “bricolage”.¹⁴

At a more malicious level, the crew occasionally ‘aired’ their complaints on the internal crew communication network knowing that the production truck was always eavesdropping on crew conversations. Insults and derogatory gossip were constantly aimed at individuals, especially the producer, who was “detested” by most on the crew. Without

¹³The member of the hockey broadcast crews were spatially dispersed to many areas including: the two production trucks, for Host and for Domestic coverage, the Host and Domestic master controls in the International Broadcast Centre, up to 14 camera positions around the Saddledome (11 Host plus 3 Domestic), occasionally between two arenas, the broadcast booths in the arenas, and the interview studio; thus telecommunication was an essential link between crew members to produce the broadcast.

¹⁴Bricolage is the french term for constituting meaning out of traditionally disconsonate elements. It is a form of rebellious creativity, and discourse politics. Umberto Eco calls it a form of semiotic guerilla warfare (1972).

ever having to confront the person face-to-face, the crew discovered ways to resist the hierarchy, while causing embarrassment for the producer and his assistants as the entire crew would hear the gripes. Furthermore, the Domestic crew's internal airways could "pack a punch" when someone intentionally coughed directly into a mike or left their studio headsets on the monitors when they left for coffee breaks. "This drives the guys in the truck nuts with static", snickered the studio camera man as he left for a break. Occasionally, tempers raged, and members often suffered verbal abuse and screaming over the airways within the CTV Domestic unit. Levels of agitation on this crew reached the level of fistcuffs occasionally in the production truck compound; during some lulls in broadcasting time, after tense situations, the producer and the engineer-owner of the truck would jump out of their separate ends of the mobile truck to "duke it out" on the parking lot (Wait, Feb. 27, 1988). If hockey was actually being broadcast to Canadians at that moment, the producer would crank up the internal volume and out yell the rest of the crew to get the primary broadcasting orders across to the intended member. The screaming, however, indicated a lack of consent regarding the leadership of the producer. Due to the time pressures upon live broadcasting, sport crews have historically negotiated their own working etiquette that has demanded that production orders get through to the crew, that technical malfunctions are a high priority request over crew conversations and quarrels, and that arguments be "blown off" immediately (and viciously if necessary) in order to get the programme to air without the errors and problems crew members are fighting over becoming part of that national broadcast for the Canadian audience.

In addition to masculine preserve of hockeycasting, strong socio-economic cleavages were evident. The crew self-imposed stereotypes. CTV-Host Broadcasting crew was

celebrated or jealously rebuffed as being an “elite aristocratic” team, whereas the proudly “blue collar blokes” on the CTV-DB crew enjoyed a mythological sense of “grounding” in the game. These stereotypes materialized at the level of interpersonal communication; they contributed to the profound difference between the two crews in the tone, volume, and content of inner-crew interaction. CTV-HB conducted their work in a relaxed manner with calm and courteous discussion and commands. CTV-DB, on the other hand, was a boisterous, loud, and often obnoxious site of crew interaction. The hockey producer for the domestic side was known throughout the industry as a “screamer”, who had a perpetually ‘raspy rant’. Similarly, one of line producers at CTV Domestic master control at the IBC was nicknamed the “master blaster” by the hockey crew who had to constantly listen to screams, and flippant remarks made by the crew task masters at the International Broadcast Centre. The crew lamented that both the hockey producer and the CTV line producer had “graduated from the same school of broadcasting”; and their “noise” and shrieks frustrated their efforts to complete their jobs effectively in a context that offered plenty of technical mishaps.

Those who overstepped the bounds of crew etiquette and commonsense could be relieved of duties, or put in the media penalty box. One young crew member, whose “cockiness” with other crew members in the production truck and disregard for the leadership of the producer was seen to raise tension levels, was temporarily “suspended” from duties: “I gave him time off to collect himself and get his headspace together” (Wait, 1988). A chief rule of crew interaction while broadcasting sport live was to *vent all concerns as they come up, fix all problems immediately, hold no grudges after* (Franceour, Feb. 23, 1988). Thus, even anger was turned into an internally broadcast

message, a reified “thing” to seemingly be blown off as easily as hockey players could slap shot a puck. The problems, however, never quite left the rink, since concerns were not directed at the CTV executives in the International Broadcast Center where the political-economic levels of decision-making took place. The unequal relationships of power were seldom redressed as the Domestic crew continued on, creatively under-utilized and technically underwired.

(IV) FORMATTING AND PROGRAMME FLOW

Crew organization usually worked in concert with the tightly scheduled format of the overall live Olympic broadcast. Televisual programming, as Ellis (1982:119) suggests, is a *segmented commodity*. Within the daily, weekly and seasonal broadcast series of most major North American networks, distinct patterns of programming segments have become evident. A repetitious flow of morning news, children’s programming, soap-operas, evening news, primetime variety shows, drama, late evening news, and late night entertainments shows and re-run movies tend to be repeated daily. Standard sequences can be associated with the networks as broadcasting “styles” have become institutionalized. For example, on typical weekend afternoons in Canada, the networks broadcast distinctive sports variety shows such as CTV’s *Wide World of Sports* and CBC’s *Sports Weekend*.

A key element of this format is the type of broadcast flow. Sports program *flow* refers to the smooth organization of programming segments and transitions to commercial breaks into a collage of half or full hour shows. As opposed to conceptualizing televisual

commodities as one coherent text, flow can be envisioned as a montage of elements (Williams 1977, Ellis 1982). The 1988 Winter Olympic Games can be viewed as a manufactured flow of network programming, rather than the more static notion of *program distribution* (Williams 1977). Within CTV's lineup of regular network shows there has long existed an overall theme of "*continuity-with-difference*". In other words, while the various shows on the CTV network may display a wide variety of topics and programming formats, CTV producers work towards a 'stylized' mode of address through the particular choice of narration tone, camera styles. This distinctive house style is meant to differ from that of CTV's Canadian competitors and to provide a degree of continuity overall. Programming will weave this distinctive style through the flow of items, images and "programming" that make up a network day. This flow is even more influenced by the attempt to capture different audiences at different times during the broadcasting day and week (as determined by demographers and the media measurement companies such as Neilson Ratings and BMI), and to account for the kinds of locations from which the audience is most likely to view the telecast (e.g. at home or at the local pub). A sample weekday during the Olympics, for instance, followed a strict daily pattern:

06:30-09:00	<i>Canada AM News</i>
09:00-10:30	Exercise/Game/Cooking/Magazine Shows
10:30-12:00	<i>Olympic Daytime</i> hosted by Dan Matheson
12:00-13:00	Local CTV affiliate news.
13:00-16:00	Soap Operas/Game Shows
16:00-16:30	CTV News
16:30-20:00	<i>Olympic Primetime</i> hosted by Lloyd Robertson
20:00-21:00	CTV Evening News

21:00-23:00	Movie
23:00-23:45	<i>Late Night News</i> with Lloyd Robertson
23:45-24:00	<i>Olympic Highlights Show</i> with Terrilynn Joe ¹⁵

15 The crew often exhibited general hostility toward the “talent” from the news department. Anchors were considered by the crew to be uneducated and uncaring about Olympic sport, as unskilled “readers” of the teleprompter not journalists, and as overly pampered by the CTV network. Crew tensions were further exacerbated because the master control desk anchors resided in upscale hotels while the hockey crew and hockey “talent” went to one of two media villages. Most on the CTV Domestic hockey crew were sent to the “army boot camp”, Lincoln Park. Hockey crew members also expressed jealousy, thinly disguised as disdain, for the CTV crews working within the comfortable temperature controlled IBC work space.

These kinds of crew tensions created ethnographic dilemmas for me during the first week of the Games. My attempt to stay among the crew, but in the background of their focus, was difficult when they kept asking or ordering me to help. The dilemma lay between choosing to be a non-participant raising frustration levels when refusing to help with tasks, or becoming a participant when asked to not disrupt the flow. Either decision affects the labour process. I had to make on the spot decisions by questioning if doing small chores (such as requests to help tape up the CTV logo backdrop wall, or redesigning the stats format sheets) would significantly change the nature of the labour process the crew was assigned to complete and wrangle with -- or if saying “no” during a crunch would serve to make me obtrusive and would redirect labour process pressures from the crew to blaming frustrations on me.

During the first week, I made the decision to do small chores if asked, but only when the command was barked in the heat of a crew frenzy trying to tackle a situation. To refuse at moments of frantic crew work would have foregrounded my place as an outsider whose “privileges” to the site could be denied should the producer complain I “was in the way” of an already overcrowded worksite by not being helpful. By the end of the second week, the crew settled into their own chores and left me to an unquestioned place in the background.

On one occasion, I was pulled into the struggles over “talent” between the news and the hockey anchors. When Terrilyn Joe became ill at the beginning of the Olympics, Ron Reusch offered my services to do the nightly highlights after I interviewed him on tape for my research. This created a few moments of turmoil because I was trying to work as unobtrusively as possible, taking the time when necessary to explain my research work to avoid future requests. The request by Reusch to have me replace the ill T.J. on air, was really a part of a bigger struggle between network news and sports departments to claim ownership and prestige over the knowledge they can impart to an audience: the sports commentators firmly believed the CTV national news team neither had the right nor the sports background to present the “news” of the Olympics. I felt I was a pawn in a bigger struggle over signifying power and journalistic acclaim between the various CTV announcing crews (i.e. “the student could do a better job than the newsreader”); luckily, the request was never heard by the anchor crew at IBC, whom I regularly observed and interviewed at the IBC during production meetings or at their work stations early each morning before the hockey day got underway.

The anchorage of the Olympic Games was not significantly different from regular CTV news broadcasts because Lloyd Robertson was employed as the “talking head”, both for regular news and Olympic Coverage during the prime time evening time slots. Thus, the usual network style was carried over into the planning of Olympic programming. Moreover, the house style and content of programming flow became a part of the ratings war and station-identification: while CTV ran the slogan, “CTV, your Olympic Network”, CBC repeated the motto, “CBC, the best on the box”. Patterns emerged in network programming style and flow to highlight familiar CTV themes and icons.

Programme flow for the series of live “sport shoots” conducted at the Winter Games, created a labour process that was characterized by the crew as a “*Hurry Up To Wait Business*”. The ebb and flow of the work day carried many extreme different moments: from the frenzied set-up of technical equipment, facilities checks, scrambling to untangle wires as announcers set up for broadcast booth “Beauty Shots” to insert a broadcasting “tease” for the hockey game early in the Olympic telecast day, to the frustrating unexpected delays that left the announcers sitting under sweltering bright lights in anticipation of their cue from the master control. This latter situation left the technical crew with long stretches of time to “kill” in the truck or behind a camera as they awaited the start of the second or third game of hockey that day, and then the crew moved back into the pace of a staccatoed rush to position when hockey was unexpectedly called to air after the weather forced cancellation of ski-jumping. The complex arrangements of Olympic programming created a behind-the-scenes movement pattern that significantly contrasted the relative smoothness of the televised programme flow presented to the CTV Olympic audience. Crews work hard to make their distinctive contributions “invisible” on

air. Major lulls in the crews' work were created by the long periods between the designated Olympic shows, at which time the network switched to other shows such as the news, or soap operas. In addition, since many members of the hockey technical broadcast crew were borrowed to help with the figure skating crew, the long days with excruciating long breaks between on-air segments seemed endless to many crew members.

During hockey games, many of these slow breaks could be predicted by referring to the line-producer's cue sheet for the overall sport programme which was distributed at the producer's meetings each morning at the IBC. But cue sheets changed as rapidly as the direction of the Chinook winds reigning havoc over other events. On occasion, when the wind forced cancellations of ski events, the off-air lulls in the working day were abruptly ended by an unexpected countdown to the hockey crew. Warnings ranged from ten seconds to three seconds of set up time from the master control line-producers in the IBC. The other two key reasons for the quick change of programming plans included technical failures at other venues, or when master control decided that a scheduled event was too boring from the standpoint of North American codes of sporting drama that demand constant action and excitement. Given the choice, most members of the hockey crew thrived on work and would have preferred to be busy and "hurrying", rather than "waiting". Waiting was the most pressing frustration the crew complained about. Overall, a day in the life of sport media personnel, particularly in the mobile truck, was summarized as "incredibly boring... overall its a good job compared to most, but it's only glamorous to those outside the business. It's just a job" (Franceour, assistant director of hockey, Feb. 23, 1988).¹⁶

¹⁶ Hockey players, whose action was the raw material of the television crews' labour, also suffer from the "hurry up to wait" syndrome as Ken Dryden recalled in this book, *The Game* (1983). During the Olympics, the teams practiced in the Saddledome or other hockey venues such as

In addition to the network flow, sports programming tends to exhibit a certain sense of flow within the show as well, as Cantelon and Gruneau have noted of earlier Canadian sports broadcasts (1984). Regularly scheduled weekend sport shows in North America have often focused on one or two major events occurring live that day, in addition to broadcasting taped material of important events that occurred during the week. The choice of sports by the networks have often been limited to the selection of sports on variety type shows to the dominant North American professional sports or amateur championships in non-Olympic seasons. Occasionally, weekend afternoon sports shows will broadcast what CTV has called “programming to fill it’s motherhood quota” (Eshaw 1988). This programming offers the minimal quota of Canadian amateur sports, such as university hockey championships, agreed to in licensing agreements with the CRTC. CTV’s Olympic broadcast differed in 1988 from their regular sports programming by virtue of being “*live-live*”: that is, the Olympic telecast contained little pre-taped or delayed, tape-to-live or fake-to-live material. “Fake-to-live” has often been used in Olympiads where the home audience of the broadcaster has resided in a primetime zone that did not match the live event in a different time zone; thus announcers have often broadcast “fake throws” to a “live” event “underway”, which had actually already been played and recorded. Tape-to-live was only employed at the Olympics during those few times that two top competitors were performing at two sites simultaneously.

CTV production crews often argued that sports programming was the “last bastion of live television” in the entire broadcast industry. “Live” sports coverage has neither a

the Corral next door, watched other teams play or practice, sat through team meetings, wrapped their hockey sticks, played soccer in the basement of the SaddleDome, lazed around the Athletes village or home. Waiting created an uneasy feelings of both anxiety and boredom for athletes and media personnel alike.

rigid script nor a predetermined ending. However, the CTV Domestic telecast at the Olympic Games was carefully scripted by master control line producers at the International Broadcast Center before the Games began. The geography of each programme was drawn up in the CTV Cue sheets handed out each morning at the CTV Domestic production meeting at the IBC. These rough outlines of the order of events and the length of time to be spent in each Olympic venue were determined the day before the scheduled competition using a standardized form. The cue sheet scripts were based on:

- (a) OCO's scheduling of the actual events of the entire Olympic slate;
- (b) a ranking of the sports events in which Canadian athletes were expected to do well;
- (c) a ranking based on the event's "sport worthiness" or usual popularity for Canadian audiences; alpine skiing, figure skating and hockey have traditionally been the "Olympic Glamour Sports" for Canadian audiences watching the Winter Olympics according to executive producer of CTV Domestic coverage (Merzel 1987);
- (d) the predicted start times of expected medal winners or possible world records;
- (e) special human interest stories such as the next ski flight of anti-hero Eddy-the Eagle or the runs of the Jamaican Bobsled team; and finally
- (f) the spots approximately where commercials could be inserted.

The 1988 Olympic Winter Games schedule of actual events represented the first complete "made for television schedule" in the history of the Games; prior to 1988, Olympic scheduling was one of the biggest issues for all world broadcaster rights holders, the sponsors and for the organizing committee alike in preparing for the Games according to

the CTV-DBC hockey producer, Dave Wait. The struggles over scheduling included ABC demanding that Team USA hockey games be placed in prime time, while the European world broadcasters wanted nordic and alpine events to be scheduled early in the Olympic mornings in Calgary so that European audiences could be enjoying their favourite sporting competition during their prime time overseas.

Still, flexibility had to be built into the script plan of the line producers because unexpected contingencies always occurred: “expect something to always screw-up” was a popular crew version of the *flexibility in production* rule. Cursing, cussing and swearing heavily spiced the regular conversation and private blurbs of the Domestic hockey crew. “We have to yell and scream and swear our blasted heads off”, claimed the producer, “Its the only way to cope with so many major screwups that you only get with live sports”. The hockey crew was often called upon by CTV-DBC master control producers to fill in major time slots of unexpected problems occurring on other broadcasting crews at other venues. At the economic level, hockey was a network saviour that could always be depended on to fit a large number of commercials into the live broadcast because of the number of penalty calls and icing calls that typically occur in a game. However, unlike the televising of NHL games, when a producer can cue the referee to wait an extra thirty seconds to finish the commercial before play resumes, at the Olympics the crew often had to settle for losing about ten seconds of play after a faceoff as a commercial was rolling into the local CTV telecasts across the nation from the broadcast centre in Toronto via satellite hook-up. If the hockey producer was able to insert more commercials than the cue sheet scripts had called for in a 15 minute section, thereby reducing the entire Olympic hour’s commercial quota achievement, then the rest of the hockey game or an important ski race about to begin,

could be relatively commercial-free and completely “live-live”. Advertisements constituted more than “just” a commercial break to the sports crew; commercials chiselled an unwanted break into the prestige of the fully live drama of the sportscast. For that reason the ability to manage “live” and commercial time served as a key marker of craft excellence.

“Seizing the moment live is everything in television” (Access 1987:93). Because sports broadcasting crews considered live television to be the most challenging, exciting, and gruelling of all types of media broadcasting, it was seen as both the ultimate challenge and test of the crew’s abilities in the craft, and as the key to maintaining the sports audience. According to the CTV-HB Saddledome Venue Producer:

Sports is generally the last bastion of live television. You fly by the seat of your pants. You’re only as good as you are NOW. You can learn from it .. but, you’re not going to worry that it’s going to show up two weeks later (Shannon 1988).

Moreover, games such as hockey, have traditionally contained greater degrees of outcome uncertainty for media crews because they cannot predict the game play or outcome, and thus cannot predict exactly what the television crew will have to work on in each quarter segment of the telecast hour. The CTV crew for figure skating, by way of contrast, knew the exact order of skaters and their routines: their programme was charted and “blocked” so that each camera operator knew when he would be on-air with a preset type of camera angle and framing. This also allowed the play-by-play announcers for figure skating to “block” their commentary about the moves and the dramatic stories lines, and to rehearse most of the predicted athletic moves. Hockey announcers on the other hand , did

rely on traditional storylines, such as “East versus West rivalries”, and traditional codes of hockey game to call the game, but unlike the figure skating announcers, the hockey crew called the game as it unfolded before their eyes.

Prior to the 1988 Games, CTV Sport Department and the CTV-DBC executive producer Mercel had already decided that the Canadian audience would be “treated” to as much live television as it was possible for the network to produce because the Games were being held within the span of Canadian time zones. The “live” status, which the sports crew cherished did not, however, convert into guarantees of quality programming. By opting not to produce “up-close-and-personal” human interest portraits or mini sport history documentaries, that other networks such as ABC had taped and infused into its programming, CTV lost a chance to establish closer ties with the audience and to deepen the audience’s understanding of the Olympic sports. Sports fans, the print media and media critics evaluated this absence as an extremely poor editorial judgement on the part of CTV executive producers.¹⁷

In addition to these limits and pressures, the mandate for *live* television opened up the possibility for more technical errors and glitches in the telecast signal sent out to the

¹⁷During CTV’s 1992 coverage of the Barcelona Summer Games, CTV reevaluated the failures of the 1988 telecast, and inserted many pre-taped “Olympic portraits” and “diaries”. Portraits have been discovered a key way to legitimate privileged stories of sport and images of athletic heroes, as well as offering a format that increases the need for broadcast labour before the Games begin, and offers commercial opportunities beyond the twelve minute CRTC maximum. After the broadcasting mistakes of 1988 were carefully analyzed, the 1992 Barcelona supervising producer, Scott Moore, adopted a different formula that the live formula mandated in 1988 by CTV Domestic broadcaster, “We’re going to try to cover as many stories as possible without losing storylines. Our philosophy is to stay at each venue a little longer and only cut away for updates” in Barcelona (cited in Norris 1992).

nation; at the Calgary Games many minor technical disasters did arise particularly on opening night. Throwing up their arms in exasperation, while watching what the crews at the opening ceremonies were doing, the hockey crew mourned the “lost air” as CTV Domestic jumped from venue to venue and to pretaped panoramic shoots in an attempt to find the action to cover up their inability to cue the announcer who could be seen on air but was not responding to the audience. On opening night, the Domestic hockey crew altered the CTV promotional slogan from “see it live on CTV” to “if ya don’t see it live on CTV, ya don’t see it”, since only CTV had the exclusive rights to broadcast the opening ceremonies and hockey game in English to the nation. Broadcasting crew commands from the production truck to the announcers was another fundamental blunder that caused the entire crew anxiety. The crew felt that if the network was to honour its exclusive rights privileges, it had a responsibility to the Canadian audience; in other words, they had a responsibility to give the Domestic crew the proper equipment and set-up time to be able to seamlessly broadcast to that audience. Despite these disabling and disempowering contingencies that were beyond the power of the Domestic crew to redress, the members of the Domestic hockey crew still relished in the “fact” that “hockey is the last *real* drama on television”.

Formulae adopted to iron out the programme flow tended to resemble the variety programming and current affairs shows normally aired on the network during different time slots. For example, continual references to what has already “happened” during the sporting competition, and “what’s to come” by the newscaster host at the anchor desk served to maintain audience interest in a show that was fairly disjointed in terms of the leaping “throws” back and forth between sporting topics, venues and their crews. For example, during *Olympic Daytime* Dan Matheson triple-jumped electronically:

Thanks Dan, that certainly is an exciting hockey game you're covering over at the SaddleDome. We'll get back to hockey later in the second period. Coming up is the Ladies downhill where Canadian Karen Percy, winner of one bronze medal for Canada, is about to go for her second medal of the Games... and then it's back to hockey.

The insertion of familiar faces of Dan Matheson and Lloyd Robertson between coverage of different sporting events, along with regular patterned insertions of the CTV animated signature logo, station and venue identification, helped to "suture" the program. Overall, however, the leaps were one way of producing a fairly fast paced and exciting televisual product that contributed greatly toward enhancing the representation of televised sport, whether or not the live event was actually quickly paced. Regardless of the style of programming that emerged from the production of flow, program ratings set the primary limits on the production crew's construction of the show; if the ratings are good all levels of the crew believed nothing needed to be changed, "if your ratings are good then obviously you're on to something that your audience is liking" quipped the assistant director (Feb. 23, 1988). If the ratings were poor the complex nature of Olympic programming decisions was blamed, particularly the CTV master control decisions to jump to other sporting events during a hockey game.

My examinations of crew labour, production organization, conventions and creativity persuaded me that the economic power structures of media production determine the degree of creativity and autonomy of media communicators and production crews. Arguing along similar lines Murdock and Golding have noted that:

media products are not simply commodities but media for creative expression. This balance between commodity

production and creativity is a precarious one, however, and one which is ultimately framed and determined by the general economic context within which production takes place (1974:223).

Just as Clarke (1987) noted that Canadian journalists were not “authors” of the routines they worked within, so too did CTV sports production personnel work within structures of power that they had not organized, but were subject to, and for which they uncritically reproduced each day. Recurring features are simply assumed as either “the way things ought to be” or as “the nature of the business”. Furthermore, while the CTV domestic constraints of time, technology and money, which were frequently cited as the root causes for problems in producing the live broadcast commodity at standards they have come to expect in their NHL work, it was the conventional nature of the workplace, the skills of the crew, and the rich resources of the Host crew that *enabled* the successful construction and distribution of the Olympic spectacle.

CHAPTER 6

BROADCASTING STYLES AND PROFESSIONAL CODES OF SPORTSCASTING

CTV's struggle to produce Olympic hockey involved more than a technical rewiring of an old mobile truck, more than arranging overtime crews to replace workers who were ill, more than the network executives entering into last minute desperate negotiations with OCO'88 to win prime time Team Canada games during the medal round, CTV was also engaged in a struggle to legitimate preferred visions of hockey as *the* Canadian game. This spectacle of legitimation was produced with the broader limits and pressures of the spectacle of accumulation. In other words, hegemonic assumptions about hockey and the crews' abilities to televise the hockey tournament had to be resolved with the mandate for the world feed being manufactured by CTV Host Broadcaster, the demands of ABC and OCO'88, the marketing images of hockey and Olympic glory presented in advertising, and unexpected twists in tournament action. My interviews revealed that members of the CTV Host and Domestic hockey production crews entered onto the Olympic site with a dominant set of assumptions that hockey is a game played by and for male sports fans, and ideally produced by male crews, that Canadians "own" the sport; and that hockey would be the triumphant centrepiece of Olympic programming. Reclaiming the game as a Canadian sport, while catering to the expectations of the other Olympic family members, demanded emergency measures when the Canadian team did not act out the championship narrative expected.

This chapter combines ethnographic observations with an analysis of the dominant

discourses mediating the process of televising ice hockey. Particular attention is paid to professional codes of broadcasting in order to discuss, in Chapter 7, the construction of the patriarchal images of masculine athleticism in the sport, notions of hockey excellence, and the ways hockey was signified as “*the Canadian game*”.

(I) CULTURAL PRODUCTION, POWER AND TELEVISUAL CODES

Cultural production refers to both the industrial production of commodities such as the sport program and the ceremonies, and the social construction of sense, meaning and consciousness (O’Sullivan et. al. 1983). To employ this as a focal concept in this research, it has been necessary to theoretically view televised sports production fundamentally as a *social process*. What television producers do with the raw material of the medium, be it news, drama or sports programming, involves work upon the material to transform sporting action into a commodity, that is simultaneously material and ideological, through human labour.

Team Canada, for example, served as both the raw material for producing the televisual commodity and the symbolic-ideological focus of the crews’ pursuit of national heroes and attempt to construct “a road to Olympic glory” storyline. The dialectic interaction between the CTV crew, the athletes, and the Olympic spectators was described as:

the Canadian Television Network, CTV, arrived as a kind of auxiliary force, its soldiers dressed in blue ski jackets adorned with gaudy emblems. The citizens put up resistance, indeed, they eagerly donned the symbol of surrender, a grey/green coat, and began making life miserable for everyone else. While most of

Calgary and a large chunk of the world were watching one of the greatest half-time shows ever mounted (the Opening Ceremonies) the Canadian hockey team was standing almost in the parking lot of the Father David Bauer Arena. Ahead stretched a long parade of athletes, people from all over the globe. The lads on the hockey team were dressed, like other Canadians, in red and white longcoats (the Maple Leaf stylishly carved into the design) but the day was a bitter one, the coats not all that warm, and the lads jumped from foot to foot trying to keep alive. ... The Canadian National Hockey Team turned the corner and were stunned by the sound. It was an awesome thing, the cheers of all those people, the sound filled the air like the cruellest of winds. The players were instantly goose-pimpled, proud, and frightened. It was certainly wonderful to be representing your country, but at the same time, the realization set in that they were draping their butts on the line, that the crowd was imploring them to a victory. And in international hockey -- the Coach had said this many times -- the difference between victory and defeat was a thin one, the *fragile edge*, he called it. ... But this crowd wanted something else. They wanted -- they demanded -- gold".¹

The fragile edge between medals and embarrassment, between ratings and financial tragedy lay at the vortex of power relations between Olympic family members. Complex social relationships between members of the media, athletes and the sports audience, interfaced with Canadian patriotism and commercial expression impressed upon the team during the production of the Olympic spectacle.

The televisual scripts for Olympic programming were designed to build a series of related discourses of Canadian supremacy in hockey and Olympic glory into the broadcasts. The CTV Domestic Broadcaster crew had been specifically sent to Calgary to capture Team Canada's pursuit of the gold medal. Long before the opening ceremonies, and during the games, the crew assumed that the key motive for Canadian audiences tuning into their live

¹Quarrington, 1988:260.

coverage was to watch Canada win a medal. But the signifier “gold” had been appropriated by many. The social processes of making spectacle now involved so many stakeholders (as chapter three revealed) that the ideological layers of the televisual commodity carried a wide variety of messages for the icons of Olympism. VISA commercials, for example, warned tourists to show up with their Gold credit cards rather than cash at the ticket booth:

“The 1988 Winter Olympics honour speed, stamina and skill ... but not the American Express Card ... there are two ways to achieve success at the 1988 Olympic winter Games ... if your planning on winning a medal, you need years of training and discipline ... but if your planning on using a credit card at the Games, you need Visa ... it’s everywhere you want to be”.²

Kodak hoped its new gold film would acquire the stamp of excellence for brand quality through its 1988 exclusive sponsorship rights with the IOC TOP programme: “Kodacolor 200, I am gold, I live in every athlete’s efforts and in their dreams and skills ... we are Olympic colours and we live in kodak film”.³ Other Olympic family members bought gold to achieve a different range of objectives. Prior to the games CTV, for example, purchased Olympic medals to give each employee on the Domestic crew on the final day to thank them for their “team effort” and to use the gold and Olympic symbols to celebrate the network’s own sense of grandeur. “When the final torchbearer lights the Olympic flame heralding the opening of the XV Olympic Winter Games in Calgary, it will also mark the beginning of what will undoubtedly become the biggest sports spectacle in Canadian television history”

²Feb. 1988 Visa advertising campaign, *The Official Souvenir Program, XV Olympic Winter Games (1988: 81-83)*.

³*Macleans*’ Olympic Issue, Feb. 1988 Kodak advertising campaign. Television version of this advertisement played during the introduction to the medal round Canada-Russia hockey game when ratings were expected to be at their highest.

(Marge Anthony, VP CTV Network Relations).⁴ CTV had assumed their official “Olympic network” status and labour at the 1988 Winter Games would translate into industry laurels, higher ratings, and therefore self-congratulatory rewards and gold medals would be in order by the close of the games.

Thus, while the Olympic spectacle has commonly been presented as the greatest, most prestigious athletic event on earth, with hundreds of nations duelling for gold to achieve athletic glory and vicarious political supremacy, the *polysemic nature* of the Olympic media commodity meant that CTV network personnel had to work hard to contain and legitimate a range of *preferred meanings* that balanced the perceived needs of their sponsors, the Canadian audience, the CRTC, Olympic organizers, world broadcasters and lastly, the athletes. The coordinated effort of orchestrating a global media event occasionally brought these pressures to a conscious level; the CTV Host hockey director, for example, described these pressures by contrasting his regular work with *Hockey Night in Canada* to the Olympic task:

the Olympics is not like *Hockey Night In Canada*. It just basically conveys the game and the toughest thing is to keep a standard procedure which the Host Broadcaster wants. Everyone has individual taste and you have to discipline yourself to keep it all common for everybody's sake. That's the hardest part (Harrison, Feb. 23, 1988).

Yet, these preferred meanings are usually barely visible in the media text. In his book *Visible Fictions*, John Ellis notes how meanings conveyed through broadcast television tend to become naturalized:

⁴From CTV's, *A Guide To the Olympics*, “A message from the publisher” (1988:4).

broadcast television work over the meanings that modern society gives itself, the web of definitions and suppositions that give sense to the world. For each medium, it appears that these meanings come from elsewhere. They seem to exist in the very air we breathe, rather than being a creation of any one medium, or of any one person's speech. Very often, such meanings do not appear to be meanings at all. Rather, they appear as commonsense, as the taken for granted, a kind of natural horizon to life, beyond which anything is unthinkable. This network of conceptions, beliefs, and habitual definitions appears to have no particular source; it is always already there. Yet at the same time, it is subtly shifting to take account of new phenomena, to interpret new events. The strength of this common sense lies exactly in its suppleness and the invisibility of its suppleness: it changes but does not appear to change (1982:14).

We can readily apply Ellis' observation to the broadcasting of the 1988 Olympic hockey tournament. The "raw material", the actual games, were presented and represented through historically defined televisual languages and associated set(s) of codes. Yet, the selective 'touch' of history was not readily apparent in the crew's employment of media production codes and discourses that served to privilege hockey as the premiere sport in Canada. Hockey's "Canadian-ness" operated at the level of "commonsense". This commonsense was articulated in the broadcast through a complex set of codes and conventions. According to Umberto Eco, codes define the rules that establish the correlation between the elements within any language system; for Eco, "the laws of signification are the laws of culture" (1967:28). The broadcast industry's dominant codes for representing hockey on television were, therefore, not structures and rules that existed on their own universally, but existed because the languages most often associated with sport have been socially produced in specific historical circumstances. O'Sullivan et. al., emphasize that codes are dynamic "systems of signs that are governed by rules agreed between the members of the using culture" (1983:36). Moreover, there are codes of human

inter/action and codes of meaning. In the case under study, one can observe how codes of behaviour guide the work of the media and the play of the athletes. For example, the rules of hockey prohibit high sticking, while broadcast codes of ethics and Canadian laws prevent the invasion of an athlete's privacy by the media. *Codes of signification*, on the other hand, permit meaning to be made and communicated through such avenues as televisual directing styles that prefer to cut between two different camera locations in a quicker fashion for hockey than for baseball programming, or the narrative themes of hockey commentary that tend to emphasize hard hitting physicality and national sporting rivalries in Canada rather than the Olympic Movement's "official" concern for promoting international understanding.

An essential point to emphasize is that certain signifying codes are preferred over other codes. Thus, certain cultural themes and social practices are legitimated while others are downgraded in importance and marginalized.⁵ *Conventions* are inextricably related to codes because both are vital to the existence of a shared culture, a common language system and their sustenance; however, conventions are habitual *practices* that demand an exceptionally high degree of conformity, as opposed to the more general rules or codes that mediate and guide these practices (O'Sullivan, 1983).

The crews producing Olympic hockey at the 1988 Games employed a multitude of signifying systems to construct meaning around the game. The visual, auditory language structures incorporated such culturally negotiated codes as: meanings associated with body language (e.g. the aesthetic grace of figure skaters versus the aggressiveness of hockey players), organizational codes of teamwork versus individuality, verbal codes of commentary, graphic codes on team crests and network station identification logos. All of

⁵ Unless otherwise indicated, the term "code" will refer to codes of signification.

these historically entrenched codes, were mediated by a number of factors. Within the construction of the game, hockey-related discourse was mediated by the rules of international hockey, the commentating team's preferred "storyline", and the television crew's scripted use of the camera, graphics, and music. Broader political economic codes, such as those surrounding nationalistic displays and those associated with the imperatives of marketing, also contributed to the cultural production of both hockey and media practices.

Anthony Giddens' (1981) theory of "structuration" can be usefully adapted within this approach to critically examine the intersections of media language, North American sport codes, and the labour process of sports production in which these codes are specifically produced and reproduced. *Structure*, for Giddens, is defined as the resources and rules that affect the capability and knowledgeability of an individual or group of individuals and are coordinated into a system of interaction. To apply Giddens' ideas to the case of broadcasting, we should note that the *rules* or codes cementing social relationships together within the production process of televised sport need not be formally written laws of broadcasting. Rules can simply be working conventions, journalistic traditions, professional ideologies, codes of ethics, or taken-for-granted "commonsense" beliefs that all served, to varying degrees, to mediate the actions and end results of the televisual labour process. *Resources*, for Giddens, are the capabilities to define ordering rules or to incite social action; they are a constitutive element of social structure. Some examples of resources utilized within the media production process include the ownership of the CTV network, access to managerial and producing decision making positions, and the possession of specialized skills such as editing or on-camera interviewing abilities. At the Calgary

Games, most members of the CTV crew assumed these abilities to be sex-specific traits of the hockey crew. Men were “automatically” perceived to have the “know-how” and the experience to operate effectively as the broadcast crew. Gender, in this sense, was subtly layered into the hierarchies of authority and power on the broadcast site. Differential access to resources and the differential ability to influence “rules” provided some individuals (such as the directors and switchers) with greater power to manoeuvre within the media organization. Those holding greater material and, indeed, ideological power -- such as Ralph Mellanby and Ron Harrison -- were more capable of affecting social patterns and situational outcomes, than those with less material and ideological power.

It is important to understand that the “structures” of work organization and televisual discourse at the Olympics were neither static nor ahistorical. Individuals working within established social networks within CTV operated within institutionalized social patterns, even though they sometimes struggled to move beyond. Thus, members of the network “Hockey Team” or the “News Crew” conventionally employed the rules and resources of the network with varying degrees of commitment or dissent. The specific use of the network resources and the constitution and negotiation of rules was influenced by the structures of economic and cultural capital consolidated during past Olympic spectacles. But to fully comprehend what this means for media organizations and institutions, media structures must be understood and analyzed concretely as historical configurations, continually undergoing transformations within broader limits and pressures of social, political and economic determinants.⁶

⁶The phrase, “limits and pressures” is a dialectic, dynamic and useful conceptualization of power provided by Raymond Williams. According to Williams, “we have to think of determination not as a single force, or a single abstraction of forces, but as a process in which real determining factors --

The theoretical application of Giddens' notion of power to ethnographic study and the examinations of televisual discourse can be immensely useful here. Giddens argues that human action is essentially composed of capability and knowledgeability (1981:163). *Capability* in media organizations can be viewed as the ability to set rules and standards in the production process, or, to work effectively outside these rules if necessary. *Knowledgeability* would refer to understanding how media structures function within the labour process -- that is "knowing the ropes", knowing where one stands within the crew, and possessing a sense of craft for using the technology to design a particular glimpse of sport for television audiences. The degree of capability rests in the scope of choices open to different people.

In this formulation we can speak of *power* in media organizations as the ability to use rules and resources of particular types (through knowledgeability and capability) to secure outcomes. It is important to understand here that power and structures are closely related. Moreover, structures that constitute power are not simply coercive or constraining; rather they are more usefully seen as both *enabling* and *constraining* features of production. Media structures therefore, are constraining in that media personnel (whether one is the executive director of the sports department or the endzone camera operator) *could* have acted in different ways and to different ends were it not for the exercise of power. Here it must be acknowledged, that each crew position and occupational role in the network had differing types and degrees of constraints. An example of the constraining nature of structures of power, linking the CTV spectacle of

the distribution of power or of capital, social and physical inheritance, relations of scales and size between groups -- set limits and exert pressures, but neither wholly control nor wholly predict the outcome of complex activity within or at these limits, and under or against these pressures" (1975:130).

accumulation with the spectacle of legitimation, occurred during the first intermission to the Soviet-Canada hockey game (Feb. 24, 1988). To keep the Canadian audience tuned into CTV during the hockey break, a network sports news announcer, Jerry Dobson, was sent by the CTV Domestic master control to the lobby of the Saddledome to work as an “on-the-spot” reporter. His assignment was to interview parents of the hockey players; however, the purpose was not primarily to add “human interest”, but to keep sense of excitement alive in a game where the score was tied in order to maintain the broadcast ratings, and to provide a free advertisement for Labatts Brewery.

Dobson’s interview lineup was the Malinowski family fully dressed in Team Labatt uniform with logos in “camera-ready” positions; the Malinowski family were at the Saddledome to cheer on their son as special guests of the Labatts’ “Parents Program”. The Labatt signature could be read off these human billboards on at least four locations. But rather than asking in depth questions about how hard their son had trained before the games, how proud they were, or how well their son was playing, Dobson asked them, “What’s the Labatts programme was all about?”. Fans cheered for the Canadian team in the lobby around the interviewees and were broadcast as if they were toasting the sponsor. This free commercial interview was surrounded by advertisements which also ran throughout the game. Labatts had served as a major sponsor of the Team Canada programme preparing for the 1988 Games; their presence seemed familiar.⁷ Dobson normally acts as CTV affiliate sports announcer in Toronto rather than a Labatt’s “marketer”; thus, it is likely that he

⁷See the Labatt’s and Royal Bank advertisements in the appendix of this chapter. Both companies were official sponsors of Team Canada and exclusive sponsors of the CTV 1988 Winter Olympic telecasts. The image of hockey, with its historical legacy as a symbol of Canada and of the excitement of sport was central the promotional campaigns of these two corporations. (Source: Canadian Olympic House files).

would have acted differently were it not for the structures of commercial power that were enabling the broadcast to be produced.

At the 1988 Winter Olympic Games, the CTV production crews operated firmly within the strict structures of the televisual labour process, which did affect the exercise of power by individual personnel and entire strata of the "team". Structuring constraints and enabling capacities of the media organization are subject to the exigencies of the particular context, time, and degrees of power held by various agents. Furthermore, these limits and pressures do not affect all media workers equally. For example, CTV camera operators tended to be unaware of the pressing financial restraints that mediated the daily decisions of the departmental vice-presidents and the executive producers -- constraints that lead to decisions to contract an old second-rate production truck for the CTV-DB hockey crew to package Canadian coverage, (while leasing a fully equipped state-of-the-art mobile 'semi' truck for CTV-HB in which to prepare the host feed for the world). Neither were camera operators necessarily aware of the reasons for broadcasting figure skating as a prime time glamour event to the neglect of other sports. Camera operators were, however, painfully aware of the weight of the hand-held ENG cameras grinding down on their shoulders, and the technicians in the truck were consciously aware of uncomfortable working contingencies, such as the crew squeeze into the cold cramped quarters of the mobile unit, or aware of missing lunches and working overtime while ill. None of these constraints mediated the daily labour process of the upper echelons of the network. Furthermore, the numerous roles and sites involved in CTV Olympic production, situated the various workers within groups of differing work agendas and sets of concerns that were not freely communicated to other levels due to the balance of power. Nonetheless, these kinds of

media organizational structures were not wholly deterministic.⁸ As media workers went about choosing and experiencing their craft, the structure of the labour process in the arena and of the media discourses that were produced and broadcast were subject to ongoing negotiation and resistance.

(II) PROFESSIONAL IDEOLOGIES AND CODES OF PROFESSIONALISM

Professional ideologies and codes of behaviour set the most readily evident rules through which the CTV hockey production crew carried out their work. For the most part, these standardized codes tended to be taken-for-granted or non-conscious. Official broadcasting codes, such as journalistic codes of “neutrality” and “fair coverage”, or political themes of patriotism used by the announcers, along with the well-established aesthetic “principles” of live entertainment programming employed by the camera operators, enabled the crew to:

- (1) carry out their production work with a sense of craft;
- (2) to experience a sense of dramatic direction and network continuity within the overall Olympic programming flow; and
- (3) to mediate the feed provided by CTV-HB in order to repackage a live sporting event into a televisual form.

Professional ideologies were the product of the range of signifying practices which have historically developed within the context of the division of sports production labour, the dominant representations of sport developed historically, and broader political-economic

⁸ See. R. Williams (1977) for a discussion of how structures are both constitutive and constituting.

influences. Yet, as Curran et. al. have noted (1982:82), the links between professional ideologies and work practices have rarely been adequately explored in media research. Among the CTV production crew ideology appeared to be both a process and a product of the localized signifying practices of the CTV hockey crew, their intersections with a number of broader social struggles, and their positioning between CTV executives, IOC members and NHL hockey crews.

(a) Objectivity and Codes of Fairness

A central professional code employed by a wide variety of television personnel was the notion of “objectivity” in Olympic news reporting and live sports entertainment coverage. The journalistic ideal of objectivity has been taken up in a number of contradictory ways within sports production and reporting. On one hand, commentators such as Howard Cosell have traditionally claimed that calling a game simply “tells it like it is”, while others, such as the executive producer for CTV-DB, openly admitted that CTV producers impart their personal “biases” into the sports programming which they prefer to call “national tastes” or “colouring” (Merzel, Dec. 29, 1987). Catering to perceived notions of national taste preferred by the audience, that is, presenting the “preferred” vision of hockey was nonetheless deemed “objective”. Indeed, during the pre-event planning Ed Merzel, Executive Director CTV Domestic Olympic Broadcasting, reassured the global sports media and the Canadian audience that CTV’s national coverage of the Games would “cut through the hype” to make objectivity the uppermost priority. Key decision makers on the CTV roster, such as the executive producer on the Host crew, claimed that sports production has never been restricted by the kinds of codes and sanctions that have

governed the journalistic profession. The news departments must abide by the official codes of objectivity including balance and impartiality.

A number of convoluted working definitions of objectivity and fairness existed throughout the network. The sense of broadcasting power held by producers of sport to be able to define rules of conduct and presentation gave the senior broadcasters and producers a strong sense of ownership over their craft and their product. The ability to define the live sports broadcast using different codes from those of the news department was a notable source of pleasure for CTV-HB and Domestic crew members.

Such disjunctures often caused diplomacy problems for network administrators when crew working ideologies conflicted with official mandates. The CTV-HB managing director, for example, complained about spending too much of her public relations time “correcting” the impressions of the Host Broadcaster’s role at the Olympics. Phyllis Switzer had to constantly parrot the Host slogan, that “the Host Broadcaster at all Olympic events acts as a lens to the world”:

it is the duty of the Host Broadcaster to provide clean multi-lateral feed to the world broadcasters with no bias imprinted on it”, particularly to members of the local print media who were critical of the position of ABC in the overall spectacle organization (Switzer: Feb. 9, 1988).

The perceived power of the American network over the Olympic movement and the Host Broadcaster, which was hotly debated within the broadcasting industry and in press columns, forced CTV to constantly defend its position by attempting to legitimate the televisual spectacle as neutral and global. Consent to CTV’s leadership was not stable due to the wider context of unbalanced economic power between exclusive rights holders.

At the official level of CTV-HB policy -- itself framed by the limits of IOC media position papers outlining media coverage -- this “unbiased” service role was promoted through the motto “world to world, start to end”. In other words, the CTV-Host broadcaster mission was to capture every athlete from every country in competition, from the start to the finish of the event. Below the administrative ranks of CTV-HB, the event producers for each sport were partially aware of how the labour of televisual coverage mediated the visual feed; after a few minutes into many of the interviews conducted, they often swelled with pride over the new ways they would employ technology to move Olympic television “into a new millennium”. Their attention to the notion of broadcasting “fairness” was articulated by people at the highest level of decision making in the sportscasting industry. As Ralph Mellanby noted in the interview: “Olympic coverage will not be neutral but it will be fair ... all competitors will be shot, but not all competitors *deserve* to be augmented with super-slo-mo” (Mellanby 1988).

This doctrine of “Olympic fairness” was related to discourses of competitive individualism, and was manifested in the use of extra cameras. Before the games began, sports crews ‘blocked’ possible times on the cue sheets when predicted feats of athletic excellence would occur by expected medal winners. Crew members were prepared to employ the most sophisticated technology such as super slow motion to capture and create a media artifact. Thus, the CTV code of fairness was circumscribed within a narrow code of athletic excellence. All athletes in motion during official competition play were theoretically captured by CTV Host feed.⁹ But, athletes were not technologically captured equally or

⁹In team sports and races, all athletes at the 1988 Games were not covered for every moment of their competitive motion as the CTV-Host motto demanded it do. The cameras panned all hockey players on the ice but once the puck was in play, the key rule for camera usage “follow the

similarly. Host televisual representations told the global audience different stories about their athletic worth. If the athlete wasn't on the puck, he wasn't in the feed. Winning isn't everything -- it's the only thing that's televised. While CTV sport producers on both the Host and the Domestic crews may have felt relatively free of journalistic codes of ethics guiding their behaviour and their productions, their work was bounded by fairly restrictive and highly conventionalized notions of winter sports coverage. The fact that their organization and styles of coverage did not significantly differ from other major North American networks indicated the widespread containment of hegemonic broadcasting conventions and discourses.

(b) Statistical Rhetoric

Quantity is a quality. High performance winter sports are largely defined through a model of athletic success and physical proficiency, based on measured lines of "objective" criteria -- such as the length of the ski jump, or the number of goals scored for and against a team, or tournament standings -- the professional ideologies employed by media to report sporting events to the Canadian audience has increasingly forced them to draw upon the quantified criteria in both their verbal anchorage and their graphical reinforcement of excellence. The rationalized presentation of numbers has become the supreme hegemonic rhetoric of sporting success; CTV hockey crew members employed this system of expression to justify their modified version of journalistic objectivity in a live entertainment broadcast format.

puck tightly"; this celebrated the puck carrier and the closest challenging players, but did not capture all players on the rink and the set up of play as promised.

“Stats” have become a naturalized or seemingly “essential” element of sports reporting and of the instantaneous calling of the game by the play-by-play announcer; so “naturalized” in fact that the Host Broadcaster, whose mandate was to provide the “natural” sights and sounds of the event, superimposed standardized numerical information on the host feed, piped to the rest of the world. Host also distributed “Sports Notes” of anecdotes and past statistical records to the 390 world broadcasters, including their hockey siblings at CTV-Domestic. As sport reporting has moved toward the greater and greater implementation of “objective criteria”, the use of technology for graphically displaying statistics, and the roles of the technicians and commentators and researchers have been significantly redesigned. For instance, if the wrong statistic was announced during the hockey game, Dan Kelly the Play-by-Play man, had to correct this number as soon as possible on the air, while searching for a witness to confirm that the information passed to him was wrong and the mistake was not his own.¹⁰ Fear of criticism by the written press and fans stemmed from the power of the unofficial spectacle of accumulation around the Games.

Furthermore, the calling of the hockey play-by-play required the constant services of the ‘statsman’ providing OCO’s computerized calculations, or his own calculations to foster the highlighting of the “important” developments in the game. At the Olympics the CTV hockey announcing crew had one stats-man, a high school teacher who

¹⁰Play-by-play commentators take great pride in calling the game, the times and the people making the plays as quickly and accurately as possible; moreover the sports department get most complaint calls on the lack of, or inaccurate exact times of goals -- terms which are demanded by gamblers.

worked part time for the football and hockey teams in Winnipeg. He appeared on air as part of the announcing team, although he never spoke on air. This was a small statistical unit compared to the regular team of seven supporting people announcer Dan Kelly was used to during his calling of NHL games as the "Voice of the St Louis Blues". While his Olympic stats "team of one" was certainly smaller, he did admit that the OCO stats were much more extensive than his regular crew could provide him. These computer-generated statistical packages and strategic summaries are the product of rivalry and cultural preferences for rationalized and measured differences; they have shifted the domain of knowledge power from the colourman and the traditional "stats man" (whose main technology - the pencil - became obsolete in 1988) toward the Host research team and to their computer and graphic operators. Statistics take on an added level of perceived neutrality and objectivity when "generated" by computers. However, the way that computer software packages produced "statistics" were through categories of representation chosen by humans and written into the formula. Sometimes interesting stats were used to pose questions on air, offered as challenges to each other, but broadcast verbally to the television fan to pull them into the analysis. "Wanna hear a good power play stat?", asked Dan Kelly as a penalty call stopped play between the Russians and Canadians, "The Soviets are 12 for 24. That adds up to 50% - they're dangerous and they're on a power play now" (Feb. 24, 1988). The computer's transformation of game information into statistical summaries were limited to quantified forms of data. Thus the construction of hockey representations was narrowed to such analysis as "the total shots on goal", the "percentage" of shots that were of a deflection or slap shot etc., "type", the percent "accuracy" of shots on goal from zone A to D.

It took an extremely skilled statistician and amiable partnership with the colourman

to interpret the twenty pages of statistics arriving from OCO'88 information services between each period of the hockey game. Information had to be translated into something strategic, meaningful and dramatic for the viewers. For example, the statistics said nothing about the character of a player, or about the game plan of the team -- the announcer had to convert such categories as "penalty minutes" into dramatic levels of "aggressiveness" of players or into storylines about the "excessive strictness" of the referee in calling light hits, trips and pokes with the stick. Due to the large ice surface of the International tournament and the style of Russian play, Team Canada practiced a defensive style that Coach Dave King called "playing for the break", a slogan announcers dug up at an earlier practice; they could never have abstracted this information from the statistical summaries. Traditionally, Canadians have played with a strategic image of rink zoning: defend the goal in your territory, chase the puck in the middle neutral zone and attack in the offensive territory near your opponents' net; King shifted to address the Russian vision of two zones of play (offensive and defensive) by redesigning the old Canadian vision of the "neutral zone" to become the "reading zone" in which players were not simply to chase the puck but would "read and react" to play, in other words, players were to put pressure on puck carrier in that middle zone (Quarrington, 1988:7). While the Canadians redesigned their triple zone to tackle the two territories of Russian strategy, the OCO game summaries adopted a four zone statistical summary that no team was implementing strategically; the overzealous application of new technology and software by OCO'88 did not always produce knowledge palatable to announcers' tastes.

Personal interviews with team officials and detailed observations of events provided the kinds of information the announcing crew believed were essential to producing an

Olympic spectacle for television consumption. After the play-by-play announcer circled the traditional statistics and rejected the many new categories of percentages, the statsman soon learned where to look on the reports for the favourite numerical categories of Dan Kelly, the play-by-play announcer. For example, Kelly preferred categories such as “player opportunities” that assisted the announcers in determining the degree of success of attacks on goal, and which legitimated the code of competitive individualism in this team game. The colourman typically turned to the “Sport Notes” to supplement his own research notes in order to inject human interest during a game.

Conventional codes of representing hockey have been slow to change in an environment that has demanded swift decisions and ready access to information. OCO was successful in quickly producing a variety of statistical measures during the 1988 Games, but failed to consult the broadcast meaning makers to check for the perceived need or desire for these new representations of the game. Moreover, in the Olympic “paper event” OCO won a gold medal according to the statistician, he laughed and pointed to his elaborate “filing system” for OCO material, which was a garbage pile under the broadcast desk. The crew often complained that OCO was cluttering up their work environment by continually sending piles of paper that the crew did not have time to sort through.

The addition and media packaging of “medal counts” served to abstract the outcome of hockey athletic process by the television crew. The medal count is a historical creation of the sport media, who have sought to deepen national rivalries to enhance the Olympic drama and cultivate national audiences. The IOC rejected the idea of the medal counts for years, citing their own mandate to foster international understanding not to divide nations.

However, they have learned of late the importance of keeping the unofficial medal count. National rivalries also lead to competitive bids for host city privileges and for media rights opportunities. Rivalry fuels the exclusive opportunities, rights and sponsorships and thereby funds the IOC. These kinds of statistical counts, and the constant barrage of broadcast “updates”, “corrections” and “final standings” during the hockey games became the media markers on the sporting drama and were testimony to the value of the code of athletic excellence.

(c) Primary Definers

One fundamental method for encoding “objectivity” into Olympic sports coverage was to employ what has been called a “primary definer” (Hall 1978): on the 1988 CTV hockey team, the announcing crew served in this capacity. Pregame hosts, half-time guests, and post game interviewees during the Olympic coverage did not merely transmit the “facts” of the game or provide an official analysis from an “informed” hockey source. Rather, the use of “experts” to narrowly define official representations of international hockey was a mediating activity of epic proportions. Sport production professionals have created a ranking system of expert definers of the game who have been graded according to the kind of specialized hockey knowledge they exhibited, or the depth of commentating experience and on-air skills they have acquired while broadcasting in the NHL.

CTV-DB employed a rigid hierarchy of expert reporters within the 1988 Winter Olympic sportscasts. At the summit of talent was veteran news anchor Lloyd Robertson,

who reported the Olympic “facts” as they occurred during the festival in the form of game “outcomes”. Robertson also interviewed and ‘chatted’ with politicians attending the game, such as with Prime Minister Brian Mulroney, or with Olympic medallists about their Olympic experiences. The pinnacle of talent for the network was located at the CTV Master Control anchor desk in the International Broadcast Centre. He was expected to project his “authoritative news voice spruced up with a bit more enthusiasm than regular news reporting” (1988). Before the 1988 Games, Robertson had been voted the “most-trusted” news anchor in Canada for his style of coverage of the national news; however the CTV television crews, both host and domestic, sharply criticized the network for choosing someone to anchor the prime time show who lacked “sport sense”. The crew felt vindicated in their criticisms of this network choice when Canadian print journalists awarded Robertson the “styrofoam” medal for his “stiff” news announcing style.¹¹

The hockey crew envisioned a different pecking order than the network presented in promotional materials. Within the venues, it was the play-by-play announcers who were positioned on the highest rung of the crew. It was their responsibility to call what was “actually happening” on the ice as the visuals were produced to be broadcast live to the nation. They described what they saw occurring on the ice in the Saddledome, and not what the television screen was simultaneously displaying. The only exception to this occurred during action replays when they glanced at the mini-monitor on the desk to call the replay.

¹¹In coverage of the 1992 Barcelona Olympics, CTV shifted to the entertainment codes of television formatting, and employed regular CTV morning news sportscaster Dan Matheson and newcomer/retired athlete Tracy Wilson as the anchors with “sports-sense”; the news codes of objectivity were deemphasized and Robertson was shifted to a documentary role which involved touring Spain to provide Canadian viewers with the political and artistic history of the host city setting rather than the news of sporting outcomes. This served to promote the signification of sport within the sports department’s vision, while adding a “human side” to the national newscaster who normally reads the news from behind a studio desk.

Dan Kelly's intense style of calling hockey was regarded by the hockey crew as "*the voice*". They trusted him to call the game "accurately". But accuracy was defined by the languages and standards of the NHL vision of the game. During an off-air moment Kelly described himself and the situational rules for bringing the other commentators into the broadcast coverage and on-air discussions:

I'm like the quarterback that throws the ball to Brad Park or to Ron Reusch. In certain instances I want Brad Park to reply because, say, its a defensive aspect of the game -- well he was a defenseman, he was an all star, he was an expert. We've worked together so long Ron's got all the history of world hockey. I first met Ron in 1965 in Finland, so that's how long we've worked together, so we know each other like a book and he knows what I do and when he can come in. He can come in and comment anytime there's a break or need for their input. They know they don't come in on a three on one break. We're a unit (Feb. 23, 1988).

Colour commentary and analysis was provided by Ron Reusch, who has been "dubbed the most authoritative source on international hockey"; while Brad Park was favoured for his strategic analysis and skill at critiquing athletic skills, despite a mumbling style of delivery he called his "marble-mouthed" condition. Park was regarded as the best judge, on this particular hockey announcing crew, for relaying to the Canadian audience what the hockey players and coaches were "probably thinking" as a goal was scored or as a player was checked into the boards. The use of these "official sources" for passing on insider information was assumed by the network to enhance the objectivity of the broadcast because of their reputations for accuracy and their dedication to the craft. What these definers of the codes and drama of hockey primarily accomplished, was the reproduction of consent to the dominant view of this sport they believed to be shared with the audience.

(d) Visions of the Audience

The view of the audience held by the CTV production crew was a fundamental variable mediating their representations of sport. At the 1988 Winter Olympic Games the beliefs about hockey fans' "wants and desires" were derived from the crews' own beliefs about the "serious and typical" NHL hockey fan expected to watch the Olympics. They included themselves in the community of zealous fans. They were, at once, producers and consumers. They projected themselves into the audience to confirm their production of the Games. Ratings were the other key indicators of the audience, but this too fit into their imagined relationship with a sea of viewers across the nation. High ratings confirmed they were fulfilling their mandate. The CTV-HB executive producer bragged, "if they're watching -- I know I'm doing something right" (Merzel: 1988). Play-by-play hockey announcer Dan Kelly shrugged off knowledge of the audience, "well there's surveys, but I never hear about it. I only hear, 'you are popular' or 'you are not popular' or they don't ever tell me to talk less or more". Technical crew members also fell back on industry "commonsense": "if they're watching then we've doing something right and we've pegged the audience on target". For Tape-Assistant Director Ross Franceour, "if the ratings are good, then obviously you're on to something that your audience is liking; if you have bad ratings, well maybe you've made a mistake" (Feb. 23. 1988). Switchboard tallies of complaints from the audience were used to justify how hockey "should" be scheduled and produced. Because of the nature of Olympic coverage, complaints from regular hockey fans (particularly about the lack of full game coverage or about the morning games missed when the nation was working) were discounted as "direct hits" on their abilities. They had no power over scheduling and or the attention the network was giving figure skating. Hockey fans, they claimed, had to "suffer as part of the bigger Olympic audience" (Wait, Feb. 18, 1988). Generally, a quiet audience

complaint line was assumed to be a sign of excellence and therefore acknowledgement they were indeed catering to the hockey audience under Olympic circumstances.

Paradoxically, the feedback with the greatest influence on the hockey crews' production, was not the televisual audience. Instead, it was the live Saddledome fans cheering around the crew as they worked that provided the daily feedback. This arena audience could not see the televised coverage, unless they brought their own miniature portable televisions to watch the replays or other Olympic events underway on other networks. Local excitement fed the crew. "The great thing about producing hockey is that you get instant feedback from the arena. We respond to the crowd, I don't think we give our audience an opinion" claimed venue producer John Shannon (Feb. 10, 1988). The deafening roar of the enclosed arena reinforced their attempt to visually capture the fast excitement to the broadcast audience. Another example, was the break away situation: as the Saddledome crowd howled, Kelly would "respond" to the fans by rapidly yelling the player's action into the microphone, matching his voice to the athletic frenzy.

Disappointment were similarly manufactured moments. When the Canadian hockey team was losing on the ice, and the announcers were disappointed in the level of play, their commentary became extremely monotone, quiet and critical. In these situations, they occasionally discussed the reaction of the fans at the Saddledome which was ironically reflective of their own response to the team. In the last minute of play during the second period of play in the Soviet-Canada game, when Canada was losing by a score of two-zero in a game that could cost them their chances of both a gold and bronze medal, the announcing crew sent the nation a verbal frown with their bland intonation:

Dan Kelly: I'll tell you what else would excite the folks a little bit more -- a goal from Canada.

Ron Reusch: Well I'm a little surprised at how quiet the crowd is here in this building. They have not really gotten into the game. It's almost like the tension got the better of them and they are on the edge of their seats. They haven't been into it from the beginning and we're now trailing two-nothing. Team Canada could do with a little support down there. They're getting the moral support without the vocal side of it. (Feb. 24, 1988).

Whether their general audience conceptions were accurate, derived from market research, or were adopted from the crews' vision of the average hockey fan at home, the conception of the audience played an important structuring role in the Olympic telecast. This mediation occurred as early as the pre-event planning. CTV-DB executive producer, Mercel, claimed that "Canadians want to watch the best in the world when they watch sports on television; Americans, on the other hand, want to watch Americans and there's nothing wrong with that" (1988). The hockey producers and announcers agreed that the Canadian audience had a viewing priority to watch winning performances regardless of the nationality of the athletes. The "cheerleading" approach of the Americans, the CTV crew claimed, was "distasteful" by Canadian broadcast standards. While CTV and ABC networks shared the same broadcast booth in the Saddledome and shared many traditions of producing sport for television, differences in priority were evident. Mercel argued, for example, that ABC planned coverage around a focus on any American competitor in competition while CTV "gears itself to the event not the competitor" (Dec. 29, 1987). Differences in national coverage (as perceived by the CTV crew) were linked to stereotypic images of Canada and the USA, and linked to how the broadcast game was assumed to be experienced by the home audiences. CTV crew members generally believed that both the American audiences

and the ABC crew were arrogant. But ABC also had an over-generalized view of the Canadian audience. In their guide to media coverage, ABC quoted Montreal novelist Hugh Wood to define the “essence” of Canadian hockey audiences; ‘unCanadianism is the very definition of Canadianism’ except ABC claimed, with regard to hockey, “Canadians remain fanatical about the game. Canada has never had a civil war ... after hockey Canadians would probably have found it dull” (Access; 1987, 67).

Patriotic cheerleading was officially rejected in pre-event planning, yet it did mediate the production decisions of the CTV master control crew in their daily presentation of the CTV “Olympic Primetime” show and the nightly highlights package for the national audience. CTV Domestic Line-Producer Tom Mckee outlined the rules of importance for a sporting event making air: (a) national importance, (b) the level interest for the Canadian audience tuning in at that point during the day or week/end, and (c) those events leading to the award of a medal. To make ‘on the spur of the moment’ decisions, Mckee admitted that his calls were dependent on, “whether it’s a Canadian that’s involved; that increases the interest factor. If it’s interesting, it’s news and it should be on the air. That’s the way I look at it and those things are arbitrary decisions on my part”. These decisions by senior men at master control and on the CTV hockey announcing team, who all shared radio broadcasting experience as a common denominator between them, were spiced with the traditions of newsworthiness: the “five-w”s borrowed from news tradition of sports. **Who** from Canada is going to win? **What** is the predicted outcome of this game? **Where** is the Canadian team in the tournament standings? **When** will the team make it into the medal standings? **Why** is Canada losing?

Networks competed over ratings and profits accumulated - media producers sought acceptance and recognition from their peers across the industry guild. Professional codes constituting what makes "good sport" on television, and industry standards concerning what it takes to be a good sports broadcaster, were substantially derived from their professional peers across the North American sports industry and not from the Olympic network. Moreover, standards for quality coverage and for innovative contributions tended to be drawn from their broadcasting peers and other media professionals, more so than from the audience. At the 1988 Winter Games there simultaneously existed a great deal of respect and jealousy in the relationships between the producers, directors, announcers and the creative ranks of sports broadcasting, around the recognition of awards and achievements of their colleagues. For example, they judged each others' careers by the number of Emmy's they been awarded, the number of Olympiads covered, and/or the numbers of seasons one worked on a crew producing Stanley Cup finals. On the day to day level, the production rank and file at the Olympics primarily judged yesterday's job performance by the ratings in comparison to (a) other networks (b) to other sports within the Olympic telecast and (c) other non-Olympic programmes broadcast that previous day on CTV and other networks, and they judged their performance by the written reviews in the Canadian press. In the younger technical ranks of the hockey crew, the crew collectively derived a self-image from (a) a belief they were creators of excellent sporting competition which could be confirmed hockeycast's ratings, (b) the sense of being "hand-picked" onto an exclusive and elite team by the executive producer for either CTV-HB or CTV-DB, and (c) the amount of airtime their camera replay or graphic received in comparison to their ratio of technical errors. The quality of the crews work could often be determined by listening to the crew conversations and production truck decisions on their headsets.

Hegemonic discourses about hockey were so tightly woven into the working decisions and conventions of the crew that a current audience dossier was neither available nor requested. Assumptions about the hockey audience were held at the level of “fact”. Not a single member of the hockey crew possessed up-to-date knowledge of the hockey or the Olympic audience from marketing surveys or telephone feedback; to make decisions they instead responded to the live crowd, their traditional assumptions of television viewing audience, peer comments and the criticisms of print journalists. In addition to their claim of being the “best in the business” at covering the game of ice hockey, their lack of knowledge and concern for the makeup of the 1988 audience was perhaps based on their own location as spectators of the game. Commentators, according to the Line Producer for CTV Domestic, are “super spectators. They get paid to help the spectator at home by being a spectator at the games to enhance the broadcast, and the excitement, and the fun, or the news value of that particular event” (Feb. 18, 1988). As fans and producers of the game, the crew assumed their taste to be universal and their talent to be inbred.

(III) BROADCASTING STYLE: THE TASTE OF HOCKEY

Network “house styles” for covering sport on television, and the aesthetic procedures and craft codes employed by various individuals carrying out their work, have historically amalgamated into a narrow set of signifying systems within the institutional settings of networks. The “languages” of televised hockey, including visual and audio codes, are integral and constitutive elements in the (re)production of contemporary sport. The social process of producing and struggling to remake *preferred* representations of hockey can be located today in the hands of those who transpose live sport into a telecast. The vast

majority of sportsfans in 1988 consumed the Olympic sports through television. While networks do try to differentiate themselves from their competitors to gain viewer loyalty and regular advertising support, there is little difference in the overall style and range of sport representations presented by North American networks.

Yet, it is always possible for the camera to capture a different range of sporting activities on the official Olympic programme, and it is quite possible for a media crew to capture a different aspect of a game through codes that are currently marginal (such as the aesthetic side of skating and deking in hockey rather than wiring the hockey boards with microphones to specifically emphasize the powerful thuds of the body check). The various athletic elements that *could* be signified in the Olympic telecast of 1988 hastened the legitimation and naturalization of versions of hockey as a male preserve. As Williams labelled it (1977:148), the crews' "commonsense" ways of thinking about hockey and their craft, and the institutional limits and pressures on the crew urge the network to take a consistent *stance* on the way that Olympic hockey is presented stylistically. Both CTV-HB and CTV-DB producers were aware of the fact that the stance adopted to broadcast the '88 Olympic hockey tournament was strictly a North American style, or more precisely, a National Hockey League style since the core people on both the production and the technical side of the two CTV crews regularly cover NHL games. Logistical differences between International games and NHL games, such as the wider ice surface, did not affect the choice of tight-follow camera coverage style as the following example demonstrates. The CTV-HB crew members were informed at a pre-Olympic production meeting days before the games opened that some of the coverage would be "widened" because of the wider ice surface of the Saddledome arena and because of the presence of European broadcasters using the host feed

(Fox, CTV Host camera, 1988). However, as the opening game progressed , the crew immediately reverted to their familiar “tight” coverage of hockey where the puck was narrowly framed and followed by the play-by-play camera at the level of the announcers; framing the player in possession of the puck” subtly reinforced the competitive individualism of the North American sport star system. ¹²

Both the production and the technical levels of the CTV crews proudly proclaimed Canadians to be “the best in the business” of hockey coverage, and that they are the best crew in North America and thus the entire world; these proclamations on the part of the technicians were based on their knowledge of the game of hockey, on being avid fans of the sport, and most importantly, on their expertise with broadcast technology. They assumed that the broadcast style they employed at the Olympics would eventually be used by European broadcasters as soon as they “technically improved” according to the producers technical assistant:

all inexperienced crews cover the game wide. As they get better they come in tighter on the puck and take more risks. Europeans use wider shots because they are technically not able to handle a faster game when shooting in tight (Perrotta: Feb. 18, 1988).

A style of “shooting” hockey had become the style.

It quickly became evident that the conventional nature of the North American convention of tight hockey coverage -- emphasizing individual athletic achievement on the

¹²See Rader (1984:145) and Young (1990) for historical overviews of how the game of producing hockey for television has changed.

ice rather than team play and strategy -- was assumed to be the standard of broadcast excellence by which all other networks and national styles of coverage were to be judged and aspired to. Only the top domestic producers in CTV and the CTV-HB executive directors consciously and publicly articulated that this was their choice of production style from the many stances available. The producers were well aware that the differing stylistic preferences of the 389 other world broadcasters could never be satisfied in one Host feed, and thus, since the 1988 Olympic Games were “North American Games”, CTV Host chose to depict hockey in a decidedly “North American” manner for the ease of the labour process and for commercial viability. “Tastes”, declared Ralph Mellanby to the discerning audience browsing through the *TV Guide’s Olympic Issue*,

are different all over the world. The Europeans, for example, are very demanding. They don’t particularly like the way we cover sports in North America - they think its too fancy. We’ve decided that this is a North American television event and it will be done in a North American style (Feb. 13, 1988).

The formal use of language, music and sound effects in the audio portion of broadcasts and the visual forms of composition woven into the fabric of the sportscast indicated that the “authors” of the production utilized a multiplicity of compositional forms. The crew actively transformed the live hockey event in the Saddledome through the conventional routines of shooting live plays, editing replays, etc., within the network labour process. The question of “authorship” in sports production was difficult to assign, since the broadcast crews drew heavily upon the dominant cultural meanings of hockey from Canadian culture and the wider North American professional hockey context.

Still, the complexity of struggles over meaning within the network, between members of the audience, and amongst the athletes themselves should not be overlooked. Television production can never simply reproduce hegemonic meanings in sport nor of the broader culture. Moreover, the visual and auditory languages employed to capture and describe the Olympic sports, were continually worked over and transformed upon the cultural terrains of the Olympic SaddleDome, the CTV mobile unit, and the International Broadcast Centre. The evolving traditions of sports broadcasting now represent a set of selective and historically preferred conventions and cultural signifying codes that guided the constant choices the crew made in the production process.

(a) Visual Codes

For the most part, the coverage of live CTV Olympic sports attempted to signify the various winter sports in as realistic a fashion as possible. One of the cardinal rules of television production is to, “be proficient at ‘*the art that conceals art*’: don’t distract your viewers attention from the content to the technique by which the content is communicated” (Lewis, 1968:96). One of best exemplifications of this “art” was repeatedly displayed at the start of each hockey period when the hockey announcers scrambled into place for a “beauty shot” of the “talent” panel to gather an audience and desperately tried to hide the lapel microphone wired under their arms when the line producers at master control gave little warning that they were about to go to air.

The pursuit of realism extends beyond hiding the technology. Whannel (1984) has

observed that realist conventions are a major theme of televisual representations of British sport, and that the process of 'realist' production seeks to locate the television spectator in the position of the *ideal spectating seat*. According to the Saddledome venue producer, the team bench side camera position at the Olympics permitted the producers to take the audience "out of the view of the press box and to put you with the players on the bench". What the Domestic executive producer attempted to do with camera placement in the hockey arena, was not to provide the television viewer with the ideal arena seat, but with a *better seat*.¹³

Despite the use of a variety of camera shots, it was the transitional devices such as quick dissolves, fades and computer wipes that enabled the CTV audience to experience a sports show that seemed to flow in a fairly smooth manner from one end of the ice to the other without the televisual sutures created by camera shot transitions becoming highly visible. For the most part, the live action of televised hockey was audited from a single play-by-play camera, with the use of the zoom lens, rather than through numerous camera cuts. Most Saddledome cameras were used for action replays and occasionally during live action play. During faceoffs, overhead panavision was momentarily employed to provide a confrontational "point of view" for the television viewer. The effect of auditing the main play-by-play camera in the Saddledome broadcast booth, and the editing of replays in quick succession after a goal, was that a "kaleidoscopic dynamic" was created by the crew. While a "close-up shot" is not a realist technique with reference to the eyesight of the fans seated

¹³This traditional sports production goal became an advertising slogan for some of the CTV affiliates during the 1988 Olympics. In Calgary, for example, CTV published a campaign in local newspapers that provided a list of daily highlights on the back rest of an armchair cartoon. The slogan declared CTV, "your best seat for the Olympics!". (See *The Calgary Sun*, Feb. 18, 1988, p. 17 for an illustration of this advertisement).

fifty rows up in the arena, the visual sense of familiarity that photographic media afford permitted the CTV audience to easily adopt an uncritical acceptance of this type of tight framing. Brien Williams (1977) has noted the heavy reliance on the close-up shot in sportscasting to enable the emphasis to be placed on the individual, rather than on team strategies. Such was the case with Olympic hockey broadcasts in 1988; the main camera focused on the player with possession of the puck and the closest players, whereas during stoppages in play the tight camera framed single players, coaches or referees rather than pulling back to display the entire ice surface.

Technical possibilities permitted a greater range of “naturalist structures of feeling” (Williams, 1975:56) to be uncritically used and to intensify the particular representations that North American crews prefer to be associated with a particular sport.

For example, structures of feeling associated with the gruelling events such as cross-country ski finish line collapses, or Eddy-the-Eagle’s daring ski jumps were reinforced with the use of improved technology that focused on facial expressions that normally would appear as a blur to the audience; downhill skiers at the ‘88 Olympics were magnified sixty times from a distance of two kilometres using the world’s largest telephoto lens to capture the “look” of a hair-raising turn on the mountain; the improved lens permitted the hockey producers to reinforce their conventional “importance of goal-tending” themes by zooming in on the piercing eyes of the goalie or the beads of sweat trickling down a forehead.

When “un”natural structures of feeling were employed, such as instant replays that repeat time, they were usually marked graphically. For example, the “barndoor wipe” closed off the visual live play and signalled the transition to videotaped transition, the

replays were presented, and “live” time was reopened by splitting the screen image and “opening the doors” of the old replay image into the “live time” waiting patiently below. Dissolves were used between replays to indicate transitions from tape to tape.

Many possible codes and methods of representation for sport on television have been restricted by the technology as well. Hockey, for example, has always been technologically difficult for still photographers to shoot because the arenas tend to be very dark. Because the cultural conventions of hockey have stressed the importance of the goal, the critically important focus of the camera has historically focused on the goal area. Television cameras, on the other hand, simply “follow the puck at all times making it one of the easiest sports to film and produce” (Merzel 1988). The cultural ordering of methods to achieve structures of feeling, organized the crew into specific locations to achieve this desired effect. Moreover, most crew members expressed feeling extremely honoured to have been chosen for the crew that would produce hockey in the world’s first made for television hockey arena. Rather than exploring the range of possibilities the crew was generally restrained to convention. New technology caught old visions.

But, the Olympic hockey tournament was played in a “made for *Canadian* television” arena. The Saddledome had been designed with a mission to offer a window for the world on the game of hockey. The site was celebrated as state-of-the-art and the skills needed to bring the spectacle to life in this television studio were naturalized as Canadian. When deviations from the Canadian hegemonic vision of hockeycasting occurred, the differences were not seen to be cultural alternatives by different world broadcasters, but rather as sources of amusement for the Canadian crews and “proof” of Canadian expertise being

inborn; Ron Harrison, the CTV Host Hockey director cited the last Olympiad as proof:

knowledge of the game is essential ... one thing I'll say about Canada, and I don't care what country you go to -- and it sounds like we're bragging, but if there's one sport that Canadians know, it's hockey. And I don't care if you take your local station in Vancouver or your big network in Toronto, or whatever, for the most part when you get hockey crews - they know the game. And that makes your job a lot easier. Before the Olympics I did it with ABC, now that's different - they would give you any amount of equipment you required but they didn't understand the game. And when you talk about meetings and preparation, I spent most of my time sitting down with them trying to explain what we are trying to do in a given day, because they can only relate to hockey as football.

I did the Olympics in Sarejevo. My producer kept calling centre ice the 50 yard line, but I knew what he was talking about, okay, you know all their terms and plans relate to football, and all you had to do was transpose them, '50 yard line? Oh yes, centre ice ... the goal line'; it's so funny. But here in Canada, your meetings deal mostly with the reproduction, intermission. The game itself become second nature almost to any station, any Canadian network (Feb. 23, 1988).

(b) Auditory Codes

Sound reproduction had become an integral part of the labour of creating a televisual product in 1988. Over television's short three-decade history of broadcasting, the emphasis of programming and thrust of the innovative work of the crews have tended to address the visual codes of presenting sport. Recently, the "sounds of sport" have become an important focus. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, the introduction of "real" sneaker squeaks on the floors and the swoosh of the basketball nets, as a ball passed through the hoop, occurred after microphone technology was developed that could be used on the floor or

attached to the plexiglass of the backboard. Previous to this, the crack of a bat in a baseball game, or the slam of a hockey player into the boards during a body check were dubbed over the game soundtrack by the special effects person(s).

Now sports producers prefer and demand the 'real vibes' of sport be broadcast to "authenticate" the notion of the sportcast as the last live drama on television. In 1981, two NBC audio-technicians received an Emmy award for "discovering" how to mike the bottom of a golf cup to permit television viewers to "feel" the "ping" of the golf ball successfully dropping into the hole - a sound that golfers don't usually hear on the green. Perhaps most interesting are the sounds of swimming, and of ski cuts in the snow, that can now be captured and broadcast. To enhance the hockey coverage at the Calgary games, approximately thirty microphones were placed by CTV throughout the Saddledome including in the penalty box and the player's benches. The increased use of "real sound in sports broadcasting, in combination with the realist visual conventions and statistical analytic devices employed, served to legitimate notions that the CTV Olympic broadcasting was of the highest technical quality possible and a "truly objective" transmission of actual game elements of noise.

A crucial broadcast goal of the CTV hockey producer was to create a product that was both exciting and entertaining. B. Williams (1977) has suggested that the audio serves to "manipulate" or at least "orchestrate excitement" in televised sport coverage. With regards to the actual non-spoken sounds of play, "the purpose of the sound is to help make the viewer at home feel he is right there, which makes the event more enjoyable"

(Executive producer, CTV Domestic, 1988).¹⁴ But opposing opinions concerning the use of 'natural' sounds have arisen. In 1980, NBC experimented with an announcerless game; the natural sounds of the crowd were broadcast, rather than inserting "canned" roar and cheering, and the miked crunches of the equipment were broadcast along with the calls of the game by the referees on the football field and the players. It was deemed a disaster; never again, NBC claimed, will they broadcast a commentary-free game, because North American audiences expect and want the verbal mediation of the game by "expert" anchors. On the other hand, CTV-HB executive producer and Emmy Award winner for Olympic coverage Ralph Mellanby, wanted to hear less of the announcers' chatter at the '88 Games and "to hear the ski jumpers breathing as they get ready to start, the pop after the jump and the thump as they hit the ground" (1988). CTV producers claimed that the network's use of natural sounds would make hockey and indoor ice skating "truly exciting".¹⁵ This, however, increased the employment of sounds by the Host Broadcaster which meant that all 390 world broadcasters from 52 nations were to require change in other aspects of the coverage. In particular, the increased use of stereo sound on site, demanded a corresponding de-emphasis upon verbal anchorage.¹⁶

To insure the greater use of sport sounds and to re-establish a new line of hierarchy within the organization of the production labour process, Mellanby sent briefing books, *CTV*

¹⁴Ed Mercel, cited in Donev (1983:11).

¹⁵Ralph Mellanby, cited in Howse, 1987.

¹⁶Ironically, in daily television criticism columns by newspaper reporters, CTV was heavily criticized for allowing the anchors, hosts and commentators to fill airtime. Campbell in his post-Olympic wrap-up for the *Globe and Mail*, for example, lambasted CTV for using "too many talking heads and not enough action" during live coverage of the Games (Feb. 29, 1988: D1).

Broadcaster's Handbook to most crew members of the CTV Host and Domestic organizations and to all national broadcasters at the Games. Unofficially, the executive producer nicknamed his manual, "The Shut-Up Book". This book described the basic broadcasting set up at each venue, the basic nuances of the various sports, the typical graphics that would be added to the visuals (such as Nation, athlete identification etc.) and at what points during the sport the announcers should be silent. Similar to the strategic use of white space in print advertising to reduce 'clutter', the "Shut-up Book" represented an attempt to select and redefine contemporary meanings. To intensify "real feeling", the producers had to convince the crew to be quiet. At a deeper level, the handbook was attempting to sell the industry on an emergent narrative -- a narrative that located the audience *within* the Olympic experience among the competitors, rather than witness to the competition from the stands. Verbal silence, the host producers believed, was crucial to highlighting visual meaning for a sophisticated North American sport audience. "Too many producers are scared of their own big-name commentators" Mellanby claimed (sic, 1988).¹⁷ The metamorphosis of television audiences from observers to participants in the Olympic spectacle proved to be a more difficult task than anticipated - the producers had yet to be convinced. The hockey producers had yet to be informed.

Among the producers and older announcers there was agreement that commentators should complement the play and not describe what the viewer can see. CTV's *General Broadcasters' Handbook*, the shut-up book, requested domestic broadcasters to regard the following:

¹⁷ Ralph Mellanby, cited in Howse (1987).

Audio Coverage: special attention has been given to the penalty box and the team benches. Microphones placed at the team benches will pick up the voices of the coaches and players.

Announcers are also requested not to talk against the public address system. CTV HB has requested the public address announcers to make their announcements only at breaks in play for goals, penalties and line violations.

Following a goal, CTV HB advises the announcers to be silent until the crowd subsides. The hockey coverage should provide sensational board, stick and skate sounds (1988:42).

But older notions about “good television” in the hockey broadcasting subculture did not shift easily. None of the CTV hockey announcers had heard of the existence of the shut-up book prior to the opening hockey game and had not received a copy by the end of the Games. No one dared. “After all”, a network host explained, “sports broadcasting is personality broadcasting” (Matheson, Feb. 19, 1988). The sports crews considered Dan Kelly to be the best announcer in the business. Kelly simply saw his job as putting words to the pictures, as the director in the truck sutured the images; Kelly was surprised to hear about the shut-up book from a newspaper column rather than from the executive director of the CTV Host network. Kelly was confused by the intent:

I don't know how you talk less about the hockey game -- I just saw a thing in the newspaper where Ralph Mellanby says we've been yacking for twenty years. We've been helping him make a living and I don't know what he's talking about because he never sent me any memo. I have the greatest respect for him, but I think I know a little more about broadcasting a hockey game than Ralph Mellanby ... As soon as you start backing off you get phonecalls because people have grown up with that history and that apparently we add to the excitement of the game - the announcer in the crowd. If you don't do it - I know Dave Hodge tried to do quiet play-by-play several years ago in that style - and it didn't work. He got all kinds of complaints. (Feb. 19, 1988).

Indeed, the hockey announcers did not “shut-up” during Olympic hockey; they felt they had been hired to talk.

Music also mediated and anchored the visuals of Olympic sport. CTV’s Olympic “signature” was an animated mountain/torch/media logo for the network, accompanied by triumphant fanfare to announce the show each day and to indicate major breaks within the Olympic show. The “feel” of the music instantly added a note of celebratory excitement that words could not describe. Music was largely absent from the hockey games, except for the Saddledome’s public address system, organ music and the trumpet playing Canadian fan who attended all home team games to loudly cheer them on. In other sports, such as figure skating and freestyle ski ballet, music played a more central role in the staging of these aesthetically-pleasing sports. The musical dimension played an important signifying role in the prime time legitimation of culturally preferred readings of figure skating as being “graceful”, “feminine”, and “expressive” in comparison to the hockey sounds echoing the slap of the stick on the puck and the thuds against the boards. It was the same arena, but different sounds for subtly constructed the gender apartheid in Olympic ice sports. Generally music was not played during actual live coverage of hockey, except for the background organ tunes during stoppages in play; traditionally, the dynamic theme music of “*Hockey Night in Canada*” in regular NHL programming, or the Olympic fanfare at the 1988 tournament signified that the show was about to start or end, and helped to glorify and romanticize the “eliteness” of the Olympic performances.

Sports broadcasting is a social process guided by the historical conventions of television labour, the craft of sports broadcasting, the codes of crew behaviour, visions of

the audience, and the basic audio-visual and graphic codes employed to construct an exciting “live” Olympic spectacle. Collectively these techniques, codes and traditions coalesced at the 1988 Winter Olympic Games to tell a number of stories about hockey in Canadian culture.

CHAPTER 7

TELEVISUAL SPORTING CODES: MAKING HOCKEY CANADIAN

Canadian sports media personnel have historically played a powerful role in constructing popular myths about hockey as *the* Canadian game. This chapter will examine the making of sporting codes of masculine physicality, notions of athletic excellence in hockey, and nationalistic codes and myths of the Canadian game by the CTV network at the 1988 Winter Olympic games.

(I) CODES OF MASCULINE PHYSICALITY

In Olympic competition and in the television coverage of the Games, hockey can be characterized as a 'male preserve'. In broader struggles over sport in Canadian society, hockey has emerged as a gender exclusive activity and symbol of rugged masculinity. The announcers readily discussed the dominant themes they pursued which formed the basis of the broadcast construction of hockey as a male preserve. Brad Park for example said he always stresses "the attack of the defense":

I think we stress the attack of the defense, you know, how people are attacking, what they're doing as far as getting out with the other team. I think there is a reason for everything that happens on the ice. Nothing happens by chance. Everybody has a generality of how they want to attack, or how they want to defend, there's an overall picture (Feb. 16, 1988).

Part of this emphasis is derived from Park's personal history as an all star NHL and as a

Team Canada defense man on the 1972 Team Canada, now depicted in Canadian sports history as the glory team that reclaimed momentary global supremacy from the Russians in International hockey. These popular themes are the result of the media's portrayal of a "selective history" of sport (Whannel 1987). Whannel describes contemporary sport as one of the key sites where gender differences are constructed and legitimated.

To build the broadcast preserve, both the all-male announcing team and crew covering Olympic hockey successfully marginalized the possibility of a female voice of authority in commentating and visually representing the sport through the technology. The lone female crew member quietly attached label microphones and cued studio countdowns to interviews after the games as they were instructed into her headset by the male producer in the truck. Women were excluded from much of the production of Olympic hockey, and were excluded in crew assumptions of who was in the Canadian audience. Yet, more Canadian women watched television in the 1988 Olympic year than did males according to Statistics Canada (1988, Catalogue 87-208:7). CTV lost an opportunity to cultivate a wider audience and to boost ratings in 1988 when they failed to place females in the production process of creating the audio-visual codes of the hockey spectacle, and by failing to provide the hockey crew with up to date information on the Olympic audience.

The marginal role allocated to females to play in CTV Olympic coverage of hockey was that of the sidelined cheering spectator. The television crew assumed the women in attendance at the SaddleDome to be mere "on-lookers" and not serious spectator-fans of the Olympic tournament; women in the stands, if attractive, were useful elements for live production; women in the audience served the crew as the "good-looking girl shot" or

“beauty shot” which was sutured into the live telecast to fade from the hockey game to a commercial (while the game was still in progress), or to kill “visual time” as announcers from the CTV control desk and the Saddledome booth bantered on air before the game began. Prior to the game, the camera team scanned the audience with their “babe-cams” for their choice of beauty shot. As the commercial was being cued up, the rinkside cameraman with a hand-held camera on the CTV Domestic crew was told by the producer to “pick your date tonight” for the fade shot.

Images of women as sex object and the conventional hockey narratives became curiously crossed in the audio-visual feed. During the introduction to the medal round game between Canada and the Soviet Union, for example, Lloyd Robertson explained how the hockey standings were mathematically determining how well Canada would have to perform to earn enough points to win a medal:

Robertson: *(close up head shot of Robertson with CTV logo from studio wall displayed over shoulder)* Lets go now to the SaddleDome and Ron Reusch, and Ron I've been fiddling around with figures here. What's it look like down there?

Reusch *Well first of all the number one figure (headshot of Robertson dissolves to a medium closeup of a young woman licking ice cream off a spoon) is about 19,000 fans. (image dissolves to an extreme closeup of another young women's hair, she turns in to face the camera, smiles and laughs, the Olympic logo from the CTV Host broadcaster appears beside her ear, “Ice Hockey, Olympic Saddledome” is graphically superimposed on her chest). We welcome you to the Olympic Saddledome for the first time ever, Canada's going to meet the Soviet Union in an Olympic or Championship game on her own soil (Feb. 24, 1988).*

The non-conscious intent of the crew was to downplay the role of the women as serious hockey spectators. Audience responses to goals or athletic feats during the hockey games

were framed around the action and cheering responses of male fans in the SaddleDome audience. Although North American sports departments have begun to respond to the broadcast industry's need to attract a wider possible audience to enhance the spectacle of accumulation, the masculine sports spectacle of legitimation at the 1988 Olympics continued to be reproduced.

There are many fans of hockey who enjoy the sizzling action and hard-hitting excitement of witnessing fights between hockey players; these fans were assumed by the CTV crew to be male spectators. Networks have begun to pressure the NHL and hockey television crews to "clean up their act", according to John Shannon, the Olympic Saddledome venue producer; to attract a wider general audience to the telecast which includes women, Shannon says the industry is beginning to feel the pressure to limit the violence. Networks want the ratings associated with attracting new audiences. Only the most senior members of the CTV Host crew argued that the wider viewing public, including both males and females, did not wish to see the "brutality" of the game (John Shannon: Saddledome Host Venue Producer and producer of over nine Stanley Cup Finals for the NHL).¹⁸ During CTV Olympic programming, women were not addressed as hockey fans because it was a culturally impossible story in the Domestic crew's vision of Canadian hockey.

¹⁸ Since the 1970s the issue of sex role stereotyping in Canada has become a social issue of "unprecedented public interest" (Raboy, 1990:312), in the 1990s this issue has been replaced by the extended consequence of such stereotyping, that being sexual abuse and violence. After the CRTC's experiment with industry self-regulation has only partially improved the construction of images of women within the programming and improved the number of positions of work within the media, the CRTC requires broadcasters to promise in their licence renewals to adhere to a code intended to dispel negative stereotyping. Raboy notes that this 1986 policy intends to provide Canadians with a more realistic glimpse of the diversity and importance of the roles played by women. Despite CTV's licensing agreement, sports programming continues to exempt itself from these agreements.

What was the perfect game on ice? Basically, the crew's definition of a battle depicting fast skating action, hard hitting body checks in the corner, and a close scoring competition filled with "solid muggings" but not "cheap shots". The hockey venue producer described it as "hard hitting, with lots of body contact, because that's what the audience wants to see", and ultimately within a game that concluded with Canada beating the Russians. The crew all nodded their heads in wistful agreement on hearing this proclamation. To capture "good hockey", the conventions of presenting this game demanded the play-by-play announcing in the Olympic hockey games to be called in an intense but "detached" manner by Dan Kelly on the CTV national telecasts. It was his job to accurately call the action on the ice as it occurred, along with inserting statistics and scores. In contrast, the colourman and analyst displayed more emotion, although it was moderately contained in comparison to the style of the figure skating announcers. The colourman Reusch provided the player's background information and human interest scoops that linked to dominant images of Canadian tough and rugged play. In the Russia-Canada game for example, graphic images of blood on a Russian player's face were infused with replays of Canadian Jim Peplinski to reinforce verbal statements by analyst Brad Park that Canadian team players had been playing hard, rough, and "with emotion".

Often, Reusch and Park would engage in light conversation that reproduced the dominant themes of "masculine physicality", nationhood, authority etc. in their hockey commentary:

Kelly: "and Malinowski ties the game 1-1, Canada-Sweden".

Reusch: "Canada is the least penalized team in the tournee. What a difference from the old Penticton Vees days.... it's been drilled in by Dave King - take no stupid penalties".

Park: “it’s going to be a problem if the ref doesn’t call them now .. it leaves the ref no flexibility later... if he calls them, then, the coaches will be irate ... Canada is great offensively yet the emotional level is good”.

To insert humour and to reinforce the roughness of hockey, Reusch and Brad would engage in verbal repartee on air in a challenge between them to come up with the most succinct sporting analogy (Feb. 24, 1988):

Reusch: I was watching Ken Berry on that last shift, him and Makarov were doing a heck of a dance -- they should of been in figure skating. He had a hold on ‘em, and their sticks were locked, they were together for a good twenty seconds out there (*he turns toward Park, and raises his eyebrows in challenge during a shot of Team Canada leaving the ice*).

Park: This reminds me of two sumo wrestlers - a little pushing and shoving. (*Park and Reusch turn from the monitor and smirk at each other*).

Their on-air challenges celebrated the masculine description of hockey while subverting the dominant narratives and practices of other sports. Hockey has to be and could only be the epitome of Canadian culture within the narrative framework from which they borrowed.

The televised hockey game at international and NHL levels of play has been forced to respond to the network’s need to reach the widest possible audience. They assumed a greater number of hockey fans enjoy the hard hitting action and love the excitement of a fight than they enjoy the other athletic attributes or team narratives of hockey. There were some significant differences between Canadian networks in handling the coverage of fights and altercations leading to penalties. TVA, the francophone network who had purchased their exclusive rights from CTV, cued immediately to commercial during the 1988 Games as soon

as a fight broke out. TVA had developed a network stance on violence that down played, and attempted to eliminate what they called the “disgracious elements” from the television coverage. Instead, they wished to boost their coverage of the skills of hockey and team strategy (Jean Claude St. Germain, 1988). CTV producers, directors and announcers all disagreed with this approach. CTV took the approach that fights, while infractions of the rules, are still part of the “news of the game” and the excitement. Thus, the plan was set: fights would be broadcast live when they occurred, but they would avoid glamorizing the battles on ice by not replaying them. Beyond their control was the decision by the network to use standard replay time to go to commercial. Time permitting, the incidents leading up to the fight could be replayed as part of the expert analysis to establish the cause of the friction and who the instigator(s) were.¹⁹ “Good” play-by-play, according to Ron Reusch, still allowed for the “thud into talk” at the Calgary Olympics (Feb. 12, 1988).

The anticipation of this kind of news did uncritically sneak into the on-air commentary. During the introduction of the Soviet-Canada game (Feb. 24, 1998), for example, Dan Kelly unveiled Team Canada’s strategy, “Dave King, by the way, says Canada wants to be physical tonight, not that they’ll scare the Soviets, but they want to throw them off their game”: to which Reusch responded as Jim Peplinski was ushered into the penalty box, “if there’s one thing Canada is noted for over the past few years, it’s a lack of discipline. Retaliation is not the norm at the Olympic Games”. As audiences were prepared

¹⁹ While a concern for violence in entertainment programming is on the public agenda because of this issue being raised in the 1993 CRTC hearings and in US Senate debate, in 1988 a conscious effort to cap violence in hockey and the way it was described was emerging in the NHL and among senior producers hoping to win an American network agreement for NHL hockey. The network and league commercial imperative to reach the broadest audience possible is beginning to mediate this concern.

to watch a physically rough game, in which the Canadian players were not expected “to back down”, Team Canada toughness was celebrated and compared to ‘tricks’ Soviets were using to create power play situations:

Kelly: Here’s Fetisov coming in ... Bykov.

Yaremchuk will get a penalty. Bykov took a dive but Yaremchuk will get a penalty anyway. And he can’t believe it. (*arena p.a. system plays “Three Blind Mice” tune to musically criticize the referees*).

Bykov, as we told you earlier, he’s a whiley little guy and I don’t think there’s any question - he took a nine point nine dive and the ref didn’t spot the dive, only the hook.

Just as rules are made to be broken, so too are plans designed to be forgotten. When Canada started losing the Soviets in the medal round, replays of fights and “business” found their way into the CTV Domestic and the CTV Host broadcasts. When Team Canada failed to provide the network with goals to celebrate and replay, they shifted to narratives of “toughness”. When Team Canada was losing 2-0 to the Russians, the territorial battles in front of the Canadian net were replayed from three angles. Goalie Sean Burke’s repeated punching of Soviet player Molguiny reinforced the “playing with emotion” storyline.

Research on commentary and narrative codes in sports broadcasting discussed earlier, has suggested that dramatic motifs or verbal embellishments have served to heighten the overall excitement in sports broadcasting beyond the level that was transmitted visually by the television (Bryant et. al., 1977). This was the case in some of the 1988 Winter Olympic hockey games. If the game on the ice was boring (if a scoring “blowout” was occurring, or the play remained in one end of the rink, or if a game had few body

checks), the announcers could sound excited about the game within limits, “because you don’t want to insult the serious fan” (Reusch, 1988). During the initial hockey round, for example, the analyst noted that “Team USA looks *tired*”; later, during an off-air break, he was informed by Kelly the play-by-play announcer that “nineteen year olds don’t get tired”. Kelly went back on the air to resignify the American team’s play by noting to the national audience “Brad is worried that Team USA has *settled down* in the second period”; a team that had been primarily defined as having “fire power” in media memos could not be described as *sluggish* on air. Occasionally, the announcers would adopt a mildly sarcastic tone if the game was slow by their favourite NHL standards, “Ohhhhhh, another rocketing shot.... he just drilled it”, assuming the regular hockey fan would appreciate their humour and subtle criticism of international levels of hockey competition (Feb. 21, 1988). Furthermore, during slow games, the colourman Reusch was put into verbal action more than usual during the live action. This supplemented the play-by-play in order to hold the Canadian audience’s attention on the CTV channel while visual images of play appeared boring.

Prior to each game a storyline was developed by the colourman, in collaboration with the other announcers. At the start of the Olympic festival, possible leads for story lines were investigated such as: hockey duels between Canada-USSR and USSR-USA, parity finally being “achieved” at the Olympic tournament, upsets, the importance of goal tending, and hockey as the fastest game on flat ice. Research was hotly pursued two days before the games began because opening games had to carry more human interest stories than regular NHL games would, in order to introduce unknown players and teams to the Canadian audience. Competitive storylines would lack depth if opponents were not known. “Meet the

players” story lines, in the first few tournament games, passed on information about players such as “nationality, age, home town and playing experience, since audiences were unfamiliar with the vast majority of athletes. While the written press often investigated injuries and discussed the positive steroid test of Polish player Jaroslav Morawiecki and the accusations by the Swedish coach, that Russian and ‘Czech’ players were taking anabolic steroids, the discourse surrounding the male body by the hockey announcers at CTV neglected both injuries, as a storyline about unnatural pursuits of Olympic hockey glory, although it dominated their personal discussions off air for days. Prior to the games, for example, Zarley Zalapski was in a back brace recovering from an injury while released from NHL’s Pittsburgh Penguins, Randy Gregg was recovering from knee and shoulder injuries, Captain Gord Sherven was recovering from a knee injury that had ended his NHL career with the New Jersey Devils. During the games throat infections hampered the team, and Tony Stiles suffered two concussions. Instead, opening on-air discussion between the announcers focused on attempts by other teams to “disrupt” the Canadian goalie’s concentration by complaining that Andy Moog’s mask was illegal by IIHF regulations. Hockey players could not be depicted as frail, unable to “take the hits”, in pain, or illegally strong.

Toughness and strength were masculine narratives that mediated the coverage of all games. These themes were central to coverage of Team Canada when they were losing. The announcers struggled to describe how the national team was still working hard to make a comeback, or employed to reason “why” teams like Russia, for example, just couldn’t be beat. When Canada was losing 5-0 to Russia, the last few minutes of commentary shifted away from strict play-by-play to analyzing the “loss in progress”. During a replay of the

last goal analyst Brad Park examined the Soviet scorer:

If you want to see the strength of the Soviet players, now this guy is not a big guy. Makarov -- watch him take the slash right there (*Makarow shoots on goal*) BOOM and he shoots on goal. He did not move. He did exactly what he wanted -- a small guy but tremendously strong (Feb. 24, 1988).

Since the Olympics are a fable of competition defining characters as winners or losers, possible upsets in the first round were usually chosen as the central storyline when the opportunity arose for announcers to signify. For example, during Switzerland's opening game of the tournament, the announcers informed the audience continually that "this may be the greatest upset in Olympic history, this could be Switzerland's first win since 1924 -- their first win in 64 years". After being informed of this possible milestone being set from the "Sports Notes" distributed to all world broadcasters by the CTV-HB information services, the "*upset theme*" came to structure the entire commentary of the show. Moreover, the ABC announcers who were sharing the booth but covering the game from a different storyline, changed their post-game highlight summary commentary of what they felt was a boring game to the "historical upset" as soon as they were informed of the sports-trivia from their CTV neighbours. Upset storyline was the dependable code for CTV since the Canadian audience was unfamiliar with the hockey teams abilities in relation to each other.

CTV's production mandate to be as "live" as possible became a production liability. Sport programming is indeed one of the last bastions of live television programming available to the Canadian audience as the crew proudly reminded all critics. Rather than prepare short pre-taped vignettes about the player's background, their hometown, a

typical training session for the team during the year, or a visual recap of the history of Olympic hockey, CTV decided to insert all human interest stories and background information during live commentary. They believed this would foreground the authority of the hockey announcing crew who appeared to chat about hockey “off the cuff”; it foregrounded their temporary “ownership” of Olympic hockey by CTV. At the level of production, this executive director’s decision affected the manner of commentary because it meant that research “bits” of knowledge had to fit into quick sound bites, and that information had to be in a form that fit neatly onto handwritten files of preconceived category charts. To fill the gap in research and preparation, CTV had acquired a copy of ABC’s extensive background research binder for announcers from which to study, and CTV had access to OCO’s/CTV-HB “Sport Notes” service, and their own investigated notes and personal files. Furthermore, on the broader level of the spectacle of accumulation for CTV, it meant that pre-Olympic research and production costs were eliminated.

Live broadcasting, they believed, gave them a decisive advantage over broadcasters without the exclusive rights to hockey and unfettered advantage over the newspaper journalists with press accreditation. Reusch loved the challenge of discovering new information from athletes and coaches during interviews that he could reveal on air, live, “I want to make people sit up at least three times and say ‘I didn’t know that’” (Feb. 19, 1988). Telling stories turns the tournament into a spectacle. The CTV announcing crew had unparalleled access to gather information and interview hockey personnel; the press were cordoned out of the broadcasting sites in the Saddledome which were the areas in which the hockey players and coaches resided.

At the 1988 Games the CTV network believed that the “live” emphasis on sports coverage would be the unique hook attracting huge audiences and advertisers. Being part of the broader entertainment industry, sport broadcasting was about telling stories of past hockey adventure and heroics and present Olympic struggle. But, the decision to go fully “live”, with no insertion of prepared documentaries or taped interviews, was one of the worst broadcast decisions the CTV domestic crew had made. The Canadian Vice-President of the IOC believed that main challenge facing television workers was to make sports seem “real” to the fan at home by providing compelling human interest stories (Pound 1992). And, the human interest stories the crew chose, were presented through a select range of androcentric malestream of codes such as questions about who was tough enough to play in the NHL. The gendered array of human interest stories, coupled by his belief that the sophisticated technology of the industry has made the Olympic spectacle the “most exciting international sports event in the world”, suggests that the Olympic sporting spectacle has to bow to the entertainment needs of the economic spectacle:

Olympic athletes are no longer just two-dimensional, virtually anonymous characters, whose performances are admired on an impersonal basis. Research and personal interviews transform the athletes into real people having families, friends and even children, into people whose aspirations extend beyond their athletic feats. We can share all this with these special individuals who we then see performing at the outer limits of athletic achievement. We will know as we watch them compete, how hard they have worked to get to the starting gates of their ultimate experiences in the Olympic Games, what sacrifices they have made, the risks they have taken and the dreams that have brought them so far. None of this would have been possible without television (April 1992). ²⁰

²⁰The failures of the 1988 Olympic coverage by the CTV Domestic Crew has significantly changed the production philosophy of the network sports department. Pre-taped human interest stories into the background and life histories of interesting athletes and predicted medal winners, vignettes of local Olympic city people to set the scene have become featured “shorts” in the 1992

(II) CODES OF EXCELLENCE

In addition to these codes of athletic masculinity, another narrative code served as a principal reference system for the Olympic commentators to criticize this highly mythologized game: *excellence*. Styles of play, skill development, levels of toughness, professional status, world ranking and medal status were ravelled into this notion of excellence. For the CTV television crews, nothing could pique an audience's interest as could the promise of "gold". In Olympic hockey, the possibility of winning gold was intricately tied to the other codes creating a matrix of masculine traits of hard hitting and power skating with goals.

To compare Russian and Canadian hockey skills, the commentators had to rely on the statistical packages for the Olympic tournament, or on broad descriptions of team playing styles because the Canadian audience would not be familiar with most players on all teams. The "Canadian game" in 1988 was described as a defensive game by Brad Park, with Team Canada being forced to be more "chippy" with the Russians than they had in past Olympic tournaments because they were being "forced" to throw them off their game. The Russians were depicted as being strong offensively and defensively; the KLM trio of Igor Larionov, Sergei Markarov and Valamir Krutov were feared by all teams according to the commentators, and when joined by two other Red Army players on defense they became the "dream unit" in Dan Kelly's play-by-play calls. During practice they were the Green line

coverage of the Barcelona Games by CTV. Since 1988, CTV has acknowledged the audience's prying desires to know more about the athletes, and CTV has discovered that sponsors such as Coca Cola were willing to pay dearly for professional produced "shorts" of heroes such as decathlete Mike Smith, swimmer Marcel Gery, Synchronized swimmer Sylvie Frechette and the comeback story of Silken Laumann.

because of their uniforms. While the team was revered, individuals were carefully scrutinized and compared. "The Canadian game" remained the role model of hockey ability in CTV's commentary. In depth descriptions of Russian ability and statistical analysis often occurred during closeups of facial expressions, while Canadians were more often depicted in action. During the Soviet-Canada Game in the medal rounds for example (Feb. 24, 1988), the skills of Canadian team members were offered as proof of Canadian excellence as the following televisual passage displays.

VISUAL

AUDIO

Medium close up of the back of Russian head, who turns to face the camera. Graphics appear on screen with Russian symbol, and #11.

Reusch: Watch him take the draw. Larionov has maybe the worst face off percentage in this whole tournament.

Cut to medium long shot of the face off circle.

Larionov does not take a face off well. Watch him take it now

Audit tighten to full body closeup of Canadian skating behind net into position.

Watch, he'll win it cleanly now.

Cut to tight body shot of Berry changing directions.

Kelly: No, Habsheid has it, and here's Berry.

Cuts back to game cam., audits out to long shot of rink end.

Just over nine minutes remaining in the first period. No score.

Follows Sherven down ice.

Here's Sherven, number 10.

Pans left to Russian end, and follows lone puck.

Trying to shoot it in, but

Audit pull back picks up

it bounced over the glass and into the crowd.

Sherven, tightens, follows
glide after play.

We're down to 8:53 to play.

Edit to CU of Russian face.

Shots on goal: Canada four, the Soviets three. That, despite two
prior power plays by the Soviets.

Cut to CU of Russian coach
face, audit out to pull back
off Russian bench from side.
Cut to medium shot of the
San Diego Chicken performing
a Russian dance down the ice.

Reusch: Well Larionov, just to get with the statistically minded
here, had won 27 of 75 faceoffs coming into this game.

Chicken moons camera.

Habscheid, conversely, has won 63% of his face-offs. 82 of 129.

Cut to low wide shot from
face off circle. Cut to game
cam long shot.
he

Which tells you also with 129 faceoffs, how Dave King uses him in
key face-off situations
There's another faceoff won by Canada. That's one of the reasons
has that Habscheid, Berry and Sherven line out against the Soviet
Dream Unit. That's his [Canadian Coach King] intention, to use it
as much as he can.

Of vital importance to commentary and analysis about skill was the professional rankings of participants of the Olympic tournament; to judge excellence, announcers privileged players' status using NHL codes of sporting achievement. The expertise of the players on ice were ranked according to their former NHL experience, or the fact that the player had been drafted to the NHL. In the opening period of the Soviet-Canada game, Reusch concentrated on his game notes for Tim Watters (Feb. 24, 1988). When a break occurred in play and the players were getting back into position for a faceoff, announcers Reusch and Park discussed the value of his NHL and former Olympic experience:

Reusch: There's a terrific addition, Tim Watters, very much an underrated defenseman I think in the NHL. You played against him Brad, he came out of the 1980 team to go to the NHL Winnipeg Jets team. He's been very steady if not spectacular. To get him into the scheme of Dave King's style of play. He fits in perfectly.

Brad: He does -- and having that experience really helps him, he does all the right things, he moves the puck well, he's exceptionally good one-on-one. I've only seen him get beat once this tournament and that was against France. Nobody was concentrating much against them. But Watters does the right thing at the right time and he has that NHL experience now so he's got the mental toughness needed to play against these fellas.

Reusch: Two guys tough to beat, Brad, number 21 Randy Gregg on the far side and of course Watters. When Randy's on the ice, either one of them, just give that rock solid feeling back there.

Park: They do. You look at Gregg and Yawney and you think of big defensemen in the NHL like a Bill White from years ago. You couldn't outleg 'em and they had that long reach.

Many of the European players were often placed into hypothetical NHL situations: "how do you think he would fare in the NHL?", "Rucizka scores the goal with Wayne Gretzky moves to narrow the score four to three", "Lindmark is the best goalie in Europe, although he has no NHL experience", "the Finns have 1000 games of NHL experience on their team", "the Swiss, who have not won in 64 years of Olympic competition have few with pro experience". Furthermore, congratulatory remarks about hockey excellence were often linked to individuals rather than a national tradition of a team of non-Canadians. Russian defenseman and captain, Fetisov, was described as the "architect of the gold" by the CTV announcer who continued to note that "never have we seen such a dominant performer in a world championships or Olympics, he's a wheeler, the other played well, but Fetisov was great". Later, in a studio interview the announcer actively attempted to define this player as an individual superstar despite the player, himself, trying to assert that it was the entire team that played well not him alone. Olympic hockey commentators must turn to long standing traditions of sporting excellence since the sport is not designed to be

primarily measured on records being perpetually broken as in the 100 metre sprint. Hockey had to design excitement and battles through traditional codes of rivalry, “who will beat whom?” and “how well would they play in the tough NHL?”.

The codes of Olympic athletic excellence have been co-opted by professional narratives. The commercial influences acting on Olympic hockey, has not debased any trans-historical “true” essence of “amateur” sport. All sporting traditions celebrated today have been culturally constructed and historically reproduced. Changes and sporting accommodations that have occurred within the organization of Olympic sport and its evolving televisual image, have occurred, as ice hockey has been expanded and linked to the various leagues and television rights agreements, by the pull of the universal marketplace. While recent debates over the inclusion of former professional players in the Olympic Games has been a recent focus of amateur status struggles, ice hockey has suffered from a lack of acceptance historically. Even the founder of the Olympic movement, Baron Pierre de Coubertin, feared that ice hockey would commercialize the Olympics and that hockey “ought” to be played on grass (Dunnell, Feb. 21, 1988).

The 1988 Games realized de Coubertin’s worst nightmare. At the same time that CTV’s Canadian viewers eagerly watched hockey games in 1988 hoping for Canadian victories, the live and the televised game served as a scouting mechanism for the NHL. The spectacle of accumulation found new territory. Crowd shots of important decision makers from the NHL, such as Harry Sinden the G.M. of the Boston Bruins or Cliff Fletcher of the Calgary Flames franchise were incorporated by CTV-HB into the Olympic lulls. “Cliff Fletcher watching Brian Bradley on the ice and a couple of other players he’d like to have”

(Reusch, Feb. 24, 1988). A glimpse of Fletcher flashed across the screen momentarily; yet by the time Reusch recognized the NHL manager and formulated his commentary, an image of a native Canadian performing a dance high in the loft of the Saddledome, was being broadcast; the visuals and the NHL commentary mismatched. The importance of NHL narratives took signifying presence over the visual content.

Still, at the 1988 Winter Games, there existed a great deal of opposition to the “professionalizing” pressures to Olympic hockey by both the crew and the fans. Some fans and media crew members in other sports argued that the Olympic game of hockey had been downgraded in comparison to amateur hockey tournaments of the past. However, the social construction of practices and labels attached to these practices have altered the meaning of the sport to such a degree that there is very little need for the distinctions “amateur” and “professional” in any sport encapsulated within the universal market. Amongst those who cherish the commercial spectacle, such as NHL Club owners and governors in the NHL, there was a loud unfavourable response to the most recent transformation in the world of spectacle sport -- the *amateurization of professionals*. For the first time in modern Olympic history, the International Olympic Committee have granted access to some professional league players for the 1988 Olympiad (the IOC lobbied the IIHF to relax Olympic eligibility requirements in the mid 1980s since team sports must receive an invitation from their international federation to enter into Olympic competition). Canada boycotted the Olympic tournament in 1972 and 1976 in protest of Soviet and Czechoslovakian teams sending athletes with state jobs that required “minimum effort”, while the best Canadian and Swedish players in the NHL were not eligible for the Olympics (ABC Sports, 1980). NHL hockey players and professional soccer players under the age of twenty-three

years were granted permission to join their national teams for the two Olympiads being staged in 1988 in Calgary and Seoul. Still, American based owners of NHL franchises did not want their regular playing schedule disrupted by the Olympic hockey tournament. They feared a weakening in their lineups if key players such as Wayne Gretzky were to be absent from their NHL team. Some were adamant about not helping Team Canada beat Team USA with players they released from the NHL temporarily. Concerns shifted from eligibility to availability. Sporting rivalries were shifted from the initial commercial concerns of professionalizing the Olympic tournament to patriotic concerns for hockey being used to signify political dominance.

There were rivalries at the levels of the athletes as well. Although there were no major NHL superstars playing on Team Canada in 1988 except three-time Stanley Cup winner Andy Moog, there was a level of resentment directed at the full time national team (long called state professionals) who resided in Calgary and were not living in the athlete's village during the Games. In his final report to the Canadian Olympic Association, Team Canada Chef de Mission Grenier recommended choosing a "real team" in the future to represent Canada to serve as "a source of homogeneity, closer contact between sports" (1988:44).

To officially confirm that Canada was not permitted to send its best players because of the struggles between international hockey and the NHL, CTV scheduled an interview for the intermission before the last period of the Canada-Soviet hockey game with a Hockey Canada official. Sam Pollock, the International Chair for Hockey Canada arrived at the studio in the Saddledome looking serious. The Soviets were winning three to nothing. Canada was

about to lose both their gold medal chance and an opportunity to earn enough points for the bronze.

Reusch: We see the same thing on this team we've been seeing with past Olympic teams, the lack of offensive power. You're not able to get the superstar scorers. Is there ever a chance that you will be able to do that?

Pollack: Well Ron, it happens in the Canada Cup so it's not realistic. You're not going to get the great scorers like the Gretzskys and the Lemieuxs in the Olympics. So the answer is that you have to form a different type of a team. We do have a good defensive team, but you're going to lack some offense which is pretty obvious.

The IOC has, of late, become keenly aware of the changing definitions of the amateur code as they have, of late, sought to actively and publicly alter the code to accommodate for the universal market of commercial sport.²¹ Prior to the Calgary Games, the IOC's "ambassador" to Canada, Richard Pound, attempted to clarify the recent decision by the IOC to accept young professional players into the Games. At a time in sporting history when certain world championships, such as that hosted by the International Track and Field Federation, were becoming the pinnacle competition in that sport, and thus were attracting multi-national corporations and large media rights, and athletes were scheduling their training to peak for world records at the "Worlds", the IOC realized it had to plan its financial peaks by negotiating a new code to win back the prestige of being "the" sporting event. While marginalizing the economic rationale for change, the IOC claimed that it would accept professional athletes into Olympic competition in the name of "fair play", that is, to

²¹During the Calgary Olympics Alan Eagleson, who was head of Hockey Canada funding Team Canada, was negotiating for the first Russian players to be released to the NHL. Before the Olympics were over, Sean Burke, Steve Tambellini, Jim Peplinski, and Tim Watters of Team Canada were back in the NHL.

acknowledge the need for financial support of athletes wishing to pursue high performance sport and thus to ultimately clinch the Olympic events as the favoured competition amongst the very best athletes in the world whether they were paid or not. ²² A history of change has recently been acknowledged. According to IOC vice-president Richard Pound,

for 75 years we attempted without success to define what is an amateur. In recent years we've tried equally, without success, to define what is a professional (1985).

Professionalism has been anathema to the spirit of the Olympics for many decades, but we realized that we had reached a point where it was less a problem of professionals than it was a problem of *fair play* ... What we want is the world's best athletes competing at the Olympic Games. We do not want better quality of athletes competing in a world Championship than those competing in the Olympics. Professional or amateur --- we want the best (1987).

Thus, the IOC has decided to eliminate the "amateur code" and replace the rules of Olympic behaviour, circumstance and eligibility with a *code of ethics* which continues to be mediated by the signifying codes of excellence in that sport. In a 1985 news conference, the IOC president, J.A. Samaranch, declared these changes simply demonstrated that the Olympic movement was "going with the times and giving all athletes of the world, no matter what political system they come from, a chance to participate in the Olympic Games" (Cotton, 1985). In fact the IOC was able to turn back to the original organizational

²²See CBC's 1992 documentary, *Summit on Ice*, for the Canadian battles to signify themselves as the "best" hockey nation in the world despite losing repetitively at each Olympics since the Russians entered in 1952. Canadians believed our best to be held hostage by the prohibitive amateur codes of the IOC not allowing Canadian players in the NHL to compete in the Olympic Games.

definition of Olympism²³ and the six official goals of the IOC to find justification for the entry of current and former professionals into the modern Olympic games. The long-standing goal of “excellence”, rather than a concern for whether or not one is paid for that achievement has become the focus of the Olympic movement, because having the very best athletes compete is commercially viable and symbolically rich. “Citius, altius, fortius” -- faster, higher, swifter has taken on a number of new meanings including: “*now, like the athletes themselves, we have reached our peak of broadcasting excellence*” (introduction to the CTV *General Broadcaster’s Handbook, 1988*).

²³De Coubertin, the founder of the International Olympic Committee and his early members defined Olympism as “a state of mind, a philosophy even, encompassing a particular concept of modern sport, according to which sport can, through an extension of its practice, play a part in the development of the individual, and of humankind in general ... and to strengthen understanding and friendship among peoples”. The six goals to attain this ideal of Olympism as they are conveyed in the current and past Olympic Charters include: mass participation, sport as education, fair play, cultural exchange, international understanding, and excellence.

(III) CODES OF CANADIANISM

The cultural genesis of hockeycasts in 1988 was located in a code of Canadian ownership over the game. This narrative not only mediated the NHL codes of hockey excellence discussed earlier, the notion of Canadian ownership governed most lines of discourse in the television spectacle. Televising the hockey games seemed to be part of a sporting pilgrimage by the Domestic crew in their effort to reclaim an “inherent right”, as they called it, to the game at a time in history when Team Canada had not been the best team in the world for four decades. At the 1988 Olympics, the CTV hockey crew soon picked up the motto of Team Canada, “ya gotta believe” to create a broadcasting narrative of victory; after a 36 year Olympic gold dry spell in hockey and the recent Isvestia tournament win, the crew believed that the home town advantage would return Canada “to its rightful place”. To traverse the gap between the team’s poor ranking and claims of cultural ownership, the CTV hockey announcing “team” set out to “Canadianize” the coverage of all games regardless of who was playing on the television.

CTV was determined to insert Canadian content and remake the international tournament as an indigenous game. Prior to the start of the tournament, the announcing Crew (Kelly, Reusch and Park) attended team practices to watch styles of play, to establish a basis for predictions of victory and defeat, and to interview select players and coaches. After acquainting themselves with Team Canada, they sought European players who had any possible affiliation with Canada. Who was born in Canada? Who has Canadian relatives? Had any player trained in Canada at a hockey camp or attended school? Who had been coached by a Canadian? Twenty-one expatriates were located at the Saddledome and relocated on the air.

This game preparation unearthed new treasures for commentary that would later “Canadianize” games being aired, and this information provided bullets of knowledge for an audience not familiar with Olympian hockey players. The importance of the goalie to Olympic glory, is one such example; Canada was heralded as having the tournament’s two best goalies, while Norway, West Germany and Austria all protected “vagabond” Canadians as their starting goalies. World wide, they boasted, the most important position on the hockey teams was usually filled with a Canadian. Constructed as Canadian mercenaries for the game of hockey, these goalies were also seen to be part of the reason for parity finally becoming a reality in Olympic tournament competition.

Games involving the West German team demonstrated this narrative crusade. Three former Canadian citizens playing on this team were nicknamed the “Canadian Bull Line” by the CTV announcers. This designation mixed codes of nationality and rugged masculinity into a seal of approval by the commentators; they assumed these actions necessary to sell the Canadian television audience on the value of Olympic hockey when the best Canadian players were absent from the Olympics because they played in the NHL. Colour Analyst Ron Reusch mingled many broadcast observations of West Germany with Canadian flavouring, “West Germany became a team two weeks ago. They took the best in their league - they have five Canadians on the team”. Only the Russian team was deemed “Canadian-free”; when Canadians played poorly against the Russians or took too many penalties, Reusch would describe Team Canada as “playing with emotion”. Except for these “Russian-Russians”, other teams were labelled the “Canadian West-Germans”, the “Canadian French”, the “Canadian Swedes” etc. This re-classification also served as a source of pride for other crew members and as a source of light humour comparing “Canadian contenders and

pretenders”.

All announcers were involved in the narrative quest to reclaim the game. These Canadianizing tendencies emerged most often in the commentary of the colour analyst, whose job description included providing human interest anecdotes and background information on the players, teams and hockey history. The traditionally more “objective” play-by-play announcing by Dan Kelly also “re-nationalized” particular players on European teams to augment the Canadian content. “Sadler scores a goal ... A Canadian boy from Ontario”: Robin Sadler was a defenseman for the Austrian hockey team who had played for the Edmonton Oilers in 1977. CTV-DB then continued in the live action announcing their plans to advertise upcoming Team Canada games. At a time in sporting history when the Canadian hockey team was not the leading force in International hockey, although their Dec. 1987 Isvestia Tournament victory suggested that regaining the “supreme” position in hockey was possible. CTV crews strenuously worked as electronic storytellers to declare the game “Canadian property” and to hold the interest of the television audience. Reclaiming hockey supremacy through the games of Team Canada had been an unexpectedly disappointing element for the network to deal with. They had trapped themselves in storylines and Olympic glory, narrative webs that they had spun around their broadcast spectacle. The act of legitimation socializes the producers more effectively than convinces audiences.

In the Canadian defeat highlights package, Olympic anchor Lloyd Robertson relayed the news of the defeat:

We have waited so long for the confrontation between Canada and the Soviet Union (*Sky Cam aerial long shot of the*

Saddledome pulls back to reveal the torch burning downtown near the arena).

We almost got to believe the Saddledome was built for that one game. *(Dissolve to medium closeup of Canadian player tangled up with a Soviet player).*

Everyone had hoped it would be a victorious battle in the long hockey wars between our two countries, instead it turned into a dream shattering rout *(Canadian players swings stick at Soviet then hooks his stick in behind the Soviets elbow, Feb. 28, 1988).*

After failing to deliver the happy ending promised, the Canadian media allowed the players themselves to try to explain the defeat. They too, could only express dismay. Team Canada player Marc Habscheid told the Olympic media in a final press conference:

Hockey is Canada's sport, Canada's baby. A fourth place finish might be good for a cross-country skier, but this is hockey. Canadians expect to win and the players in the dressing room expect to win too. We didn't. We're disappointed.

The sense of cultural ownership over the game and over the standards of excellence of broadcasting the game set the context for a "lethal blow" when Team Canada lost all chances of winning an Olympic medal. CTV had lost its chance to surge ahead in network ratings. On the twelfth day of the Olympics, CTV Olympic anchor Lloyd Robertson sadly observed:

At a party there usually comes a time when the hosts realize they are not having as much fun as the guests. It was that kind of day for Canada, a day when the nation's proprietorial sense of identity with the sport of hockey was rudely violated, as the Soviet Union methodically stripped Team Canada of its chances for a gold or silver medal. It was not the first time, and it will not be the last, but the knowledge that history was repeating itself served as cold comfort... But Canadians have never gotten used to being humiliated in hockey. The 5-0 game was not a pretty one. It was a clutch-and-grab contest in which the Soviets wore down the Canadians in the first period, stung

them hard in the second, then toyed with them in the third. As the SaddleDome's raucous crowd sank into morgue-like silence, it was clear to them on this night, the party was bust.²⁴

Canada had finished fourth in the Olympic hockey tournament with a "5 wins, 2 ties, 1 loss" record, enrolment in CAHA hockey clubs by Canadian males was at an all time low, but the CTV Domestic Broadcaster's hockey crew continued to pursue the sport as if Canadians were the sole patrons of "The Game".

These codes of cultural ownership, athletic masculinity, and excellence in the sport of hockey combined with the broadcasting codes and labour conventions of the CTV crews were experienced by the television audience as an entertainment package. The particular ensemble of codes utilized in the media labour process was but one of many possible ways of producing and representing sport. Furthermore, experiencing or consuming this ensemble of Olympic stories was significantly different from what the live spectator in the Saddledome experienced.

Finally, this composition of televisual codes was neither produced nor consumed in a vacuum. Rather, the CTV Olympic showcase drew its particular constituency of elements together while being immersed within broader cultural codes and relations, and at the same time it contributed to the broader repertoire of cultural codes. Overall, the crews felt confident in their employment of the familiar conventions and craft of producing hockey due to their NHL experience and believed themselves to be working at excellent heights; despite the trials, tribulations and exhaustion of making hundreds of hours of live television

²⁴Robertson and Johnson (1988:137).

broadcasts -- the crew left satisfied but exhausted. While covering Olympians or working beside hockey celebrities they displayed a modicum of awe. They had been caught up in the “exhilaration of Olympic glory” and the “emotions of the competition”, they claimed, and caught up by the fact that they as individual artists and members of a crew had made something so special as the Olympic games. A piece of spectacle was their own.

CHAPTER 8:

CONCLUSION: THE OLYMPIC SPECTACLE AND BROADCASTING POWER PLAYS

The purpose of this dissertation has been to observe and critically analyze the production of CTV's broadcast of ice hockey at the 1988 Winter Olympics. In order to conduct this analysis I observed the labour and decision making processes of CTV-Domestic Broadcaster and the social interaction between the producers. In addition, I examined the political economic context of the Olympic spectacle as well as the range of broadcasting resources made available to, or denied, CTV crews as they sculpted their televisual discourses. My intent was to scrutinize the intersection of human agency and the production of a national television broadcast.

In this chapter, I elaborate on some of the central arguments and key findings of this study. The dual nature of the Olympic *power play*, as a human *drama* reworking popular mythologies from Canadian sporting traditions, and as an unequal *struggle* between the various blocs in the Olympic "family", are addressed first. Following this, I shall revisit the question of method, to suggest that ethnographic analysis yields invaluable insights into the lived culture of television broadcast crews, particularly insofar as it allows the researcher an entree into tensions between various forms of containment and resistance in the making of spectacle. I elaborate on the work of producing and reproducing the Olympic spectacles of accumulation and legitimation can be viewed as an aspect of ideological hegemony. Finally, I shall outline suggestions for future cultural studies research on the

media and will offer a series of recommendations to sport media event producers and policy makers.

(I) THE TELEVISED OLYMPIC POWER PLAY

As a drama, the 1988 Olympic hockey broadcast reenacted popular myths of national unity, hockey as a tough game for men, and a quest for athletic triumph and Team Canada glory. While reproducing these narratives, the crew assumed they retained an uncontested cultural right to this rough game. Crew members, trying to make televisual sense out of the hockey competition, exerted a tremendous amount of physical and creative energy to breathe life into old sporting tales. A national fable resonating with patriarchal power, patriotic and sporting passion, coalesced within the organized communication between hockey crew members as they televisually adapted the myths of hockey. In a rapidly changing media industry and unpredictable world of sport, the broadcasting work of making popular meanings “stick” to the games broadcast during the Olympics was, perhaps, the toughest battle waged at the Games. Metadiscourses of masculinity, Canadian “ownership” of the game, and athletic excellence based on NHL rather than Olympic standards, transparently existed in CTV’s working assumptions and tended to be understood as “universal” elements of the game. While it was difficult for crew members to be self-reflexive about broadcasting traditions and hockey storylines, the crew’s struggle to maintain and retain familiar visions of hockey was readily observed in the ethnography: their levels of choreographed passion around the national team fluttered in the second week, for example, as they pondered how to deal with a losing home. The crew pondered how they would remix the oscillating codes of amateurism and professionalism in their production as

they became caught up in rumours about who would be playing in the NHL the following week. Producing a live drama, in which Team Canada was failing to act out the scripted victory storyline, pressured the CTV crews to revise the plot. While the crew claimed sports broadcasting is the last bastion of “real television” and “real live drama” on the airways, my fieldwork uncovered that, far from being “immediate” event coverage, the 1988 Olympic hockey telecast was the end result of selection, scripted storylines, serial replays, cultural representation, and marginalization. It was the production crew’s way of presenting preferred ways of pursuing and understanding the game.

My argument is that the production process can be seen as a complex and elaborate power play. At one level the power play is primarily mythic and ideological. But at another level it is also a political process involving strategic alignment and social manoeuvring. Playing for power -- be it gender based power, economic power, or political power -- meant selling the audience. The Canadian audience was sold by CTV to national sponsors such as the Royal Bank and Kodak film. CTV’s stated corporate goals, to reap financial reward from exclusive rights and to buttress their market share of the national audience, were the official financial power plays in the spectacle of accumulation. But this spectacle of accumulation cannot be separated from the Olympic spectacle of legitimation. Particular relationships of power were encoded in the telecast and sold to the audience. For example, to maintain their sense of the “rightness” of masculine cultural capital in the sphere of sport and to retain hockey as a national treasure, the crew worked over dominant themes of the athletic drama to privilege activate particular meanings for Canadian viewers. This served individually to reinforce broader structures of unequal human relationships. Making Olympic spectacle was a complex challenge pursued by CTV through elaborate webs

of power.

(II) THE ETHNOGRAPHIC IMPERATIVE

The study of “lived” culture demanded a multidimensional methodological approach. To comprehensively understand the cultural consequences and products of these webs of power, I needed to find a research method that would yield insights about the nuances of production, including production constraints and oppositional/creative pursuits, that textual or document analysis alone could not offer. Wanting to know more about the lived cultures of broadcasting, proponents of cultural studies over the past decade have called for ethnographic studies but ethnographic field studies of media production are still far less prevalent than “text-based” analyses. In this study I adapted and attempted to infuse the ethnographic method with the theoretical insights of critical cultural studies.

Ethnographic research, informed by a critical cultural studies perspective, can offer invaluable and interesting insights about lived practices, belief systems and relationships of power not easily discernible using other methods of investigation. Insights into the “deep play” of broadcasting can demystify the taken-for-granted social nature of media production, thereby opening the door to new critical insights. Ethnographic accounts of broadcast production provide details historically denied to audiences to sport administrators and even to various levels of broadcast crews separated from each other by armed security forces at international events. Exposing the taken-for-granted “commonsense” of the crews during the manufacturing processes of the Olympic spectacle --

including the broadcast process, the privileged discourses, and lines of power in the subculture -- can create opportunities for critical analysis of the historical realities, and consequences, and finally can open up the possibilities for the role of sports broadcasting in our society.

(III) NATIONHOOD AND MANHOOD AT THE DROP OF A PUCK: HEGEMONY, CULTURAL PRODUCTION AND THE TELEVISION SPECTACLE

My study of the political-economic context and the work of producing CTV's broadcast of the 1988 Winter Olympics revealed how the sporting telecasts were neither neutral reproductions of the Olympic event captured through the mechanical lens of the camera, nor were they simply mechanically distorted renditions of a game offered by a network selling 'sportainment'. Rather, the broadcasts were the result of a complex labour process, set in the context of a powerful but not a fully determined set of economic and cultural resources and limits. For example, the broadcasts drew on a traditional "commonsense" about the nature and meaning of high level hockey in Canada and thereby contributed to the continued popularization of this commonsense. This tendency toward the articulation of hegemonic discourses was itself filtered through a set of broadcast conventions about *what* images and storylines make "good television", and through the broadcast industry's belief about *who* makes good television.

In 1988, the telecast was awash in gendered storylines of a rough and hard fought series of hockey games, of tournament parity and Olympic glory, of national pride and

Canadian ownership of this game. The articulation of these familiar narratives, borrowed from past hockey broadcasts and Canadian popular culture, created a curious paradox. On one side of the paradox, the CTV network generally sought to attract a *broadcast* audience consisting of the regular NHL audience trussed up with a temporary Olympic audience and yet, on the other side, the CTV hockey crew were simultaneously engaged in *narrowcasting*.

The discourses around hockey were tightly cast by the Domestic hockey crew in a manner that targeted a hockey-knowledgeable audience of males.

Overgeneralized market research sustained the paradox and reinforced the hegemony of hockey broadcasting traditions. The “consumer index”, provided by the market research industry before the 1988 Games, instructed CTV sports department officials to aim for an official target audience of males 18-49 years of age. This index, according to the Vice President of CTV and head of CTV Sports, has traditionally suggested that this age group of men has been “the number one group of spenders” (Eshaw, Feb. 11, 1988). During the Winter Games, previous marketing advice and the working assumptions of the sports department were rarely questioned. However, between obtaining the broadcast rights in 1984 and the commencement of the Olympic Games in 1988, considerable changes in consumer spending patterns and television audience makeup had occurred in Canada. But cultural transformation had neither been targeted, planned for, nor addressed in CTV’s treatment of the Olympic tournament as it unfolded. Although the CTV network sought to cultivate the female audience in sports such as figure skating and the demonstration sport of freestyle ski ballet, the network continued to assume a monolithic audience of male fans would watch hockey. Yet, men in the official target zone were the least frequent viewers of television in 1988. According to *Stats Canada* reports for broadcasting in the fall season

after the Olympics, men in this age group watched television programming between 17 and 22.6 hours on average per week; females in this similar demographic age niche watched between 20.9 to 23.3 hours per week (Catalogue 87-208, p. 12.; see Table 8.1). Mature women in the 50 plus age groups watched significantly more television than all other sectors of Canadian society. The ratings companies, market researchers and CTV did not conduct specific research to discover *who* was actually watching Olympic hockey and *how* these audience members understood the spectacle. CTV had targeted an audience specifically but monitored it abstractly.

Sports broadcasting was not the mainstay of audience preference in the 1988 broadcast year. Of total viewing time, sports programming accounted for 6.1 percent of total television consumption across the range of types of television programming available. Canadian sports programming constituted 4.9 percent of total television viewing consumption time by national broadcasting audiences in 1988. The broadcasting audience in Canada preferred drama, news and public affairs, comedy, variety and game shows over sports. So if the goal of Olympic programming was to pursue a national audience, broadcast producers failed at their own ratings game.¹ Ultimately, pursuing a spectacle of

¹It is becoming increasingly difficult for the production crews of any particular sport to gain more intimate knowledge of the audience for an event and to offer significant creative input outside of the stance of commercial networks because of "media migrancy". In major commercial networks, such as CTV, there are no permanent full time sports crews. While the network sports department employs a vice-president, the crews that produce the sporting event are contracted for the event alone. Those who practice the craft of sports production are migrants in an industry, moving from event to event, and network to network. Audience research and projections may be addressed in the pre-event planning of major games by the executive producers and network officials, but this information is currently not being translated into the working knowledge of the sport crew. Lacking intimate knowledge of audiences reinforces the trend of relying on stereotypes of the audience and older "subcultural" attitudes in the broadcasting profession. Furthermore labour migrancy decreases the potential input of craftspeople when the time to negotiate labour processes or media significations is limited by the contract. Moreover, a system of migrancy empowers the network to hire crew members with a track record and style that matches the network stance.

uncritical legitimation may well contribute to the decreasing profitability levels for networks in the spectacle of accumulation. To attract and cultivate an audience, broadcasters need to activate it.

By catering to a perceived audience of regular NHL male fans, CTV's narrowcasting of hockey discourses failed to acknowledge dominant tastes, the range of pleasures and possibilities of a wider set of television audiences. The point is that there was no single audience for Olympic hockey; over the two week tournament, a number of audiences floated in and out of the consumption of the live broadcast. Ratings were never steady during the 1988 Games. Crews were not aware of specific daily ratings for hockey, which gave them indirect licence to conduct their business in a traditional fashion. Narrowcasting familiar narratives of hockey led to the uncritical reproduction of hegemonic storylines and images of Canadian life by the crew. These narratives seemed to be petrified cultural artifacts -- hard, tightly layered and refusing to be significantly adapted by the crew's work. The reception of hockey drama by the various audiences had not been questioned by CTV. Indeed, the audiences were not strategically cultivated by CTV's Olympic program planning and crew's pursuit of their craft; instead, the network consciously used the Olympic games as an opportunity to cultivate relationships with marketers and owners of other sport properties.

Ironically, the audiences which CTV needed to garner in order to strengthen these corporate relations, were available but ignored. Recent audience research on *Hockey Night in Canada* has discovered that the female audience for hockey is growing and is currently much larger than national broadcast networks and advertisers have assumed. In the early

1990s, women have constituted thirty-six percent of the hockey audience.² Field work on audiences would be useful for comparing, for example, how these female viewers compare or differ from the male viewers. Indeed, there seems to be a quandary in the broadcasting industry around (a) a failure to acknowledge the changing chevalier of audiences of sport, and (b) the particular interpretation of quantified audience measurements. The determination of media labour and “event property” value, as predicted by measurement companies, continues to deny sports broadcasters and organizers lucid knowledge of the cultural value of their *capacity to invoke meaningful communication* with the audiences. CTV crews did not really know their audiences - they employed only their own imagined perception of an audience which resembled *themselves* as fans.

The IOC and CTV network mandate for Calgary Winter coverage, “to achieve the widest possible viewing audiences” was, therefore, not adequately addressed by the network because of the patriarchal and patriotic hegemonic assumptions pervading the current culture of sportscasters. The temporary crews CTV had assembled to produce Olympic hockey *seemed* to be working at a national task. The crew struggled to win the world’s consent to the notion that hockey was *our game*. But, patriotic discourse was rarely separated from patriarchal discourses. While CTV Domestic and Host crews discussed patriotic sentiments openly, the crew’s resounding silence about the gender exclusiveness of this sport suggested that the layers of hegemonic consent deeply affected the broadcast artists themselves. The media reproduced themselves at the same time they reproduced a

² *Marketing*, a weekly industry trade journal, recently reported that Neilson Ratings for the Canadian sports audience have found that women account for 36 percent of the hockey playoffs audience, 36 percent of CFL football audience, and 40-44 percent of the baseball audience (Dec. 7, 1992:12).

popular culture of hockey. Day-to-day intercrew communication uncritically reproduced a taken-for-grantedness about hockey as a male preserve; in addition to the verbal transactions, the aggressive images vividly etched into the feed also displayed the placid articulations of gender. The historically specific achievement of hegemony resulted in the momentary alliance of a fundamental social strata of broadcasters in the circuit of cultural production -- an alliance that promotes unity and reconstructs the social formation through a series of "national tasks" (Hall, 1980:35).

My field study of the labour process revealed the broadcast material and signifying work of the crew to indeed be, first and foremost, a *social process*. The cultural processes pursued by the CTV hockey crew, who adopted historically-specific images of hockey, reworked the elements of the live hockey game on the ice through televisual means and entertainment storylines. The familiar and consensual nature of the narratives and the actions of sportscasting rendered their cultural manufacture invisible. By combining familiar mythologies of hockey with the promises of Olympic action and uncertain event outcomes, the CTV hockey crew produced a live broadcast that allowed the nation to be closer to the Olympic athletes, coaches and other television personalities. CTV endeavoured to provide the best seat in the Saddledome, the best seat on the team bench and occasionally, a place on the ice with the hockey players to the television audience.

Yet in conducting this cultural labour, institutions such as CTV harbour a self-deluding assumption in the unity of their own official vision. Basically, what Canadian fans of Olympic hockey consumed in 1988, were cultural reproductions of a cherished symbol of masculine national sporting life as interpreted by the television industry. When the

Canadian team failed to live up to broadcasting promises of a gold medal, and then a revised promise of a bronze medal, hockey as the quintessential symbol of the masculine sporting hegemony in Canada required emergency “repair” to maintain the dominant storyline. As a national symbol, the media workers struggled to typecast the game their own. The journey to reclaim supremacy over hockey at the international level was assumed to be the great Canadian epic that would be broadcast to eager fans. Living out the epic became a daunting task as historical developments refused to march in the same direction as the cue sheets. The crew had incorrectly assumed some sort of ahistorical essence pervaded the national game. Visions of hockey did not simply flow from home ice in Calgary as planned. The ethnography revealed how strenuously the crew worked to contain the traditional range of meanings surrounding the national team. A masculine vision of Canadiana rippled through all they presented. Hockey was constructed as the citadel of masculinity. Their labour often seemed simply to reproduce past sporting fictions, and to lack fresh insight, but the intensity of their struggle to contain traditional mythology around hockey suggested that broadcast versions of the game of hockey were clearly the historical result of a process of cultural negotiation, manufacture, and compromise.

Reproducing the dominant myths about hockey exerted mystifying pressures on the CTV crew. Strict hierarchies, restricted crew work areas, and tight framing of the games also mystified the reasons for (a) the muted creative penetrations by the crew into the televisual processes, (b) the crew’s deepening levels of frustration as Team Canada was continually beaten on the ice, (c) the misery suffered from nasty crew relations, and (d) the uncomfortable working conditions. The entrenchment of an “official” vision of hockey in broadcasting helped to shift the blame for broadcasting “problems” and

technical mishaps to the individual level. This served to deny the crew opportunities for more creative communication with audience members. And indeed, the network's own assumption, that NHL ratings justified the maintenance of the traditional vision in the Olympic telecast, stifled the collective pursuit of the craft. That was reinforced by the perception that the economic imperative of global spectacles have demanded tighter rules of production and technology use to reduce the margin of technical error. The creative edge was dulled in the resulting spectacle of legitimation.

Broadcasting, in a culturally diverse country with few icons of national identity, prompted the CTV teams of Host and Domestic Broadcasting crews to engage in a signifying frenzy at the Olympic Games. Voices in the media industry spoke loudly to the crew. They wanted to overcome the perception their ABC broadcast booth partners were telling their audience, that "unCanadianism is the very definition of Canadianism"³. When all else has failed, according to sports broadcasters, the seemingly immutable symbolism of hockey was dragged to the rescue of patriotic platforms. Without a chorus of audiences voices being heard, in a setting where industry peer pressure was intensified by the shared spaces of the arena, the white male crew conducted their work in a manner that permitted traditional myths of hockey to flourish. As the great Canadian sporting dream of hockey gold became a burden to the CTV crew at the 1988 Games when Team Canada began to lose at its 'own game', the televisual focus of the CTV Domestic crew was compelled to shift from the performance of Team Canada, to the "Canadian game" as it was played by others.

³(Hugh Wood in ABC Access, 1987:76)

Despite a lack of athletic success on the rink (that is, crew definitions of success as determined by NHL codes of “good hockey” and Olympic medal standards), the Canadian media were still able to successfully legitimate hockey as one of the marquee events at the Games. While the level of sporting performance of all national teams in this global tournament were ranked as mediocre in skill levels by the television crews (in comparison to level of play in the National Hockey League level they normally witness while broadcasting), the hockey broadcasts were basted in malestream Olympic codes of glory and international grandeur.

The Olympic *spectacle of legitimation* was called to the rescue of the spectacle of accumulation. Hockey games were produced for the home audience by immersing the international festival in North American codes of commercial sport, entertainment and the Canadian sports quo, despite the fact that the visual feed manufactured by CTV Host Broadcaster was contracted to be produced “cleanly” for 390 world broadcasters and not for Canada alone.

This broadcast (re)construction of the live Olympic event in progress was guided and situated within the institutional features of the television industry and the particular exclusive economic agreements of the 1988 Winter Olympics. As the designated marquee event for CTV, sharing prime time with figure skating, hockey had been assigned the burden for the spectacle of accumulation. Team Canada fell short of medal expectations after costing CTV \$4.5 Million for the rights to the nation, and costing Sport Canada \$3.8 million⁴ and

⁴ Parrish (Feb. 29, 1988:G7).

Hockey Canada \$8 million to run the quadrennial hockey development programme. These investments provided the NHL with fifteen players from Team Canada before the Olympic torch was extinguished. Moreover, the CTV television crew helped orchestrate an Olympic spectacle of accumulation generating \$326 million, thereby raising profit levels for OCO'88 and CTV to approximately \$106 million and \$20 Million respectively, *and* to orchestrate a cultural spectacle of legitimation in and through the social process of broadcasting labour⁵.

In recent years, national television networks have become involved in broadcasting Olympics games because it has been considered to be profit-generating, value-added "event marketing". As the potential for market share generation decreased for Olympic sponsors and Olympic media rights holders during the 1988 Olympiad, the quest for value partially shifted to the terrain of symbolic power. To enhance corporate prestige and market share, the symbolic power of the spectacle will be called into question in upcoming Olympic Games planning. The deepening economic pressures to attract broad audiences, as new competitors in the cable and interactive media industries and other professional sports fragment the Olympic audience, will put greater pressures on network corporations and sporting organizations to critically scrutinize the Olympic broadcasting plans for the narratives they wish to celebrate.

The highly competitively media market is now encouraging the major North American television networks in the early 1990s to become more self-reflexive. As part of

⁵Saunders (Feb. 29, 1988: G13).

the spectacle of legitimation for example, the major networks are now reconceptualizing the broadcast network as a “brand” product and not just a corporate organization. Networks believe this will help maintain the status of broadcasting being the last efficient mass advertising vehicle in the marketing industry, and to address their shrinking market shares (Mandese, 1993: 1 and 44). Broadcast organizations desire viewer loyalty to their network stance. The traditional separateness of sports departments within network structures will likely be pulled further into an overall network style.

Power is shifting from the “makers” of the sporting event to “makers” of the media event. New directions in marketing by television corporations, such as brand marketing, suggest that greater demands will be placed on the Olympic movement to offer a “product” that fits media plans. The IOC, in its own quest for capital accumulation, will have to act swiftly to decide what range and depth of commercial messages will be allowed to be legitimated through sporting events. The IOC has even considered developing its own permanent host broadcaster. However, offering the networks the prestige of being the “Olympic network” and the opportunity to design and control the visual presentation of sport, is an opportunity for which many corporations are willing to bid. Sponsors associate their corporate identity with the motifs of Olympic excellence because they believe the association “upweights” their prestige. The Olympic movement is currently concerned with accumulating economic capital by auctioning its cultural capital. Richard Pound, Chair to the IOC Commission for New Sources of Financing and negotiator of television rights explains:

we [the IOC] toyed with the idea of being our own Host, but I'm not sure the IOC should get into the business of producing television. That would qualitatively make us different actors. The IOC sees themselves more as

facilitators of sport rather than producers (July 10, 1992).

Thus, the International Olympic Committee has come to define itself as the keepers of the flame and bankers of the process. Having unbridled power to sell the Olympic games to the highest bidders as a commercial event, the IOC has become a “facilitator” of profit, but one that leases the rights to the spectacle of legitimation.

As a “facilitator” afraid of lagging revenues, the IOC has adamantly resisted developing a code of ethics for the sport media. Echoing the claims of the commercial networks, the IOC believes that imposing a code of professional code of ethics would constitute a form of censorship (Pound July 10, 1992, Eshaw Feb. 11, 1988). Sportscasters work in the entertainment industry, but often claim the rights of the field of journalism. Yet, this issue of the relationship between rights and responsibility is not as clear cut as sportscasters like to suggest. As networks have turned to proven rating-grabbers during tough economic times, such as violent programming and popular sports to boost audience size, broadcast regulators in North American and Europe are beginning to demand self-regulation. Still, economic depression has historically exerted conservative pressures on sporting and media organizations to capture guaranteed audiences. The metadiscourses of sporting events, such as national unity, meritocracy, competitive individualism and masculine athleticism, will continue to be revised by the interests of the commercial television industry and multi-national sponsors. Broadcasters and sponsors are now inextricably rooted in the nexus of international sports spectacles.

The CTV broadcasting labour process at the 1988 Winter Olympic Games did succeed in making meaning and money for the network. Hockey was taken up by the network to

reproduce unequal cultural and economic capitals. Both forms of capital were bound together in the Olympic spectacle nexus in 1988, and they currently exist as interdependent monopolies. "We are in a business", the Master Control Line Producer explained, "where the more people we have watching, the more people we have keenly interested, the more people who are going to watch commercials as well. That's the brutal truth, but it's the truth" (McKee, Feb. 18, 1988). Cultural and economic capital place limits and pressures on each other. The traditional "masculine" ethos of ice hockey, and the exclusive male hockey crews, reinforced the media's monopoly over the construction of gendered significations of masculinity to attract a male audience for network sponsors like Labatts Brewery. This gendered production was sustained by the exclusive rights to the broadcast spectacle granted to CTV by the IOC. Furthermore, the lack of struggle by females to enter into the production of hockey, and the broader dismissal of contact sport as an arena of political action for the women's movement, have further strengthened the effectivity of hockey as a gallery of masculinity in Canadian culture. Possessing ideological potency for establishing a sense of national unity and reinforcing masculine preserves, hockey was utilized as a lucrative resource by CTV to garner profit and industry position within the network's power plays.

However, the earlier monopolistic control by exclusive broadcasters over the Olympic spectacle is approaching a crisis of hegemony. Multi-national sponsors of The Olympic Program (TOP), and national sponsors of sporting broadcasts now claim that event marketing is no longer profitable in the face of a world wide recession and fragmenting audiences. As the spectacle of accumulation becomes "leaner", both sponsors and producers will be forced to question what and how they are broadcasting. What constitutes riveting

sport action for a new generation? Have tastes in sports consumption and modes of interpretation changed in traditional sports audiences? Do dormant audiences exist for sport that could be cultivated with new visions of sport, new forms of address, and/or new sports to activate their fanship? The sports media have arrived at a serious disjuncture. They are now being forced to reconcile threats to their traditional journalistic freedoms by regulators and public interest groups, and competitive threats for possession of viewing audiences. As sport socially develops, the sports media are being forced to respond to emergent cultural penetrations into hockey at odds with traditional visions. For example, a crisis of the national masculine hegemony is beginning to simmer as networks consider how they will accommodate or reconstruct ice hockey when female Olympians skate into the 1998 Winter Olympics venue in Japan. Profits ebb and images flow as the locus of hegemonic power shifts. Masculine hegemony is indeed a *moving equilibrium* in which consent to economic-cultural leadership is never finally nor fully achieved.

(IV) RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

To acquire a more comprehensive understanding of the broadcast spectacle, ethnographies and critical analyses of the full circuit of cultural (re)production -- including crew production, industrial distribution, and sports audience consumption -- is required. The frames of observation for this study were guided by my objectives to examine the dominant political economic and cultural structures of televised hockey, using critical theory insights to specifically tackle gender, nationality and notions of hockey as a masculine Canadian sport. However, hockey can also be discussed as an exclusive *caucasian* sport for young men. Issues of racism and the social production of a national game

through eurocentric codes have not been addressed in this study, yet clearly an ethnic hegemony has been powerfully established and fortified by the complete marginalization of players of colour in this Olympic game, by the total exclusion of media workers of colour from CTV hockey broadcasting crews, and by the narrow vision of hockey as a traditional working class and middle class game for white males.

A dearth of information and incomplete explanations about the broadcasting of sporting spectacles exists. In this study, I have sought to provide critical insights about the production moment, but an enormous gap in knowledge still exists about the sports audience at their sites of consumption (home, pub, etc.), about sporting organizations as they conduct the bidding process for exclusive television rights, about the dynamics of media corporations negotiating services and resources with organizing committees, about the limits and pressures the advertising industry exerts on networks and their sport departments, and about the relationship between athletes and the broadcast crews. Ethnography is uniquely suited to uncovering the dynamics of human agency, political-economic limits and pressures and the mediation of ideological power not yet explored within the sports audience. Further methodological refinement is required to better articulate a procedure that combines the traditions of (non)participant observation, ongoing interviews during the labour/consumption processes *with* the theoretical foundations of critical cultural studies.

The ways in which television programming activates particular meanings in the sports audience, and the ways in which media texts provoke resistance or containment of audience members in the broader relationships of power in Canadian society require

examination. The patriarchal inequalities of the labour process and of the masculine narratives of hockey programming were abstracted for examination in this study to foreground the profoundly hegemonic existence of these dominant codes of behaviour and codes of signification; yet during observation it became clear that the political and cultural economies of these gendered relationships and programming were inextricably fused. Olympic hockey was a prime time financial success for CTV despite the defeat of Team Canada, because the sponsors had not negotiated disbursements for low ratings and they, like the CTV producers, never questioned *who* made up the ratings. Audience members were assumed to be hockey fans similar to themselves.

In struggling to retain the hegemonic core of hockey narratives, the crew traded some of their power as craftsmen in broadcasting. As a unit, the hockey crew admitted only a few regrets, such as their lack of power to broadcast the full hockey tournament without interruptions from CTV master control “throwing” to other sports like luge or alpine skiing, and that many Team Canada games they produced were televised during the day when the nation was at work. Alone in interview, however, many individuals expressed a more deeply felt need to be heard and creatively respected by other crew members and the network. They wondered about what they could create with their technology if they could gain the time and freedom “to play” with their broadcasting tools, and they expressed a deep curiosity about network battles and circumstances of labour at the other levels of the crew. While sports audiences remain elusive to academics and to broadcasters, knowing the members of various network strata and the extent of creative possibilities of their craft remains elusive to the crew as well. To adapt C.W. Mills sociological imagination, the *sporting imagination* of television crews could be developed by taking the *personal troubles*

they suffered while producing Olympic hockey to the level of *public issue* (Mills, 1959). Making connections between human agency, social structures and relationships of power demands a fuller view of the circuit of cultural production.

Thus, theories of power need to be revisited in future ethnographies: in addition to considering the material and ideological strands of power, the multiple facets of unequal relationships demand attention. Relationships of power are simultaneously structures of opportunity for some, and barriers leading to discrimination and disempowerment for others. The few ethnographies of Canadian media production conducted thus far have tended to examine the limits of institutional structures and resources of power, such as the availability of money, technology and time being defined as “constraints”. The labour process is a site of struggle, resistance and accommodation in which media personnel are able to borrow the ideological and material resources at hand to *enable* the production of privileged meaning and the accumulation of economic capital as well. In other words, the working definition of power needs to be reconceptualized to allow questions about production, creativity, resistance and counter hegemonic possibilities during broadcasting to be asked. If broadcasting structures, conventional relationships and discourses are to be acknowledged as culturally produced and reproduced, then a theory of human agency and empowerment must dialectically accompany the scrutiny of limits and constraints. Prevailing constructions of sport can be challenged, revised and recreated. Murdock has suggested,

in the end it is not a question of choosing between structural determinism or methodological individualism, but of exploring the *relations* between determinism and concrete action, and the ways in which they have been formed and transformed historically” (1978:63).

Examining the production “moment” of sports broadcasting (in the circuit of cultural production) can provide a window into the social lives and cultural struggles of television workers as they make spectacle. Ethnography can help recover the significant moment of media production, so important to the “remaking” of modern sport -- a moment that has contributed to the narrowing of choices of the many ways of playing hockey into *the way*, a moment that has channelled the cultural focus from the many different groups of people playing sport at various levels of accomplishment to *the national team*, and a moment that has sorted through the multiple visions of a game to televisually paint *the game* in a culturally specific way. Understanding the complex hegemonic relationships between the pursuit of economic capital and the (re)production of cultural capital in a non-reductive manner will help to build a clearer picture of the role of televised sport, and indeed the role of sporting practice, in the social construction of gender, nationhood, Olympic grandeur and social relationships.

Broadcast versions of hockey, and the larger Olympic spectacle will never be produced as a universal broadcast vision. Hegemonic beliefs, relationships and broadcast cultural forms are continually issued challenges. Since 1988, for example -- significant losses in sponsorship revenue, the fragmentation of the broadcasting audience, serious competition from cable television expansion, the growing strength of European broadcasters entering into event rights bidding competition, government demands for broadcasters to self-regulate depictions of violence on television, challenges from ethnic communities and feminists over the concept of nationhood and how public monies are to be invested, additions to the Olympic programming and challenges from those previously excluded from sport -- have collectively constituted penetrations into a growing crisis of hegemony for the

broadcast keepers of the “national game”. The challenge for media workers and researchers will be to transform their monoglossic production vision of what is being produced to a deeper understanding of how media sporting events are created in order to invoke experiences, pleasures, pains, and desires of the sporting audiences.

Sports broadcasting is a form of social communication that is ultimately *of* the world -- as a part of making profit and expressing meaning, as constitutive and constituting of the spectacle of economic accumulation and the spectacle of legitimation, and not merely imposed on Canadian culture or electronically reflected off the ice. The challenge now lies in expanding opportunities for producing alternative visions of sporting life, in linking the transformations and struggles in sport to broader social issues, in hearing the previously silenced voices, in seeing richer images of sport, in producing an Olympic spectacle with the audiences primarily in mind, rather than simply producing the audience as an event property for exclusive sponsors to purchase. Olympic sportscasting was, and is, a complex power play.

(V) RECOMMENDATIONS TO OLYMPIC GAMES PRODUCERS AND POLICY MAKERS

I want to conclude by offering some pragmatic suggestions to key agents manufacturing the Olympic spectacle to transform the processes and products of sports broadcasting.

The International Olympic Committee

A “promise of performance” could be written by broadcasters bidding for Olympic media rights agreements that included technical standards, rules for dealing with athletes and coaches, and quality working conditions for the broadcasting crews. This agreement could include both media codes of conduct and codes of representation in order to guarantee balanced coverage across the range of sporting events and the multitude of ways that sporting success and athletic pursuit can be expressed, to address gender and race stereotyping, and to foster the aims of the Olympic movement.

In keeping with the Olympic Charter’s aim to spread Olympism, the IOC could reevaluate the unfettered freedoms currently awarded to the highest bidders for exclusive television rights. To ensure continued access to a full range of events by Olympic audiences, programming promises of performances could guarantee minimum amounts of programming across the full range of sports. This would shift the balance of power from networks catering primarily to advertisers seeking access to particular audience segments, to a media focus on producing a broadcast spectacle in which sports fans have access to the Olympic festival of sports. Promises of performance would shift the bidding process from a concern for maximum rights extraction and minimum achievement of broadcasting standards to a competition between interested networks over quality coverage as defined by the networks.

In addition, pay-per-view exclusive rights should be limited to a supplementary role in IOC financing strategies; pay-per-view formats introduce a new level of class and gender inequality to Olympic programming because they offer exclusive access to those who can afford to purchase personal rights. Exclusivity does not breed Olympism as the IOC has defined it.

The IOC could develop a permanent host broadcaster to ensure equitable visual coverage of all participating nations, equitable access to employment and high standards of excellence in technology and expertise, and to ensure adequate working conditions. The temporary nature of the host broadcaster has led, prior to the 1988 Games, to national broadcasters restocking their equipment for post-Olympic broadcasting in Canada. A permanent Host would open up the possibilities for a wider range of cities bidding to host the games since a fundamental requirement for Olympic hosting would be universally available.

Olympic solidarity monies could be directed to workshops to equalize access to the media by all nations; attendance at associated media professional development sessions could become criterium for accreditation to the Games. A focus on the critical analysis of pressing Olympic issues (be they political, economic, cultural, health-oriented, labour issues and/or athletic concerns), a reflection on the traditions of media sport production to help media personnel develop strategies to effectively deal with those issues, and the encouragement of a wider range of sport-news values being adopted by the media could be central to the curriculum of these sessions.

Olympic solidarity money could be used to train media workers around the world to spark a wider selection of visions and voices for the Games. Olympic broadcast agreements could establish guidelines to enhance parity between men and women working in the Olympic media. Olympic solidarity money could be used to help economically depressed nations broadcast their national sport championships so that they may possibly host and broadcast a future Olympiad.

Olympic scheduling of events should consider, first and foremost, the health of athletes in establishing the media scheduling for broadcasting athletic events; in other words, scheduling for optimal media prime time should be a secondary consideration.⁶ When media time zones are a consideration for the start times of events, priority could be given to the host nation's prime time (assuming that the Olympic games continue to rotate sites).

A broadcasting code of ethics concerning gender and ethnic/race stereotyping could be written into IOC media rights contracts to help the IOC uphold the Olympic movement as a humanitarian movement.

⁶When media prime time becomes a scheduling priority it is an indication of nation favouritism since there is no single optimal time zone for the world.

An advertising code of ethics concerning gender and race stereotyping, could be written into exclusive sponsorship agreements and into domestic broadcasting rights agreements. This could include a ban on products that contribute to unhealthy states of being and a ban on corporations whose business and advertising standards are contrary to the Olympic Charter goals.

Canadian Media Corporations

Press and broadcasting outlets could publish sports department policies that clearly articulate what constitutes "good employee conduct" and the department's mandate for athletic coverage. Specific policies could incorporate CRTC guidelines and journalistic codes of ethics practiced in their news departments in order to guarantee that Canadian laws and regulations governing the media are applied to the Canadian sports media.

Policies for special events such as the Olympic games could be developed when rights agreements are finalized: for example, (1) Canadian laws and guidelines could primarily be upheld by domestic rights holders, and (2) charters and mandates of the sport committees and international federations could be negotiated into the policies for media conduct and representation.

Media corporations covering major events could ensure that sports media personnel are provided with adequate resources and appropriate working climates to complete their work at a high standard of craft and safety. Resources for continuing professional education about sports history, political issues, technical information about the sport and their own industry, and development of their craft could be provided.

Regular market and audience research could be performed to better ascertain the needs and concerns of the Olympic audience, and to target wider potential audiences currently ignored by national networks.

Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission

Radio and television licence renewals could include promises of performance that guarantee the elimination of sexist and racist stereotyping in sport, a balanced coverage of events and significations of sporting drama, and a balanced of fair coverage across different

levels of sport.

When exclusive rights to major international sporting events are won, networks should promise provisions for gender parity among workers and for broadcast parity throughout the year to equalize the current unbalanced allocation of male/female events in most current international sporting spectacles.

Sports Broadcasters, Journalists, Editors and Producers

The sports media should organize a professional association to create mechanisms for self-regulation, to develop their craft, provide ongoing educational programs and to negotiate a code of ethics for the profession that could exist beyond individual network control.

The sports media could develop mechanisms to improve audience access to the media. This could be fostered by market research surveys and focus groups, expanded editorial broadcast/columns, "talk back" phone lines, etc.

Olympic disciplines and other levels of Canadians sport could be covered on a regular basis; media professionals should take the responsibility to understand the sports they are covering - including the technical aspects, the current issues, the history of the sport and knowledge of the people involved. Regular contact with athletes, sporting officials and organizations rather than reliance on news services could be expected.

The sports media should abide by current legal restrictions, such as those laws covering privacy and hate literature, as well as national codes and standards covering the various forms of stereotyping.

Sport Canada and Sporting Federations

A wider selection of information about sports and athletes could be provided through the Athlete Information Bureau and other agencies of information. This information could define success and accomplishment as both as a process and an outcome, and it could better

emphasize how “success” is a collective rather than individual achievement.

The Sport Marketing Council could advise sponsors to adopt images of Canadian athletes and teams utilized in advertising and promotional campaigns in ways that present a healthy array of athletic types and forms of success.

The Coaching Association of Canada could provide media literacy courses for coaches, technical directors, and administrators. This could include a critical analysis of dominant myths and stereotypic representations of sport in the media, strategies for dealing with the media, advice for preparing athletes to cope with media pressure and interviews, tools to aid coaches promote their sport, and an overview of the media’s legal responsibilities.

Sport federations, Sport Canada, and the COA officials could be encouraged to contact the CRTC, professional media associations, advertising standards councils, and provincial press councils if the media promote sport in an “irresponsible” manner.

Table 8.1: Average Hours Per Week of Television Viewing by Age and Sex Groups - Fall 1988

Average Number of Hours Weekly

Total Population		23.5 hours per week
Men	18+ years of age	22.6 hours viewing per week
	18-24	17.7
	25-34	19.9
	35-49	20.0
	50-59	24.7
	60+	32.2
Women	18+ years of age	26.7 hours viewing per week
	18-24	20.9
	25-34	24.0
	35-49	23.3
	50-59	29.8
	60+	35.1

Source: Adapted from Stats Canada (Catalogue 87-803 Table 1, p.12.)

APPENDIX I

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

The following is a list of questions posed during in-depth taped interviews and during informal interviews during fieldwork as the crew was working. Questions were framed by my broader objectives to study Olympic hockey broadcast production as a spectacle of accumulation and of legitimation.

As the Olympics progressed the range of questions expanded as opportunities arose to ask reflective questions and as the events of the Olympics gave rise to specific situations. A number of levels of inquiry during the formal taped interviews and the hundreds of informal interviews were pursued including: (a) personal background, (b) questions directed at the crew position in the CTV network and (c) general questions about hockey and broadcasting within the larger context of the sports world/Olympic structure.

The intent of the questions was to probe how the context of the Olympics placed limits and pressures on their work, to have them describe the flow of work, their sense of craft, relationships between co-workers, their vision of hockey and why they cover sport in a particular manner.

Personal Background:

Demographic questions about age, ethnicity, socio-economic class, challenges were asked. Other personal background questions included level of education and kind of broadcast training, and about apprenticeship in broadcasting.

Work History:

How and when did you get involved in the broadcast industry? In hockey production?

What is your official title on this crew?

Outline your work history. How long have you worked for CTV? What positions have you held in CTV? Identify professional groups, trade unions, etc. you belong to.

If the crew member was not a regular CTV "staffer": why did you apply to work for CTV at the Olympics? What skills do you possess that CTV needs?

Crew Dynamics and Work Site:

Overview the preparations you and the rest of the crew have taken to setup for these Olympics.

What tasks have you specifically been assigned to do? Describe your position? In what ways is your position to the telecast?

Describe the other positions? How does their work affect your work? Describe contact with other members? How important is teamwork -- is there a sense of team with CTV?

Who has the decision making power? At what levels? Who has the creative input? Describe crew relations?

What do you enjoy/dislike about sportscasting? About the Olympics?

Have you been given formal written instructions, CTV sportscasting policies, etc.?

Describe the technical set-up? What technical preparations and adjustments have you made? Has the process been a smooth one? What major factors affect your work (time, financial, technological, space, etc.)? Which of these factors are positive challenges/frustrations?

Compare working at the Olympics to your regular work.

Describe a day in your life at the Olympics.

Hockey Production Craft and Codes:

Describe the overall process of getting the hockey game to air.

Are there a particular set of rules or conventions for covering hockey?

Did you play a role in developing them?

How have the traditions of broadcasting hockey changed over the years? Hockey-lore?

Compared to producing other kinds of television programming (e.g. news, drama), how does the production of hockey differ? Do you have a sense of craft for producing hockey that differs from other crew members who normally work on other kinds of programmes?

Will CTV coverage be different from the hockey seen on CBC?

How will hockey coverage differ from coverage of other types of Olympic sports CTV is broadcasting (e.g. from figure skating, alpine skiing, etc.)?

Why have the cameras/microphones been placed in the specific locations chosen in the Saddledome? How are these positions similar/different from most NHL hockey arenas? How does the crew feel about the new changes to hockey production this Olympiad (e.g. panavision, reverse angle camera, microphones beside coaches etc.).

How will the 'shut-up' book affect your work?

What will these changes do for the viewer at home?

Describe the audience for broadcasts? How will the Olympic audience differ from the regular NHL hockey audience? Has the press and fan response been supportive?

What distinguishes CTV Domestic/Host coverage from ABC's? TVA ? European Broadcasters?

Why is the coverage different? Similar? How do the audiences differ?

ABC, TVA, EBU and CTV Domestic are all using CTV Host feed: how will the networks add their own style and colour?

How important is hockey to the overall Olympic telecast?

If the perfect hockey game were to be played on the ice what would it be like? Describe the perfect television game -- what kind of hockey game and crew set up would make "good tv"?

When the game on the ice is boring, what can you do to make the game worth watching for the audience? What can the producer-director do? What can the crew do? What would insult/impress the audience?

What criteria do you use to distinguish good sports production from the bad? Does this apply to all sports or just hockey? What criteria do other sports producers use? Does it differ between networks/nations?

What criteria do you use to judge the quality of your own work? How would you rank your performance at the Olympics? The crew's? CTV's?

Describe what you are doing now?

ADMINISTRATIVE AND EXECUTIVE /PRODUCTION LEVELS

What is your background as a sport/television producer (or manager)? How did you first get interested in this work?

What major developments in this field have occurred throughout the span of your career?

What elements of sportscasting/managing have remained stable? What are the reasons for these transformations (e.g. exclusive sponsorship/ use of the camera, increased use of natural sounds, crew organization etc.)?

Describe your major contributions to the field.

Describe your role at the Olympics? What major tasks have you completed before/during the Games?

What major factors affect your work (time/financial/technology/space)? What typical challenges and problems arise during sports broadcasting? What problems are unique to Olympic sportscasting? What are your strategic plans to avoid/overcome these challenges?

Describe OCO/IOC/Press/sponsor and CTV relations.

Why was CTV awarded the exclusive Host and Domestic rights to broadcast the Olympics? What will this do for the position of the network in the industry?

How were you involved in the bidding negotiations? Describe the process? What is the economic/symbolic value of winning these rights?

What rules/obligations are attached to these rights? What degree(s) of freedom does the network have in telecasting the games?

Have the rights "hit the ceiling" as Johnny Eshaw claims? Are the 1988 Games, as he argues, the last of the "big-time Olympics"?

Describe the Olympic audience. What measures are you taking to cultivate the audience? How will you keep them after the Games? Other than ratings, do you have other measures of success? Have you done any market research to find out about your audience? If so, how has this information informed your plans and decisions?

How will Host and Domestic Coverage differ? What skills and attributes do members of the hockey crew possess to help you achieve Host and Domestic broadcast objectives?

How important is the hockey coverage to the overall Olympic broadcast package? How many hours do you plan to telecast live? How do you plan to make it entertaining? Why is hockey so important to the Canadian audience? What narrative themes about hockey and Canadian culture will you emphasize?

Describe what decisions were made when organizing the Olympic Cue Sheets. How did you make decisions about the length of segments, when to break for commercials, when to "throw" to another sport on the Olympic schedule of events, or about the codes of sport-newsworthiness?

Rank the following elements for importance in making broadcast decisions:

- market research
- audience ratings

- ratings of other shows on CTV
- exclusive sponsorship (CTV's, IOC TOP, OCO'88)
- network budgets for CTV HOST, CTV Domestic
- pressure from IOC, ABC, world broadcasters, IHHF, Sport Canada, COA, sport organizations/coaches, other TV networks
- CTV's traditions of sportscasting
- your personal work history and conventions of sportscasting

Has the emphasis changed historically? Which factors will dominate future decisions?

POLITICAL ECONOMIC QUESTIONS FOR IOC, OCO AND CTV EXECUTIVES

Outline the history of Olympic television rights agreements and negotiations.

How has the bidding process changed?

Did CTV get a good deal for the Canadian rights to the 1988 Winter Olympic Games?

ABC paid a record \$309 Million (US dollars) for their national rights: what were the factors and industry circumstances that led to this outcome?

How important is media money to the IOC in comparison to other forms of revenue?

Did ABC and/or CTV put pressure on the IOC or OCO to change schedules and prioritize certain events in primetime?

What criteria was used to choose the host broadcaster? The domestic rights holders?

Why did CTV, rather than CBC, win the bid for the 1988 Winter Games?

What were the successes and failures of media coverage at the 1988 Games?

What IOC reports, positions papers on the media currently guide television coverage?

Have the media expressed concern that IOC TOP sponsors conflict with the exclusive sponsorship programmes of broadcasters for the same Olympic Games?

What concerns do the IOC have about the power of the media currently?

Has the IOC considered developing a code of media ethics for sports media workers at the Olympics?

Explain the relationships between the IOC, OCO'88 and CTV at the Olympics.

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