

MICRO-POLITICS AND SYMBOLIC INTERACTIONISM: A SYMBIOTIC PARADIGM FOR RESEARCH INTO THE MODERN OLYMPIC ORGANIZATION

KEITH GILBERT
QUEENSLAND UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

[1] INTRODUCTION:

Over the past few years there have been several books, journal articles and television programmes emanating from the world's popular press which have actively sought to damage the reputation of the International Olympic Committee. In almost all cases these reports have been directly aimed at the members of the Committee and until now have not been challenged by the academic community. One could make an assumption that the academics working within the disciplines of sociology and philosophy of sport agree with the comments and nature of the popular press reports, or have not considered the difficult option of academic micro-research into the arena of the I.O.C. In other words I believe that quality research into the I.O.C. has not yet been attempted or fulfilled. Consequently, it is my intention in this paper to offer a conceptual and theoretical base from which to study the political lives of those individuals who spend their daily working hours within the confines of the International Olympic Committee.

This presentation is designed to stimulate further debate and at times may appear controversial, I make no apology for that. However, I must state that my major reason for writing this paper is to encourage further research and deliberation into the micro-political aspects which pervade sporting organizations. In highlighting this focus I would like in particular to express my opinions on how academics might begin to centralize on the differing discourses and

voices of those individuals who are currently in control of the I.O.C.

For many years I have been a supporter of the I.O.C. and therefore, I am critical about the popular press who I believe have not put forward quality research which offers the reader both sides of the argument. Indeed, in my opinion they have at times been guilty of unfair and unjust statements. Perhaps, I also am fearful of the old adage that 'you should not believe everything you read in the press' and that academics, myself included, have been slow to react to the often emotive and biased statements of some factions of the media. Consequently, what follows is an attempt to link the theoretical constructs of micro-politics to the conceptual symbolic interactionist frame of reference so that academics themselves can contrive new and interesting projects which highlight the political truth regarding the organization known as the I.O.C.

[2] RESEARCH INTO ORGANIZATIONS:

Throughout the past twenty years there has been a proliferation of research in the area of sports sociology. In actuality considerable upgrowth in the quality and quantity of research papers in various areas has been achieved. However, it is very difficult to find journals with sociological research papers published from the interpretive paradigm and certainly, there are few papers which have delved into the organizational structures of sport from this perspective. In delivering this paper I could be regarded as a fraud because I am currently working within the interpretive paradigm (Sparkes, 1992: 21) and within the specific arenas of life history (Goodson and Walker, 1991: 137-49) and narrative (Genishi, 1992: 183) which supports the postmodernist perspective of Tinning (1991: 1-20). However, I come here with the specific assumption of resurrecting the use of symbolic interactionism (Mead, 1934) and the study into organizations from a micro-political perspective. It is not my intention to provide a detailed account of what constitutes an organization however, according to most definitions the I.O.C. can undoubtedly be classed as an organization. This is because it has rules and regulations, a formal structure with fiscal power and individuals who spend most of their working life supporting the Olympic ideals. There have been many definitions of what constitutes an organization. However, I prefer the

abstract tidiness of conceptual debate into organizational structures rather than the concrete messiness of empirical research (Ball, 1987). The definition of an organization, which is utilized in this paper, follows Barr-Greenfields' (1975: 65) orientation where like him I reject the notion of a 'single abstraction called 'organization' but begin rather with 'the varied perceptions by individuals of what they can, should, or must do in dealing with others within the circumstances in which they find themselves' (Ball, 1987: 3). As Ball (1987) remarks, 'organizational theorists have failed to offer any sensible and comprehensive analysis' of organizations. He further remarks that 'their work has tended to be fundamentally handicapped by a reliance upon theoretical models and empirical insights gleaned from and developed exclusively in relation to studies of industrial and business concerns or large scale bureaucracies'. This tendency towards empirical research has led to a lack of in depth observation and subject validity by sociologists who have produced work which is often found to be conceptually arid. What follows is an attempt at a wholesale escape from the dominant paradigm of 'organizational theory' rather than a piecemeal critique of its weaknesses' (see Ball 1987). Consequently, there is much more research work to be achieved from the micro-sociological level that delves into the unknown perspectives of the I.O.C. or Olympic organization and in particular the 'micro-politics of its organizational life'.

[3] MICRO-POLITICS:

The use of micro-politics as a theoretical perspective to researching organizational behaviour is relatively new and I believe that it offers sports sociologists an exciting challenge for the generation of new knowledge. Perhaps new knowledge which is the kind of knowledge that is qualitatively different from that generated by 'non participant researchers' (Wagner, 1993: 3). The best method of explanation regarding micro-politics is for you (the audience) to reflect (as I speak) critically upon your own university organization. Thereby, placing micro-politics into the realm of an organizational context or framework in which you are familiar and where most of you will be able to identify with the constructs. It is hoped that you will then be able to reflect further and transfer the knowledge to the Olympic organization.

Certainly, there have been several definitions of micro-politics. Pfeffer (1978: 29) offers one plausible example by referring to micro-politics as:

... the conflict in preferences among organizational participants and the resulting contest for control of the organization.

Morgan (1986) proposes a more simplistic definition by referring to micro-politics as 'the day to day political dynamics of organizations'. However, the most commonly used definition and the one highlighted throughout this paper is that of Hoyle (1982: 88) who notes that:

Micro-politics embraces those strategies by which individuals and groups in organizational contexts seek to use their resources of power and influence to further their interests ... It is characterised more by coalitions than by departments, by strategies rather than enacted rules, by influence rather than power, and by knowledge rather than status.

Micro-politics, then, enjoys the benefit of being mostly clandestine in nature and acts as an undercover adjunct to the normal arrangements of the organization. Which in this instance could refer to the Olympic organization. Sparkes (1988: 157) illustrates this point beautifully when he mentions that:

Most people working in an organization readily admit in private that they are surrounded by forms of 'wheeling and dealing' through which different people attempt to advance specific interests.

Hoyle (1982: 87) supports this statement by commenting that employees in organizations are quite conscious of schemes which are often 'idiosyncratic, adventitious, unpredictable and intractable in nature and that every day brings new organizational pathology to disrupt well laid plans'. This statement appears sound as most academics would understand that there are hidden agendas at meetings, and some official functions. In that sense it can be clearly stated that the Olympic organization is no different to other large organizations. The main difference is that it is being reported in the popular press from one particular perspective, which discredits the neutrality and impartiality which should occur in the final

writing of the research document, thereby deemphasizing one of the basic rules of research, that of writer impartiality. Andrew Sparkes (1994: 21) in a recent paper which he delivered at the 1994 AIESEP World Convention in Berlin would disagree with this perspective and noted there that:

The ways that we write and the manner in which we pass judgement has now become problematic and we cannot ignore this central aspect of our work. Our texts can no longer be innocent and neutral.

Although I agree with Sparkes (1994), I believe that in writing the final research or report, when working within a large organization like the Olympic organization, great care must be taken to demonstrate impartiality. However, if I were working within the critical paradigm (Sparkes, 1992) I would utilise the direct approach which Sparkes suggests. It seems logical to argue that the impartiality approach would appear the best method of writing for research into micro-politics.

Micro-politics, then as Hoyle (1986: 125) informs us, 'is a favourite theme of organizational gossip as people talk about playing politics, hidden agendas, organizational Mafias', Machiavellianism and so forth. Micro-politics in organizational life therefore appears to be as natural as breathing (Burke, 1969: 166). Indeed, there appears to be a 'Domain of Micro-politics' which has been defined again by (Hoyle, 1986: 126) as 'a continuum, one end of which is virtually indistinguishable from conventional management procedures but from which it diverges on a number of dimensions-interests, interest sets, power, strategies and legitimacy. The major problem with Hoyle's definition is that it fails to take into consideration the consequences of individuals' actions, thereby negating the inherent construct of conflict. Hoyle's neglect of the notion of conflict within organizations seems unusual considering other authors like Morgan (1986) had noted that systematic analysis of organizational politics can be simplified by focusing on the relationship between 'interests, conflict and power'. More recently Ball (1987: 8) suggested that there were a key number of micro-political concepts which are relevant to most organizations. These concepts are summarized and in terms of this argument they appear directly counterpoised to those of traditional 'organizational sci-

ence'. Indeed, I would like to suggest that these concepts are a different method by which research into the Olympic organization might be attempted.

Micro-political Perspective	Organizational Science
Power	Authority
Goal Diversity	Goal Coherence
Ideological Disputation	Ideological Neutrality
Conflict	Consensus
Interest	Motivation
Political	Decision Making
Control	Consent

Source: Ball, S.J. (1987) *The Micro-politics of the School* (p. 8).

Many of these key concepts require further explanation. For example:

[4] POWER AND MICRO-POLITICS

According to Hindness (1982: 504) power is:

The exercise of control, the realization of one's will or objectives, the securing of interests, or whatever, always involving the deployment of definite means of action in particular situations, that these means of action themselves depend upon definite conditions and that their deployment may confront obstacles including the practices of others.

All this leads to the notion of power emerging among individuals who work in large organizations and is often reflected in the functioning of leadership. This notion of power takes account of contingencies, changes over time, the results of conflict and the struggles, and not the playing out of some pre-ordained script (Hindness, 1982: 506). With this maintenance of power by individuals within the Olympic organization, compromise, trade offs, threats, pressure and underhand dealings could have their part to play in daily life. Indeed, in translation into the real world of the Olympic organization we might find that 'politics and politicking may be an essential aspect of organizational life, and not necessarily an optional dysfunctional extra. However,

we do not know for sure that these types of actions are occurring. What we do have is a biased popular press intent on discovering the problematics involved with the decision making process within the Olympic organization. Ball (1987: 26) remarks however, that decision-making, is not an abstract rational process which can be plotted on an organizational chart; it is a political process, and I believe 'it is the stuff of micropolitics'. Consequently, without the popular press working within the Olympic organization on a day to day basis there can be little truth to their claims of power politics and innuendo. Indeed, the notion of the meaning of power within sporting organizations has tended to be neglected. It also appears as though industry, management, leaders and also researchers have ignored the relationship between organizational politics and the individuals' quest for power. Bacharach (1984: 4) suggests that it is not power that has remained unexamined but rather the patterns of inter-organizational politics. This is certainly the case with the Olympic organization for there is very little evidence to suggest that any academic research has been forthcoming in this area.

The major author working on the constructs of power within organizations is Morgan (1986) who puts forward the following 'sources of power in organizational settings.

1. Formal Authority
2. Control of Scarce Resources
3. Use of Organizational Structure, Rules, and Regulations
4. Control of Decision Processes
5. Control of Knowledge and Information
6. Control of Boundaries
7. Ability to Cope with Uncertainty
8. Control of Technology
9. Interpersonal Alliances, Networks, and Control of Informal Organization
10. Control of Counter-organizations
11. Symbolism and the Management of Meaning
12. Gender and the Management of Gender Relations

13. Structural Factors that Define the Stage of Action

14. The Power One Already Has

Source: Morgan, G. (1986) *Images of Organisation*, p. 159

More recent work by Noblett et al. (199 1: 393) has made a strong attempt at viewing the notion of power through the medium of micro-politics. They found that an ideological definition of professionalism was transformed into increased power. Indeed, it was Bums' (196 1: 270) who attempted to show power through action in two perspectives and his major point viewed power 'as the category of personal conduct concerned with the advancement of self interest'.

[5] INTERESTS AND MICRO-POLITICS

Interests have been named as one of the primary dimensions of the domain of micro-politics (Lawler 1980, Hoyle 1983, Ball 1987). This is quite understandable because there appears to be a close relationship between an individual's ideology and the promotion of that ideology over others. There has been some attempt at categorizing interests into three basic types by Ball (1987: 16), who put forward the following: vested interests, ideological interests and self interests. Within vested interests he refers to the material concerns of the individual in relation to their employment and the actual rewards which they receive from their 'work, career and promotion'. Of course the tension or conflict between individuals which can be created through the promotion of vested interests can increase if the available resources are at a minimum. Ideological interests he contemplates as purely referring to 'matters of philosophical commitment'. Self interests are referred to the sense of self or identity. This relates to the type of individual the person perceives themselves or projects themselves to be in the working environment. However, the study of interests is problematic and fraught with conceptual and methodological difficulties. Morgan (1986) perhaps best explains the aspects of interest as a 'complex set of predispositions embracing goals, values, expectations and other orientations and inclinations that lead a person to act in one direction rather than the other'. He goes further by putting forward the following

chart of the inter-relationship between task, career and extra-mural interests. There does appear to be an unease that exists between the three constructs. For example one's job (task), career aspirations, (career interests) and personal values and lifestyle (extramural interests).

Task Career

Extramural

Organizational Interests, Task, Career and Extramural

That unease is manifested because the variables of task interests, career interests and extra-mural interests are constantly changing and are in a perpetual state of instability as individuals in organizational settings attempt to stabilize the three constructs.

[6] COALITIONS AND MICRO-POLITICS

In the past sociologists have substituted many different terms for coalitions. Terms such as action sets, and factions are popular. However, coalitions arise when groups of individuals get together to co-operate in relation to specific issues, events, decisions or to advance specific values and ideologies. Consequently, coalition building may be viewed as an important aspect of Olympic organizational life. However, they are generally ad hoc in nature and could be referred to as a general indicator of organizational life because by their very nature they are subject to change. They create a certain form of dependency upon one another and if one person is let down in some way conflict can occur and further interactions between the groups of individuals can become strained. One individual must not appear to have profited more than the other coalition members. As Smith (1983: 207) remarks, 'the exposed Machiavellian will never again be trusted'. Coalitions of individuals can also be interest groups. Consequently, coalitions which are formed within the Olympic organization, may be for self improve-

ment or group enhancement by their very nature they may be micro-political and exist only to promote the coalition's own goals and vested interests.

[7] CONFLICT WITHIN ORGANIZATIONS

Conflict arises within organizations whenever interests collide. Conflict between individuals or between coalitions usually occurs between antagonistic ideological and interest based rivals. It could be argued that micro-political behaviour is a direct result of the conflict and stress which is concocted between the opposing players in the micro-political arena. Conflict is however, not a new concept within sociological literature. Boissevain (1974: 10) when referring to conflict within society promulgated two views. The first he termed the consensus or integration model, and the second the coercion or conflict model. Briefly 'the first model attributes to social systems the characteristics of solidarity, cohesion, consensus, co-operation, reciprocity, stability; the other attributes to the characteristics of division, coercion, dissent, conflict and change. However, earlier, Weber (1968) described conflict as it is found in government and political bureaucracies as 'something which appears to be only a result of human shortcomings such as cowardice, stupidity, and greed. Eitzen (1986) re-defines the analytical focus of conflict theorists by reference to 'how individuals are dominated through the shaping of their consciousness and worldviews'. However, like Ball (1987) I am inclined to believe that the conflict perspective should underlie all aspects of the analysis outlined in the research on micro-politics. This consideration as previously stated is 'fundamentally antithetical to the social system tradition, which underlies so much of organizational theory'. The constructs of the conflict paradigm have been neatly summarized by Baldrige (197 1: 14) who stated that:

1. Conflict theorists emphasize the fragmentation of social systems into interest groups, each with its own particular goals.
2. Conflict theorists study the interaction of those different interest groups and especially the conflict processes by which one group tries to gain advantage over another.
3. Interest groups cluster around divergent values, and the study of conflicting interests is a key part of the analysis.

4. The study of change is a central feature of the conflict approach, for change is to be expected if the social system is fragmented by divergent values and conflicting interest groups.

In short if applied to the Olympic organization the model of Baldrige would indicate that conflict is central to the micro-politics played within the organization. However, although a political interpretation is based on conflict theory, it does not mean that the Olympic organization is torn apart by ceaseless conflict. Conflict can be and often is quite healthy; or it may revitalize an otherwise stagnant system. Baldrige (1971: 202) continues by announcing that:

If Marx taught us anything it was that conflict is often necessary and beneficial for it constantly provokes the social system into self examination and change.

Consequently, because of the very nature of micro-politics any research which is carried out at the workplace where the actions between individuals can be recorded an understanding must include a conceptual framework which takes into consideration the relationship among individuals and their actions and attitudes towards each other. An essential concept permeating the literature on micro-politics and common to the remainder of the discussion is the notion of human interaction. Thus, the conceptual framework chosen for any study on micro-politics should be the one which best fits the task and in this case it is 'symbolic interactionism'.

[8] THE REBIRTH OF SYMBOLIC INTERACTION

Many theoretical and conceptual understandings have been discarded because of the recent work by sociologists into postmodernism which according to Tinning (1991) is an intellectual position, a form of cultural criticism, and a response to an emerging set of social, cultural, and economic conditions that characterise an age of global capitalism and individualism. Sociologists have thus, been strongly inspired by the postmodernist work of authors such as Foucault (1979), Derrida (1972) and more recently Baudrillard (1983). This shift in conceptual paradigm has resulted in a rush to join the postmodernist bandwagon. I believe in disregard of most

other sociological theory. Although Foucault refers to the constriction of power and knowledge the constructs of symbolic interactionism still best fit the micro-political and much of the micro-sociological approach to research. Indeed, Fine (1993) argues that 'symbolic interaction will serve as a label of convenience for the future; and 'serve as a label of thought'. This is principally because the central thrust of the theories developed by Mead (1934), Goffman (1959), Cooley (1962), Kuhn (1964), and Blumer (1969) have the idea of interaction between individuals. In the interaction among individuals there is the implicit assumption that participants are operative and resolute, as distinct from being unassertive and 'respondent to social norms.' Indeed, Blumer (1969: 12) notes that:

The human being is viewed as an organism that not only responds to others on the non-symbolic level but as one that makes indicators to others and interprets their indications.

Eldon Snyders (1986) earlier work on 'Athletics in Higher Education', Fine's (1986) chapter on Small Group Interaction and Hargreaves (1982) book entitled Sport and Culture have been some of the excellent work produced from the interactionist perspective. However, apart from these works there have been few sport sociologists who have delved into the symbolic interactionist perspective or indeed the micro-sociological perspective. I believe that we need to have more micro-sociological research into the Olympic organization so that we might find out the truth by 'getting inside the reality of the actor (individual) in an effort to understand reality as the actor does'. The symbolic interactionist argues that the subjective meanings that individuals attach both to their own actions and to those of others have important consequences for the researchers understanding of social action. This comment although correct is perhaps simplistic in its description of the symbolic interactionist approach to life. The analysis of Blumer (1969: 2) places symbolic interaction into a broader framework and lies within the analysis of three suppositions. These are:

1. that human beings act towards things on the basis of the meanings that things have for them.

These could include situations such as an individual encounters in everyday life.

2.that the meaning of such things is derived from, or arises that of, the social interaction that tone has with ones peers.

3.that these meanings are handled in, and modified through an interpretive process used by the person in dealing with the things which they encounter.

In order for sociologists to have a clearer understanding of the theoretical premises of symbolic interactionism, they must come to realize that the constructs are grounded within the minds of those who experience the perceived symbolic actions.

However, it was Irving Goffman, who had an interest in micro-sociology, who presented the world with the role theory which he termed the 'dramaturgical perspective'. Goffman has developed his own methodological stance but the influence of symbolic interactionism and the work of Mead (1934:34) is symbiotic to the ideas which he portrays in his book 'The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life'. In this work Goffman (1959) views theatre as a metaphor to the social world. Within the text Goffman attempts to analyze the many intricate methods which individuals utilize to 'construct images of their selves in encounters with significant others'. Within his work Goffman asks the question: What are we concerned with what humans really are? He suggests that we will never know because we are all continually acting. This 'face work' (Goffman, 1968: 5) or presentation of 'self can be construed as the 'art of impression management' and relates to other individuals' perceptions of the circumstances of the interactions which people are involved in on a daily basis. Goffman terms the often uneasy situations which occur between individuals as possessing a 'surface of agreement'. Occasionally this 'surface of agreement' collapses causing eventual breakdown of relations or interaction. Clearly there is a bridge to be built here among the ideas of symbolic interactionism, micro-politics and the Olympic organization. However, it must be based upon the acceptance that a relationship exists among the three constructs. It is therefore possible that the social structures of micro-politics and the individually constructed realities of symbolic interactionist theory will provide a complete picture of the actions of those who staff the Olympic organization.

[9] THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MICRO-POLITICS, SYMBOLIC

INTERACTIONISM AND THE OLYMPIC ORGANIZATION

The purpose of the following section of the paper is to attempt to integrate some of the focal aspects of micro-politics, symbolic interactionism and the Olympic organization.

Central to symbolic interactionist theory is that individuals are 'constructors of their own actions and meanings'. In other words individuals who work within the Olympic organization, at all levels of administration, construct meanings which inform their actions which could be micro-political. However, different objects and situations have different meanings for individuals and according to symbolic interactionist theory each person will view the objects from differing perspectives and they will attribute meanings in different ways. This could cause conflict to occur between individuals within the organization if meanings are synthesised incorrectly. Individuals are therefore in the process of creating value laden symbols. The micro-world of the symbolic interactionist revolves around the interaction of these symbols. Consequently, micro-political strategies can be viewed as constructs within the individuals political armoury and the resultant action which is taken depends upon the manner in which the individual responds or interprets the symbols of others. In this case the action taken could depend upon the power which the individual has within the Olympic organization. Through the experience of interaction and the use of language, gesture and objects the individuals learn a great number of symbols. This is reflected in the work of Goffman (1959) on the establishment of a 'surface of agreement' and Morgan's (1986) study on individuals 'self interests'. Indeed, the Olympic organization, micro-politics and symbolic interaction have much in common. For example the symbolic interactionist perspective and its relationship to the Olympic organization revolves around the concept of 'self (Mead 1934). Goffman (1959: 252) argues that the formulation of meaning is enhanced by the individual's ownership of self, and it is through micro-political action that individuals can support their personal or group self interests. It is possible under the rubric of symbolic interactionism for individuals to converse with their 'selves'. In doing so, they are capable of possessing the ability to observe actions from other individuals perspec-

tives. This reflexivity enables individuals to actively engage in politicking. This statement assumes, of course, that politics is inherent in the interactions between individuals within the Olympic organization. It also supports the notion of intentional@ of human thought in individuals who become deliberately political, in their actions, in order to achieve their own ends. In Mead's terms, when transferred to micro-politics and the Olympic organization the individuals self can be divided into two. The subject 'I', where an individual may actually initiate a political action which the individual perceives and constructs. In this instance the action might be calculating, clandestine in nature and relate to a number of micro-political constructs like power and control. Secondly, the part as other individuals might view them within the organization when they are being reflexive and able to perceive prior knowledge to support the micro-political strategies which they put into place. The individuals are thus performing a valuable social function in taking the role of the other. If this co-operative function breaks down, chaos and conflict often occur. Indeed, as individuals mature in the social setting they begin to view themselves in terms of 'generalised abstracted norms' which in the symbolic interactions literature is termed the 'generalized other'. Thus, after initially building a conception of their role in the Olympic organization individuals can gradually change this perception overtime to view wider concepts of the organization as a conceptual link between each others behaviour within the social framework, making the behaviour a product of the social interaction of the individual. In other words the individuals could if they wished, establish a micro-political objective or goal, map out a prospective strategy or line of behaviour, note and interpret the micro-political actions of others, size up their situation, and check out this or that point. In this manner there is a continuous relationship between the symbolic interactionist notions of the individuals as they put together the different pieces of the jigsaw in order that micro-political action can occur.

Within a social setting like the Olympic organization, nothing is performed in isolation. Individuals' actions are a product of sequential aspects which are formulated into one noticeable act. Over time the individuals within the Olympic organization will become socialised into understanding whether to interpret others' actions as humour, conflict orienta-

tion or 'backtalk' (Goffman, ,1959: 254). These clues give individuals an opportunity to respond in the particular manner which fits their own interpretations of the situation. Indeed, these actions could be transferred into micro-political roles which are put together by the individuals in order that they can influence the situation. As noted by Woods (1983: 4) 'the interactionist view of the relationships between the individual and society is therefore a dialectical one'. This activity within the social sphere of the Olympic organization can be manipulated by political activity. For although there is no such thing as an original action, many individuals are skilled at reacting to others in a manner which manipulates others indications of them. This form of manipulation can only be micro-political in nature. As previously noted Goffman (1959: 208) calls this 'the art of impression management'. Individuals can manipulate other individuals' opinions of them by use of impression management techniques. That is why, what you wear, what you say, and when you say it, what you do or the actions which others perceive you to be doing, are important micro-political issues which are often overlooked by individuals within organizations. Again these acts themselves with the Olympic organization can be micro-political in nature and can result in conflict occurring. As espoused by Woods (1983: 5):

1. In interaction, individuals try to manage the impressions others have of them. They put on a performance. They will try to influence the others' definitions of the situation.

2. 'Others' also, of course, project definitions of the situation. Conflict is obviated and order maintained by individuals suppressing their heartfelt needs and wants and contributing to a script which all accept. They establish a working consensus.

3. In projecting impressions, individuals take account of their knowledge of others. As interaction proceeds, and their presentations become more adjusted and refined, so they become more committed to them.

4. When events contradict presentations, breakdown of social interaction occurs, leading to embarrassment, anger, discomfort or shame.

In other words individuals within the Olympic organization may be micro-politically driven in order to gain kudos, prestige or to support their own interests. For example they could manipulate the impressions of the leaders to create a false image of

their worth. Not only can they dramatise their meanings and create a social act (Perinbanayagam, 1974: 537) they could dramatise their meanings and create a micro-political act. This manipulation of the social agenda within the Olympic organization could lead to conflict and further unrest as individuals politicise the interaction process.

[10] CLOSING THOUGHTS

The major premise for this discussion alluded to the fact that all interactions among individuals appear to be political in nature. Consequently, micro-political action is a feature of everyone's daily life and it is not unrealistic to state that micro-political action within the I.O.C. is, in fact, an inherent feature of interaction between people. As researchers into the sociology and philosophy of sport we must come to understand that we need to undertake more micro-sociological studies from a micro-political perspective.

The framework highlighted in this presentation gives us a theoretical and conceptual insight to complete the tasks which others appear to have completed in an ad hoc manner. Consequently, there appears to be a symbiotic relationship between micro-political theory and the conceptual framework of symbolic interactionism which are paradigmatically linked. Both provide us with the tools to effectively research into large organizations like the I.O.C.

References

- Bacharach, S.B. (1984). Notes on the Political Theory of Educational Institutions. **Eric document**, ED243175.
- Baldrige, V.J. (1971). **Power and Conflict in the University**. John Wiley, New York.
- Ball, S.J. (1987). **The Micro-politics of the School: Towards a Theory of School Organization**.
- Barr-Greenfield, T. (1975). 'Theory about Organizations a New Perspective and its Implications for Schools' in V.P. Houghton, G.A.R. McHugh & C. Morgan (eds.). **Management in Education**, Ward Locke, Open University Press, Reader 1, London.
- Baudrillard, J. (1983). **In the Shadow of the Silent majorities, or the End of the Social**. Baudrillard and Semiotext pub. New York.
- Blumer, H. (1969). **Symbolic Interactionism Perspective and Method**, Prentice Hall, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey.
- Boissevain, J. (1974). **Friends of Friends**. Network, Manipulations and Coalitions. Basil Blackwell, Oxford.
- Burke, K. (1969). **A Rhetoric of Motives**. University of California Press, Los Angeles, California.
- Burns, T. (1961). Micro-politics: Mechanisms of Institutional Change. **Administrative Science Quarterly**, 6,257-281.
- Cooley, C.H. (1962). **Human Nature and Social Order**. Swchoken Press. New York.
- Derrida, J. (1972). 'Structure, Sign and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences, 247-264 in **The Structuralist Controversy: The Language of Criticism and the Science of Man**. (eds.) R. Macksey and E. Donato. Baltimore: John Hopkins Press.
- Eitzen, D.S. (1986). Athletics and Higher Education: A Conflict Perspective: In R.C. Reeves and A. Miracle, (eds). **Sport and Social Theory**, Champaign, Illinois. 227-234.
- Fine, G.A. (1986). Small Groups and Sport: A Symbolic Interactionist Perspective. In R.C. Reeves and A. Miracle, (eds). **Sport and Social Theory**. Champaign, Illinois. 159-169.
- Fine, G.A. (1993). The Sad Demise, Mysterious Disappearance, and Glorious Triumph of Symbolic Interactionism. **Annual Review of Sociology**, Vol. 19, 61-87.
- Foucault, M. (1979). **Discipline and Punish**. New York: Vintage.
- Genishi, C. (1992). **Ways of Assessing Young Children and Curriculum: Stories of Early Childhood Practice** (eds) Teachers College Press, New York.

Goodson, I. (1991). 'Teachers' Lives and Educational Research' in I. Goodson & R. Walker (eds.) **Biography, Identity and Schooling: Episodes in Educational Research**, Lewes, Falmer Press, 137-49.

Goffman, E. (1968). **Asylums**. Penguin, Harmondsworth.

Goffman, E. (1959). **The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life**. Doubleday-Anchor books, New York.

Hargreaves, A. (1982). **Sport and Culture**, Falmer, Press, London.

Hindness, B. (1982). Power, Interests and the Outcomes of Struggle. **Sociology**. 16,4,489-512.

Hoyle, E. (1982). Micro-politics of Educational Organizations. **Educational Management and Administration**. 10,87-98.

Hoyle, E. (1986). **The Politics of School Management**. Hodder and Stoughton, London.

Kuhn, M.H. (1964). Major Trends in Symbolic Interactionist Theory in the Past Twenty Five Years. **The Sociological Quarterly**. Vol. 5 (winter) 4, 61-84.

Mead, G.H. (1934). **Mind, Self and Society**. The University of Chicago Press, Chicago.

Morgan, G. (1986). **Images of Organization**. Sage Publications, London.

Noblett G., Berry, B. & Dempsey, V. (1991). Political Responses to Reform: A Comparative Case Study. **Education and Urban Society**. Vol. 23, No. 4., August.

Perinbanayagam, R.S. (1974). The Definition of the Situation: An Analysis of the Ethnometho-

dological and Dramaturgical View. **The Sociological Quarterly**. 15 Autumn. 521-541.

Pfeffer, J. (1978). The Micro-politics of Organizations, in M.W. Meyer, et. al. **Environments and Organizations**. Jossey Bass Publishers, San Francisco.

Sparkes, A.C. (1988). The Micro-politics of Innovation in the Physical Education Curriculum, in J. Evans (eds) **Teachers, Teaching and Control in Physical Education**. Falmer Press, London.

Sparkes, A.C. (1990). **Curriculum Change and Physical Education: Towards a Micro-political Understanding**. Deakin University Press, Victoria.

Sparkes, A.C. (1992). **Research in Physical Education and Sport: Exploring Alternative Visions** (eds). The Falmer Press, London.

Smith, T.J. (1983). On Being Political. **Educational Management and Administration**. 11. 205-208.

Snyder, E.E. (1986). Athletics and Higher Education: A Symbolic Interaction Perspective. In, R.C. Reeves and A. Miracle (eds) **Sport and Social Theory**. Champaign, Illinois, 211-225.

Tinning, R. (1991). Teacher Education Pedagogy: Dominant Discourses and the Process of Problem Setting. **Journal of Teaching in Physical Education**. 11: 1-20.

Wagner, J. (1993). Educational Research as a Full Participant: Challenges and Opportunities for Generating New Knowledge. **International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education**. Vol. 6, No. 1, 1993.

Weber, M. (1968). **Basic Concepts in Sociology**. Citalid Press, New York.

Woods, P. (1983). **Sociology and the School**. Routledge and Kegan Paul, London.