
Introduction

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For the 2006 FIFA World Cup for men held in Germany the Australian team was comprised entirely of players who play and live outside of Australia. For example, Harry Kewell has been living in England for 10 years. Whilst all of the Australian were born and raised in Australia, several within the team identify as Australian-Croatian. Furthermore, two players on the Croatia team were born and raised in Australia. This made for an event of unusual cultural significance in the first round matches against Croatia. Yet, Australia has a Prime Minister and Deputy Party Leader who very recently have both spoken publicly against multiculturalism and its underpinning philosophy of cultural diversity (Hallinan et al., 2007). Sports organisations worldwide have had variable responses to organisational diversity. The implementation of legislation designed to enforce or accommodate access and opportunity has not necessarily translated well into the realm of sport. At the same time alternative opportunities have arisen as a result of the resistance practices of entrenched organisations and paradigms.

This special issue explores the dimensions of cultural diversity that relate to the marketing and management of sport. The research articles in this issue attend to factors and issues dealing with policy, inclusion, affirmative action legislations, identity, and equity in all aspects of sports organisations as well as related issues that have emerged within the context of cultural diversity. The exploration of cultural diversity has not been widely taken up by academic writing in journal outlets specifically targeting management and marketing. Rather, the issues and factors associated with cultural diversity have typically appeared in journals specifically associated with sociology and psychology of sport and leisure. It was the specific intent of this volume to focus upon several salient issues and factors: the politics of identity and representation in sports organisations, the theorising sport and inclusion practices, accommodation and resistance to diversity/equality, symbolic construction of sports communities, ethnocentrism and whiteness, ethnic identities and corporate managerialism, exploring alternative leadership paradigms, promoting equal opportunity within sports organisations. We have drawn together scholars from across the world who have likewise attended to topics that address cultural diversity issues and factors connected to Australia, Canada, England, France, Greece, Japan, New Zealand, Norway, Switzerland, and the USA. The issues and factors are important for academics and practitioners alike to address. But, as noted by Stuart Hall (1995) stereotypes, beliefs and ideologies of difference become seamlessly embedded into the everyday thought and routine narratives and thus prove difficult to dislodge. Hopefully, this special issue can make some contribution to reduce this oversight.

References

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