

Title

An evaluation of the domestic pre-event social representations of the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games

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Abstract

Mega-events (MEs), and in particular sport-based mega-events, provide those involved in their development and delivery with the opportunity to modify the image of the host, both domestically and internationally. Glasgow, host of the 2014 Commonwealth Games (CG), is no exception. For example, although image, in the context of MEs, is not always easy to control (e.g. Smith, 2005), issues highlighted in the *Glasgow Candidate File* (CGCS, 2006), amongst many others, focus on how the CG can be used to enhance the images of Glasgow and Scotland, how the image of the CG can be reinforced and developed by Glasgow hosting it, and how the branding strategy of the 2014 event could facilitate both of these. Thus, the main purpose of this project, informed by a critical realist perspective, and underpinned by social representation theory (Moscovici, 1961), is to evaluate the image impact of hosting the 2014 Commonwealth Games, pre- and post-event, for the city of Glasgow, with this part of the project representing the pre-event assessment. It will seek to determine, compare and present the images generated by the UK population concerning Glasgow as a city, the CG as a mega-event, and the 2014 CG as a one-off event.

Based on previous research conducted around the 2008 and 2012 Olympics (Bodet & Lacassagne, 2012; Kenyon, 2013), UK citizens (18+) will complete an online, mixed-methods questionnaire before the 2014 CG are held. Participants will be required to submit free-association responses to the objects: Glasgow, the CG and the 2014 CG. Data gleaned from this questionnaire will be used to construct the image of each of the objects, using only those responses cited by at least 15% of participants. Subsequent analysis will be aimed determining the internal structure of the generated images; that is, the strength of the connections between the terms contained therein.

The aim, at this stage of the project, is that this research will: inform those involved in the development and delivery CG as to the critical issues influencing the level of

UK participation in and engagement with the 2014 CG; and, create the basis for a longitudinal analysis.

Word count: 350

Most relevant conference theme: Sport

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Author Biographies

Dr. James Kenyon

Dr. Kenyon has been an Assistant Lecturer in Sport Management, based at the School of Sport, Health & Exercise Sciences in Loughborough University, since October 2013. In 2010, James joined the Centre for Olympic Studies & Research (COS&R) at Loughborough University to undertake a research studentship (PhD) in sport management and marketing, which he then completed in 2013. During his PhD, James was also employed part-time at Liverpool Hope University as a lecturer in sport studies (sport sociology and football studies), part-time at Loughborough University as a research assistant, and on a casual basis at TARGET Football CIC, Liverpool as a consultant. James's principal research interests are focused on issues

related to: sport development (and developing communities through sport), sport marketing, fandom and spectatorship, and various aspects of sports-based and non-sports-based events.

Selected Publications

Kenyon, J. A. & Bodet, G. S. P. (2012). North vs. South: UK's regional perceptions of the image impact of the 2012 London Olympics. In, S. Bang & M. Kätow (eds.) *Sport Between Business and Civil Society. The 20th Conference of the European Association for Sport Management*. Aalborg: University College of Northern Denmark.

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Miss Clare Mackay

Miss Mackay is a Teaching Research Assistant in Events Management at the University of Northampton. Alongside her teaching commitments, Clare is in the concluding phase of her doctoral research which seeks to analyse, through a Foucauldian lens, the discursive construction of the 2014 Commonwealth Games through social networks. Throughout her PhD, and before joining the Northampton Business School, Clare also lectured at Glasgow Caledonian University (where her PhD is based) in Events and Sustainable Regeneration and Policy, and was also employed by the university as a part-time research assistant. Clare's research includes studies of the discursive construction of London's bid for the 2012 Olympics

and the 2014 Commonwealth Games, and the development of social capital through volunteering in the context of the flag handover ceremony at the 2010 Commonwealth Games.

Selected Publications

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Dr. Guillaume Bodet

Dr. Bodet is a Senior Lecturer in Sport Management also based at the School of Sport, Health & Exercise Sciences in Loughborough University. From 2000 to 2006, he taught sport management and marketing at the Sport Sciences Faculty of Dijon, and worked within the group of Socio-Psychology & Management of Sport (SPMS) research group at the University of Burgundy, Dijon. Dr Bodet joined the School of Sport, Exercise and Health Sciences at Loughborough University in 2006 as a lecturer in Sport Marketing and Management where he teaches sport marketing, managing service quality, managing sport organisations and quantitative research skills. Guillaume's principal research interests are focused on issues related to sport marketing, sporting events' strategies and consumer behaviour.

Selected Publications

Bodet, G. & Lacassagne, M.-F. (2012). International place branding through sporting events: A British perspective of the 2008 Beijing Olympics. *European Sport Management Quarterly*, 12(4): pp. 357-374.

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