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INTRODUCTION

Events, urban spaces and mobility

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This special issue seeks to critically examine the relationship between events, urban spaces and mobility. Specifically, it seeks to explore how and why events enable and/or produce new spatial (re)configurations when staged and how these changes influence mobility, exploration, engagement and/or consumption across host environments – whether at an international, national, regional, city and/or community level. Events, irrespective of their size and composition, influence the way people move, explore, engage with and/or consume the urban environments that stage them (Giulianotti et al. 2015; Mhanna, Blake, and Jones 2017). They are often managed in private venues, yet are increasingly staged in public spaces like street, squares and parks (Smith 2016). Utilizing urban public spaces to house events, whether a beach, park or plaza, often requires temporary urban rearrangements, producing what are sometimes referred to as 'Host Event Zones' (HEZs). These are temporary designated areas where event activation activities take place (McGillivray, Duignan, and Mielke 2020). Sometimes HEZs are public and open to all, other times they are private and closed, requiring a ticket to access and the rights of sponsors and other commercial actors being protected by exceptional planning regulations. Beyond the demarcated boundaries of HEZs, events also extend their territorial presence and reach in a number of creative ways, including the emergence of 'fringe spaces'. For example, food festivals have sought to engage peripherally located restaurants as a way to move visitors out of central urban areas (Duignan et al. 2017). In contrast, mega sport event organizers create strategically located 'live sites' and 'fan parks' to house non-sporting cultural and commercial activity, deploying tactics to circulate visitors to and contain them within global spaces of consumption (Armstrong, Giulianotti, and Hobbs 2017).

Relatedly, a nascent body of critical research has illustrated how new spatial conditions have the power to include *and* exclude particular social groups across the event's lifecycle (Walters and Jepson 2019; Duignan, Pappalepore, and Everett 2019). Hassanli, Walters, and Friedmann (2020) found that multicultural festivals allow ethnic minority migrants and refugees the opportunity to express their identity and engage in cultural practices in a safe space. Festivals and events organized at the community level have been shown to generate a shared sense of belonging and identity (Gibson and Connell 2015). The very act of drawing together diverse interests within a community to plan

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and organize place-based community events can produce short-lived surges of conviviality which can loosen social and spatial relations (Stevenson 2021), disrupting conventional ways of being in neighbourhoods, if only temporarily. Richards (2017) has also suggested that smaller, iterative events can enhance a local area, in contrast to the more detached larger pulsar events. Space is an important dimension in community festivals too as communities and neighbourhoods are complex territories with their residents distributed in different wards or areas and outdoor public spaces playing an important role in ownership of place. As Misener and Mason (2006) suggest, events play an important role in marking 'who makes claims to civic space' (394). In this sense, events and the urban spaces they utilize can be the site of contestation and negotiation over place, identity and access. For example, when civic spaces are enclosed for extended periods of time to stage concerts, motor-races, Christmas markets or related festivities, disaffected residents often resist and campaign groups pressure authorities to minimize local disruption (McGillivray, Guillard, and Reid 2020; Smith 2021).

In this Special Issue, we include contributions from motorsport to the Olympic Games, and recurring festivals and events which are inseparable from the places that stage them, across a range of contexts from a Heavy Metal Festival in Germany to motor sport racing in Australia. In total, we include eight papers.

Jamieson and Todd argue that festivals require a greater representation of deaf and disabled communities to advance inclusivity and diversity agendas and make public space accessible. They specifically look at the context of Edinburgh (UK), a city that proclaims to be the world's leading 'Festival City'. Facilitating access and overcoming barriers to leisure consumption connects to the *Annear, Shimitzu, Kidokoro and McLaughlan* article too; they argue that hosting large-scale sporting events like the Olympic Games provides a unique opportunity to re-imagine public space to promote 'active leisure'. They carried out walking audits of key Olympic sites to examine usage by utilizing a framework called the Physical Activity Resource Assessment (PARA). The authors found six key challenges: limited resource accessibility, lack of amenities, health, nuisance, vegetation overgrowth, heat effects and disaster, identified as barriers to active leisure.

Drawing on a series of large inner-city events in Brisbane, *Dorreboom and Barry* studied how barriers erected prevented access to the city. They suggest that opening up access to public space and encouraging inclusive event participation is a key policy and practitioner challenge that owners and organizers must recognize and overcome if they are to promote inclusive experiences. The authors argue that security imperatives legitimize a reconfiguration of space that interrupts and redirects pedestrian mobility, and although they recognize the importance of making events safe and secure, they argue this condition can impact the event's festive atmosphere. *Duignan, Smith, Pappalepore and Ivanescu's* paper takes a similar focus but in the context of the Rio 2016 Olympics. The relationship between security and the reconfiguration of urban space is particularly striking in an Olympic city as so much urban infrastructure from transport systems to entire tourist attractions is transformed. The authors offer two main analytical points. The first is that existing tourist bubbles (i.e. Copacabana beach) are overlaid with temporary event regulations, producing a 'double bubble' effect – significantly influencing how tourists behave and experience the city. Second, staying with the bubbles theme, they argue that the city's transportation network acts as a 'bubble wrapping' – encasing tourists in

the city and preventing them from alighting across parts of the city. Therefore, precluding interaction with some parts of the city.

Johnson, Everingham and Everingham's article shifts the focus from a cultural event and softer metaphors for how events take over public space to what they refer as the 'juggernaut effect' produced by the staging of 'high-octane' motor racing events in the city. They argue that these spatial processes are fuelled by power and political plays, from boosterism to brinkmanship – orchestrated by local elite stakeholders through a coalition between public and private partnerships to squash community resistance to the changes impacting their daily lives. *Jordan's* work also critiques governance approaches. Her work specifically examines how those institutions governing festivals can produce social spaces and relations that alienate local cultural communities and potentially limit social mobility. Creating positive relationships between events and hosting communities is a key theme that underlies a number of the articles, yet there is clearly a way to go – and a series of recommendations to be considered – to harmonize this relationship.

The final two articles focus on the social and economic development role events play for communities and participants. *Bohn and Bernardi* examine the heavy metal festival Wacken Open Air (Germany). They explore how host event zones are developed and the way they balance (or not) the dynamics between temporality, spectacle and ritual as a commercial site and how this intersects with existing inhabitants and everyday living. Then, to close, we have *Nava, Carr, Miller, and Coetzee's* study looking at how hosting the Rugby World Cup in 2011 served to redefine the way in which New Zealand's authorities approached camping. They note how events act as exceptional vehicles to craft new special legislation, in this case to guarantee the right to practice 'freedom camping'. They conclude that counter to initial objectives these regulations intensified mobility restrictions.

Our special issue usefully illustrates how events are powerful drivers for social, economic and environmental change, often having longer-term consequences for host communities, cities and countries after the event draws to a close. This is, however, a doubled-edged sword. Events can be used as a force for good and serve as a way to be highly inclusive to *some* stakeholder interests, but often at the expense of others. Staging events does not have to be a zero-sum game and numerous authors argue that more careful planning, specifically taking into account the ways events impact local people and livelihoods, to advance mobilities and inclusionary agendas as opposed to immobilize and exclude those who may not have the social or economic capital to participate.

Disclosure statement

Notes on contributors

David McGillivray holds a Chair in Event and Digital Cultures and his research focuses on two main areas of activity. The first area of interest is the contemporary significance of events and festivals (sporting and cultural) as markers of identity and mechanisms for the achievements of wider economic, social and cultural externalities. The second area is the affordances of digital and social media in enabling (and constraining) participation in civic life, including in relation to major sport and cultural events. He is currently Principal Investigator on two major European research projects,

FESTSPACE and Event Rights. The former focuses on the role of festivals and events in the generation of inclusive public space in Europe. The latter is concerned with the relationship between mega sport events and human rights.

Michael B. Duignan studies the social and economic impact of planning and staging major events at the community, regional, national and international level, with a specific focus on human and community rights. He is Head of Department and Reader in Events at the School of Hospitality and Tourism Management, University of Surrey, and Director of the 'Observatory for Human Rights and Major Events' (HaRM) - the UK's official Olympic Studies Centre endorsed by the International Olympic Committee. As of November 2021, he became the Editor-in-Chief of the leading international journal in the study of events and festivals: Event Management.

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