

**BP3 / APPARATUS (STATE + MEDIA)**

Games Monitor [ Briefing paper on London 2012 Olympic Games ]

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– replacing previous background papers and extensively revised

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**Dedicated to the memory of Katy Andrews 1958–2015**

Sharpened by the moon's cold sheen / the snow glare dazzles the windows, / crawls sheet-white in across  
silent floors. / When the clock strikes it sounds / as if it were beyond the bounds of life.

(From *Chickweed Wintergreen* by Harry Martinson [Tartet: Bloodaxe Books, 2010])

## ACRONYMS

*Common to all background papers.*

ABAC	Association of British Athletics Clubs
ACPO	Association of Chief Police Officers
AI	Amnesty International
AOTU	Art on the Underground
ASA	Amateur Swimming Association
ASBO	Anti-social Behaviour Order
ATCSA	Anti-terrorism, Crime and Security Act 2001
BCCLA	British Columbia Civil Liberties Association
BOA	British Olympic Association
BOCOG	Beijing Organising Committee for the Olympic and Paralympic Games
BTCV	British Trust for Conservation Volunteers
C6/C7	Sixth century/seventh century etc
CABE	Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment
CARP	Carpenters Against Regeneration Plans
CBC	Canadian Broadcasting Corporation
CCHP	Combined cooling heat and power
CCTV	Closed-circuit television
CLM	Consortium managing London 2012 construction: CH2M Hill (environmental evaluation), Laing O'Rourke (construction), Mace (project management)
CLO	Community legal observer
COHRE	Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions
CPET	UK Central Point of Expertise on Timber
CPO	Compulsory Purchase Order
CSIS	Canadian Security Intelligence Service
CSJ	Centre for Social Justice
CTRL	Channel Tunnel Rail Link
DCLG	Department for Communities and Local Government
DCMS	Department for Culture, Media and Sport
DDOS	Distributed denial of service
DLR	Docklands Light Railway
DPU	Development Planning Unit (UCL)
ECJ	European Court of Justice
EDAW	Consultancy, now part of AECOM, responsible for Olympic masterplanning
EIC	Environment Industries Commission
ELL	East London Line
EU	European Union
FA	Football Association
FIFA	Fédération Internationale de Football Association
FOI	Freedom of information
GMB	General Municipal Boilermakers and Allied Trade Union
GLA	Greater London Authority
JPAT	Joint Planning Authorities Team
HCA	Homes and Communities Agency
HLF	Heritage Lottery Fund
HMUG	Hackney Marsh User Group
IOC	International Olympic Committee
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IT	Information technology
IWW	International Workers of the World
LBH	London Borough of Hackney
LBN	London Borough of Newham

LBTH	London Borough of Tower Hamlets
LBWF	London Borough of Waltham Forest
LCR	London and Continental Railways
LDA	London Development Agency (1999–2012)
LGTU	London Gypsy and Traveller Unit
LED	Light-emitting diode
LLDC	London Legacy Development Corporation (2012–)
LLV	Lower Lea Valley
LLW	London 'living wage'
LOAR	London Olympic Association Right, dates from London Olympic Games and Paralympic Games Act 2006
LOCOG	London Organising Committee for the Olympic and Paralympic Games (2005–2014)
LRO	Legislative Reform Order
LRRA	Legislative and Regulatory Reform Act
LTGDC	London Thames Gateway Development Corporation
LVRPA	Lee Valley Regional Park Authority
MDC	Mayoral development corporation
MGS	Manor Gardening Society
MLBG	Marshgate Lane Business Group
NAPO	Formerly the National Association of Probation Officers
NEF	New Economics Foundation
NLL	North London Line
NLLDC	New Lammas Lands Defence Committee
NMP	Newham Monitoring Project
NOGOIE	No to Greenwich Olympic Equestrian Events
NRF	Neighbourhood Renewal Fund
NRMM	Non-road mobile machinery
NSNO	No Second Night Out (homelessness initiative)
ODA	Olympic Delivery Authority (2006–2014)
ODPM	Office of the Deputy Prime Minister
OLD	Olympic Legacy Directorate, part of the LDA
OPLC	Olympic Park Legacy Company (2009–2012)
ORN	Olympic Route Network
PwC	PricewaterhouseCoopers
RSL	Registered social landlord
SMEs	Small and medium-sized enterprises
SOCOGE	Sydney Organising Committee for the Olympic and Paralympic Games
TFL	Transport for London
TMA	Team Member Agreement
TMO	Tenant management organisation
TUC	Trades Union Council
UAV	Unmanned aerial vehicles
UCATT	Union of Construction Allied Trades and Technicians
UCL	University College London
UEL	University of East London
UPPs	Pacifying police units (Brazil)
US	United States
VANOC	Vancouver Organizing Committee for the Olympic and Paralympic Games
WFSGI	World Federation of the Sporting Goods Industry

# 1. MILITARISATION, POLICING AND IMPLICATIONS FOR CIVIL LIBERTIES

## 1.1 Costs of repression

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**Security comes in many forms, but in the Olympic context one cannot separate security from surveillance. A raft of surveillance measures aim to make people, places, and processes visible in new ways using diverse tactics and technologies that include new CCTV cameras, satellite monitoring, facial recognition devices, chemical detection, databases, and forms of personal credentials. Outside of airports and prisons, it is difficult to think of comparable situations where citizens are monitored to the extent they are at the Olympics. Such surveillance ‘surges’ are important because of the wider surveillance legacies of the Games. Many examples can be found of intensive surveillance tools remaining in place after the Games or of them being subsequently reused for markedly different purposes. Past experience suggests that in the post 9/11 period these legacies are no longer accidental.**

Philip Boyle and Kevin D Haggerty (2009). ‘Olympic-size questions about surveillance and privacy’, Straight.com, December 1

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Security for London 2012 was overseen by a cabinet-level Olympic security committee chaired by the home secretary and comprising senior officers from UK security forces. The London Organising Committee for the Olympic and Paralympic Games (LOCOG) had a security directorate of its own. Original estimates put the London 2012 security bill at £838 million. The House of Commons Public Accounts Select Committee had been told in 2007 that this £838 million would be supplemented by a further £600 million, and strangely, it was this additional sum that stuck in the media as the total figure for security alone (Slavin 2007/1). In September 2008, Independent on Sunday revealed that the London 2012 security bill would hit a figure almost twice the initial amount – £1.5 billion – in a leak rather than an official announcement, triple the original estimate, and pushing the overall Olympic budget through the £10 billion mark. Later, in December 2010, Theresa May, the new conservative home secretary, floated an idea to the Home Affairs Select Committee to reduce the £600 million by £125 million (Dowding 2010), or, alternatively, for Daily Telegraph readers, to increase it by another £280 million (Fitzgerald 2010) (Gibson [2011] suggests a figure of £282 million here). Finally, on December 15, 2010, security minister Baroness Neville-Jones conceded to parliament that much of the £1.131 billion budgeted for UK counter terrorism in the two years around the event (2011/12 and 2012/13) would be devoted to policing London 2012, indicating in her speech that ‘the end cost, in ... event of a major security scare, [might] very well top £2 billion’ (Daily Telegraph, cited by Cheyne 2010/1).

As early as 2005, consultant Mark Bostok of Arup, stated in a cost-benefit analysis that initial security costs had not been properly estimated. Security for Athens 2004 was proposed at just over £71 million; the city’s final security expenditure was just under £1.06 billion (Cohn 2005). Vancouver’s budget ballooned from C\$175 million to C\$900 million (Mickleburgh 2009).

Security minister Alan West, speaking to Royal United Services Institute think tank in 2009, suggested London would face one of the most significant security threats since 1939–1945, with a threat level of ‘severe’, second highest rating on the government’s five-point scale (Gardham 2009). This fluctuated: by the end of 2011, the ‘threat’ had been downgraded to level 3 (‘substantial’) (Hopkins and Norton-Taylor 2011), and was still regarded as such in March 2012 (Daily Telegraph 2012). Targets considered vulnerable included shopping centres, pubs and public transport (Press.tv 2011) such as the high-speed Javelin shuttle, and open air jollities in parks around the country (Evening Standard 2010/1, 2012/1). Other risks identified included theft from museums and art galleries (Alberge 2010), the stretch of the Lee Navigation Canal as it nears the Stratford site (Cheyne 2010/2), roadside bombs (Cheyne 2010/3) and cyber attacks on the ticketing system (Arthur 2012). In April 2012, the Guardian (Booth and Hopkins 2012/1) noted an eight-day security ‘rehearsal’ starting on May 2.

## 1.2 Personnel and infrastructure

– *Military personnel and weaponry*

In August 2010, the Press Association indicated squads of marksmen preparing for dangers such as armed siege, sniper shooting and hostage taking, specifically mentioning events in Mumbai in 2008 [Cheyne 2010/4]. These units, detailed as Scotland Yard’s ‘elite’ CO19 wing were to be armed with pistols, carbines and night vision goggles. CO19 officers shot dead Brazilian electrician, Jean Charles de Menezes, on the London tube in 2005 (ibid).

From 2011, Special Air Service (SAS) involvement began to be touted, with deployment of more serious military infrastructure. Financial Times (Parker and Blitz 2011) noted the SAS examining possibility of terrorist attacks, and predicted deployment of up to 12,000 MOD personnel, including between 4,000–5,000 specialists providing bomb disposal, air defence, and maritime capability. Intriguingly, the paper reported ‘several Whitehall figures’ had remarked on the army, navy and air force ... providing thousands of security guards to protect venues in the capital and other parts of the UK’; Hopkins and Norton-Taylor (ibid) gave a reduced estimate of 3,000 military personnel (with another 2,000 in reserve) and Reuters (2011) expanded this a month later to 7,500. By the event, numbers of MOD personnel had risen to 13,500 (Norton-Taylor 2012), with 3,500 more drafted in for the Olympic event to cover for shortfalls in private security (Castle 2012 – see G4S debacle under ‘private security’ below).

The Royal Navy planned to deploy its new £1 billion Daring class Type 45 Destroyer, fitted with laser-guided missile systems (reputedly able to shoot down targets the size of a cricket ball) (Wells 2010). RAF confirmed as early as 2007 that it would deploy armed Reaper unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs). ‘The Reaper, which is the latest version of the General Atomics Predator hunter-killer UAV, can carry an array of laser-guided bombs and missiles, including the deadly Hellfire air-to-ground weapon which has been used against Taliban forces in Afghanistan’ (Slavin 2007/2). One MOD decision to scrap the new Nimrod MRA4 surveillance aircraft prompted fears that this might leave a gap in Olympic security. The nine planes had been due to play a major role in counter terrorism from 2012 but were threatened by defence cuts (BBC News 2011/1). By the event, General Sir Nick Parker (coordinator of armed forces during the Games) was touting military snipers in four Lynx helicopters based on HMS Ocean anchored off Greenwich and three Puma helicopters at a territorial army HQ in Ilford (Essex) ‘to shoot pilots of low-flying aircraft’ (Booth and Hopkins ibid). Daily Mail (Castle ibid) enthused about RAF Typhoon jets stationed ‘ready’ at RAF Northolt. Rapier towed missile systems with a range of 7.5 miles were sited on Blackheath Common and in Oxleas Wood (both in south-east London), by William Girling reservoir (in Enfield, north London), and at Netherhouse Farm on Barn Hill in Epping Forest (Norton-Taylor ibid).

#### *Missiles sited on residential buildings*

At the end of April 2012, news broke of the siting of Starstreak high-velocity missile systems (range 3.5 miles) on the Lexington Building in private ‘gated community’ Bow Quarter (the former Bryant and May match factory) and on top of 17-storey housing association block Fred Wigg Tower in Leytonstone (Booth and Hopkins ibid). Residents of both estates said they had not been consulted prior to the decision. Brian Whelan, living in Bow Quarter, told Reuters (Castle ibid) that residents had been informed by a leaflet through the door. Flash Bristow, chair of Ferndale Area Residents Association, was worried that Fred Wigg Tower would become a terrorist target, and said she was ‘shocked’ by the siting of missiles in a dense residential area, noting three schools located nearby (Booth and Hopkins ibid). Residents on both estates sought judicial review, but failed to persuade judges. Regarding siting of missiles on Fred Wigg Tower, Justice Haddon-Cave said that in his judgment liaison by the MOD had been ‘immaculate’. Furthermore, that MOD had no duty to consult, and residents had been ‘under a misapprehension’ on the nature of equipment and risks involved (Norton-Taylor 2012). General Sir Nick Parker suggested that the defence secretary was within his powers to order the siting due to an agreement with Waltham Forest council (ibid). Speaking after the judgment, David Enright, solicitor for Fred Wigg Tower residents, noted that parliament had not been consulted and suggested the implication of the judgment was that ‘MOD now [had] power to militarise the private homes of any person even when there was no war on, or state of emergency declared ... exercising powers under the royal prerogative.’ Labour MP for Leyton and Wanstead, John Cryer, tabled an early day motion condemning the siting and asked MPs to support the building of a temporary tower (Bond and Drury 2012). At the judicial review, Enright’s colleague, Martin Howe, added that scaffolders had contacted the company and said they could erect a gantry to replace the tower block as missile location within two days (Norton-Taylor ibid).

#### *– Policing and emergency services*

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#### **The Olympics has its uses. Now the Metropolitan Police hope the 2012 Olympics will protect them from the cuts ... Get ready for more Olympic security, terror, protest scare stories?**

Julian Cheyne (2010/5). ‘Olympics to save police from cuts?’, Games Monitor blog, September 22

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Speaking at the Police Federation’s 2008 conference in Bournemouth, vice chair Alan Gordon asserted that London 2012 security demands would leave police forces struggling to cope with everyday crime. Some 15,000 police officers, about 10 per cent of the police workforce in England and Wales, were expected to be involved in the operation (Oldbillplod 2008). Other reports (BBC News 2008) put the number of police required at 5,000, and by 2011, 12,000 police officers were to be involved in security in and around London during the Games, including 2,000 from forces outside London (Daily Telegraph 2011). The Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) was more alarmist. In 2008, Chief Constable Meredydd Hughes, ACPO’s lead on the Games, advised parliament that 2.5 million security personnel (officers plus private security) would be required (UK Parliament 2008: 12). By 2012, the Guardian reported that 51 police forces from across the UK were involved in Olympic policing and stated a final figure of 12,500 personnel (Norton-Taylor ibid).

Police bosses hedged about possible militarisation of the force, itself a continuing concern in the UK. Scotland Yard’s assistant commissioner Chris Allison, who took over control of security at London 2012 in spring 2009, had told BBC Radio 5 Live in November that year that some police would be armed (but that these would be a minority). Pressed by presenter Brian Alexander (2009) on whether there would be ‘armed officers on every corner’, Allison replied cautiously that ‘there [would] be an element of that’. By 2011, US officials were so dissatisfied with security arrangements that they were intent on bringing 1,000 agents (some armed), including 500 FBI officers, to protect US contestants and diplomats (Hopkins and Norton-Taylor ibid). One ‘well-placed



Whitehall source' told the Guardian that the entire Olympic security operation was prepared 'with the US in mind'. Evening Standard (2012/1) reported that armed police might be deployed on the underground network before the Games started. Senior police officers were holding talks with government about creating a new firearms unit to protect the tube and railway network as part of a review of counter-terrorism measures. Armed police were also scheduled to protect training venues around the country before the event, plus hotels during Games time (Scotland on Sunday 2011). Reports from 2007 raised the prospect of a 'nerve centre' built for London 2012, combining police, fire, ambulance and intelligence services (Slavin 2007/3). This was constructed later on Wanstead Flats (see BP1 §1.2).

Despite government priority and projected crowd numbers, police and emergency services did not escape cutbacks. In fact, police chiefs were told in 2010 (Boxell 2010) they would have to cope with steep cuts to their budgets in 2012 itself. Theresa May MP (then in opposition) thought cuts could be frontloaded, with a six per cent reduction in 2011/12 and an eight per cent cut in 2012/13 (plus another two years with reductions of four per cent). Sir Paul Stephenson, Metropolitan Police commissioner, warned in October 2010 that his force might struggle if cutbacks were implemented alongside the Olympic event (ibid), and Scotland Yard feared that recruitment of 10,000 special constables for the Olympics was unattainable. Sights were set at hiring 6,667 officers for March 2012. By the end of November, Stephenson agreed to draw £1.4 million from Metropolitan Police financial reserves to pay for the specials' recruitment (Gardham ibid). Emergency and health services were also hit by cuts. Reuters (2010) reported that the London Assembly (democratic body with oversight of the Greater London Authority [GLA]) was worried: '[F]unding for all of London's emergency and health services [remained a] key unknown ... impact[ing] on ... preparedness for the Games and ability to provide business-as-usual services'. London Fire Brigade told the London Assembly Health and Public Services Committee it feared a £900,000 shortfall during the Games, and the capital's ambulance service said it would need 300 extra staff (ibid). The Health Protection Agency, slated for abolition, warned that this upheaval could pose 'extreme risks' during the Games, compromising emergency response times (Meikle and Gibson 2011).

- A controversial bill to allow police to raid the athletes' village was proposed by Lord Moynihan, chair of the British Olympic Association (BOA) (Mackay 2010). The bill would bolster police search powers and give them the authority to seek out performance-enhancing drugs as well as illegal substances. Any British athlete falling foul of the bill, if it became law, would be banned for life from competing at the Olympics. The bill's progress was halted by the 2010 UK general election, but Moynihan, a former Olympic rower and Tory peer, hoped to reintroduce it in the next parliament. He also called for international cooperation on intelligence gathering to be made a priority (Peev 2010). Athletes' representatives warned that random drug searches in the village at London 2012 would be 'utterly disastrous' (BBC News 2010). Updating this paper in 2015, we could find no online reference to the bill finding its way into force of law.
- Scotland Yard was accused of endangering sex workers after it emerged that officers were targeting brothels in the five Olympic boroughs as part of a coordinated clean-up operation ahead of London 2012 (Doward 2011). Figures released to parliament by the Home Office show that SCD9 (the Yard's human exploitation and organised crime command) carried out 80 brothel raids between January to August 2010 in the five boroughs. There were a further 20 raids in Westminster and 13 in Camden, the two boroughs expected to play host to the majority of tourists arriving for the Games. In contrast, in the remaining 25 London boroughs, there were just 29 raids over the same period. Harry Fletcher of the probation union NAPO told the Guardian: 'The strategy will drive the trade underground and prohibition merely distorts the laws of supply and demand. As a consequence, the trade will be more dangerous for women. Policy initiatives should address real problems, such as housing, health and safety, and not be based on flawed ideology which distorts the market and endangers the women'. This was sentiment echoed by the English Collective of Prostitutes: 'Research shows no increase in trafficking of women during international sporting events' a spokesperson said. 'Figures on the numbers of women trafficked in to the UK have been exposed as false, yet they are still used as an excuse to hound sex workers. Prohibition has never done anything but drive sex workers underground and into more danger. Is the government prepared for further tragedies like Ipswich and Bradford?'

#### *– Private security*

Police were not responsible for security on the Olympic park site. In the run-up to the event, numbers of private security personnel were consistently underestimated, something underlined by David Evans, project director of the British Security Industry Association, to Hopkins and Norton-Taylor (ibid) writing in the Guardian. The paper floated a figure of 21,000 security guards needed across the UK; Reuters (2010) put the figure at 23,700; Daily Telegraph (2011) at 15,000. The main contract was awarded to G4S to find and train an initial 10,000 guards under the Bridging the Gap scheme (G4S 2011) (Maidment and Holton [2012] put this contracted number at 13,700). Whitehall conceded a need for 20,000 more private security guards after the contract had been awarded (Gibson 2011). Blogger Rhythmist (September 5, 2010 – now deleted) worried that private security contractors 'expelled from Afghanistan' by the government-under-occupation would be engaged at the Games, and that London 2012 would be used as a commercial opportunity to broaden the domestic security market. Sponsors such as Coca-Cola were expected to hire their own private security personnel, 'adding complexity to the policing operation' (Hopkins and Norton-Taylor ibid).

G4S blew its £284 million Olympic contract (Booth and Hopkins 2012/2) with a fine of £88 million (Croucher 2014), and CEO Nick Buckles was dragged before a parliamentary committee to apologise (Maidment and Holton ibid). The news wiped US\$1.1 billion (£703.59 million) off the firm's listed stock market value (ibid). County police forces attempting to privatise services rapidly withdrew from negotiations with the firm (Worthington 2012). The

Guardian (Booth and Hopkins *ibid*) reported that the firm had managed to recruit and train a mere 4,000 guards, although it claimed to have 9,000 more 'in the pipeline'. Police in Coventry were covering for G4S absentees before the arrival of military personnel at the Ricoh Arena hosting the football tournament. The paper detailed aspirant guards lacking schedules, uniforms and training on x-ray machines, or being posted to distant locations. Some had been sent rotas intended for other employees, or were offered shifts after failing G4S vetting. G4S stated that it had received 100,000 applications for 10,000 Olympic vacancies (Worthington *ibid*). One ex-police recruit described the selection process as 'an utter farce' (Booth and Hopkins *ibid*). He noted applicants being processed unable to provide referees or fill in forms. Another experienced security worker told of G4S training sessions with as many as 200 attendees but only two instructors. One student recruit told the reporters that he had already spent £650 on travel and hotel costs to attend training sessions but had not received accreditation.

G4S has been described (Worthington *ibid*) as the biggest employer on the London Stock Exchange with more than 650,000 staff across the world. The firm has been mired in a series of brutal human rights scandals in the UK and abroad (Croucher *ibid*), including the death of Jimmy Mubenga, an Angolan man sentenced by UK courts to deportation and killed *en route* by G4S operatives employing 'excessive restraint'. In 2013, the firm was banned from bidding for future UK government contracts after fraudulently charging for electronic tagging of offenders, and in South Africa, the BBC received video reports of detainees being electrocuted in a G4S prison alongside accounts of the forced injection of prisoners with anti-psychotic medication. G4S operatives were also charged with using excessive and degrading force against a disabled and pregnant woman being removed from a deportation facility near Gatwick airport. In Papua New Guinea, a 23-year-old Iranian refugee, Reza Barati, was killed in a riot at a G4S-run detention centre funded by the Australian government.

– *CCTV, database and modelling systems*

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**Head of the Metropolitan Police's dedicated Olympic team (CO12), Commander Mick Johnson, will be able to call on the Computer-Aided Modelling Bureau (CAMB). They use three-dimensional computer models of crime scenes in London[,] ... and their work is also used to plan major events and support police raids ... CAMB [is] working to acquire computer-generated 3D models of all Olympic venues. 'Our first task has been to contact architects, planners, builders, the venues – everyone involved – to get hold of as many plans and as much information about the locations and structures as we can,' explains Tony Martin ... 'We then need to coordinate this technical and structural information with policing and security plans ... liaising with ... other agencies, and collecting information from other emergency services.' Images and models ... will allow anyone involved with the operation to drag up details and ... images to scale of any area – that's any tier of a stadium, any gangway, any entrance – at the Olympic sites. '[These] plans will be used for security purposes, to coordinate resources and to see which officers are closest to an emergency, should one occur,' Tony adds.**

From a post by Martin Slavin (2007/3). 'The multinational security games', Games Monitor, January 31

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Before 2012, London had a surveillance network of 500,000 closed-circuit television (CCTV) cameras, and it was anticipated that this network would be integrated by the event, enabling police to follow individuals as they moved through the city (Wells *ibid*). Threat assessment and behavioural analysis software, which relies on coordinated CCTV footage, was being considered (*ibid*). The security industry was optimistic that London 2012 would be good for business. A report by MBD, on UK CCTV market development, predicted that by 2012 value of the market would have increased by 10 per cent, with Games security leading growth. Equipment sales were anticipated to reach over £450 million between 2007 and 2012. Other equipment with strong growth potential included remote monitoring services, rapid deployment cameras and alarm-activated systems (Slavin 2007/4). Security officials were also considering the deployment of 'geo fences', technology that can pinpoint and track the location of mobile phones. Policing magazine (Williams 2009) reported that civil servants had held meetings with US mobile location firm True Position. Geo fences can alert security staff when an unauthorised mobile phone enters a protected site and track it, typically with an accuracy of 30–50m. Security precautions for the Stratford construction site also included construction of a 17.5km, 5,000 volt electric fence, topped with 900 daylight and night vision surveillance cameras spaced at 50m intervals (Wells *ibid*).

Metropolitan Police proposed a central, biometric, Olympic database (Homeland Security Newswire 2012). Games Monitor (Slavin 2007/3) reported a desire by assistant commissioner Tarique Ghaffur, an early head of the Olympic Security Directorate, for DNA testing of workers and volunteers. Other security measures touted by Mike Wells (*ibid*) include more widespread facial and iris recognition, fingerprint and hand recognition technology, guards with attack and search dogs, plus machines capable of 'seeing through' clothing. Slavin (*ibid*) also noted use of computer modelling to enhance police and emergency service response times.

– *Cyber security*

Gerry Pennell of London 2012 suggested that it was 'inevitable' that Olympic information technology (IT) systems would come under cyber attack (Arthur *ibid*). 'We will get cyber attacks, for sure. Previous Games have always been attacked, so we will be attacked. We are working with partners and government to make sure we have the right defences,' he told the Guardian (*ibid*). ATOS Origin, provider of online security, assigned 450 staff to protect systems from hacking. There were particular concerns over hacktivist network Anonymous tampering with medals charts, and of identity theft and malware. The Guardian (Arthur *ibid*) reported that ATOS 'already had practice runs against ... huge [distributed] "denial of service" [DDOS] attack[s], in which thousands of virus-infected [personal computers] [were] instructed remotely to try to connect to the site and tie up its resources.' ATOS Origin Iberia CEO, Patrick Adiba, cited 400 online incidents against systems at Beijing 2008. However,

Mikko Hypponen of cyber security firm F-Secure dismissed the threat: 'In reality we have seen very few cases ... [but] nobody is going to question an investment in security', he said. Hypponen noted only one incident, at Salt Lake City 2002 Winter Olympics, where US-based websites suffered DDOS attacks after US athlete Apolo Ohno was awarded the 1,500m speed-skating race after a South Korean competitor was disqualified. In 2004, Greek cyber security officials 'cut off the internet from [the Athens 2004] network over fears that viruses might invade their system' (ibid).

### 1.3 Rule 53 and ATCSA 2001

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**'Security' measures for the 2012 Olympics will intensify attacks on our democratic rights. These attacks include not only 'stop-and-search' as political harassment, but also a policy of 'shoot-to-kill'. After the public execution of Charles de Menezes, for example, [former London] mayor Ken Livingstone commented that the police had acted correctly. Although he opposes British state terrorism in Iraq, unfortunately he accepts it here in London. Now we are all 'terror suspects', liable to be harassed, arrested or even murdered – especially anyone with a dark skin.**

Les Levidow (2005). 'Olympic policing: a threat to democratic rights', statement for the No London 2012 press conference, February 14

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Counter-terrorist policing has worked to undermine emigré solidarity networks (Peirce 2003) in east London, and has been written into regeneration policy statements (such as the Hackney Safer Communities Partnership 2004) at a local level. UK has acted as global vanguard of the 'war on terror' since 2001. Anti-terror legislation systematically undermines human rights and civil liberties, effecting a 'pseudo state of emergency' and denying United Nations and European Union (EU) charter guarantees (CAMPACC 2003). It has been used to target emigré and Muslim individuals as well as political activists. No London 2012 and Games Monitor feared that the Anti-terrorism, Crime and Security Act 2001 (ATCSA) would be used widely to persecute and criminalise dissent, attacking rights of free expression and association. However, in the event, more politicised aspects of state repression seemed muted. As with other Olympic Games, political demonstrations were banned on the Olympic site and in surrounding areas under International Olympic Committee (IOC) Rule 53.

Games Monitor also anticipated intensification of more generic criminalisation around the Olympic event. Police in the Olympic boroughs have a continuing history of racist assault, including arbitrary arrest, house raids, stop and search, planting of drugs, deaths in custody, and shooting of unarmed suspects. Between the July 7 bombings in London (directly after the bid result was announced) and Vikram Dodd's report in the Guardian on December 24, 2005, there had been a 12-fold increase in the number of UK Asians subjected to stop-and-search powers. Searches had already tripled since the passing of ATCSA in 2001. The Guardian also reported disproportionate male DNA profiling – with ethnicised criteria – on the police national database: 37 per cent of Black men, 13 per cent Asian, compared to nine per cent 'white' (Randerson 2006).

In 2011, following a report into the arrest of six street cleaners during a visit by the Pope, police were warned specifically not to misuse counter-terrorism powers during the Olympic period (Evening Standard 2012/2). David Anderson QC, independent reviewer of counter-terror legislation, warned that: 'Rumours and reports of terrorist activity around particular events are likely to recur and indeed increase, as we approach the Olympic Games, a target for terrorism in the past ... Section 41 of the Terrorism Act 2000 does not require any specific terrorist offence to be suspected. Its use will provide a tempting riposte to such rumours and reports, particularly when a feared attack is imminent. Such exceptional powers however, require exceptional vigilance in their exercise. It is not lawful to use power purely out of caution.'

- Canadian professor, Chris Shaw, author of the book *Five Ring Circus: Myths and Realities of the Olympic Games*, announced at Play the Game conference 2009 in Coventry that he had been held by British authorities on flying in and questioned for an hour about the purpose of his visit. The conference passed a resolution in support of freedom of expression and security of the person at the Vancouver 2010 Winter Games (Slavin 2009/1).
- Guards at the Olympic site took exception to amateur photographers, and sought to prevent them taking pictures with threats of police involvement, despite a lack of formal Olympic Delivery Authority (ODA) prohibitions (Cheesman 2007). One photographer was threatened with the Official Secrets Act when he attempted to photograph a joint police/SAS exercise being carried out in one of the tower blocks next to the Clays Lane estate. Here, residents were woken up at 6am by the sound of stun grenades and blank ammunition being fired (Cheyne 2008/1).
- Newham Monitoring Project (NMP) report (Blowe and Du Boulay *ibid*: 11) photography being used twice as pretext during the Games for stop-and-search of tourists. On the second occasion, outside Stratford Picturehouse, officers did not introduce themselves, and gave the 'suspect' no legal justification for the search and request of details (information on the man's criminal record, not required by law) and did not issue a 'receipt' of search (thus breaking the law themselves).
- In August 2011, many cities in the UK were hit by a week of rioting, including London. Assistant commissioner Chris Allison warned that police would not be able to cope with disturbances on this scale at London 2012. 'The challenge is going to be: that there are [not] enough police officers, [not] enough private security [or] enough infrastructure to put on all of these events. So we've got to make sure that we dampen the enthusiasm appropriately,' he told a media briefing (Evening Standard 2011). Just before the riots broke out,

on July 29, 2011, Metropolitan Police's Griffin Briefing declared: 'Anarchism is a political philosophy which considers the state undesirable, unnecessary, and harmful, and instead promotes a stateless society, or anarchy. Any information relating to anarchists should be reported to your local [p]olice' (Cheyne 2011/1).

- Police information gathering touched Games Monitor, albeit lightly. In April 2008, we hosted a conference with Planners Network UK. The first part of this event was in Limehouse Town Hall, headlined by novelist Iain Sinclair and Bill Parry-Davies, Hackney solicitor and founder of urban conservation campaign Open Dalston. Neither could be regarded as a security risk. During the evening, two police officers turned up, directed to visit by the Olympic Intelligence Unit. The next day, the conference moved to a church hall in Dalston for workshops on the Olympic planning process. This received a visit from a community support officer, who was sent to check out our connections with people who had opposed recent planning decisions to build a bus station and tower blocks in the Dalston area (Cheyne 2008/2).

#### – Arrests and imprisonment

##### *Mike Wells*

Journalist Mike Wells (also of Games Monitor) was arrested while filming at Leyton Marsh on April 26, 2012. Worried by an excavator working dangerously near walkers on Sandy Lane, a public footpath, Mike approached the driver, and was set upon (by the driver and other security guards). Julian Cheyne (2013/1) details the severity of the attack:

The security guards ... pinned Mike to the ground before dragging him 200m and holding him captive ... He ... sustained cuts to his head and injuries to his ribs, which were possibly fractured. An ambulance was called and the paramedics treated Mike and offered to take him to hospital, which he declined. His assailant had not sustained any injuries.

Mike was held for 40 hours, charged with common assault, then taken to Bow magistrates court, where he pleaded not guilty. Police prosecution claimed that 'a protest had been underway and that the incident was part of that protest and in breach of the [Leyton Marsh] injunction' (ibid) (see BP1 §1.2). Mike was denied bail and held on remand. A week later, he was released after another bail hearing. Conditions were imposed prohibiting him venturing within 100m of any Olympic facility. At the trial on January 17, 2013, the prosecution witness – practically in tears – acknowledged in the witness stand that police had forced him to attend. Mike was acquitted. The judge was reluctant to acknowledge his innocence, despite a complete lack of evidence. Cheyne comments (ibid): 'The fact that there was only one witness against Mike made no difference, as far as the district judge was concerned it was the driver's word against his and that would be sufficient for a conviction. The fact[s] that the driver had changed his story and that there was no objective evidence from the police to corroborate ... the alleged assault ... were not mentioned.'

##### *Leyton Marsh*

Three more people were arrested during protests against the erection of a temporary basketball court at Leyton Marsh in April 2012, and were imprisoned for five days after refusing to pay a £200 fine imposed by the courts (East London Lines 2012). Simon Moore, Daniel Ashman and Anita Olivacce had been activists at London Occupy, and joined local residents on the marsh in March that year (see BP1 §1.2). All three pleaded 'not guilty' to charges of breaching §14 of the Public Order Act 1986. On his release from jail, Simon Moore was presented with an anti-social behaviour order prohibiting him from protesting at the Olympic event and from entering a defined area of east London. Another protestor who pleaded 'not guilty' was given bail, also with conditions attached prohibiting him from an area within a one mile radius of Leyton Marsh. The protest encampment received a visit from Chris Allison, head of counter terrorism at the Olympic Security Directorate accompanied by Robert Reed, a civil servant. Both refused to talk to protestors. Activists also faced high court injunctions, eviction orders and punitive costs (£335,000 for a two week delay to construction work and later, £24,000 for requesting a hearing for judicial review) (Day 2013). One woman, Rowena Johnson, who had merely taken part in 'theatrical dissent' when bailiffs attempted to remove the camp and had not been arrested, was forced to come to 'an agreement' with the ODA after her name was added to the injunction following a report in the Evening Standard. A gagging order was imposed on the case during the Olympic and Paralympic period, prohibiting herself and the Save Leyton Marsh campaign from publicising the injustice. Day also described Johnson as 'intimidated into keeping apart from the people who would have supported her the most' (ibid).

##### *Critical Mass*

On July 27, 2012, around 9pm, on the night of the London 2012 opening ceremony, 182 cyclists (Malik 2012) on a bicycle ride called under the banner of Critical Mass were arrested on Bow flyover and at Warton Road (off Stratford High Street) for breaching police conditions (Indirikki 2014); BBC News (2012) reported only 130 arrests. The Guardian (Malik ibid) noted a 13-year-old among those detained, that some cyclists were pepper sprayed, and that those arrested were held over night in 'a windowless police garage and single-decker buses' without toilet facilities. The conditions prohibited cyclists from riding north of the Thames from their meeting point in Waterloo, and were imposed under §12 of the Public Order Act 1986 (Cheyne 2013/2). Police also cited the danger of public nuisance (BBC ibid). Reports suggest between 200 (Malik ibid) and 500 cyclists (BBC ibid) had attended the ride, a regular monthly event. Police closed several bridges across the Thames trying to

prevent the protest approaching the Olympic precinct.

Bicycles were seized, and those arrested were taken to processing centres across London (as far away as Kilburn and Croydon). Indirikki (ibid) notes that 'many [media] reports ... conveyed a sense that the operation was simply extra-judicial punishment for daring to challenge the corporate Olympic machine'. Those arrested were bailed on the condition that they did not enter the London Borough of Newham area on a bicycle, ride on the (dedicated) Olympic Route Network, or approach any Olympic venue within 100m (Malik ibid). Most of those detained had their court cases dropped after legal representation. There were anecdotal reports of those arrested being strip-searched in police vans.

In March 2013, five cyclists out of the 182 detained were found guilty at a trial lasting 10 days and stretched out over three weeks (Richards 2013). Most received a nine-month conditional discharge with £300 costs. Writing in the Guardian after the convictions, Tom Richards charged the Metropolitan Police with criminalizing recreational cyclists and pandering to 'Olympic exceptionalism': 'The policing of the ride was farcical, with the rolling roadblocks at most of the major Thames crossings in central London causing far more disruption to traffic than Critical Mass could ever have hoped to, even if that had been the intention. Given that Critical Mass has been happening on a monthly basis in London since 1995, the Met had five years to consider how to deal with the ride on the night – and mishandled it in a spectacular fashion.' Richards described the regular ride as 'apolitical' (initial reports in the Guardian back this up [Malik ibid]), and the arrests as 'an affront to the right to free assembly and free association', adding: '[t]he legality of Critical Mass in London depends on [it] being a 'public procession' which is 'commonly or customarily held', and since the ... defeat [of the Metropolitan Police] in the House of Lords in 2008, the Met should know better than anyone else that Critical Mass is not a protest and should not be policed as such.'

#### *Graffiti artists*

In July 2012 there were arrests of graffiti artists (many operating legally as businesses) by British Transport Police on 'suspicion of conspiracy to commit criminal damage' (Addley et al 2012). Reports of numbers of arrestees vary from between 'around 30' (Webb 2012 in an article on the VICE magazine website), to four according to Addley et al (ibid) in the Guardian. Two of the people noted by the Guardian were also arrested for incitement to cause criminal damage. All were bailed until November that year with conditions attached prohibiting them from 'access to rail, tube and tram transport, preventing them from owning [or carrying] spray paint or marker pens, and ordering them not to go near any Olympic venue in London or elsewhere. None had been charged when reports were published (ibid). One of the men, Daniel Cullen, had worked for corporations Microsoft, Red Bull, ITN News, Royal Shakespeare Company, and (Olympic sponsor) Adidas and had been approached by Team GB to create a mural in the athlete's village (Webb ibid). In Cullen's case, police stated a pretext of his business registering the web domain for Frontline Magazine (Addley et al ibid). The website had published a history of graffiti art and had included images (according to police) of 'illegal' graffiti. Cullen had never met any of the other people arrested and was not questioned by police before being bailed (ibid). Computer equipment, phone, iPad and Cullen's son's laptop were also seized by police, and Cullen noted the financial impact of bail conditions on his company's finances (Webb ibid). The Guardian (Addley et al ibid) claimed that '[t]he arrests [came] as the Metropolitan Police's strategy of halting potential disruptive action in advance of major public events was given high court endorsement', and noted that '[t]he tactic [was] a key plank of police planning to ensure the Games [were] not disrupted'. Other cases were being heard at the high court at the time, contesting pre-emptive arrests in 2011. One graffiti blog accused police of 'attempting to "sanitise" London before the Games' (ibid).

#### *– Newham Monitoring Project*

NMP launched an intensive (unwaged) legal monitoring operation during the Games in Stratford (Blowe and De Boulay ibid) around the Olympic park site and near the ExCel Centre (an Olympic venue) in Canning Town. Defending Newham residents rights to basic civil liberties (freedom of movement and association unrestricted by harassment or intimidation), their legal observers, dressed in high-visibility jackets, handed out cards with rights information and acted as witnesses to incidents. Observers worked in teams of 10 and with four shifts per 12-hour day, backed up by office staff and 24-hour legal helpline.

Blowe and Du Boulay state that NMP observers handed out over 7,000 rights cards. They report police misusing stop-and-search powers invariably under dubious pretext, §60 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 (permitting 'search and account' 'in anticipation of violence', again with false justification), §50 of the Police Reform Act 2002 (particularly in the harassment of the young and those deemed intoxicated), §164 of the Road Traffic Act 1988, and (in one incident only) anti-terrorism legislation. Section 60 can be used 'without reasonable suspicion' of crime, making it open to abuse. The authors note 'an inordinately high level' and 'often controversial' deployment of §60 in Newham, where it is used in conjunction with ethnic profiling. Metropolitan Police also announced a dispersal zone covering Stratford town centre (including the transport hub and magistrates court) and top of West Ham Lane in May 2012, extended for three months from the beginning of August that year. Any persons under suspicion (and not living in the zone boundaries) could be asked to vacate the area for 24 hours, with the effect of displacing crime and stigmatising young people in particular.

The authors detail the intensification of harassment: seizure of mobile phones and their own rights cards; arbitrary intimidation as pretext for stop-and-search; illegal strip-searching in police vans; the targeting of 'known faces'; young people being stopped, searched and/or asked for identification several times in one day; plus assaults of young people (and one homeless man) during searches. Those refusing to give personal details were (illegally) threatened with arrest, and friends were subject to threats and verbal abuse by police officers. Anyone taken into custody was subject to DNA testing, regardless of whether they were charged. Young people

(particularly Asian young men, including those under 16), homeless people, the elderly (African Caribbean), car drivers (especially Black and minority ethnic [BME]) and also eastern European men were disproportionately targeted. The organisation reported 'suspects' denied access to NMP legal assistance; and in one case an elderly man was threatened with missing a crucial medical appointment. Pretext for stop-and-search included possession of weapons, religious dress, suspicion of buying and selling tickets (touting), taking photos, waiting with hands in pockets, pulling up socks, (and more generically) acting 'suspiciously'. Frequently, large numbers of officers would arrive on the scene (often more than 10; the highest figure NMP reported was around 21). On occasions, their legal observers were asked to leave Transport for London (TFL) owned areas and Stratford Park (used as a live-screening venue) by private or local authority security. Police had asked for personal details of legal observers several times. NMP also documented police armed with machine guns at Stratford station and Westfield Stratford City shopping centre, and noted that at times armed officers withheld uniform identification numbers. Elsewhere, police 'clusters' gave a continuous presence and officers with sniffer dogs 'inspected parked bicycles'.

The observers' log from Wednesday, August 8, 2012 (ibid: 22–23) itemises the aggressive process criminalising Newham's population.

A young man recounted to community legal observers (CLOs) how his wrist was broken when he was arrested. He was subsequently released without charge. Large numbers of officers were observed conducting a vehicle stop-and-search operation. Police were checking driving documents under §164 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 and the passport of at least one of the drivers. CLOs handed rights cards to a group of [B]lack 14-year-old boys who had been watching the police operation and one made a comment, using strong language and laughter, that the cards should be given to the police. Officers who heard this came over and grabbed the boy from his bike. They demanded his name and address under §50 of the Police Reform Act ... The boy was briefly hand-cuffed, but his restraints were then removed while his personal details and bike were checked and his phone was taken. The boys were eventually allowed to leave without arrest, with officers threatening the group that they would be informing their parents and suggesting they drive them home. [The young men] declined and obtained a receipt of the search. One of our CLOs felt that: 'It appeared that the police, once they had stopped this boy and his friends, were trying to find something to do them for.'

Officers in a police van were noted keenly watching three young Asian men waiting for a bus. When two began walking away, they were followed by an officer. The man remaining at the bus stop was approached by CLOs and said his friends had left to avoid hassle and dispersal as they are constantly watched, stopped and searched for drugs. He had himself been stopped the previous night and had ownership of his phone checked.

A group of young Asian boys told CLOs that they had been stopped and searched the night before due to a robbery in the area by people their age. An officer behaved aggressively towards CLOs observing vehicle stops, demanding to know 'what kind of legal training [they had] had'. Discussions by CLOs with members of the public revealed the police were using §50 powers ... and powers under §60 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 ... One individual said he had been threatened with dispersal zone powers near Stratford Park but officers had backed down when he stood his ground.

There were reports of harassment near local shops and within Stratford Park, with the suggestion police behaved differently in tourist areas to avoid creating a negative impression. One individual reported carrying a bust card at all times and expressed interest in volunteering with NMP.

A group of young [B]lack men reported constant stops and that groups of two or more were dispersed, although they generally tried to stay away from police to avoid being searched. They admitted submitting to voluntary strip searches in vans because 'once they get you to the police station, you don't get out'. Although they were aware they were not obliged to give their names when they were stopped, they explained that if they refused the police would look at their phones and, if registered under a different name, arrest them for theft. They expressed the belief that the increased police presence was associated with increased hassle from the police.

Local authority enforcement officers and police were observed conducting an identification check on an Asian market stall holder. One enforcement officer explained to a CLO that the police were called for non-compliant stall holders and the volunteer reported that this appeared to be accepted by stall holders as standard procedure.

CLOs had a request from a youth worker for a visit from NMP to their youth group, where young [B]lack men expressed the opinion that the Olympics were being used as an excuse to hassle them more. Some individuals had been stopped under section 60, the police telling them that 'they [were not wanted] here'.

A local authority enforcement officer told a CLO about violence in the area. 'You can get stopped or you can get stabbed.' [S]he express[ed] the opinion that everyone should be stopped all the time. CLOs spent time speaking to young people. One young Asian man told our volunteers he felt discriminated against by security guards at Westfield who objected to him walking slowly up the steps to the entrance. A group of young people reported that the police were removing the NMPs rights cards from them when stopped. Another group of 15-year-old girls said they were stopped and searched almost every day and that it had become worse during the Olympic period, while a group of men in their late 20s and early 30s also reported daily stops and searches. One [B]lack man said he felt racially profiled and although, before the Olympics, he and his friends were stopped in groups of three or more, since late July he was just as likely to face a stop-and-search on his own or [when] with one other person. One Asian man told the CLOs that he felt unduly harassed because he and his friends were [often] stopped but never charged. He also expressed the belief that he had been targeted because of his religion and dress. Another recounted detention without charge for two days ...

## 1.4 International

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### **The Olympics are a continuation of war and competition by other means.**

Eleni Portaliou, of the Greek campaign Anti-2004, speaking at the Urban Forum (fringe event to the European Social Forum) on October 15, 2004

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State repression and the Olympics have a long association. In Mexico City, shortly before the start of the 1968 Games, 300 people were murdered by security forces at a political protest. For Sydney 2000, new laws gave police extra powers to enforce Rule 53 (Blowe 2004), while Athens 2004 saw a repressive mobilisation of military proportions. The Italian state met counter protests to Torino 2006 Winter Olympics with a 'zero tolerance' policy.

#### *– Sochi 2014*

Gay rights campaigning around the Sochi 2014 Winter Olympics highlighted the extent to which profile of the event can help generate international political support for key issues. In December 2013, presidents of France and Germany (Francois Hollande and Joachim Gauck) plus EU commissioner Viviane Reding announced their boycott of Sochi 2014 in protest at a Russian law banning media and statements promoting 'nontraditional sexual relations' to young people (Walter 2013). The US delegation also announced that family members of US president, Barack Obama, would not attend the Games (Brennan 2013). Norwegian health minister, Bent Hoie, himself gay, announced that he would attend the opening ceremony with his husband (Koranyi 2014). A coalition of 40 human and gay rights groups from the US, Europe and Russia (including Amnesty International [AI] and Human Rights Watch) sent an open letter to the 10 key global Olympic sponsors asking them to run advertisements critical of the legislation (Crary 2014). The law frames promotion of gay and other 'nontraditional' sexualities as 'contradicting public morality' and juxtaposes policies towards 'family motherhood and childhood protection' (Gold 2012). It has fuelled homophobic attacks, and one young woman from the Bryansk region has been criminalised for announcing her sexual orientation (Radio Free Europe 2014). Several international athletes made vigorous statements opposing the legislation, including gold medallist Brian Botano (US), 800m silver medallist Nick Symmonds (US), snowboarder Belle Brockhoff (Australia), swimmer Ari-Pekka Liukkonen (Finland) and speed skater Anastasia Bucsis (Canada) (Wikipedia 2015). Dutch snowboard competitor Cheryl Maas raised her glove showing a rainbow and unicorn to TV cameras after taking part in qualification rounds, commenting that 'the IOC [was] taking a step back in time' by hosting the Games in Russia (Nichols 2014). Some sponsors were also sympathetic. Telecommunications corporation AT&T, sponsor of the US Olympic committee, made a strong statement against the legislation (ibid). Other sponsors were tarnished with the brush of homophobia by brand hijackers. Both Coca-Cola and McDonald's found their Twitter hashtags and trademark imagery and slogans redeployed (Signorile 2014; Wolledge 2014).

Legislation was passed in June 2013, and gay rights activists protesting the new law in St Petersburg shortly afterwards were assaulted by police (Sputnik 2013). In September 2013, two activists were arrested and injured after they held up a poster declaring 'Homophobia is Russia's disgrace' outside Moscow headquarters of the Sochi organising committee, later facing heavy fines for illegal protest (Crary 2013). In January 2014, a gay rights protestor, Pavel Lebedev, was jailed for unfurling a rainbow flag during the Olympic torch relay in Voronezh (506 miles north of Sochi) (Associated Press 2014). Just before the opening ceremony, on February 7, 2014, 10 women from Sweden were arrested in Red Square (Moscow) and St Petersburg for protesting against the Act (Reuters 2014). Their banner in St Peterburg read 'Discrimination is incompatible with the Olympic movement. Principle 6 Olympic charter' (Gibson and Walker 2014). In Sochi, Sky News (Stallard 2014) reported a 'forbidden zone' around venues prohibiting protests for three months around the Games, declared by presidential decree, while the organising committee offered 'free speech zones' 10 miles from venues. Campaign All Out organised demonstrations during the event in New York, London, Rio and St Petersburg (Crary ibid).

Less well publicised, environmental activists in Sochi suffered 'police pressure, threats and home searches' for seven years, for publicising injustices against residents of the town and other 'environmental violations' (Walker 2014). Close to the event, one activist Evgeny Vitishenko of Environmental Watch, was jailed for three years for painting graffiti on a fence constructed around an illegal building on national park land. Initially, he had been given a suspended sentence, but was later imprisoned for 'swearing in a public place' and accusations of 'parole violations' (the report states 'authorities appear to have used any excuse'). His fellow campaigners also told of being 'harassed, questioned, detained' and 'incarcerated' (ibid). Norwegian prime minister, Erna Solberg, met Vitishenko's colleague Vladimir Kimayev and other activists during Sochi 2014 to offer support, and raised the matter with Russian PM Dmitry Medvedev. In return for cancelling a protest at the start of the Winter Games, the mayor of Sochi and Russia's deputy environment minister met the campaigners to discuss their demands.

#### *– Vancouver 2010*

During the first week of June 2009, 20 individuals (including Chris Shaw, above) who had publicly questioned the Vancouver 2010 Winter Olympics were visited by police in their homes and at work. Olympic Resistance Network reported that the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) and police attempted to recruit informants in 2008. Vancouver Integrated Security Unit (VISU), responsible for policing Vancouver 2010, recommended 'free speech zones' within the security plans to contain protest. Vancouver mayor, Gregor Robinson, called the proposals 'Orwellian' (CBC 2009/1).

Maria Renn of the Olympic Resistance Network was detained and questioned at the Pacific (Truck) Crossing border station and denied entry to the US on December 10, 2009, on her way to an event in Portland, Oregon, to speak on negative impacts. She was held for over six hours. Both Canadian and US border guards interrogated

her about the subject of her speech, her contacts in Portland and her political activities. Previously, she had been denied entry for a Seattle speaking event on the grounds that her 10 anti-Olympic shirts were unauthorised commercial merchandise. The excuse for rejecting her this second time (lack of employment since graduation) was brought up after she was questioned on her planned speech and political activities by border guards. Renn was photographed, fingerprinted and searched, her mobile phone was taken and accessed, and documents (even the book she was reading) were photocopied. She was warned that any attempt to enter the US within the following six months could result in two years imprisonment. At the Canadian border, she was again searched and interrogated. In another case, journalist Amy Goodman of Democracy Now was detained and questioned about her visit to Vancouver and contents of a planned speech as border guards assumed that she would be criticising the Olympics (Vancouver Media Co-op 2009).

Documents uncovered by British Columbia Civil Liberties Association (BCCLA) revealed active state censorship and intimidation ('an anti-free speech agenda') underlining preparations for Vancouver 2010. Vancouver 2010 Olympic Torch Run Manual called on participating cities to limit the distribution of political leaflets; the Clean Venue Agreement outlined a swat team tasked with seizing offensive literature on public property, while private security guards were employed to prevent people holding up placards or wearing clothes with political messages in Olympic venues. The IOC Host City Contract required the city of Vancouver to prevent international media and attendees at Olympic venues from encountering political speech outside as well as inside venues, and the Technical Manual on Media, also in force at London 2012 (see <http://www.gamesmonitor.org.uk/node/935>) grants IOC the ability to withdraw accreditation from any journalist at any time for any reason. On an acutely sinister note, when challenged by BCCLA, Canadian security agencies VISU and CSIS stated that they refused to refrain from using *agents provocateur* or from assuming the leadership of activist groups. BCCLA suggested that such tactics might be permissible under certain interpretations of Canadian criminal and constitutional law, but disputed their legality (BCCLA 2009).

- Vancouver police purchased a long-range acoustic device for the event, capable of emitting loud blasts of sound. The sound emitted could cross the human threshold of pain and was potentially damaging to hearing. The device was originally designed for the US military and first used on civilian populations by police in Pittsburgh at an anti-G20 demonstration (CBC 2009/2).

#### – Beijing 2008

Amnesty International charged the Beijing government with using the 2008 Games as pretext for extension of detention without trial. Moves to reform or abolish 're-education through labour', administrative detention without charge or trial, remained stalled, with its use being extended to 'clean up' the city before the event. Beijing police suggested that another form of detention without trial, 'compulsory drug rehabilitation', might be extended from six months to one year to force drug users to 'give up their addictions before the Olympics'. AI also complained of internal media crackdowns. Catherine Baber, deputy Asia Pacific director at AI said: 'The new extra layer of judicial review for death sentences and the relaxation of restrictions on foreign journalists are important steps towards better respect for human rights in China. Disappointingly, they have been matched by moves to expand detention without trial and "house arrest" of activists, and by a tightening of controls over domestic media and the internet. The failure to ensure equal rights and freedoms for both foreign and domestic journalists smacks of double standards – China has yet to meet its promise to ensure "complete media freedom" for the Olympics' (Cheyne 2007).

- Former Beijing vice-mayor, Liu Zhihua, in charge of Olympic construction projects, was given a suspended death sentence for corruption in 2008. The sentence was commuted to life in prison in two years if he showed 'good behaviour' (Associated Press 2008).



## 2. SPORT AS CATALYST

### 2.1 Postmodernity; the city as neoliberal frontier

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**Starkly, the Olympics are an interpellation of post-fascist regularity, the disciplinary subject imposed via state violence, corporate sponsorship and gender enhancement; and remediated (even expanded) via neoliberal experiments in labour market and welfare state regulation. As with economic impact, the Olympic event provides a focal instance for intensification of existing trends.**

Project Mimique (2005). '2012 Olympics and the institutionalisation of consent', leaflet issued for the London Social Forum conference (Whose London?), City Hall, London, October 29

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London Development Agency (LDA) and consultants asserted a reimagining of locality via increased media exposure, and ascribed to major sporting events the power to redefine inhabitants' perception of place (LDA 2004). Cultural critics might disagree. Fredric Jameson (1991) points to 'induced disorientation' effected by much postmodern architecture and a 'depthlessness' based on culture of the TV image and change in lived experience of the built environment. Jameson highlights the aggressive passivity of saturation CCTV, lack of self-determination in movement, and a lack of congruence between actual landscape and its representation, something particularly noticeable with the Olympic masterplan illustrations which turned the whole site upside down (a view from the north), excluded the car park replacing East Marsh (that is, presented it as open space), and included trees that were later removed. Later, mapping promoting the Water Chariots service to the Olympic park invented a nonexistent canal. Blogger DiamondGeezer commented: 'Looks fast, looks direct, total fabric-ation' (Dowding 2011/1). Fabian Tompsett (1996: 104–105), writing on the Isle of Dogs, argues that 'capitalist TV and film ... interact with the architecture of redevelopment in new strategies of class control and repression', adding 'class struggle has always manifested itself around the construction of symbolic landscape'. For Olympic developments, open antagonism is prohibited on the site itself under IOC Rule 53, enforcing dispersion of protest and annihilation of effect.

'No longer concerned narrowly with the mobilisation and extension of markets (and market logics), neoliberalism is increasingly associated with the political foregrounding of new modes of "social" and penal policymaking, concerned specifically with the aggressive reregulation, disciplining, and containment of those marginalised or dispossessed by the neoliberalisation of the 1980s' (Peck and Tickell 2002: 389). Neil Brenner and Nik Theodore (2002: 345) comment that 'cities have become a key arena in which the everyday violence of neoliberalism has been unleashed; neoliberal projects of political-economic restructuring collide with pre-existing socio-spatial cleavages and, in turn, create new forms of inequality, political disenfranchisement, and economic immiseration'. Policy discussion and political rhetoric around the Olympic developments were promoted within the context of what Gordon MacLeod (2002) has called a 'revanchist'<sup>1</sup> political mobilisation.

As key sites of economic contradiction, governance failure, and social fall-out, cities find themselves in the front line of both hypertrophied after-welfarist statecraft and organised resistance to neoliberalisation. Regressive welfare reforms and labour market polarisation, for example, are leading to the (re)urbanisation of (working and non-working) poverty, positioning cities at the bleeding edge of processes of punitive-institution building, social surveillance, and authoritarian governance ... 'Entrepreneurial' regimes of urban governance are ... not simply local manifestations of neoliberalism; their simultaneous rise across a wide range of national, political, and institutional contexts suggests a systemic connection with neoliberalisation as a macro process. In other words, the remaking of the rules on inter-local competition and extra-local resource allocation – or the deep neoliberalisation of spatial and scalar relations – fundamentally reflects the far-reaching macro-political [re]alignment that has taken place since the 1970s (Peck and Tickell *ibid*: 395–396).

Urban policies – and one might include here the Olympic bidding process and replacement of planning by project management – 'anticipate, complement, and in some cases, mimic the operation of competitive markets' (*ibid*: 394). Competitive regimes of resource allocation, barriers to local government finance, and centralised political mandate foreclose economic development strategies based on social redistribution, workers control or

<sup>1</sup> Literally meaning 'revenge' and a state's reincorporation of territory (here, recapitalisation of urban economic landscapes). The term derives from France in the 1870s, where a right-wing populist movement mixed military tactics and moral discourse to contest the relative liberalism of the Second Empire and socialism of the Paris Commune (MacLeod *ibid*: 606).

public investment. A public sector saturated by performance-based target setting, and fighting its own austerity, becomes compelled to collude with growth-chasing (and mobile) proposals.

Eric Swyngedouw, Frank Moulaert and Arantxa Rodriguez (2002) point to 'exceptionality' measures such as the bypassing of statutory regulations and institutional bodies (that is, deregulation of planning requirements), exceptional powers of intervention and decision-making (see also §3.2), and changes in national legislation, as 'emblematic' of neoliberal urban regimes. They charge that large-scale development projects, such as London 2012, accentuate economic polarisation via property markets, changes in public budget priorities (redirected from social objectives to investments in the built environment) and labour market restructuring (ibid: 542–543). The authors confirm 'the ascent of a more assertive, dynamic and entrepreneurial style of urban governance' as '[p]lanners and local authorities adopt a more proactive ... approach aimed at identifying market opportunities and assisting private investors' (ibid: 548–551), noting the instrumentality of a city's economic and political elites in definitions of social and economic value of particular developments. They also point to appropriation of land-rent value increases by private operators (improvements funded by public investment), and comment: 'The role of local growth coalitions is critical in framing a discourse of renewal, innovation, achievement and success' (ibid: 562).

## 2.2 Economic development strategy

It is clear that social actions and relationships, development plans and economic strategies have all been defined by a discourse of uneven development, that of poverty in the Lower Lea Valley (LLV) and Olympic boroughs (a continuing product). Local baseline data from 2004 indicates that a majority of wards around the masterplan boundary fell within five percent of the most deprived areas of England in terms of income, with related impacts on health and with a relation to qualifications and perceived skills. Within the Inner Impact Zone (the 12 wards with territory in or immediately adjacent to the masterplan area) the wards of Bromley-by-Bow (16.3 per cent) and East India and Lansbury (15 per cent) suffered unemployment rates over three times the national average (LDA 2004: 8–10). LDA estimated that in this area alone, somewhere between 11,000 and 12,000 jobs could be created by the Olympic proposals (private conversation). Later projections were grossly inflated: prime minister Gordon Brown touted 50,000 new jobs to BBC News [2009], including 30,000 in construction; others suggested 60,000 (reported by Slavin 2006) or even 100,000 (Financial Times cited by Cheyne 2012/1). By 2011, even Newham mayor, Sir Robin Wales, complained of a discrepancy between Olympic hype and actuality: ODA had announced that 12,635 people were working on the Olympic park but when the bid was won, officials had suggested to Wales that the Olympic project would result in a 70,000 reduction in the number of workless people (Muir 2011). Even with the building of Westfield Stratford City shopping centre, which would have happened without the Olympic event, this latter figure also seems preposterous. A year later, Wales stated that he was concerned the Olympics would repeat the mistakes of Canary Wharf, which created 110,000 jobs but with only a few hundred going to Newham residents. One in five of the 7,000+ Olympic workers was local to Newham but Sir Robin regarded many as temporary. He suggested Newham was missing out on a 'skills legacy' (Beard 2012).

- In 2008, only 430 jobs (17 per cent) out of a total of 2,488 had gone to people from the five host boroughs, according to Hackney North and Stoke Newington MP, Diane Abbott. Hackney had the lowest number (48) of residents with Olympic jobs (Abbott 2008). In 2009, Abjol Miah, former leader of the London Borough of Tower Hamlets Respect group, charged that the borough's residents counted for only two per cent of employment on the Olympic site (Socialist Unity in Slavin 2009/2).

The initial economic development strategy was set out by LDA in the *Socio Economic Assessment: Lower Lea Valley Olympic and Legacy Planning Applications (Appendix 5 to the Environmental Statement)* from 2004.

### – Training

LDA sought to maximise potential of construction employment in the period of Olympic development, particularly targeting more marginalised unemployed: migrant workers, women and youth, with apprenticeships and taster courses before full training for those unsure. Training opportunities were to be sought via local labour agreements and a signed 'construction charter' to prioritise employment and training of local residents.

Construction industry lobbyists point to a pressing need to train existing construction workers, and not only those to work on prestigious Olympic developments. In 2005, Peter Lobban, chief executive of Construction Skills, (a national body representing construction employers), stated that 100,000 existing construction workers needed to reach NVQ2 standards each year until 2010 to achieve a 'fully-qualified' workforce (Fennell 2005/1). Lobban estimated that the sector needed to attract and train 88,000 new entrants every year for the next five years to meet (general) demand. Later estimates reduced this to 13,000 construction workers and 1,500 electricians and plumbers a year (Bawden 2007). Fennell (2005/2) noted that three quarters of skilled people in the industry were self-employed presenting a distinct problem for skills training as responsibilities are passed down the supply chain and costs foisted on to the worker. One might note that in what is known as 'building services engineering' (electrotechnical, heating, ventilation, air conditioning, refrigeration and plumbing), small firms were reported as viewing trainees as tomorrow's competition, inhibiting apprenticeship schemes. At the time, numbers of apprenticeships were shrinking. With over 50,000 applications for 10,000 places, the traditional apprenticeship route into construction had not been able to meet demand (Bawden ibid).

- Several training courses under the rubric On Your Marks were announced in 2006, financed by the European Social Fund. These included OLYSE003 Increasing access to Olympic construction employment for foreign workers, OLYSE004 OSAT qualifications for building workers, OLYSE005 NVQ2 maintenance qualifications,

OLYSE006 Improving construction leadership and management, and OLYSE009 Increasing access for female workers in the sector (LDA 2006). Contracts awarded to colleges in the south east included Oxford and Cherwell College (women in construction), and specialist courses at Central Sussex and Eastleigh colleges (Pattni 2006). Other construction skills courses receiving funding in relation to the Olympic event were evident locally. Further education colleges in Newham and Hackney were working with sector skills councils to provide trainees with literacy, numeracy and communication skills alongside specific trades needed for Olympic developments. Hackney Community College, for instance, teamed up with Westminster Kingsway to offer NVQs in hospitality and catering. There were also initiatives such as Train to Gain, which hoped to encourage employers to train their own staff. In 2008, Train to Gain was awarded more than £300 million for training (including apprenticeships) in the construction, hospitality and manufacturing sectors (Carpenter 2008). The Learning and Skills Council aimed to spend £5 million across London in 2007 to expand vocational training in sport, customer service, audiovisual and construction skills. This would have included training for people on incapacity benefit and income support to enable them to become construction trade A1 assessors (Regen.net 2007/1). PeopleManagement.co.uk (2010) reported that, according to the ODA, 2,865 workers had passed through its training centres in east London.

One programme called Personal Best was piloted in Hackney, and 50 local residents graduated. However, only two of these secured Olympic-related employment while eight were taken up as volunteers. Another ODA scheme aimed at getting local people involved propelled only eight Hackney residents into Games-related jobs. ODA told Abbott that it aimed to employ 10–15 per cent of people from the five host boroughs in its construction workforce (Abbott *ibid*). Despite this, two years later, Abbott found that out of 150 apprentices, only one was from Hackney. While ODA hoped to increase the number of apprenticeships to 350, construction apprenticeships take three years, and when Abbott asked her question there were only 18 months left to go on the Olympic site before the event – not enough time for apprentices to complete their training, as ODA acknowledged (Hackney Citizen 2010). By mid-2010, it emerged that only nine apprentices had qualified as tradespeople (Evening Standard in People Management *ibid*), and that ‘with one year left of the ‘Big Build’ phase, there [were] 199 apprentices on site and most of them [were] not due to finish their training until several years after the Olympics.’ Despite this, the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills told the Guardian (Muir *ibid*) that 426 apprentices had been employed constructing the Olympic park, exceeding initial targets.

#### – *Small firm support*

LDA sought to optimise synergies for firms in the construction and legacy periods by maximising local effects: policy highlighted promotion of networking and interfirm subcontracting; help with access to premises, finance and contracting opportunities; relocation aid; advice, information and marketing; and integration of employers in training schemes. The construction charter also sought to give subcontracting preference to local small firms. Plans touted database support, ICT infrastructure, and a ‘capacity register’ with information on construction projects. Attention was to focus first on the building industry, with advice and training to enable firms meet ‘quality thresholds’. During the legacy phase, sectoral shifts were set to be monitored in an attempt to keep training relevant (that is, business reflexive), with particular attention to trends in media, tertiary education, leisure, retail and entertainment.

London 2012 put a business brokerage service in place – CompeteFor – matching small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) with contract opportunities (UKTI 2011). Hackney Community College’s Centre of Vocational Excellence at Morley Hall in London Fields opened in January 2006, working to enable local small firms maximise the ‘opportunity’ of London 2012 with skills training. Other initiatives awarded funding included a business club with supply-chain support to assist local firms competing for Olympic contracts (London 2012 2005). On Your Marks (above) included a course OLYSE007 Improving competitiveness of SMEs in the construction sector. However, Third Sector magazine reported that east London social enterprises (that is, not-for-profit companies) had found that Olympic contracts were too large to bid for. Some not-for-profit groups argued that ODA had ignored its commitment to work with social enterprises in the development of the Stratford site (Wiggins 2009).

### **2.3 Political economy of uneven development**

Economic development strategies are in danger of exacerbating unevenness: between localities and firms, but also between workers (Gough 1992). Divisions of labour within construction are highly segmented and international disparities reflect the racism of corporate wage and status setting, a recomposing secondary market, intensity of subcontracting, and institutionalisation of peripheral economic relations forged through Empire and the regulatory arrangements of EU accession (with these remediating through national strategies of exposure,<sup>2</sup> socialisation and containment). Trainees local to Olympic boroughs and migrant workers faced the prospect of being labelled ‘contingent’ in an already flexibilised sector by dint of existing marginality<sup>3</sup> and a process of conscious (albeit

<sup>2</sup> ‘Exposure ... works at the bottom end of the labour market where unskilled workers are made aware that they are easily replaced by unemployed or marginal workers. Where this is accompanied by exclusion from union representation too, such groups may be locked into a bargaining vacuum’ (Cooke 1983: 216).

<sup>3</sup> ‘While social divisions within the workforce are not created by capital or by the state, they are nevertheless exploited in the allocation of labour and regulation of the labour supply ... [C]ontingent workers tend to be defined by ascribed status and by their relationship to “institutions located on the outer limits of the labour market” dominated by “relations of force and control which deprive people of the resources for collective action and thus prevent them from realising their economic interests: family systems, schools, prisons, social security programmes, armies, hospitals and so on”’ (Offe and Hinrichs, quoted by Peck 1996: 31).

progressive) social selection (here, existing social inequalities become a training or hiring criteria). Contingent workers are prey to greater substitution pressures by employers and are more vulnerable to exploitation.<sup>4</sup>

Martin Jones and Kevin Ward (2002: 480–481) suggest that training interventions can be regarded as response to a ‘devolved rationality crisis’, and within a discourse of competitive advantage under globalisation this crisis becomes displaced from the political sphere of the state onto vulnerable groups such as the unemployed, who are then stigmatised for the state’s own economic failings and forced to shoulder responsibility. Critics charge that within labour market policies, the production and emphasis on qualifications, and importance laid on institutionalised knowledge and practice in the classroom as well as the workplace, lies in a process of social exclusion rather than technical or personal advance (Bourdieu and Passeron in Willis: 128). Qualifications reproduce class privilege and the state regulative framework – from tax and accounting principles to the institutionalisation of consent in a labour process context. Hackney Training and Employment Network report that certificates issued by training contractors to the New Deal, as well as government-promoted NVQs, are regarded by employers as ‘largely useless’ (Hutton et al 2003). Definitions of ‘skill’, intrinsic to job classification, are nuanced by distributions of power in the labour market and sphere of social reproduction (most noticeably around gender and ethnicity, but also with regard to the Olympics, international divisions of labour) and exhibit a strong ideological component. Craft unionism continues to be a strong force for demarcation.

– *Contesting safety negligence*

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**[A report by anarcho-syndicalist union International Workers of the World (IWW)] claims that, contrary to the impression created by the ODA, accident rates are much higher than reported because site managers do not report accidents such as cuts and muscular injuries. They cite two reports, one by a worker on the ... athletes’ village site who was told to stay in the canteen after injuring a tendon so that ‘the absence would not be reported’ and another by a worker who aggravated a back injury after it wasn’t treated. Among other failings the report states that there are too many obstructed walkways, fall-through points, unprotected trenches and unsecured ladders and platforms, particularly in the sector managed by PC Harrington, all of which represent serious hazards for workers and have resulted in ‘multiple accidents’. This is an indication of poor site planning. Workers are not being provided with ... protective equipment, like dust masks and goggles, and are having to work long shifts with pneumatic drills, which may result in vibration injuries. The report contends that proliferation of subcontractors has exacerbated these problems. It also claims there is a lack of clean toilets, hot water and washing and drying facilities and that workers face harassment for taking toilet breaks and have had to work in wet clothes in the recent cold weather.**

Julian Cheyne (2010/6). ‘Stratford City fatality follows safety warnings’, Games Monitor, February 2

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Action in December 2004 in King’s Cross against the imposition of contracts enforcing lower pay and longer hours by Olympic contractor Laing O’Rourke (a contract agreed by Union of Construction Allied Trades and Technicians [UCATT]), and the intimidation of migrant workers by company management, suggested a brutalised context for flagship Olympic developments and bleak prospect for local, national and international construction labour. The UK construction industry is notorious for casualised contracting, onsite hazard and deaths at work. UCATT Building Worker (2005/1) reported more than 300 onsite deaths nationally 2001–2004, that 90,000 construction workers suffered musculoskeletal injuries during 2000–2001 (double the all-industry average), and that over 1,500 workers were fired between 2000–2004 for raising safety concerns, a statistic exacerbated by subcontracting endemic to the sector.<sup>5</sup> In 2009, there were 53 construction fatalities, 11 in London (Marshall 2010). Jim Sheridan, Labour MP for Paisley and Renfrewshire North, moved a 10-minute Rule Bill in parliament on June 13, 2007. ‘[C]onstruction is the fastest growing sector of the economy, yet is also the least regulated,’ he said. ‘Worst of all, health and safety laws are being broken to such an extent that deaths in construction rose by a staggering 25 per cent last year. In fact, things are now so dangerous that construction workers are seven times more likely to die at work than workers in any other industry’ (Slavin 2007/5). One problem in London is that the Health and Safety Executive has insufficient staff – only 26 inspectors for the whole of the capital, thus 90 per cent of reported accidents are never investigated (ibid). In 2009, the Conservative party proposed to privatise the health and safety inspection process (Hoyle 2009). Construction activists argued that this would lead to an increase in deaths and serious accidents on building sites in the future (Construction.co.uk 2010).

- ODA signed an agreement in 2007 with major unions that may have decreased the extent of London 2012 subcontracting. The Memorandum of Agreement commits signatories to the ethos of a directly-employed workforce, for local employment, for safety as major priority, for training, and for dignity and respect. The agreement was signed by Unite, General Municipal Boilermakers and Allied Trade Union (GMB), and UCATT. (Regen.net 2007/2).
- Henry Sheridan, 58, from Luton, died in December 2008 after an excavator bucket fell on him while working at the Olympic rail extension site at West Ham. Workers downed tools at the Olympic site on Workers’ Memorial Day (April 28, 2010) and marched around the Olympic site, to mark his death alongside Shaun

<sup>4</sup> Offe, 1985: 35, 40, 42

<sup>5</sup> International Labour Organisation reports that work causes three times more deaths and suffering annually than wars throughout the world. More than two million people die from work-related accidents or disease every year. Construction, along with agriculture and mining, are listed as the three most dangerous occupations (Osborn 2002).

Scurry who died building Westfield Stratford City in December 2009. They were joined by families of the dead men, other construction safety activists and workers who had laid a wreath at the statue of the Unknown Building Worker in Tower Hill. In 2010, IWW alleged 'systematic breaches of basic health and safety standards' on the Olympic sites, which placed workers 'at risk of injury and death'. IWW also accused the police of 'intimidation of workers and harassment of union activists' and pointed to the 'exclusive sweetheart deal' with UCATT as cause of the 'proliferation of pyramid subcontracting' on the various sites, exacerbating health and safety hazards (Cheyne 2010/6).

ODA imposed gagging clauses in contracts of both subcontractors and employees that prevented workers from whistleblowing when health and safety issues arose. Abjol Miah (above) said 'We have already had asbestos scares, and as deadlines on contracts approach the pressure will inevitably grow for corners to be cut. We have to have strong union organisation and whistleblowing protection to ensure that health and safety is not jeopardised' (Slavin 2009/2).

The construction labour market is acutely international. UCATT estimated that 88,000 non-UK workers were employed in construction in January 2003, mostly in London and the south east. In 2005, the Trades Union Council (TUC) reported that 'migrant workers in the UK [were] subject to such levels of exploitation and control that [these met] the international definition of "forced labour"' (UCATT *ibid*). One TUC report, *Forced Labour and Migration to the UK* (Anderson and Rogaly 2005) found conditions in construction similar to those in sex slavery. Under New Labour, MPs campaigned for the extension of anti-gangmaster legislation across the industry (UCATT *ibid*).

– *Prospect of worker militancy*

Alan Ritchie, general secretary of UCATT, warned the House of Commons Business and Regulatory Reform Select Committee in 2007 that London 2012 faced an 'industrial relations disaster' if ODA did not agree a common site rate for construction workers on the Olympic park. Ritchie said that he believed there was need for a 'level playing field' on pay rates. He feared that some workers being paid less than others for the same work would leave for better work on site or alternatively down tools in protest, causing instability and delays (Builder and Engineer Online in Slavin 2007/6). The UK's largest union, Unite, warned that a decision by the European Court of Justice (ECJ) in 2008 on a case in Germany could mean that London 2012 venues would be built either on poverty wages or be derailed by industrial unrest. The case concerned a Polish subcontractor of the company Objekt und Bauregie which paid employees working on a prison building site only 46.5 per cent of the prescribed industry minimum wage. The ECJ found in favour of the company on the grounds of freedom of movement and the provision of services across the EU. Unite called for the powers of the ECJ to be curbed to allow national governments and national courts sovereignty on collective agreements and collective action (Slavin 2008). Nearer the event, unions for workers on the capital's tube and bus services, and the Heathrow Express, won financial concessions in return for keeping transport running during the Games. Daily Mail (Walker 2011) fulminated at the £1,800 'bonus bribe' to tube drivers not to disrupt the Olympics; Evening Standard (Murray and Cecil 2011) also called the payment a 'bribe', but put the figure at a maximum of £1,200, stating that all drivers would get a minimum of £800. Network Rail staff were due to receive a 10 per cent pay rise and a bonus of £500.

In November 2004, well before the bid decision, Lord Coe, London mayor Ken Livingstone and the chair of the LDA signed a five page statement of economic guarantees at City Hall. These included payment of the London 'living wage' (LLW) to all workers on Olympic projects, a construction training academy in east London, local labour clauses and allocation of land for affordable homes and a community land trust. However, London Citizens and TELCO continued to campaign close to the event for the commitments on labour to be honoured. Best value regulations restricted the ODA from requiring the 'living wage' to be written into all contracts. LOCOG was less than willing to promote it. LOCOG chair Seb Coe told the London Assembly in 2007 that the LLW would 'be a consideration but certainly not a condition' in evaluating contracts. By 2012, LOCOG had modified its position, suggesting that 'wherever possible' contracts for the event itself would be awarded to firms paying the City Hall-endorsed LLW rate, then £7.85 per hour, to an expected 130,000 workers (Evening Standard 2012/3).

- Illegal blacklisting of construction workers by the Consulting Association was clarified in 2012 in evidence to the House of Commons Scottish Affairs Select Committee. Julian Cheyne (2012) relayed reports by Construction Enquirer (Prior 2013) on Games Monitor: 'Ian Kerr [an ex-Special Branch officer and director of the Consulting Association] claimed [Sir Robert] McAlpine had helped set up his blacklisting operation with a £10,000 loan and had paid Kerr's fine when he was convicted in 2009 of breaching data protection laws. McAlpine did not dispute the statement but simply asserted that the Construction Association was "established by a large group of construction companies". Balfour Beatty claimed some of the points raised by Mr Kerr were "new to us". Earlier in November Dennis Hone, then director of finance and corporate services at the ODA, had said ODA was unaware of any blacklisting on the Olympic site. He said in evidence to the Select Committee: "The ODA did not receive any evidence or could not find any evidence of blacklisting on the Olympic park during the construction phase or otherwise." He went on to claim that: "At that time there was a discussion with our contractors and we requested evidence from people making the allegations and no evidence was forthcoming. If it had been then we would have gone after the contractors involved.'" Cheyne notes that UCATT uncovered 'a spike in payments from McAlpine to the Consulting Association between July and September 2009, confirming his financial involvement'.

Olympic economic development policy operationalised a neoclassical (and neoliberal) conception of competition, that is, the presence of many firms competing in a given market and on market forms of cooperation, such as (and despite fears of casualisation) interfirm subcontracting. It sought to weight strength of local SMEs by capital subsidy and spatial policy (and with information now a factor market). That is, policy sought to strengthen a reified 'locality' (defined by the territory of host boroughs) as bidder at the same time as it (via the Olympic development process) intensified the competitive milieu. This, while perfectly valid, revealed a fundamental contradiction: exposure and potential displacement of existing firms, a frequent problem with local economic initiatives (Gough 1996: 392–398).

Perhaps because of this flagship postfordist policy, expectations point strongly toward highly casualised (insecure) employment in the longer term, even in more prestigious and higher-waged technology and media industries moving to the former Olympic precinct site, plus low wages (national minimum rates for younger workers) in the periphery (now euphemised as 'growth boroughs'). Athens 2004 corporation chief, Gianna Agelopoulos, suggested that (internationally) the Olympic Games would develop 'a new model of labour', more flexible and intensive than before. While one might argue that any 'new model' has been with us since the 1980s, symptomatic of polarising postfordist tendencies across specific sectors, 'flexploitation' (Gray 2004) – where flexibilisation of the labour market is accompanied by a major increase of job insecurity and underemployment, and actively promoted by benefit and labour market regimes – appeared implicitly to be defined as grounding principle. LDA strategy would seem to fall into what economic geographer Jamie Peck (1996: 130–131) has characterised as the 'low road from Fordism'. That is, based on principles of 'defensive flexibility': 'deregulation, individualised employment relations, job insecurity and sharpened competition'. To which one might also add 'mobility'. In 2006, London Chamber of Commerce and Industry speculated that workers could be recruited abroad to plug skills shortages around the Olympic and legacy developments in construction, transport, security, tourism and IT (Fuller 2006).

By an absence of geographical barriers to flows of money capital, contracting, labour and firm migration, neoliberalism imposes the discipline of value with full force. Class relations may be reproduced through varied combinations of coercion and incorporation: the state is infused by this tension. After Eisenschitz and Gough (1998: 760) one sees clearly the state here as imitation, neither serving the needs of capital nor acting as guarantor of social reproduction, but rather acting out the social relations of capitalist property, accumulation and exploitation. LDA posits consensus in the interests of locality – calling forced removal of existing firms 'regeneration', throwing a false legitimacy over capital via the Olympic proposals and local labour agreements, and opening a path via training, contract compliance and capital subsidy, for an intensification of the rule of value, a discipline on individuals and firms. And as Gough (1996: 392–393) notes: as with contingency (above), when labour is more geographically mobile it becomes more abstract and replaceable.

Economic development strategy also sought to offset the crisis for workers engendered by flexible contracting and volatility of technologised innovation (a centrifugal force within postfordist labour markets), coopting the Olympic development project into a (neo-Keynsian) experiment in social, labour market and welfare state regulation. Such cooption can be seen as typical of the mode of regulation underpinning, in particular, New Labour postfordist social democracy – a marginalist current reflexive to the production and reproduction of variable capital (that is, the disciplined worker [Melossi 1979]) in the context of wider regulatory compliance – and exacerbated in the current decade by further disciplinary measures leveraged against the un- or underemployed. Economic development policy and land-use planning can be regarded as among the defining 'technologies' of contemporary governance, and with labour and property markets constitute a central power mechanism of capitalist societies (Edwards 2000).

There is a sense of economic development as an elite project, and in east London, of socialised conceptions of disparity and uneven development informing a local acceptance of the Olympics themselves and promoted training, small-firm promotion and infrastructural proposals. Economic development strategy itself stalled some time ago at a national level in what has been described as a 'centrist' framework and exhibits little critical thought or left innovation (Eisenschitz and Gough 1993). In London, and since 2010, impetus has been placed on the private sector, notably large transnationals, to define and finance sectoral restructuring initiatives. For the worker, economic development policy is predicated routinely on the transience of opportunity, and of marginal increments in economic benefit. Yet here, even this limited horizon has been overshadowed by the scale of initial job displacement from Olympic boroughs (see BP1 §2.3), and 'flexi-security' of projected growth sectors of both development and legacy phases.

Economic discipline transversalises into authoritarian social policy. After the bid decision in 2005, Olympic preparations were coopted as vehicle for the New Labour Respect Action Plan coinciding with the May 2006 local elections. Political rhetoric veered intensely to the right. At a meeting on January 24, 2006, in Leyton, headlined 'How the Olympics can strengthen our community', Tessa Jowell (then minister for culture, media and sport) described young people as responsible for 'debasement of society', the mere sight of them causing others 'a sense of apprehension'. Sport was projected as building 'community cohesion' and organised youth activities such as boxing (so reminiscent of the 1940s) suggested on a national basis as diversion from graffiti and menace. No London 2012 activist, Keith Prince of Waltham Forest Respect party, noted a fascist nuance reminiscent of the Nazi Strength Through Joy programme of the 1930s after hearing Tessa Jowell's speech. Such naked party ambition was underlined by the presence of a number of young people brought in for the occasion as virtuous exemplars, dressed in the red uniforms of Waltham Forest's SafetyNet Community Partnership Unit Young Wardens. Jowell herself also embarked on a three-week 'roadshow' around the UK (promotion of volunteering and skills training were key themes), and held a 'business summit' at Canary Wharf on economic benefit during July 2006 (Prince 2006).

- HMP Wayland at Griston, near Watton, announced that from February 2007 it would become 'a national hub for prison labour', supplying big business with skilled workers from jails across the UK. Industry bosses welcomed the scheme saying that it would help plug growing labour shortfalls in the UK, 'particularly ahead of the London 2012 Olympics'. The scheme won £35,000 from the Prince's Trust and at the time of the announcement the prison administration was applying for another £40,000 from Lloyds TSB, with the hope of government backing if the initiative proved successful (Eastern Daily Press 2006).
- On February 10, 2006, Alan Travis reported in the Guardian that those convicted of minor crimes (with prison sentences of 12 months or less) would be required to undertake unpaid work to cut down prison numbers. The government's five-year plan which contained this announcement included work on Olympic site preparation specifically. This is tantamount to the reintroduction of hard labour (or penal servitude) and links Olympic developments into what is known in the US as the prison-industrial complex.
- London Civic Forum positioned the voluntary sector as key vector of Olympic social policy (employment and skills, volunteer recruitment, health inequalities, legacy planning, translation, contractor support, and crime prevention) through its project the Big Opportunity, launched on June 26, 2007. This promoted the prospect of commercial Olympic contracts to third sector organisations. One group, Community Action Team, claimed to London Civic Forum that it was 'best placed to gauge levels of grievances arising from the Games, as well as to help alleviate any social unrest in the run-up' (LCF 2007: 11).

## 2.4 Legacy 'convergence' – from security to reflexive government

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**The percentage of affordable homes will depend on future financial constraints. In fact, because land will have to be sold to recover costs the amount of affordable housing may well be lower than it would otherwise have been. The reality is that land values and rents rise following these events meaning local people find it harder to stay in the area and gentrification leads to the arrival of a new population. The statistics will change but so will the people.**

Julian Cheyne (2010/7). 'More bl\*\*ging censorship', Games Monitor, January 11

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By 2012, the six Olympic boroughs (afterwards renamed 'growth boroughs': Newham, Hackney, Tower Hamlets, Greenwich, Waltham Forest and – from 2010 – Barking and Dagenham) held '18 per cent of London's population but 62 per cent of areas [in the capital] with the highest levels of deprivation' (London Boroughs 2012: 4). In 2013, the Guardian website (Hill 2013) reported that caps on Housing Benefit across London were pushing claimants into the former Olympic boroughs; in Newham, claimant numbers were up by 41 per cent.

One key Legacy publication, the Strategic Regeneration Framework (known as the Convergence document) drafted by the Host Boroughs Unit, was published in 2009. It dropped historic pretensions of technocracy – the feeding of economic drivers, supply, demand and context – that had fuelled the LDA socioeconomic assessment (ibid) attached to Olympic planning applications in 2004. Instead, the Convergence document articulated a drive towards the virtuous, disciplined and responsible autonomy of citizenry, with institutional achievements quantified by public accounting. Targets aimed to equalise life chances with the rest of London over 20 years. The metabolic heresy of obesity is ranged as enemy number two. Deficits of employment and income are conceived in terms of regional planning outputs, educational attainment and benefit 'dependency' (targeting social housing tenants specifically), but also overcrowding, fuel poverty, the need to raise standards of private rental accommodation alongside health outcomes and sporting participation, reducing violent crime and so-called 'anti-social' or 'bad' behaviour. 'Problems' are 'fixed' via governmental mechanisms alone: improved teaching in schools, JobCentre Plus, New Deal providers and so on. One can see a shift from the C19/C20 Liberal problematic of security (a 'material, technical, practical, governmental' concern with liberty as a limit to intervention [Rose 1999: 63] – that is, 'government at a distance' [ibid: 49]) – to the enhancement of market rationalities in 'secular' existence [ibid: 166] ('maximising ... entrepreneurial comportment of the individual ... the will to self-actualise' [ibid: 144]), and policy redefinition of the individual in relation to reconfigured (reflexive) modes of administration (Dean 1999).

In common with other planning documents, 'change' is presented as 'transformative' (that is, as positive, rather than disruptive or damaging), a discourse strategy remarked as central to managerialism by Clarke and Newman (1997). Prescriptive statements make change appear constructive, achievable and accountable. 'The focus is on ... paradigm shifts involving ... dismantling of ... the old social order of the welfare state settlement and the ways of thinking that sustained [it]' (ibid: 42). Bureaucracy is identified as leader of change (to the author's knowledge, there has been no public consultation around this document or subsequent modifications). As managerialist artefact, the Convergence document 'has set the agenda of change, defined its meaning, its direction and the means of its accomplishment. It is the core [document] that other contending positions must negotiate ... In particular, it has established the need to remake organisational forms of the state around the managerial prerogative' (ibid: 5). That is, the document defines the direction of local state restructuring.

What comes through in evaluation (2009–2011 and 2011–2012) is the volatility of national context and extent to which legislative reforms can sabotage local authority target setting. The second evaluation comments:

The Localism Act and the Welfare Reform Act received [r]oyal [a]scent respectively in November 2011 and March 2012 ... Together with ... impacts of the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) and ... changes outlined in the Local Government Finance Bill (due to be enacted later in 2012) these financial and legislative changes present a very different framework within which to deliver Convergence from the one that was in place in 2009 (London Boroughs 2012: 5) .

Evaluators were optimistic ('These will bring in significant changes to the welfare system and shift power from central government to communities and councils'). However, they note (ibid: 26) the government's Place Survey as abandoned, making it impossible to track levels of street cleanliness or 'anti-social' behaviour (ibid). In housing, legislative changes (such as caps on Universal Credit and Local Housing Allowance) were regarded as 'likely to impact negatively' (ibid) on residents due to a higher proportion already on benefits and existing levels of overcrowding, especially in Newham and Tower Hamlets (ibid: 27). Evaluators (ibid) had 'significant concerns about the new 'affordable' rent regime', especially for families in larger properties. Numbers of people undertaking no sporting activity at all during 2011–2012 rose in Barking and Dagenham, Greenwich and Newham (ibid: 21); however, data for children doing PE at school is also stated as no longer collected at the national level (ibid: 25).

Olympic developments enabled evaluators to massage what figures they did collect. Delivery of 10,500 affordable units out of 16,500 completions (over 63.6 per cent) reads as impressive but the athletes' village was counted within the performance targets, accounting for 79 per cent of new starts in Newham (London Boroughs 2011: 7), and it is not clear quite how Olympic units were classified in relation to government rental criteria (impacting on affordability counts). Violent crime increased slightly between 2009 and 2011 (ibid: 10), and the gap between the host boroughs and the London average decreased by almost two per cent in 2011–2012 (London Boroughs 2012: 27). Median earnings 2009–2011 for full-time workers became worse and the gap between host boroughs and the London average increased from £30.70 to £39.40 per week (ibid: 14). Job counts relied on temporary posts created by the Olympic event to boost performance. Although local schemes put 3,800 people through training in 2009–2010 (London Boroughs 2011: 6), 'the employment rate ... reduced from the 2009 position [in] Newham, Tower Hamlets and Hackney. In terms of the unemployment rate the situation since 2009 has worsened in every borough' (London Boroughs 2012: 13).

There was better news on educational attainment: targets for pupils achieving at least level 4 in English and Maths at Key Stage 2 were 'on track for convergence in 2014–2015', and pupil's achievement of five GCSE grades A\*–C (including English and Maths) had reached its target early (ibid: 16). The significant gap between the host boroughs and London average on child poverty narrowed slightly (ibid: 19), and the gap for adults with no qualifications was down 4.9 percentage points (ibid: 18).

## 2.5 Volunteering

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**It is imperative to call into question the government's communitarian ethos – the constitution of the 'responsible subject' (now the 'managerial', 'creative', 'sporting', and 'tidy' subject) – here building through the global signifier of sustainable development (and bolstered separately by an evocation of 'art', 'administration' and 'order'). The call for 70,000 volunteers for London 2012 was reminiscent of voluntary postwar construction of the Budapest Népstadion in Stalinist Hungary (contemporaneous with dictator Mátyás Rákosi's Ready to Work and Fight Movement of sporting youth). The Olympic event – corporate, expensive and elitist – was elevated to transcendent goal (beyond conflict). There was also an attempted synchronisation of the subject reconstituted as 'national' ('Make Britain Proud') with the moral ideologies of the state.**

Project Mimique (2005). '2012 Olympics and the institutionalisation of consent', leaflet issued for the London Social Forum conference (Whose London?), City Hall, London, October 29

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With the active collusion of environmental organisations, British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (BTCV) and Groundwork, Olympic volunteering (unwaged conservation labour) was touted as corporate team building and leadership training for youth (London 2012 and TimeBank 2004). In fact, 25 years of voluntary environmental labour in the Lower Lea Valley, undertaken often by local residents, was destroyed by Olympic proposals. Habitat management organisations seemed happy to act as tools of neoliberal social policy (as above, facilitating workfare and prison labour) and at least one, BTCV, has undermined practical conservation as a livelihood for over 30 years by forcing destitution paycales on its staff.

Original projections for numbers of volunteers stood at 47,000 (Poynter 2004), with the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) predicting a need for more dedicated specifically to information technology. ATOS Origin, who eventually won the contract as IT supplier engaged 2,000 volunteers for Athens 2004 (McCue 2005). By 2005, projected requirements for unwaged workers had escalated to 70,000 (BBC News 2005). This figure was reduced for a time to 50,000, but reinstated by the event. Around 250,000 people applied for volunteer positions (Daily Telegraph ibid). Applicants were recruited and trained by transnational fastfood chain and TOP sponsor McDonald's, with interviews held in the ExCel centre in Canning Town. 'Games Makers' were nicknamed 'McVolunteers' (ThisisLondon 2010; Evening Standard 2012/5). According to ThisisLondon, McVolunteers would not receive any tickets, and perks were to be limited to the uniform (marketed by Adidas), meal vouchers, free use of London transport and possibly subsidised train tickets for those from outside the capital. Lord Coe told parliament that volunteers should be prepared to sleep on friends' floors if they needed somewhere to stay in London.

## 2.6 Resisting normativity: fat activism

The fat body has moved from relative invisibility to object of moral panic in the space of the last 15 years. To be fat now is to be regarded as socially deviant, branded with the stigma of poverty, a 'faulty consumer' within the paradigms of late capitalism. Images of fatness cluster with the refusal of work in policy scenarios. Schools have become sensitised to the body weight of their pupils, and health educators articulate a normative crisis in national eating habits. In the run-up to London 2012 'the body' objectified was placed centre stage. The text below is



taken from an interview with Charlotte Cooper (Smith 2012), who describes herself as a 'queer fat activist' living in Stratford, east London. The full text can be found at: <http://www.gamesmonitor.org.uk/node/1647>.

**GM: Olympic rhetoric around body size revolves around a biomedical model. How does this model impact on fat people and on fat children especially? How do you challenge this discourse?**

CC: The image of the Olympic athlete is one that is supposed to inspire people to embodied greatness, but this is also an alienating image if your body is not that ideal. I think the Paralympics goes some way in addressing this, but it's still an event that is about ultra-competitiveness, nationalism and corporate power, which inevitably leaves a trail of losers in its wake. I think it's very hard for kids, especially in schools in the Olympic boroughs, because this athletic, sporty ideal is being pushed very hard right now, in a stigmatising and bullying way, and it exists within a wider context of anti-obesity campaigns aimed at children, such as Change4Life and [celebrity chef] Jamie Oliver's work. I think these weight-based initiatives are building a foundation for long-term problems with eating and bodies, they are profoundly shaming. I challenge biomedical discourse on fat through my activism. Many fat activists are interested in countering obesity discourse claims, but my interests are in creating communities and cultures, and documenting fat activist histories, that are somewhat autonomous and exist beyond the boundaries of medicalisation ...

**GM: In a Foucauldian schema, bodies trained in disciplinary institutions and by implication, disciplinary regimes such as fitness, are regarded as 'docile', that is as an object and target of power: 'a body is docile that may be subjected, used, transformed and improved' (Foucault 1977: 136), which makes the fat body (resistant to normalising discourses) an 'active' one. How would you respond?**

I think the idea that fat is resistance is a romantic one and that most fat people don't feel that way at all ... But resistance is important. There is plenty of attention paid to Foucault and governmentality in fat studies, but I tend to think that this is a truncated means of theorising what's going on. Foucault also talks about power and resistance, and, like him, I believe that people in the most dire circumstances can enact some form of power ... In this way I think that power, agency, resistance and activism are really vital means of making life bearable. In my research I've found that most fat activism isn't of the being in the streets and waving placards variety, although that does happen, and many people in fat activism are invested in speaking upwards to power through legislative and policy change, for example. Instead, most fat activism takes place in micro moments ... I love the everyday accessibility of these forms of resistance, they can be very small and unheroic and also amazingly transformative.

**GM: In the Convergence strategic regeneration framework (Host Boroughs Unit 2009), 'obesity' is factored in as a major problem ... What are the implications of including the body in governmental frameworks?**

CC: The Convergence document does not surprise me, it's creating a stereotype of workshy fat people, about whom something must be done. Hello stigma! They're not alone though, it's common for organisations of all kinds that have anything at all to do with bodies and health, to have some kind of anti-obesity thing on their mission statement, the Ramblers Association and London Cycling Campaign spring to mind. It's a load of crap, and really alienating for fat people who might otherwise want to join or get support from them.

**GM: How did we get into this position? Is there a genealogy of [fat] stigma?**

CC: I think fat is another intersection in the many ways that people are marginalised and that these have many genealogies ... Fat pushes people's buttons, it gets in the way, it really, really upsets people. I think these are excellent qualities! There's a big rhetoric of inclusion surrounding the Olympics, of sport as a thing that ameliorates social barriers, and fat people, who have bitter experience of always being picked last for the team, expose the limitations of this hype. Fat people are living evidence that the competition enshrined in Olympics values does not make everything better for everyone, especially in the host borough of Newham, where I live, which has one of the fattest demographics in the country. Given this, fat activists are really well-placed to aim a dart or two at the Olympics-industrial-complex and look amazing and inspiring when doing so. It's easy for us to get away with things because fat is apparently so funny, so silly, so trivial, and so completely under the radar of anyone who would want to, for example, suppress legitimate protest. Many activists seek political visibility, but there are more things you can do when the people in power don't have the capacity to recognise your existence.

More information and links are available at <http://www.charlottecooper.net> and (for the event on July 7, 2012, in Memorial Park, West Ham) <http://fattylympics.blogspot.co.uk>. See also Charlotte's 2010 article 'Olympics/Uhlympics: Living in the Shadow of the Beast', <http://www.thirdspace.ca/journal/article/view/cooper>

### 3. INSTITUTIONALISATION OF CONSENT

#### 3.1 Media coverage

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**Communication not only expresses but also organises the movement of globalisation ... by multiplying and structuring interconnections through networks ... the imaginary is guided and channeled within the communicative machine ... mediation is absorbed within the productive machine. The political synthesis of social space is fixed in this space of communication. That is why communication industries have assumed such a central position ... [they] make its justification immanent. Power as it produces, organises; as it organises, it speaks and expresses itself as authority.**

Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri (2000). *Empire*, Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, pages 32–33

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– *Narrative stability in TV news*

*Text below is from a leaflet by Project Mimique drafted for the London Social Forum conference, October 29, 2005.*

Media treatment of the London 2012 Olympic bid revealed a narrative striving for credibility as index of locality and remediation of Olympic tradition (Cohen 2004), exposing a simulacrum of modernity, a policy discourse of self-development and economic development (Cooke 1988), bolstered by the depoliticising mediation of multiculturalism. After the bid decision on July 6, 2005, and subsequent bombings, Trevor Phillips described the London Olympics as ‘recognition that our capital offers the best real-world answer that humanity has to the challenge of ethnic and religious diversity’. But one might counter that media treatment of the Olympic bid, and London 2012 media strategies are, in fact, raised as postfascist mystifications. Backed up by attacks on civil liberties and a generalisation of racist policing, surface forms of this mystification included, alongside multiculturalism, the body-without-obstacles and the nation state. Such aestheticisation is the process of myth ... Much of the Olympic promotion was achieved via TV news broadcasts, and ITN were explicit in their support for the bid. The televised message has a finality which is not so much a function of actual referential content as of the relation between sensory receiver and referent (McLuhan in Guiraud 1971: 16). Viewers are receptive, and implicated in communication of the message. There is a one dimensionality involved. The socialised viewer provides the message with each repetition of encounter; a moment of narrative stability in the heterogenous media flux (which is itself a process of containment), fixing the viewer as spectator and benignly affirmative. The shift from cynicism to an affirmative interest was built by this technique – a reduction of content to the extent that the image (devoid of intrinsic signification) was really all that was there, reinforced by compulsion towards closure of the (simple) enigma (would London win?) The bid promoters constantly reiterated that the bid itself was ‘competent’; the press and London mayor Ken Livingstone that there would be ‘quality’ regeneration for the Lower Lea Valley. These ‘facts’ were challenged by no one except No London 2012.

Dealing with a televisual phenomenon, one is acutely aware of processes of spectacularisation: social relations of uneven development mediated by images of bureaucratic ‘glad-handing’, state mobilisation of citizens around a call for sporting and moral excellence – honed multiracial bodies – and a call for 70,000 volunteers to staff the event. This attempts containment of mass society via manipulation of individual subjectivity and agency, and – to rephrase Debord (1983) – the reduction of politics to a question of sport (‘Are you for or against a London Olympics?’).

For IOC broadcasting rights profits, please see BP2 §2.3.

– *Social media*

In 2007, Charlie Tims of postcommunist think tank Demos, pointing to the success of YouTube, Flickr, Wikipedia and the blog, suggested in a thoughtful paper that ‘[i]t is not unreasonable to assume that the communication of London during the Olympic Games ... will be a collective, dispersed activity,’ adding ‘the audience for London and the post-exotic city will be harder to reach and what will be communicated will be harder to control.’

This was the case at Vancouver 2010, where citizen journalists (bloggers, Twitter aficionados) organised to create independent media centres, covering everything from sport to local heritage, and discussed aspects of the

Olympic programme and its ethos. One of these centres, True North Media House, even embraced a DIY approach to accreditation, asking its journalists to download a media pass, attach their own photograph and laminate it themselves. Social media academic Andy Miah of Leicester University proposed something similar for London 2012, the Abandon Normal Devices Festival, (on Twitter @ANDfestival, #ANDfest) (Miah 2010). The hope was that citizen journalism would lure journalists away from official media centres and out onto the streets of the capital. In part, one could argue that Miah's strategy implied a socialisation of Olympic governance – he hoped to make #media2012 the dominant hashtag on Twitter during the Games – but he also (laudably) hoped to raise the profile of the Paralympics, which previously had received scant coverage. Sadly, the project was unable to access premises in London and failed to materialise.

IOC has also moved in the direction of social media. At Vancouver 2010, it teamed up with Yahoo to produce a Flickr meet up, and since 2008 has been broadcasting content through YouTube, Facebook and Twitter accounts (Miah *ibid*). Computer games are also on IOC radar. Miah reframed Tims' assertion into a question: 'Will the IOC be able to retain ... strong control of its intellectual property, or will it develop new methods of making money?'

#### – *Print media*

Government ministers kept close relations with newspaper and broadcasting executives. In the three months between January 1 and March 31 2012, sports minister Hugh Robertson held a total of 11 meetings on (viably) Olympic-related business with executives of national newspapers and broadcasting corporations, specifically NBC News, Daily Mail and Mail on Sunday, Daily Telegraph, Independent and Independent on Sunday, and the BBC (DCMS 2012). Relations between reporters, editorial executives and sport industry lobbyists can also be close – perhaps too close for comfort – attested by reports of the membership list of the cosy Olympic Journalists' Association (Dowding 2009 citing Jennings 2009).

In September 2011, regional publisher Newsquest charged the BOA with withholding press passes for the Games to local and regional papers. BOA hoped to rely on the Press Association to syndicate news. Andrew Parkes, group managing editor for Newsquest South and West London, talked of local media being left '[standing] at the gate', while Richard Firth suggested they had 'received a collective slap in the face' (Bould 2011). The Newspaper Society, an industry lobby group, brokered an agreement in May 2012 for 39 passes accorded to local and regional publications (22 to reporters, seven to photographers working for regional newspapers and groups, plus another 10 venue-specific passes to newspapers in London and Weymouth). However, local free newspapers and websites still complained of being excluded (Lambourne 2012).

#### – *Marketing*

London 2012 public relations issued regular newsletters informing locals of construction progress, peppered with splash statistics such as '300,000 wetland plants used within the park' (Batsworth 2010/2). Employment advertising intimated the (alchemical) transmigration of souls. ODA job applicants were solicited with superlative enthusiasm (a tensioned irreality of C21 Faustian compacts, the Dreamer and the Lover at behest of developing agency). In 2010, ODA advertised for a £44K marketing manager. Mephistopheles beckoned thus: 'Live the dream, Go for Gold and Be THE BEST! Sports Marketing role for The Olympics. A DREAM role to be part of the future ... building a sustainable, profitable and socially-networked Marketing Plan. The Olympic Games. Do you want to leave your footprint on the greatest game on earth? Are you a passionate marketer with Sports Industry, Through-the-line Marketing and Public Sector experience, who wants to make a difference on a GLOBAL STAGE? Do you have the X-FACTOR? Can you magic GOLD faster, stronger and prettier than an ALCHEMIST? If so, this job is for you ... And look no further... your future is set' (Batsworth 2010/1).

This discourse carried through into social policy programmes, where it declined into patronising monotony. The Accentuate programme, operational in the south east (the 'Welcome Region') and funded by the Legacy Trust UK, aimed to tackle disadvantage among the disabled population, 'raise aspirations and celebrate excellence': so '[t]hat people across the south east [would] have raised awareness of and [would be] inspired by the values of personal best, going for gold and excellence'. Disabled persons were to be 'offered strategies to help them adopt these values in their own lives' (London2012.com, no longer online). Projects were eligible for the 'Inspire' mark. Richard Morrison (2008) described similar discourse articulating the Cultural Olympiad as 'Orwellian', but this misses the contemporary nuance. In his book, *Powers of Freedom* (1999), Nikolas Rose details the myriad of forms in which liberty, our very desire to live, is 'aligned' by policy discourse to integrate its own restructuring initiatives. Rose terms this 'the dynamics of translation' (*ibid*: 48), where 'government at a distance' inflects the individual and interest group as 'counterweight' and 'limit' (*ibid*: 49) to its own powers and budgetary finance.

- ODA was given a Building Public Trust Award for Excellence in Reporting in December 2010 (Batsworth 2010/1).
- Neofunctionalist imagery underlining the Olympic park and associated property developments effected a flattening of perceptual differences. Games Monitor was surprised to find this rationality operational in school visits to the Field Studies Council outdoor classroom on the Olympic site, where rebranding (coupled with 'regeneration') was defined as necessary criteria for urban change (Charlie 2011).
- Daily Express (Wooller 2011) reported that more than 700 children 'who dreamt of taking part in the opening ceremony of the 2012 London Olympics ... had their hopes dashed'. Officials had promised that every child born in the UK on December 20 2004 (the bid submission date) would be invited to the capital to celebrate the Games. Parents who applied for the Children's Promise at the time, were told that their newborns would have roles in events, 'such as the opening and closing ceremonies', and as a result, raised their children to

believe they would be among the privileged few to take part. Instead they were told that they would only be involved in the torch relay, possibly two months before the event.

- Olympic mascots, one-eyed Wenlock and Mandeville, infiltrated children's comic the Beano and (for the sum of £850) were offered as celebrity visitors to schools. One film featuring the mascots was withdrawn because it might trigger epileptic fits. In the Daily Express, David Pilditch (2010) charged that the film was made by a Chinese company, raising ire from industry lobbyists Animation UK.

For brand protection, please see BP2 §2.3.

### 3.2 Planning processes

Planning process around the Olympic proposals was deployed as binding and coercive agent in the context of what geographer Neil Brenner (2001: 799) has described as 'a major recalibration of social power relations mediated in and through the state apparatus', where 'emergent patterns of authoritarian statism entail a significant enhancement of the state's role in mobilising space as a productive force'.

Powers of London's mayor were up for review in February 2006 in advance of modifications in the Planning White Paper that proposed centralisation of authority and decision-making for 'strategic' applications. Enhanced London mayoral powers came into effect in spring 2008 (the white paper was published in 2007). Since then, the mayor has been able to direct local authority planning departments to grant permission for defined categories of strategic planning application where it was intending to refuse. Also, a wider range of applications have come to be regarded as 'strategic' and thus referred to the mayor. The London mayor also gained the power of direction over local authority plans. A similar scenario was rolled out across the UK with creation of the Infrastructure Planning Commission, replaced in June 2010 by the Major Infrastructure Planning Unit, to fast-track major applications (DCLG 2010). In 2010 also, the London mayor and GLA took over work of the Homes and Communities Agency in London, and central government funding to the GLA for housing and regeneration, transport and skills training were all ringfenced. The London mayor with the transport secretary became responsible for awarding franchises for London suburban rail lines. GLA also took control of the Port of London Authority. The LDA (GLA's economic development wing) was closed in 2012 (Marrs 2010).

Olympic planning decisions were made within tightly closed systems of reference. The Joint Planning Authorities Team (JPAT), regulatory body charged with modifying applications and advising local authorities on viability and issues raised by Olympic proposals, was part of the LDA, itself a constituent body of the mayor's GLA. LDA submitted the Olympic planning applications in the first place. Responsibility for consultation around planning applications in the UK lies with the developing company not the planning authority. One should emphasise that the ODA was both. For the Olympic developments there was concurrently a corporate mission to enthuse (to socialise support, by the mayor as well as GLA and London 2012) as well as to consult (undertaken by both the GLA's JPAT and LDA-employed consultants), and these relationships could be viewed as conflicts of interest. Those considering democratic deficit might also note that both ODA and London Legacy Development Corporation were set up as urban development corporations (and thus operate without public oversight, but with some local authority input).

Proposals that might be considered 'strategic' often generate most public outcry: airport expansion, tube and rail proposals, sewerage, water and waste facilities, demolition of housing for parks, and Thames Gateway developments spring to mind. While strategic infrastructure has its own validity, it is insidious that debate and local influence over planning applications and location of facilities should be curtailed by this extension of London mayoral powers. In 2005, reasoning by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) seemed uncomfortable: their consultation document linked increased mayoral powers to the (nebulous) GLA duty toward sustainable development, suggesting that if (for instance) action to prevent global climate change would benefit from such an increase in mayoral authority, then the increase in mayoral powers might be justified simply within these terms (ODPM 2006).

In contesting Olympic planning applications, campaigners found also that local authorities were mired in a normative paradigm of 'opportunity', something institutionalised in managerialist ethos (and training) of planners, and bolstered by barriers to local government finance.

- LDA appeared for some time to be lobbying against their own regulatory modifications. Grampian conditions concerning a statutory mandate to provide exchange land attached to the applications by JPAT were legislated out in parliamentary process around the London Olympic Games and Paralympic Games Bill 2005. Those attempting to lobby the Lords over this surprise amendment found it hard to make headway, not least because peers were often absent from the chamber, but also because the Olympic event enjoyed so much crossparty support. LDA also reneged on Grampian conditions to rehouse all residents of the Clays Lane estate (that is, not just those with tenancies and up-to-date rent accounts) and to relocate non-registered residents of the Clays Lane and Waterden Road Travellers' sites (see BP1 §2.1).

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**In London, there has been a lack of consultation with local groups, compounded by inadequate notice for meetings. In Hackney, council officials lacked knowledge of the extent of proposals, making promises that turned out to be false when the plans were published. Local authorities are starved of money, officials grab any opportunity or face being left out. Opposition is effectively silenced.**

Anne Woollett (2005). 'The London Olympic bid should be scrapped ...', statement for No London 2012 press conference, February 14

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Activists found a pronounced attempt to institutionalise consent via borough-level consultation procedures, and unevenness in approach by consultants to the various resident groupings threatened with displacement. In the run-up to the bid decision, the public were invited to consider possible benefits only, not harm, and bribed with free use of local sporting facilities as the bid neared its deadline. Environmentalists complained of a lack of more formal consultation and lack of notice for meetings which, at times, forced an absence of group discussion or even presence. Conversely, Gypsies and Travellers resident at Clays Lane and Waterden Crescent have pointed to a surfeit of consultation with very little substance. Manor Gardens allotment holders were not consulted initially at all about their prospective removal, although some attempt at dialogue was made by LDA after it forced the relocation agreement. Residents of the former housing co-operative at Clays Lane were treated to an all-singing-and-dancing presentation extolling the benefits for regeneration if London was awarded the Games, and then informed that their estate was unviable and that it would be removed regardless of outcome of the bid. Only in February 2006 did LDA recruit a liaison officer to advise individual tenants and mediate their concerns, and conceded funding for independent legal advice (an item fudged in the Grampian conditions of the 2004 planning applications). For other details here, please see BP1 §2.1.

Urban sociologist, Marike van Harskamp, who undertook a research project on the consultation process in 2003–2004 had this to say about the systematic exclusion of dissent and absence of discussion on regeneration priorities:

Like the bidding process itself, the consultation period was typified by a lack of public debate and input. Both LDA and London 2012 claim to have run a thorough and successful community consultation process during the two years between the bid announcement and London 'winning' the 2012 Games. These claims can be challenged in many ways, almost all of which highlight the undemocratic nature and tokenism of consultation. The consultation process included prestatutory consultation events in the autumn of 2003, and a further two statutory consultation rounds in the first half of 2004. The latter were guided by JPAT, while the former were organised by a company specialising in facilitating community engagement. During each of these stages the emphasis was firmly on the regeneration masterplans.

The masterplans set up a firm top-down approach to local stakeholder input, despite claiming that these drew on previous consultation responses from the initial regeneration proposals of the LLV Matrix Group. In addition to this restriction of public deliberation, the consultation worked with a confusing mix of Olympic, non-Olympic and legacy versions of the masterplan. Information and feedback on, for example, housing, transport, employment and anticipated costs, was often absent, ambiguous or inconsistent. Typically, especially during the more 'participatory' prestatutory phase, much of the information and discussion was focused on, or (re)shaped by, issues relating to the Olympic event itself rather than wider concerns of 'regeneration' in the Lower Lea Valley area.

Local and grassroots input was squeezed further from the interplay between (official) 'public involvement' and political/strategic decision-making, due to the pressure of IOC (bidding) deadlines. Such time limits also restricted the scope, depth and research of the consultation. Out of necessity, LDA started land acquisition in the Lower Lea Valley prior to the July decision. IOC rules and requirements for Olympic facilities quite clearly did not sit comfortably with (claims for) 'community-led regeneration' or, even more modestly, specific local needs and desires such as existing recreation grounds, as the debates about East Marsh clarify.

As so often with deliberative and even participatory approaches, the consultation process discouraged and at times was prohibitive of dissent, opposition and alternative forms of public involvement. For instance, posters and banners opposing or criticising the Olympic-led regeneration plans have been systematically removed, even when hung up legally. Critical contributions made during the prestatutory public meetings ('talkshops') were often downplayed and sometimes ridiculed by the 'expert panel' of masterplanners, London 2012 and LDA representatives. Letters of discontent were usually answered with an envelope of 'Back the Bid' material, underlining again the very thin line between consultation and marketing.

In any context of global events being used or promoted as 'catalysts for regeneration', especially when such events are 'awarded' in an undemocratic manner, it is unsurprising that consultation cannot be more than token gesture toward local and other stakeholders. The current absence of continuing community consultation and involvement in the regeneration process merely appears to confirm this.

It is telling that in August 2005, Finer Stephens Innocent, a law firm advising companies based on Marshgate Lane threatened with displacement and financed under statutory obligations by the LDA, was subject to LDA accusation of overcharging (an allegation rejected). LDA also questioned the expertise of partner Mark Stephens who had been handling the case, and suggested that he had billed for time engaged on active resistance to the bid, accusations Stephens described as 'blatantly untrue'. Michael Finlay, director of one of the firms that was displaced, countered that LDA had been presented with time sheets on a monthly basis, and stated that it was unfair of the agency to reject them at the close of contract. Mark Stephens told the Guardian newspaper (Muir and Kelso 2005): 'LDA are trying to welsh on a deal when they should be trying to settle with my clients. They have

failed to grasp that my responsibility is to offer independent advice to my clients without fear or favour. Once the LDA realised that my advice was that the London Games would not be in the interests of the businesses because of the unfair terms being offered they became hostile ... Next week, for example, I am chairing a[n] [unconnected] planning inquiry, which does not suggest a lack of competence. The truth is that this is a tactical game being played by the LDA to deflect attention from the fact that they are still to reach agreement with scores of firms in the area.'

### 3.3 Arts and culture

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#### **The texture of the Olympics is not a happy context for art.**

Grayson Perry, Turner prize winner, talking to Charlotte Higgins in the Guardian, March 25, 2009

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The production of supportive individuals and organisations was enhanced via the populist charade of a 'cultural fringe' (billed originally as starting in 2004, but announced formally in 2008), touted local synergies of 'creative' subcontracting and recruitment (London 2012 2004/2), and an ongoing call for sporting and other volunteers (see §2.5). Proposals for the period of the Games themselves include special performances by the Royal Shakespeare Company and Globe Theatre, along with a month-long Olympic Proms.

The Cultural Olympiad was awarded £28 million (70 per cent of a £40 million Legacy Fund, jointly financed by the Big Lottery Fund, DCMS and Arts Council England, in the context of wider cutbacks for arts funding. Louise de Winter, director of the National Campaign for the Arts, warned that arts needed to be funded at a 'sustainable and consistent level' if the industry was to benefit the Games. In May 2007, arts organisations approached the Treasury for a comprehensive spending review settlement that would make up the shortfall of other funds lost from the lottery (Calvi 2007).

Administration of the Cultural Olympiad was cloaked in secrecy. By April 2011, the Independent reported spending on arts had quadrupled to around £87 million (Sharp 2011), and projects came in for derision: 30-foot crocheted lions, a football pitch hidden away in a forest unlikely to be used (ibid), a 10m statue of Lady Godiva brought to London from Coventry by a peleton of 50 cyclists (Cheyne 2010/8). The festival was criticised by leading figures including Sir Nicholas Serota, director of the Tate galleries and ODA board member ('The original bid projects were put together by committee. Some have legs and some, frankly, don't'). Turner prize winner Grayson Perry suggested organisers were overly bureaucratic (Higgins 2009). Director Ruth McKenzie announced complete autarky: proclaiming that she alone would decide on the Olympiad's programme without recourse to committees ('Great banquets by committee? Name several!'; 'anyone who wants to can email me and give me a brilliant idea'). Critics noted that the Olympiad derived much of its funding from the public purse: 'Public money needs accountability', said Marcus Romer, artistic director of York's Pilot Theatre (Sharp ibid).

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**LOCOG's One Year to Go gig at Trafalgar Square in the summer of 2011 featured a strange sampling of London Calling by the Clash. The recuperation used the famous riff, but dropped the lyrics. However, that didn't go unremarked. National Public Radio in the US picked up on the story ... linking to the BBC's longer piece by Alan Connor (2011): 'The Clash's breakthrough single is enough to start a housing crash and send tourists fleeing. Even so, it's easy to understand the branding appeal ... The Clash were supporters of pirate radio and considered launching their own station – this love song to the wireless signal recounts what, in punk terms, is up-to-the-minute and truthful news. But it isn't saying "come and enjoy the canoe slalom". In Joe Strummer's mind, in fact, conflict is back. The second line is, now war is declared, and battle comes down. Engines have stopped running and meltdown is expected. So what's caused this war, perhaps a third world war? It's partly down to resources – a kind of unnatural disaster. The Clash were part-band, part-reading list, and the lyrics distill the gloomiest headlines of the 1970s. United Nations was tackling food shortages – as the chorus has it, "the wheat's growing thin". Three Mile Island reactor leaked radioactive steam ("a nuclear error"). Newspapers suggested that the interglacial period might end sooner rather than later ("the ice age is coming"). At times it's unclear whether the city's getting too hot or too cold ("the sun's zooming in"), but either way, the outlook is poor. And so London Calling is a post-apocalyptic radio message to the survivors ... There's even, at the end, guitar feedback sending a signal in Morse code – naturally, SOS.'**

Steve Dowding (2011/3). 'London Calling', Games Monitor blog, August 2

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In the event, the Danny Boyle-directed opening ceremony fused nationalist myth with dissonant subversion: spectators cheered the National Health Service while deprecating Thatcherite cuts, James Bond hoisted the monarch into a rescue helicopter, and giant puppets (Lord Voldemort, Captain Hook and Cruella De Ville) were there to personify evil (Blind Summit 2015). Closing ceremony of the Paralympics featured sculptures by the Mutoid Waste Company, long a feature of the European squatting scene. Chancellor George Osborne, at the time cutting disability benefits, was booed live on TV.

One independent cultural production stands out from the crowd. Moving Forest expanded the last 12 minutes of Kurosawa's adaptation of Shakespeare's Macbeth – Throne of Blood (1957) – into a sonic performance saga. For 12 days, the event permeated the city and internet, culminating in a 12-hour opera in six acts themed on betrayal and rebellion (omen, remorse, betrayal, overthrow, insurgency and eternal return). The event closed with a coda of debate 'for the sake of argument'. First presented at Transmediale.08 (Berlin), Moving Forest projected the playwright's castle and Birnam forest (sic) on to the metropolis. The event combined work by diverse artists (visual/sonic/electronic/digital/performance) with writers, walkers, coders, hackers, 'mobile agents', twitterers, 'networkers' and anyone else that turned up. (Mach. 'Throw physic to the dogs: I'll have none of it ...'). Staged performances were at Furtherfield (Finsbury Park) and Chelsea College of Art and Design. The publicity was optimistic: 'A final merging of forest and castle occurs during a moment of downfall, jubilation and loss.' The event

was organised by TAKE2030 (Ilze Black and Shu Lea Cheang), Matthew Fuller and Graham Harwood (Goldsmiths College), Rachel Baker (irrational.org) and David Garcia, dean of CCW (Chelsea, Camberwell and Wimbledon) Graduate School (Mute 2012).

Earlier, Hilary Powell, director of *The Games* (2007), a film staging a surreal Olympics amid the landscape of the Stratford site, set up a company to gather last wild harvests (rosehips and sloes) of the Olympic area (Pudding Mill River: Purveyors of Sporting Spirits and Foodstuffs). Powell also organised political debate, theatre and film showings, and ran regular forums for other artists working around Olympic 'regeneration' (Salon de Refuses Olympiques), building an archive of interventions, events and responses. One such event was a discussion on military urbanism, chaired by journalist Anna Minton, author of *Ground Control: Fear and Happiness in the 21st Century City* (Penguin, 2009/2012). On the platform was Laura Oldfield-Ford, artist behind fanzine *Savage Messiah*, plus anthropologist Isaac Marrero-Guillamon and photographer Giles Price, who documented militarised aspects of the Olympic construction area. Powell and Marrero-Guillamon's book, *The Art of Dissent* (Marshgate Press, 2012) collates the fissile resistance generated by artists based in Olympic boroughs. Anna Minton updated *Ground Control* with a chapter on London 2012 in time for the Games.

Also in the event run-up, queer fat activist, Charlotte Cooper, author of *Fat and Proud: The Politics of Size* (Women's Press, 1998), organised the rather wonderful Fattylympics (June 7, 2012, in Memorial Park, West Ham). This was a satirical take on perjorative messaging around body weight that intensified with approach of the Games (see §2.6). Much like a village fête, and with a leotard-wearing compère (complete with cartoon dumbbell), stalls, performances and offering 'very sporty orange towelling headbands to give away', attendees were encouraged to participate in activities such as getting very dizzy, rolling and ribbon twirling. Irony was gentle and press were banned. The event was planned with an anti-commercial aesthetic, and framed within punk DIY culture. More information can be found at: <http://fattylympics.blogspot.co.uk>.

Some funded projects did manage a critical edge. East London production company Germination asked 35 15–19 year olds to make a series of short films that 'took the pulse' of how Newham young people viewed the Olympics (one can be viewed here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xxwPCATM0CA>). The young people's findings were revealing. Half of the 50 local residents interviewed for the films did not know when and where the Games were to take place. Answers ranged from 'It's happening in Berlin' to 'It's going on now' and 'It lasts two or three years.' Another film made by young people (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JCeMJPiBtiw>), this time at Bromley-by-Bow Community Organisation youth project, articulated their own sense of estrangement: 'Loads of police trying to make us stay inside', 'The pitch is closed at 8pm because of the Olympics', 'No youth club, nothing round here', 'I didn't get any tickets, I'll watch it on TV, that's about it.'

- Hackney's offering for the Cultural Olympiad launch, *One Carnival*, was described by Games Monitor activist Steve Dowding (2008) effectively as 'deadweight' (that is, he said, it would have happened anyway). Centreprise, a long-standing and respected community and arts centre in Dalston, had organised the Hackney *Mare di Gras* (a festival of similar size) annually in September since 1998, until their funding was cut just before the announcement of *One Carnival*.
- East London hosted CREATE ('a festival of festivals'), parasitising the soft power of image management that the local arts scene offers, and coopting every last event into the Olympic vortex. One venture that did gain funding was the floating cinema, a collaborative project between Somewhere (Nina Pope and Karen Guthrie), UP Projects, Studio Weave and architects Duggan Morris. The cinema, a converted canal barge traversing the Olympic waterways, offered celebrities the chance for a leisurely cruise and film showing. Even the poet and novelist, Iain Sinclair, an Olympic critic and filmmaker himself with Chris Petit, enjoyed a trip on board, as well as conservationist Richard Mabey (Somewhere 2015).
- Host Boroughs Unit Culture Team contracted consultancy labour to devise marketing campaigns and flagship events. Superlative claims around one event aroused the ire of Charles Batsworth (2010/3): 'Possibly the ultimate in ... metahighjacking, [one project.] ROAM[ , inflates] activities such as fishing, birdwatching ... swimming, and a talk on wild plants into 'possibly the largest participatory art award in the UK'. At the same time, he noted, the Olympic development process was destroying the very habitats that ROAM celebrated.
- Publicity for Hackney Wick-ed festival (complete with coracle regatta, bike polo suggested by Gilbert and George, pole vaulting over the blue fence, competition kebab eating, and exhibitions at 14 galleries) asserted that they were 'doing just fine without the Cultural Olympiad'. That was, of course, until 2011 when the festival listed the Olympic Park Legacy Company as one of its sponsors and partners, and a mix-up led to London 2012 ambushing the Hackney Wick-ed logo for its Dysarticulate event (Cheyne 2011/3).
- Notional head of church and state, Elizabeth Windsor ('The Queen') did protest against tawdry nature of the event early on. According to the Daily Mail (Nicholl 2009), the monarch felt that London 2012 was draining 'her' country's finances and that public resentment was therefore high. 'The Palace does not want the 60th [Diamond Jubilee] celebrations tarred with that brush and for any celebrations to be marred because of the Olympics. Besides, the Olympics are just a one-off event. The Monarch and her reign is (sic) ongoing.' Rapper Dizzee Rascal announced that he was fed up with preparations for London 2012. According to the Sun (Wightman 2009), he complained that building work had turned his birthplace into a 'hole'. Nevertheless, he'd still do the opening ceremony for the right cash. He said: 'They need to be talking about the right situation.'

– *Censorship*

- In October 2008, local legislation designed to prevent the racist British National Party from speaking on Hackney council premises was deployed to ban Iain Sinclair, one of the borough's most celebrated writers, from launching his book *Hackney, That Red Rose Empire* in Stoke Newington Library, on the basis that he was a noted opponent of Olympic developments. Conservative London mayor Boris Johnson branded this as 'an attack on free speech', while the *Evening Standard* (2012/6) commented: 'Obviously, it is idiotic of the council to ban Sinclair ... Still this daft decision does have the virtue of drawing our attention to Sinclair's original essay [in the *London Review of Books* (NLR)]. Headlined 'The Scam of Scams' [actually, the NLR article is titled 'The Olympic Scam'], it's top stuff. Like all Sinclair's writing, it combines ... rhetoric with lots of footwork. He doesn't just issue sweeping condemnations from on high, he gets out there and trudges around the site. It's surely the best piece so far inspired by 2012. Hackney council has done well to bring it to our attention – and it would do even better now to make plenty of copies available in all its surviving libraries.' The article can be accessed at <http://www.lrb.co.uk/v30/n12/sinc01.html>. Sinclair also appears reading from his Olympic blockbuster – *Ghost Milk* (Hamish Hamilton, 2011) on the futility of megaprojects, including London 2012 – in Mike Wells' short film *Gold Dust*, complete with a haunting soundtrack by local lawyer and campaigner Bill Parry-Davies on saxophone. With Paul Charman, Wells and Parry-Davies have been crucial to the exposure of radioactive contamination on the Olympic park site (see BP1 §3.1). Wells' film, *Gold Dust*, can be accessed at <http://vimeo.com/28065136> and <http://youtube.com/watch?v=X2QmYmoF1GA>.
- Despite proclaiming 'Olympic values of inclusion and celebration' at its heart in a newspaper produced for Stratford station, *Art on the Underground* (AOTU) censored the comments of local resident and Games Monitor activist Julian Cheyne, despite the fact that he was approached directly by the artist editing the newspaper, who wanted contributions from people evicted by Olympic developments. The artist informed him that AOTU would not use what he had written as everything had to be approved by the head of TFL. Cheyne had been indelicate enough to include criticism of public figures and organisations. Despite similar claims to inclusion, the ODA website refused also to allow proper debate. 'Instead, he commented, 'ODA pursues its "manifest destiny" of bringing civilisation and its benefits to the benighted land east of the river Lea, backed up by visionary experiences of its explorers ... At a recent meeting at UCL, Jason Prior [of masterplanners EDAW] said that it wasn't possible to carry out an Olympics-style development in west London, because of the resistance of better-off communities. As a local resident, first of Newham and now, as a result of being forcibly removed, of Tower Hamlets, I am depressed by this relentless Olympics aggrandisement. This is truly a colonial experience for east London' (Cheyne 2010/7).



## 4. ON GAMES MONITOR

Games Monitor was pleased to exhibit at UCL Urban Laboratory's Cities Methodologies in April 2012. This essay, entitled 'Grasping the Incommensurable: Coresearch and Politics as Immanent Experience', appeared on a display board with slide show of photography by Charlie Charman, Martin Slavin and Mike Wells, and computer terminal for website access. Charman and Wells also spoke in a seminar at the exhibition on techniques of investigative and citizen journalism, limitations of FOI legislation, and detail of their investigations into excavation and disposal of contaminated and radioactive soil on the Olympic park site in Stratford.

London 2012 presents a performative mythology, the Olympic Games becomes (in the words of philosopher Jean-Luc Nancy [1991: 50]) 'communitarian articulation of mythic speech', effacing resistance of beings in common, and effecting division (of space and resources) (ibid: 50, 57–58). Invention/recitation of the Olympic narrative elevates '[h]umanity ... on [to] the stage of myth, humanity being born to itself in producing myth – a truly mything humanity becoming truly human in this mything: this forms a scene just as fantastical as any primal scene' (ibid: 46, 49). Nancy describes myth as 'autofiguration' (ibid: 54), designating 'the absence of that which it names' (ibid: 52). Our website, Games Monitor, emanating from the Lower Lea Valley, seeks to interrupt this mythologisation, and expose notions of belonging surrounding representation of the event as inherently false. Nancy has given a name to this interruption or writing, used here somewhat tongue-in-cheek: that of 'literary communism'.

Our research process, never consciously stated, can be framed retrospectively as coresearch (*conricerca*). This aims to diminish separation of political and intellectual spheres, striving against normalising processes of capitalist hierarchy. Coresearch was praxis at the base of Italian autonomist journal *Classe Operaia* (1964–1967), and has been taken up more recently by organisations such as Kolinko (Germany), Colectivo Situaciones (Argentina), Precarias a la Deriva (Spain), Edu-factory (Italy), Zerowork, Midnight Notes, Counter-Cartography Collective and Team Colors (US)(CUNY 2009).

CUNY (ibid) cite the historical antecedents of coresearch: Engel's *The Condition of the Working Class in England* (1844) and Marx's 'Workers Inquiry' (1880), US workers' research on labour struggles in the 1950s (CLR James, Martin Glaberman, Johnson-Forest Tendency), and the militant inquiry initiated by another Italian journal, *Quaderni Rossi* (1961–1965; pioneered by Raniero Panzieri, Mario Tronti and Sergio Bologna).

The split between the two autonomist journals is informative. *Quaderni Rossi* sought to innovate political and trade union culture (and practices of trade union organisation); *Classe Operaia* turned to 'the urgency for ... political experiment in revolutionary autonomous workers' organisations' (Roggero 2011). Games Monitor, working in an extremely different political climate, eschews any attempt to 'improve' the Olympic project and processes (of consultation, planning and social policy frameworks etc). Rather, it can be described as a shared search for a viable way to shift conditions of prevailing hegemony, a negative conception.

How to situate the incommensurable? As an informal collectivity we produce counter discourses, support oppositions and alliances, and explore the 'materiality of social exclusion' (Stephenson and Papadopoulos 2006: 26). We attempt to militate against technocratic expression, complicity of local functionaries and much mainstream media. We approach the Olympic event, its discourses, construction, planning and outcomes, as a diversity of immanent experiences (ibid), that is as intrinsic to the everyday, continuous and lived; and 'aleatory' (random, multiplying, contingent). Immanent experience is productive, a forceful process. Each one of us cultivates a different trajectory of research and action: photography, film making, journalism (investigative and citizen), policy analysis, planning objection, networking, technical expertise and social media activism; tarrying until spark lights, then immersed in obsession. We refuse all roles and representation (each one speaking for themselves), working from a multiplicity of subject positions and starting points. We have no overarching interpretation of events, our pronouncements may be contradictory; we alienate each other. Yet at the same time, while we experience research as process of subjectification, we move beyond the self towards the collective dimension. Stephenson and Papadopoulos (ibid) describe immanent experience as plastic, corrigible and sociable. Our discussions are intensive; somehow amid the collision of event, opinion and (in)action, the website gets made.

The website (maintained by the core production group) and open discussion list are an extensive archive unique to the Olympic event, comprising two searchable databases (articles and news postings), extensive document archive, book reviews, blog, media contacts page and briefing papers. One might argue that the website institutionalises a process of media flux while invoking a memorial process (for instance, briefing papers attempt segmental narrative analysis; GM stories highlight research and inform on international

developments), Twitter (amplification of the negative) provides the main website gateway along with Google search. Multiple entry points interpellate visitors to the site: the document archive hails researchers, briefing papers are written for students, the discussion list attracts the news junkie. Blog, latest and main stories keep the site up to date and engage a global audience. The beginner's guide attracts those with little time. The website aims to be a hub; we rely greatly on our supportive hinterland. Stories are gleaned from the news, erupt out of personal experience or are the result of intensive research, while others are crossposted (with permission) from critical sources. Humour, detail and analysis are our tactical weapons.

For Spinoza, collectivity is a process of increasing differentiation, of the production of singularities; beyond capture, refusing to become a normalising force (ibid: 128, 131–132).

'To do politics entails disidentification, refusing who one is supposed to be. Doing politics refigures the perceptible ... to make evident the incommensurability of worlds ... Politics in this sense is a refusal of representation ... Rethinking collectivity provides [one] way of pursuing this refusal, ... introducing the part which is outside, which is not a part of community' (ibid: 138).

The Olympic Games is a *prima facie* example of exclusionary force, bolstered by exceptionality measures. Matrix of exclusion works through discursification, effacement, material displacement and exploitation, along with extinction (of spaces and economies) (ibid: 25). For many, despite 'promises' made on behalf of the Olympic event, it precludes the capacity for people living locally to project on to the future, to actively structure desire in any form that does not cohere with the technocratic, moralising vision; effecting a loss of hope. As local residents, we experience a distortion rooted in our own materiality, an effect of disorientation (ibid: 44, 45). This 'elsewhere' is a desert we retreat to. It enables the logic of negativity – exodus, dissenting. As campaigners, therefore, we prioritise critique, not redistribitional assertions.

Tiqqun (undated: 29) state: 'The problem with demands is that, formulating needs in terms that make them audible to power, they say nothing about those needs, and what real transformations of the world they require ... But also, demands often end up masking the real conflicts whose stakes they set.' As Stephenson and Papadopoulos suggest, we need to rearrange the conditions on which political projects are formulated. Games Monitor's research and media reporting extends this process of experiment, of continuous negativity. Out of this comes a re-engagement: reversal of contemporary conditions, the sharing of effective means. Collectivity becomes one form of organisation of the secession (ibid: 37, 42).

Carolyn Smith, April 2012 (revised 2016)

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