Lecture 2: Representing the Sporting Past - Memorials, Museums, Films & the Internet

How we remember the past shapes our social/collective memory:

→ *Never homogenous* as each interpretation depends on the information the individual receives

- **Sport history** – professionally approved artefacts (journals/books/thesis)
- **Public history** – umbrella term that covers multitude of representations of past in present

**Forms of PUBLIC history** – How different documentations represent the past in different ways

1) **Sport Memorials** (memorialising the past) – physical, material and built objects (MUNSLow)

- **Monuments**: COMMISSIONED (invested interest) to SAVE (preserve past) a movement
  - Spatial (fixed position in real world) & social anchors (people gather to them)
  - Informal and formal acts (ie. labour day) of commemoration
- **Plaques** – narrow spectrums of information using formulaic language
  - Frames and positions monument through identity of social group/social idea

Different themes/story from plaque & status → view together and separately (holistically)

- **Design & meaning** – avoid ambiguity, one version of history (homogenise memory)
  - **Contested Meaning**: Viewers are not passive recipients (have past knowledge which influences meaning) – monuments are related to systems of power
    → “Dialogic” – intermeshing of various viewpoints &
    → “Polysemic” – different elements mean different things for different people
  - **Liminal Qualities**: transports us to be in transition, or between two worlds

Concerted efforts to control content and form through combination of plaques & design
Therefore, statues are controlled to a point BUT ultimately open to multiple and contested meanings
They also entertain a level of performativity (talisman – goodluck charm)

2) **Sport Museums** (staging the past) **MUST KNOW**

1. **Academic** (learning)
2. **Corporate** (hall of fame)
3. **Community** (public)
4. **Vernacular** (pubs)

- **Material Culture**: Central to all museums = prizes (agon), equipment (craft), colours (community), gambling, sportswear (eros) & venues (framing)
- **Pedagogies of Museums**: techniques & ways of teaching things (knowledge production)
  - **Formal Curriculum**: obvious educational features
  - **Hidden Curriculum**: predominately visual culture that engages kinetics, auditory and tactile culture and space/physical activity (engagement not explicit learning)

Written history does not engage the sense like museums (learning through movement), instead, they do different pedagogical work (analyse & critique history) – focus is different in each
Lecture 3: Memorialising the Past: Sporting Memorials

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| - Representations (vertical & figurative) | (1) Funerary  
  eg. Walter Lindrum: World Champion Snooker Player  
  >> monument changes the way he is remembered; people only know him because of this tombstone |
| - Permanent  
  >> Enduring material (designed to last) | (2) To historical events/ideas  
  Eg. Tom Willis (footballer)  
  >> Need to look at monument holistically (inc. plaque) |
| - Social and spatial landscapes | (3) Great sportsmen & women, and war heroes  
  Often paid for by private companies  
  >> Who is remembered comes down to money |

Monuments can be memorials, but a memorial does not need to be a monument  
→ Ie. Donald Bradman memorials = walk, museum, stamps, statue (monument), drive & grandstand

Memorials linked to AFFECT (feelings/emotions) & are used to preserve memories of events/people

“ES NIGGER BROWN STAND: AN ANGRY MEMORIAL”
A rugby league player & president of Toowoomba rugby league  
name referred to his fair complexity or brand of boot polish

Stephen Hagan (aboriginal activist) challenged the use of the word nigger of the grandstand but the Federal court ignored his request to remove the offensive term stating that the term nigger has “long been devoid of racial connotation” although the UN supported him.

→ IGNORANCE by Federal Court – there is racial connotations associated with this word

- You cannot disconnect a word from its past/present racial ideologies  
  History is viewed with a certain knowledge, the **viewer brings their own dialogue**  
  >> Intention of the memorial v. how it is actually seen
- Shows the POWER of monuments/memorials in PRESERVING IDEOLOGIES

State Government refused to act, arguing that “The term Nigger would be inappropriate today but it is not inappropriate in terms of history”  
→ ... Are memorial of the past of present?

→ LIMINALITY: Of the past & of the present (exists in both but only seen in present)

- Memorials are of the past but they are interpreted by knowledge we have in the present  
  o Ie. The sign is both of the past and the present (liminality), because it preserved ideologies/memories from the past and provides them with an anchor in the present

It is not the word that distressed the aboriginal committee – it is the memories it conjures and the discrimination inflicted on them & their loved ones.
Lecture 4: Memorialising the Past: Sporting Memorials

- Monument/memorials are AFFECTIVE
- Our INTERPRETATION of them are based on what we KNOW IN THE PRESENT
- They seek to tell certain stories and HIGHLIGHT CERTAIN MEMORIES

**THE LES DARCY TOMBSTONE: INDICATED BOTH PRIDE & ANGER**
A famous Australian boxer who died from teeth infections that lead to blood poisoning

Memorials embody feelings and transmit affect:

- **Pride: Proud of Les Darcy as a boxer & person**
  - Catholics proud of Darcy’s catholic identity & relatedness to lower working class
- **Anger: Rejection from those who criticise him for leaving Australia during war**
  - Sectarianism – perceived differences between subdivisions of a group (religion of classes)
    - Middle class protestants believed Darcy was undermining war effort; the Catholics were proud of Darcy (understood) and angered by the protestants reactions
    - Boxing community & federal government (rejecting war) & H.D.M (reject contract)

Multiple stakeholders effected when Darcy left Australia for America

1. **Boxing community:** Publicly disowned Darcy & stripped him of his titles
   - *When Darcy left it tarnished the boxing community image - they were already being criticised for disrupting war so they had to disconnect themselves from Darcy*
2. **Federal Government:** Saw Darcy as damaging to the war effort
   - *Darcy was seen as drawing men away from going to war*
3. **Hugh D. McIntosh:** Darcy rejected his offers to manage American career (=anger)
   - *H.D.M connection with politicians and ownership of prominent newspapers allowed him to pull strings to stop Darcy fighting in America*
4. **Wartime Class Conflict:** Middle class (committed to war efforts) painted Darcy as being representative of Lower class disloyalty (not as enthusiastic about war)
   - *This was because war effected classes disproportionately – a loss of men for the lower class meant a huge impact by loss of income*
   - >> Class reactions to his death: Lower class mourned (can sympathise with Darcy) while Middle class were absent at funeral (accused WC of disloyalty for mourning)
5. **Sectarianism:** Protestants (MC – supported conscription) painted Darcy as representative of Catholic (LC – opposed conscription) war disloyalty
   - *The catholic (like the lower working class) defended Darcy’s actions as they understood Darcy’s desire to make money for his family before joining the war*
   - >> Darcy was a symbol of Catholic solidarity amidst protestant majority

The class conflict & sectarianism is lost in contemporary readings of his tombstone because:

- Memorials do not have stable/timeless agendas (they are seen in the present)
  - Thus, they rarely maintain the same meaning that was originally attached to them
- The enduring quality of monuments leaves them open to changing narratives over time