

wizards ever really had control over these magical creatures, or if this control was not simply a collective self-delusion, with the desertion of the Dementors from Azkaban, because "Voldemort can offer them much more scope for their powers and their pleasures," being a case in point (OP, 707). The pivotal role of the goblins in the financial system of the wizarding world is also strange given the extent to which goblin rebellions have occurred in the past. It underscores *either* the extent to which mirrored institutions are probably relatively unimportant in the final analysis *or* the possibility that goblins have a great deal more power than wizards would like to acknowledge.

60. See the essay by Hall in this collection, as well as essays by Grimes 2003 and Nikolajeva 2003.

61. From this perspective, neither the *X-Men* nor the Harry Potter series are particularly pleasant fantasies. One might wonder, after all, what a child like Harry is likely to become? It is not far-fetched to suppose that he would inevitably grow into something like Magneto or Lord Voldemort, who would both concur with Quirell that, "there is no good and evil, there is only power, and those too weak to seek it" (PS, 361). Both Magneto (in some versions of the *X-Men* storyline) and Voldemort represent the same fantasy as Harry, but they are versions in which all of the dark implications of unchecked individual power are made manifest.

62. Wilner 2002, 126.

63. Buzan, Jones, and Little 2000; Sterling-Folker 2005.

## 6 Quidditch, Imperialism, and the Sport-War Intertext

DAVID LONG



*Quidditch . . . is a fictional sport.*

ALBUS DUMBLEDORE

*A foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds, adored by  
little statesmen and philosophers and divines.*

RALPH WALDO EMERSON

IN THIS CHAPTER I EXAMINE THE RELATIONSHIP of the game of Quidditch to the conflicts in Harry Potter's world. I consider the simple rendition of a parallel between Harry's exploits on the Quidditch pitch and his battle with the evil Voldemort. And I explore the more complex sociological and psychological function of games in schools like Hogwarts. The purpose of this discussion is to uncover the ways in which Quidditch and games relate to the international and the political relations of the magical world of Harry Potter. In this regard I argue that a concentration on the good versus evil narrative does not serve us especially well in understanding the significance of the game that Harry is playing or the international relations of his or our world.

The idea of games has been used in many ways in international relations scholarship. The most common association these days is certainly game theory, a rationalist modeling technique that highlights and clarifies the importance and subtleties of strategies in international interactions. This is not and has not been the only way of drawing on games to understand international relations, however. For instance, in his influential study

of different approaches to conflict resolution, Anatol Rapoport distinguishes between fights, games, and debates, arguing that there are significant differences in the goals, rules, and structures in each. In debates, the disputants try to persuade each other of their respective case. The aim is to convert the other, the means are rhetoric and other methods of persuasion. Each party in a debating contest respects the bodily integrity of the opponent and also observes the rules of the debate. For Rapoport, fights are contests where opponents try to destroy or harm the other. Any means to do this are appropriate and the ultimate goal is the elimination or subjugation of the opponent in the fight. Games come between these two extremes. While opponents try to outwit each other, they are not trying to convert the other. While they are trying to win, winning is within the set of rules and conventions that make up the game, unlike the ruleless context of fights.<sup>1</sup>

Rapoport's purpose in drawing the distinction among fights, games, and debates was to secure but also delimit the use of game theory as an approach to studying conflict. Only where the context allowed us to portray the activities of opponents as games could we readily use this metaphor. Since then, however, analysts have happily moved beyond Rapoport's limits and the whole world of international relations has been studied as a game using mathematical methods. It has been argued that international relations theorists need to move beyond the simple deployment of the game metaphor and be more theoretically rigorous.<sup>2</sup> Indeed, the models and methods have advanced in sophistication beyond the simple models used, for example, in early products of the field, such as Robert Axelrod's *The Evolution of Cooperation* (1984: chaps. 1-2, esp. pp. 6-7) or in Kenneth Oye's *Cooperation under Anarchy*.<sup>3</sup>

In *The Nature of International Society*, Charles Manning suggests that international relations can be understood as a game but takes a different approach to game theorists. *Contra* Snidal, Manning encourages us not to attempt to surpass the use of metaphor but to play with it; to think of international relations as (among other things) a game or "pseudo-game" of cricket or of chess. But Manning is not content with the simple analogy; rather, he suggests that the choice of game analogy conveys different aspects of international relations—chess, for instance, relates the notion of the importance of territory "wherein it shows its peculiar affinity also with war" and also at once respect for and challenge to the opponent's king.<sup>4</sup> We are on the field in cricket, above it in chess; in a two-sided contest in cricket with a clear sense of the opponents capability, in a many-sided one in poker with lack of information about the other players' strengths and

weaknesses. Furthermore, Manning argues of international relations that "*It's Only a Game*." But he is not only nor even primarily highlighting the playful elements of international relations such as can be found in its diplomatic niceties. He is also drawing our attention to the character of international relations which, "though dubbed the international 'anarchy,' [is] not those typical of the jungle, but rather a kind of quasi-game."<sup>5</sup> What Manning as a proto-constructivist means by this is that international society is rule-bound and that only in the context of the rules of the game is it possible to understand international relations. Meanwhile Manning is aware that the players may be playing more than one game, that there is no referee, and that rules can easily be broken. Indeed it was the breaking of the rules of the game of international society that preoccupied Manning.

While the game might be an insightful device for understanding certain aspects of international relations, there are a number of difficulties with the distinctions that Rapoport makes, the theories Snidal wants to build, and the analogies Manning draws. Most importantly for this chapter, while sports are games, they are particular types of games. I show in this chapter that the competitive, physical nature of sports, and in particular sports with a combative element like Quidditch, readily fade over into what Rapoport categorizes as fights. For this reason, as well as a number of others, we might want to take more seriously the connection rather than the distinction of fights and games, or more specifically, war and sport. Similarly, focusing simply on the playful game aspect of Quidditch obscures its important place in the construction of identity and difference, solidarity and enmity, as well as its social function in the generation of individual and international competitiveness and the legitimation of a world of dramatic inequality.

While gaming language is often applied to international relations, the language of war frequently infuses that of the sports that we play, particularly in terms of strategies for defense or attack, winning or losing a competition. This suggests there is a more complex, intertextual relationship of sports and international relations, a connection explored by Michael Shapiro.<sup>6</sup> For instance, sport and war are not simply linked through the ancient origins of sports in preparation for and the development of skills readying for war, Shapiro observes, but also in the way that the text of sport that is so prevalent in our world at once obscures the politics and legitimizes violence of international relations. Intertextuality of sport and war is evident in the use of sports analogies in war and vice versa, but more than that, the social function of playing and watching sports contributes to a depoliticization of the use of violence internationally. Shapiro points in

particular to the use of the game analogy in Brzezinski's *Game Plan*, where international relations is reduced to a contest between the United States and U.S.S.R. for global domination. Furthermore, insofar as the purpose of sports has in part been the preparation for conflict, this preparation is influenced by the development of gaming technology. Whether it be fencing or running or soccer, the requirements of skill and physical fitness map on to the requirements for fighting or strategy needed for fighting. Today's video and computer games, flight simulators most notoriously but also many versions of RPGs (role playing games), similarly map onto the high tech world of virtual war.

Shapiro's analysis, like many, reads sports as a cultural event considered in terms of display, that is, as a form of entertainment or even as a sort of art form. This is an important characteristic of sports like Quidditch, as we see especially in the Quidditch World Cup. There are team and player posters, collectible playing cards, rosettes, cheerleaders, and national leagues and international tournaments—all familiar paraphernalia of sports as entertainment. But in the Harry Potter stories this display element is largely subordinate to Harry actually playing Quidditch himself. Indeed, the Quidditch World Cup is unique in the Harry Potter stories because it is one case of sport where Harry is a spectator. The rest of the time Harry is a participant, except when he is forced to the sidelines by injury or detention. He is a player, and his school friends and we are the spectators. As a player of a game, Quidditch fulfills a number of sociological and psychological functions for Harry. At the same time, the institutional practice around Quidditch, at school and in the wizarding world, helps structure Harry's world. Harry's discovery of the international relations of the wizarding community derives largely from his participating in and playing games, specifically Quidditch and the Triwizard Tournament.

When we read the Harry Potter stories, we can read them as fantastic tales of Harry's (and to a lesser extent his friends, Ron and Hermione's) heroism in the face of growing evil and danger. In doing so, one can seek recourse to the myths and legends that are drawn on by other literary figures such as Tolkien and Lewis, and link the stories to others in the multiple universe such as more recent children's fantasy writers like Philip Pullman and William Nicholson. This sort of reading encourages us to see Harry's playing Quidditch for Gryffindor as a metaphor for his struggle against the Dark Side, particularly when playing against Slytherin or less directly in winning the Quidditch and House Cups for Gryffindor (and in beating Hufflepuff and Ravenclaw houses in the process).

But why focus on Tolkien and Lewis rather than the just as obvious parallels to End Blyton whose *Mallory Towers* stories mirror the seven years of high school at Hogwarts and in which the role of sports is also prominent? I am tempted to offer an ad hoc response to this question to the effect that there is a selection bias in the children's literature international relations scholars refer to or will admit to reading! More seriously, there is a masculinist bias at work here. Comparisons of Harry Potter to *The Lord of the Rings* is masculinist in inspiration and in outcome: it is inspired by a concentration on male authors writing on masculine topics, dealing with grand themes, war, nobility, kings, and the like; and the comparison results in a masculinist reading that emphasizes precisely those elements of the Harry Potter tales. This reading surrenders to what Richard Ashley has called the blackmail of the heroic practice.<sup>7</sup> Seeking the grand themes, the foundations and manifestations of good and evil, the attempt to expose the underlying structures and forces of the magical world of Harry Potter considers Harry and his friends and enemies in black and white terms. Such explanations are themselves rehearsing the heroic practice in their focus on the dichotomies of good and evil and the location of responsibility in the sovereign individual, in this instance, for the most part, Harry himself. Looking for the origins of good and evil in this way this approach actually re-presents, reinforces, and even generates the dichotomous representations it seeks to undermine. Such analyses must, it seems to me, be irretrievably mundane. They reduce Quidditch and Harry Potter's magical world to a masculinist two-dimensional timeless algorithm and omit the complexities, pluralities, and contradictions of gender, class, and history.<sup>8</sup>

As a sport enjoyed by Harry Potter and his wizard friends (and enemies), Quidditch is a focal point for a consideration of Harry's heroism and illustrates the ways in which he (and the author J. K. Rowling) deals with conflict. It also provides a portal into the wider world of the international relations of the wizarding community. Reading Quidditch through a dichotomous "good versus evil" narrative of Harry's heroism and the battle between Harry and Lord Voldemort obscures the history and function of Quidditch as a sport-as-social-activity which is just like any other sport-as-social-activity. For example, this magical sport, played by wizards apparently for hundreds of years, happens to have a history that maps closely to muggle, and specifically British imperial, history.

Unsatisfied with a simplistic reading of Quidditch as a metaphor for Harry's heroism, in this chapter I present a double reading of the magical problematic in Harry Potter particularly as it pertains to Quidditch. After a brief presentation of a mundane analysis, I attempt a "magical" reading

of Quidditch considered as a social practice located in specific historical and geographical space-time. This reading requires that we suspend our muggle disbelief about the magical world, abandon the dichotomies of the heroic practice, and instead consider the wizarding world as a social and cultural system, focusing our attention particularly on the role that Quidditch plays in that magical world. In short, our reading must not stop with Harry's leading the good team but should interrogate the place of Quidditch in the magical world and its meaning for wizards and for muggles. As a combative team sport, Quidditch at once provides the context for the rehearsal of skills important to war but it also features in the social hierarchy at Hogwarts and beyond. The history of the development of Quidditch and the contours of its current global reach also suggest a link to European imperial history very much like that of modern-day muggle sports such as football, rugby, and cricket.

Just as Dumbledore tells us that Quidditch is fictional, yet in the same sentence wishes the best to Puddlemere United, the magical reading begins on the understanding that "there is always an ineluctable debt to interpretation such that there is nothing outside of discourse": all social relations are representations and thus to varying degrees fictitious and at the same time real.<sup>9</sup> Before presenting the double reading, however, we need first of all to be clear on what Quidditch is, as well as the way it connects Harry to the international relations of the magical community.

## Quidditch, Sport, and War

*It's our sport. Wizard sport.*

RUBRUS HAGRID (PS, 6)

*The game of Quidditch continues to thrill and obsess its many fans around the world.*

KENILWORTH WHISP

Quidditch is a sport played at school at once very familiar and very strange to us muggles. Its familiarity begins for some of us in the resemblance of the name to the game of cricket. This association is an important one insofar as it connects Hogwarts and the wizarding world with a particular view of an England of the days of Empire. The traditional connection is one that resonates with the class aspects of Hogwarts as an old English aristocratic academy. I have more to say on this below. Nevertheless, of all the

sports usually played at such English private schools, Quidditch is most unlike cricket.

When Harry is first introduced to Quidditch, he asks: "So—that's sort of like basketball on broomsticks with six hoops, isn't it?" (To which he receives the reply: "what's basketball?" see PS, 124). The other associations are rounders (PS, 125) and football (soccer) (PS, 138). In all cases, we are informed that Quidditch is not like any of them. First of all, Quidditch is played with four balls: the Quaffle, about the size of a baseball, which is the ball that the teams score with; two Bludgers, shaped, sized, and made of iron like cannonballs which can be used to attack opposing players and which are thus the focus of the Beaters on each team who attempt to hit them toward the opposing team and away from their own players, especially their Seeker; and the Golden Snitch, which is the smallest of the balls and short of agreement between the two teams the capture of which is the only way to end a Quidditch game. Each team has seven players: one Keeper, minding the goals of the team in order to prevent the other team scoring; two Beaters who deal with the Bludgers and generally try to protect the other players on their team; three Chasers who are responsible for scoring with the Quaffle; and the Seeker whose sole responsibility is to find the Snitch and thus end the game. The aim of the game is to amass the greater number of points by scoring with the Quaffle before the game is ended when either side's Seeker catches the Golden Snitch.

Superficial similarities to other sports aside, there are a number of unique aspects to Quidditch. The surfeit of balls is likely indicative of wizards' superior capabilities, whereas muggles find it difficult enough to follow or control one ball in their team sports, let alone four. Quidditch is also unusual in there being essentially two games going on simultaneously on or rather over the same pitch: the contest to score the most goals runs parallel to but separate from the duel between the Seekers in the hunt for the Snitch.

Another aspect that is unique is that Quidditch is played in the air—you have to fly in order to play the game, and therefore you need the aptitude to be able to control your broom before you play the game. This is important in a couple of respects for Harry Potter. First, his very strong ability to fly marks him out from his peers and makes him already a good prospect for his house Quidditch team. Second, flying is important to Harry from a psychological point of view. It gives him a sense of freedom; the literal loosening of the physical bonds holding him to earth is a metaphor for his release from the cares of the world, at least briefly. Furthermore, Harry himself feels that this is something he is good at and this

is an important bolster to his self-esteem. In the requirement that one learn a skill prior to being able to play the game proper, Quidditch is special but not unique among sports. Ice hockey or water polo are impossible to play without the prior ability and training to be able respectively to skate or swim well, with speed, agility, power, maneuverability, backwards and forwards.<sup>10</sup>

Another unusual characteristic of Quidditch is that it is played by both girls and boys and that they play together. Or at least they can play together. At one point, the Gryffindor team has three girls: Katie Bell, Alicia Spinnet, and Angelina Johnson, who are the Chasers on their team, while Ginny Weasley later also plays for the team as Harry's replacement as Seeker and Angelina becomes team captain. Harry's one-time romantic interest, Cho Chang, is the only girl playing for Ravenclaw. Interestingly, this is not regarded as a disadvantage by Gryffindor or Ravenclaw for whom Katie, Angelina, and Alicia's or Cho Chang's participation seems to be simply on merit. By contrast, Slytherin's team is all male, adding a gender dimension to the singular evil already represented by purity of blood and the aristocratic connections. Interestingly enough, the co-ed character of Hogwarts and its sports teams deviates from the traditional hierarchical and gendered organization of equivalent muggle academies, which have generally been single-sex institutions.

Interestingly, other than flying on a broom and the fact that the balls are charmed, there is notable lack of magic in Quidditch of the sort that George Gmelch is referring to in his "Baseball Magic."<sup>11</sup> In this regard the magic of Quidditch is, like that of wizard's chess, rather ordinary, and the magical elements are as well rather stereotypically technological.<sup>12</sup> Happily, this ordinariness makes comparison to muggle sports easier and facilitates a consideration of the nature of Quidditch as a sport and the sport-war intertext using muggle analysis.

Quidditch is a sport, which is a form of play and a type of game. Understanding the sport-war intertext in Quidditch requires an understanding of the characteristics of Quidditch as a sport. Sports first of all are a form of play. According to Guttmann, play is "non-utilitarian, physical or intellectual activity pursued for its own sake."<sup>13</sup> Play is a realm of freedom, something that is done for the pure enjoyment of doing it. The play aspect of Quidditch is important to Harry. We are told at one point that Harry leaves his cares behind when he is flying and playing Quidditch. He feels more free playing Quidditch than at any other time: "In a rush of fierce joy he realized he'd found something he could do without being taught—that was easy, this was *wonderful*" (PS, 111; see also PA, 225).

Play can be spontaneous or organized. In organized play we are in the realm of games. Games limit the freedom of play by the requirement that there be rules. The aim of the rules is simply to give structure to the game. Rules structure games in different ways, and Guttmann points to the critical distinction between competitive and noncompetitive games. When we think of games, we generally think of contests like chess or poker or golf or football that are structured competitively and in which there are winners and losers.<sup>14</sup> Harry and his friends play a variety of games besides Quidditch that are contests, such as Exploding Snap and Wizards Chess. While in each of these there is a physical element, both are marked by the intellectual rather than physical characteristics of the competition (although this is rather clearer with Wizards Chess than in Exploding Snap, in which once a snap is recognized it is a matter of reflexes and speed who wins [PS, 159]). Harry is aware of the competitive aspect of Quidditch and regards it as an important part of his identity. When asked by Moody what he is best at, on reflection he replies, Quidditch. Harry's conclusion reflects his sense that he excels relative to others: he is the best Seeker (and the youngest in over a century), not merely that it is the thing he does better than other activities, including schoolwork and so on.

Quidditch clearly falls into the category of a contest; each side aims to score more goals and catch the Snitch first (if they are ahead in points). On a number of occasions the supreme importance of winning is stressed, not only by Harry but Hermione Granger and Oliver Wood. (See PS, 164; CS, 131, as examples.) For example, at one point, Gryffindor's captain Wood implores Harry, "Get to that Snitch before Malfoy or die trying, because we've got to win today, we've got to" (CS, 126; see also PA, 181). According to Guttmann, contests such as Quidditch are already associated with war. Unlike cooperative games like leapfrog and ring-around-the-rosie, competitive games such as chess and baseball are also contests like legal proceedings, examinations, or elections (HBP, 178). Sharing the characteristic of being a contest, games like Quidditch are also prescribed analogues for war because they share the same discursive universe of competition and contest.

But sport is also like war in other regards. Sport is a predominantly physical rather than an intellectual contest. As Guttmann notes, because they involve strategy and tactics, both of which entail planning and thus are intellectual to some extent, sports are always to some degree intellectual pursuits. Nevertheless, sports and war are physical contests where it is agility or strength or speed that is the basis for winning. Unlike war, for most sports, physical damage to the participants is not a legitimate part or

objective of the game, although it is in many games a routine, predictable, and accepted (although proscribed by the formal, written rules) outcome or result.<sup>15</sup> Sports can be either individual or team sports, instances of the former being golf or tennis, while the latter includes basketball or lacrosse. In addition, sports can be more or less combative, where damage to the opponents is a greater or smaller part of the game. The most combative of modern muggle sports is boxing and in the magical world it is dueling, where the purpose is to render the opponent in some way incapacitated to the point of knocking them out, and thus making them unable to continue the bout.<sup>16</sup> By contrast, in tennis while there can be attrition, hoping to outlast an opponent, damaging the opponent is generally prohibited. Similarly in baseball it is not permissible to pitch at the batter, although this does occasionally happen. The range of permissible combativeness in sports seems to be almost infinite, from the bodyline bowling of cricket through the physical contact of football, to the hitting and checking of ice hockey and the "mock fight" of rugby and American football.<sup>17</sup> Clearly, the more combative a sport is, the more it resembles a fight in Rapoport's terms where the goal is damage to the opponent, bringing it closer of course to war. At the same time, team sports and war resemble one another in their collective and organized character. But similarity is not identity and the comparison can obscure the difference of the two concerning the centrality of damage to the opponent as a means to a political objective. Thus, Shapiro is correct in his suggestion that the intertextuality of team sports and war can serve to depoliticize the latter insofar as the game element is emphasized over other aspects of war.

Quidditch is an extremely combative team sport where violence is formally prohibited but is in actuality rife in practice and where damage to an opponent if not a goal in itself is seen as a means to the end of victory in the game. Compared to other combative team sports, Quidditch seems to closely resemble ice hockey and American football in the central part that hitting plays in the game, although it is only allowed in limited circumstances compared with the continuity of physical contact and the brute force used in rugby and football. We are told that a few players have died playing Quidditch but at Hogwarts the worst that has happened is a broken jaw or two. Of course, during one game, Harry's arm is broken. Quidditch is a physical, combative, even violent contest, and as a result it is hardly surprising that the language of war should appear. As well as the preparations, planning, strategies, and tactics, we find that Harry's first appearance as Seeker is kept quiet so that he will be Gryffindor's "secret weapon" (PS, 133), that the Weasley twins "dive-bomb" each other (PS,

159), that the brooms of the Slytherin team are like "jump jets" (CS, 94—the reference is to a British military aircraft, the Harrier Jump Jet). The warlike atmosphere is even higher in Fourth Year when Ron accuses Hermione of fraternizing with the enemy in her flirtation with the international Quidditch player, Viktor Krum (GF, 367).<sup>18</sup>

### A Mundane Reading: Quidditch and the War of Good against Evil

The mundane reading I present here refers to nothing more than a non-magical understanding of the world of Harry Potter, although I recognize that this choice of terminology is far from innocent because of the derogatory associations of mundane and because the technical usage I deploy is derived from wizard rather than muggle usage. A mundane reading focuses on the grand themes in Harry Potter and his world and reads them as a work of fiction seeking parallels in the great works of literature. The grand theme in the Harry Potter stories is the contest between good and evil. Quidditch, then, becomes a metaphor for and even a part of that contest.<sup>19</sup>

A mundane reading presents Harry as the hero fighting for the good, as the Chosen One, with Lord Voldemort representing the ultimate in evil. Interestingly, Harry is regarded as a hero by his peers at numerous points in the stories, but usually in connection with his exploits on the Quidditch pitch or in getting points for his house, rather than for his infamous scar, which is often a source of envy and fear, at least until Harry's sixth year when Voldemort's return is finally acknowledged officially by the wizard community. By contrast, we are regularly reminded of the false heroism of those on the Dark Side. Tom Riddle frames Hagrid and takes credit for exposing the monster in the Chamber of Secrets, and Peter Pettigrew makes himself a "posthumous" hero by faking his death at the hands of Sirius Black. While Harry actually breaks his arm playing Quidditch, Malfoy suffers a small scratch from a Hippogriff and uses it to avoid facing Harry and his Quidditch team. Later, Harry suspects Malfoy is using Quidditch matches as a cover for and distraction from his suspicious activities. Surrogates for Voldemort as the Bad Guy include Draco Malfoy and his father Lucius Malfoy, as well as for a time, Snape, the Head of Slytherin House, and Sirius Black, Harry's godfather.

This reading highlights and reinforces a series of dichotomies: besides good and evil, there is Harry/Voldemort, Harry/Malfoy, Gryffindor/Slytherin (Harry's choice of Houses when he first arrives at Hogwarts), and the matching trinites, Harry, Ron, and Hermione versus Malfoy, Crabbe,

and Goyle. Rowling lets us know whose side we should be on in the use of language of names—mort, mal, black—and the way in which Gryffindor players are called by their first names (conveying the sense that they are our friends) while Slytherin are presented by surname only, creating a sense of formality and distance. In case we missed it, the Slytherin symbol is a snake and the Gryffindor symbol a lion.

Throughout, Quidditch plays a central role as a vehicle and metaphor for Harry's heroism. Harry is the important Seeker and in his sixth year, and significantly, shortly before Dumbledore dies, he becomes captain of the team. In Quidditch, Harry is placed directly opposite the "anti-Harry," Draco Malfoy, who becomes the Slytherin Seeker by buying his way onto the team. Malfoy neatly satirizes Harry as "the Chosen Captain—the Boy Who Scored" (HBP, 386). Harry plays for Gryffindor, the good, brave House, and while he and his team also play Ravenclaw and Hufflepuff, the main focuses of attention are Gryffindor's games against Slytherin, the bad, ambitious House. Harry is victorious and honorable in victory on the Quidditch pitch while Slytherin either avoid playing when weather conditions are poor or resort to cheating or other underhand methods in their thirst for victory (PA, 126, 224–30). These cheating methods are in vain as we know, and Harry usually wins. The one time Harry appears to have cheated, he has simply deceived his friend Ron in order to bolster his confidence (HBP, 274, 279–80).<sup>20</sup> He has won all but twice indeed, once when Harry was being impeded by a rogue Bludger and in this instance the opposing victorious Seeker, Cedric Diggory, subsequently dies, and once when the team is squabbling Harry is accidentally hit by a Bludger from one of his own teammates (HBP, 389). Harry's house, Gryffindor, has won the House Championship each of the years that Harry has been at the school when the championship has run. But one of the high points of Harry's victory over the representatives of the dark forces comes when Slytherin Malfoy, Crabbe, Goyle, and Flint pretend to be Dementors in order to put Harry off his game. Harry summons his patronus (in an illegal move I would note, since players are not allowed to use their wands on the Quidditch pitch) to knock out his tormentors (PA, 134–35). Indeed, Gryffindor has never lost to Slytherin while Harry has been playing.

In its search for a grand theme, the mundane reading leads us to consider the Harry Potter stories in terms of comparable literary forms and techniques. In this regard, we are pointed to Tolkien and Lewis, among others, and the common technique of children's fiction and fantasy more generally wherein there is a contest between good and evil. The similitari-

ties between the Harry Potter characters and stories and *The Lord of the Rings* are of course manifold—Frodo/Harry, Dumbledore/Gandalf, Voldemort/Sauron, Wormtail/Wormtongue,<sup>21</sup> as is the circumstances of the conflict where there is good within and evil without.

As well as making the links to other mythic children's literatures such as *Lord of the Rings*, the mundane reading's emphasis on the literary character of Harry Potter, Quidditch, and so on highlights the dichotomies of author and subject. It considers not only where the author Rowling drew her conscious and unintended inspiration for Quidditch. It highlights the origins of Harry Potter in the writing of once impoverished single parent, Joanne Rowling, in which she creates a magical world populated by wizards, giants, dragons, werewolves, and the like. The mundane reading reinforces the distinction between author and text as we are invited to think of the influences on Rowling, and between fact and fiction (which itself conflates the dichotomies of true and false and of nonfiction and fiction). A magical reading refuses these categories.

The mundane reading reduces the magical world of Harry Potter to a series of mundane dichotomies. Populated though it is with wizards and other magical creatures, we are instructed to read the story as a stylized tale about an individual hero fighting the good fight. Yet this reading, as hidebound as it is, neglects not only the many categories Rowling challenges in the traditional stories of heroism and glory but also omits those elements of Harry's world that are rendered in a rather traditionalist way by the author. This applies particularly to international relations and the way that the world of sporting nations is portrayed. Rowling is often sensitive and thought-provoking when it comes to questions of intercultural, intergenerational, and even interspecies relations, certainly in comparison to the grand literature to which she is compared in the mundane reading, yet when international relations crops up, it is a world of given identities where otherness is suspicious and conflictual.

### A Magical Reading: Quidditch, the Civilizing Process, and International Relations

The mundane reading is idealist and paradigmatic rather than a historical and sociological understanding. Structuring Harry Potter's world according to the axis of good and evil, Quidditch is subordinated to this narrative and becomes a focus for the conflict between good and evil. Among other problems with this reading, it neglects the historical and sociological aspects of Quidditch as a social practice in the wizarding world. Conducting what I

style a magical reading involves suspending our disbelief about the unreal qualities of Harry Potter and his world and instead entering that world as if it is our own. Such a magical reading points our attention to the actual social practices of Quidditch and what they tell us about society and international relations in the wizarding world. Rather than a black and white world that mimics international relations' realism and idealism, we find a world of unequal and exploitive relations, a world of internationalism and imperialism. Quidditch plays an ambiguous part in this world, normalizing these inequalities while providing a locus for challenging the established categories of the wizard's world.

The cultural studies of sport have highlighted not only the historically increasing dominance of display over play, the rationalizing shift from ritual to record (as Gutman puts it), but also the patterns of class dominance in modern sports.<sup>22</sup> This centralizing, rationalizing, and routinizing of sport has been presented as part of the civilizing process where violence in society at large is increasingly diminished and displaced onto the realm of leisure activities.<sup>23</sup> The history of Quidditch matches this development very well.

In the early record of the games recorded by Whisp, Quidditch was already an international sport insofar as a Scottish player was present and there were some later Norwegian reports on games resembling Quidditch.<sup>24</sup> However, the early informal development of the sport lacked consistency of rules and seems to have been prone to outbreaks of violence. This early version of the game was also absent the most notable part of the game with which Harry Potter is associated, that is, the Golden Snitch. The origin of this fourth ball was a cross-fertilization of game hunting with the original form of Quidditch reported in the Museum of Quidditch as taking place in 1269.<sup>25</sup> The association of Quidditch in its very early stages with a particularly ruthless and violent social practice is indicative of a certain gladiatorial element that the sport maintains in Harry's time. The diminution of the level of violence matches that in contact sports like rugby and football, but also even such apparently noncontact sports as cricket.<sup>26</sup>

Quidditch has folkloric origins, being played in an early form by wizards and witches in a variety of locales, with modifications made to the game through happenstance, necessity, and changes in technology.<sup>27</sup> The intervention of the Wizards Council, however, marks the beginning of the familiar schism in the sport between its origins in play and the locality, on the one hand, and the increasingly centralization and regulation of Quidditch, on the other. This resonates with the process that Shapiro notes

occurs with muggle sports, where local control is usurped by central authorities as a way of pacifying the magical populace. Specifically, the development of Quidditch looks like the history of rugby. In *Barbarians, Gentlemen and Players*, Dunning and Sheard show that rugby emerges in localities and is played by people according to locally established rules.<sup>28</sup> Progressively, however, centralized rules come to predominate, and Dunning and Sheard note that this process parallels the social control of industrial workers. The rules that come to predominate are those associated with the upper (that is, the ruling) classes. In the case of rugby, we find that the sport splits along class lines with rugby union being the aristocratic "amateurs" and rugby league the working-class professionals.

The centralization, routinization, and the de-escalation of violence in present-day Quidditch extends to its international dimensions. Although Quidditch is a magical wizard sport, the ordinariness of its bureaucratic organization is striking. Like muggle sports, it is a sport that is played in an organized way at school, is played by "professionals" or at least those who specialize in playing the sport (it is not clear that anyone is paid for playing the game), and is played in an informal way by Harry and his friends (CS, 39; HBP, 103). Like muggle sports, Quidditch also involves the paraphernalia of "professional" and national teams, with its attendant cultures and cultural products of fan support. There are posters of famous players and teams, figurines of Quidditch players, rivalry over who supports which team, and so on, all of which would be familiar to muggle sports fans.

While Harry is initially relatively ignorant of the international relations of the wizarding world, it is through Quidditch that he begins to learn about it. Before the start of his fourth year, Harry goes to the Quidditch World Cup final. This event highlights the role of sports in the political and international shape of the wizarding world. Although he was presumably aware of the international dimension of the muggle world, Harry had apparently not thought about there being foreign schools of magic (he had not thought of schools other than Hogwarts, indeed) until the international competition involved in the Triwizard Tournament (GF, 165-66). Before the Quidditch World Cup final, the countries with wizards that Harry would be aware of are predominantly European.<sup>29</sup> Southeastern Europe figures because of the existence of a certain variety of dragons. The only other reference to a country outside Europe before the World Cup Final is Egypt (where Bill Weasley is employed by Gringotts Bank). The Cup Final, however, presents a veritable bonanza of international variety, although it becomes clear that the geography of Quidditch centers on the British Isles first of all, then Europe, and then a collection of countries that

are part of the British Commonwealth. Thus, at the Quidditch World Cup Harry watches Ireland defeat Bulgaria, but the crowd is made up of wizards and witches from around the world. The color and variety of the event is exemplified by the different dress and demeanor of wizards and witches from foreign lands. For instance: "Three African wizards sat in serious conversation, all of them wearing long white robes and roasting what looked like a rabbit on a bright purple fire" (GF, 76). This event is also the only occasion at which Americans are mentioned, when Harry passes "a group of middle-aged American witches [who] sat gossiping happily beneath a spangled banner stretched between their tents which read: *The Salem Witches Institute*" (GF, 76).

While there are national Quidditch leagues around the world, Kennilworth Whisp (2001) focuses on the league in Britain and Ireland which has thirteen teams. This league includes teams from across the United Kingdom but also Ireland. This is unlike, for instance, English football, where Welsh teams play in the same league with English teams but Scottish and Irish teams do not. At the national team level, however, Quidditch more closely resembles the world of football, rugby, and cricket as there are separate national teams for England, Scotland, and Wales as well as Ireland. The political geography of the muggle world intrudes into the description of the teams' locations, as while the Ballycastle Bats are described as coming from Northern Ireland, the Kennmare Kestrels are simply from Ireland and their players are reported to have represented the Irish National Team.<sup>30</sup> Generally, the exotica of the magical world is embellished here by the association of Quidditch teams with the Celtic parts of the British Isles, along with names resembling village names of southern England.

If sport is a way that Harry discovers international relations, it also provides insight into the institutional character of those international relations. For example, chairwizard of the International Association of Quidditch, Hassan Mostafa, referees the Cup Final (GF, 96). Both the major sporting events that Harry participates in or watches, the Quidditch World Cup and the Triwizard Tournament, are overseen by the Ministry of Magic, specifically the Department of International Magical Cooperation, which is essentially the Foreign Ministry, although the title suggests that it is itself an international body, as well as the Department of Magical Games and Sports. In comparison with muggle sports institutions, the magical community seems to be equally bureaucratized but more internationalized. The influence of the international association is matched by the control that the Ministry has over national associations for Quidditch. The Department of Magical Games and Sports, as well as being an apparently quite significant

part of the Ministry, also incorporates the headquarters of the British and Irish Quidditch League.<sup>31</sup> This prominence of games and sports in the bureaucracy of the wizarding world is unmatched in the muggle context. Nor do we see the level of governmental and international penetration in muggle sports, which are for the most part managed and self-regulated by national and nongovernmental associations.

One might from a commonsense point of view expect wizards' and witches' superior magical skills to free them from the constraints that we muggles face in terms of speed and ease of travel, and in being able to provide for themselves. Yet we know that there are still inequalities in wealth (and as a result, in social status) among wizards and witches and that wizards share nationalities with muggles. The magical community is clearly not cosmopolitan. While there is not one global wizard community, there is international cooperation among wizards, much of which seems to have been a response to a combination of Quidditch and relations with muggles. Whisp (2001) tells us that Quidditch is a significant reason why muggles associate witches with brooms, and before long there were rules to keep Quidditch games from the prying eyes of muggles. These rules were apparently not enforced until the International Statute of Wizarding Secrecy of 1692 mandated that all Ministries of Magic were responsible for the sports played within their territories. In Britain this led to the creation of the Department of Magical Games and Sports. Interestingly, this account of the development of Quidditch rules suggests that international regulation changed the character of national regulation of sports. Among the very few rules of Quidditch that appear in *Quidditch through the Ages*, the sixth indicates that wands can be taken onto the pitch but may not be used against other players. A footnote indicates that this rule has less to do with Quidditch than the wizarding world in general. At the time this rule was instigated, there were concerns about muggle persecution and wizards were permitted to carry wands at all times for protection. This provision, ratified by the International Confederation of Wizards, has definite hints of the right to bear arms, although the focus was muggle outsiders rather than their own or another government. It should be noted that the perceived threat from muggles is belittled by Adalbert Waffling in his *A History of Magic*, where he suggests that persecution by muggles was in fact unlikely to harm witches and wizards (quoted in PA, 7).

The hierarchical character of the magical community is further highlighted by the provision that Departments of Magical Games and Sports could disband Quidditch teams that were not following the agreed rules. While muggle Ministries of Sport have emerged in various countries, this

has not been as a product of an international regulation, organization, or international confederation. Rather, muggle Ministries of Sport were a by-product of the pressure of the Cold War competition between East bloc countries and the West. Just as there was a race into space, there was a competition not only of political systems politically but also in terms of athletic prowess. It was this competition rather than an international impulse that created Ministries of Sport. It is also interesting that these Ministries were set up very early in the life of the sport of Quidditch, and are now hundreds of years old. By contrast, muggle Ministries of Sport are generally late twentieth-century vintage.<sup>32</sup> All this suggests that while the national competition among wizards was serious business, it was not the driving force behind centralization and control in Quidditch or in the international relations of the wizard community more generally. Indeed, it seems that the need to separate and remove themselves from the prying eyes of muggles is the operative factor, and this seems to suggest a particular external threat as the determining element. But this is surely not persuasive, since short of some persecution wizards and witches have little to fear from muggles. A more compelling argument seems to be the overwhelming need to control the massive levels of violence that wizards can visit on one another as well as on muggles. This interpretation reads the internationalization and institutionalization of Quidditch as part of a civilizing process.

As Elias notes, however, this controlled reduction of violence is never complete. The displacement of violence within Quidditch is as ambiguous as it is in muggle sports. Thus, sport is the basis for managed international competition among wizards, although this seems to be a somewhat precarious balance. On the one hand, one of the goals of the Triwizard Tournament is to promote international cooperation through sport in a manner similar to the Olympics, and we read that “[t]he tournament [is] . . . generally agreed to be a most excellent way of establishing ties between young witches and wizards of different nationalities” (GF, 165). Percy Weasley remarks to his brother Ron, “Excellent! That’s the whole point you know—international magical cooperation” (GF, 368). However, we are invited here to ridicule the pompous social climber and it is clear that sports also reflect the conflictual aspect of international relations. Hermione observes about interhouse competition at Hogwarts, “That’s the trouble with Quidditch . . . it creates all this bad feeling and tension” (OP, 507). Harry feels strongly that Hermione does not understand Quidditch, especially when, reacting to the histrionics of some of the school Quidditch players, she declares, “It’s only a game, isn’t it.” For Harry and for many of his friends,

nothing could be further from the truth. When Hermione suggests that the Triwizard Tournament is “supposed to be about getting to know foreign wizards and making friends with them,” Ron responds, “No, it isn’t. . . . It’s about winning” (GF, 368). Hermione points to the gendered aspect of Quidditch—“Is that all boys care about?” she snipes in sixth year, but Ginny Weasley later suggests that Hermione does not understand the game (HBR, 298, 496).

Quidditch is a realm of competition in which conflict and cooperation mix in unequal and rather unpredictable measure. Barrier argues that the competitive aspect of sport reinforces national identity formation, building a bond between those on and supporting one team and reinforcing the strangeness of the other team and its supporters.<sup>33</sup> International relations as a realm of strangeness is reinforced during the Triwizard Tournament, as the visitors from Beauxbatons and Durmstrang are regarded with suspicion, and the teacher and students of the latter are portrayed as surly and somehow untrustworthy. They look and sound foreign, to begin with. In the case of Durmstrang we also know that students not only practice Defense against the Dark Arts but (it is said with rather ominous approval by Draco Malfoy) that they are introduced to the Dark Arts themselves.

### Quidditch, Imperialism, and Violence

Quidditch not only introduces us to international relations and reflects its complex amalgam of cooperation and competition. As a social institution, it also reflects and manifests the social mores of the wizarding community. As such, Quidditch marks out and reinforces social inequality, class conflict, and the imperial heritage among wizards.

I have already mentioned the similarity of the development of Quidditch to the story of rugby; this similarity extends to the social functions it and other competitive sports perform in school. Harry and his fellow wizards are an aristocracy. There is a certain limited social mobility in and out of the wizarding class, but the references to bloodlines and blood purity are class references rather than to an ethnicity. In the aristocratic environment of the wizards and witches, Hogwarts academy is like other private schools in having houses named after glorious heroes.<sup>34</sup> These houses compete for academic and sports honors, and the sports and the competition breed solidarity with the group, a belief in the value of hard work, and a desire to win.

J. A. Mangan suggests that competitive sports were an integral part of the creation of the image of empire among British schoolboys and a key

aspect of the export of that imperial regulative ideal.<sup>35</sup> Quidditch seems to operate in a similar way. Indeed, the magical world in a number of ways resembles the muggle world before the fall of the British Empire and the history of Quidditch maps onto the history of British imperialism reasonably well. The similarities to the interwar period are striking, particularly in the sense that we are viewing a world between two wars. There is a sense of impending doom, of approaching conflict, of disagreement over what needs to be done to oppose the gathering dark forces.<sup>36</sup> Having survived a conflict with Voldemort, the wizarding world is facing the prospect of another imminent, perhaps worse, conflict. Even the name of the wizard foreign ministry, the Department of International Magical Cooperation, conjures up the interwar predecessor to UNESCO, the International Institute for Intellectual Cooperation. By the sixth year, with the impending civil war among wizards out in the open (HBP, 17), the tone takes on a distinctly post-September 11 feel with fear of random attacks on wizards and muggles alike.

While international bodies like the International Federations of Wizards and the International Association of Quidditch are important features of the magical world, that world is divided into those places that have adopted Quidditch and those that haven't. According to Whisp, Quidditch spread around the world, fanning out from Britain first to Ireland and then to parts of Northern Europe before reaching a wider audience in Africa and Australia and New Zealand. Quidditch is not very popular in Asia because the preferred method of transportation there is the flying carpet, and thus there is little expertise in flying brooms (Japan being the one exception). We are also told by Whisp that Quidditch is gaining some popularity in North America, with Canada providing a number of good teams and the national U.S. team having performed in the Quidditch World Cup, but that it is not as popular as it might be primarily because of being out-competed by the rival charms (!) of Quodpot, a variant on Quidditch.<sup>37</sup>

Similarly, the pattern of the development of broom technology emanates from the United Kingdom. Indeed, the development of various advanced forms of brooms is almost exclusively English. The only exception to this appears to be a broom produced by Universal Brooms Ltd., a name redolent of an American multinational enterprise (MNE) rather than a British company. This company produced the cheapest brooms but they didn't work terribly well and the company went out of business.

While there is a coincidence of timing and the geographic extent of the development of Quidditch with its British muggle imperial counterpart, the association of sport with imperialism seems less obviously present

in the case of Quidditch. Some have argued that British sports were introduced not only as distractions but also as the basis for the creation of social discipline and order. Thus, the export of cricket was not only a product of expatriates playing the game in front of Indians, West Indians, South Africans, and so on, but it also performed an important social function of pacification of the local elite and masses of the subject populations.<sup>38</sup> However, such a determinist view of the role of sport has been challenged by, among others, J. A. Mangan who points out that although the export of sport is clearly a part of cultural imperialism in, for instance, Latin America, sports are incorporated into and appropriated by national cultures and tailored to local conditions. Thus, while modern sport is "essentially a derivative European sport, creatively and imaginatively adapted to North American cultural needs, inclinations and imperatives," imperialism is not the end of the story of sport in the postimperial context.<sup>39</sup> This imperial origin and nationalist response are not easy to reconcile with what we know of the wizarding community. The analogues to these conflicts, unequal relations, and requirements for control in the magical universe appear instead in wizards' relations with other types of magical creatures, elves, giants, dementors, inferi, and so on.

Finally, Quidditch is an arena of controlled violence as is evident in the persistence of dueling among wizards (CS, 141-45). Thorstein Veblen<sup>40</sup> argues that:

Apart from warlike activity proper, the institution of the duel is also an expression of the same superior readiness for combat; and the duel is a leisure-class institution. The duel is in substance a more or less deliberate resort to a fight as a final settlement of a difference of opinion. In civilized communities it prevails as a normal phenomenon only where there is a hereditary leisure class, and almost exclusively among that class.

The importance attached to Quidditch, where it is a key element in interhouse competition alongside academic excellence, along with the persistence at Hogwarts of dueling,<sup>41</sup> as well as the violent associations of Quidditch and the cast-off remark that wizards have died in previous Triwizard Tournaments—all these suggest a world like the one Veblen is describing. There is a common tendency to settle disputes through fighting, even among the more mild-mannered such as Arthur Weasley who scuffles with Lucius Malfoy. His son Ron Weasley is routinely being held off pummeling Draco Malfoy for his slights of Ron's family. Quidditch seems to contribute to violence occasionally, as we can see in the fight among Harry and Fred, George and Ron Weasley on one side, and Malfoy and his

friends on the other, which results in a lifetime ban from playing Quidditch that is later revoked (OP, 371).

In any event as a physical and to some degree combative team sport, we can consider whether we might expect Quidditch to generate, increase, displace, or not affect aggression. Sipes concludes that combative sports are not an alternative to war, that is, such sports do not discharge aggression. He concludes rather that war and combative sports show a direct cross-cultural relationship where the "more warlike [are] more likely to have these sports and less warlike societies less likely to have them."<sup>42</sup> This analysis and that of Guilbert suggest that rather than being a pleasant distraction, sports like Quidditch are reflective of warlike tendencies in the magical world and may even engender aggressive feelings among players and spectators.<sup>43</sup> We see this in evidence in the lead-up to the Quidditch final between Gryffindor and Slytherin in Harry's Third Year: "Tensions between the two teams and their houses was at breaking point. A number of small scuffles broke out," as a result of which a couple of boys are hospitalized (PA, 222). At that time, "the enmity between Harry and Malfoy was at its highest point ever." The upcoming Quidditch game crystallizes and exacerbates the hateful relationship between the protagonists. The violent character of Quidditch suggests, then, that the magical world is a violent one in which Voldemort is remarkable for his ferocity and malevolence rather than his use of force.

But we should be careful in ascribing such a critical role in the fomenting of violence. As Clifford Geertz has observed in his analysis of the Balinese cockfight, while the sport of betting on fighting cocks and the social rules and conventions that surround the sport revolve around a violent practice, it neither seems to stimulate violence among the Balinese nor does the relative equality that is an important part of this sport appear to spill over into the wider, very unequal society in Bali.<sup>44</sup> Sport appears to reflect rather than generate social conflict, and this seems to be the case whether in Geertz's Bali, between rival football fans whether internationally or locally such as Celtic and Rangers in Glasgow, or with respect to Quidditch.

## Conclusion

*The game's over. Harry won. We won.*

HERMIONE GRAINGER

*The game is over.*

GEORGE W. BUSH (QUOTED IN THE OTTAWA CITIZEN, FEBRUARY 7, 2003)

Harry Potter has intruded into our world in a number of ways and at a number of levels, whether it be the malicious comparison of Vladimir Putin to Dobby, youngsters likening the newest expensive hockey stick to the Firebolt, or the use of thinly disguised Harry Potter characters by the U.S. army for a military training manual.<sup>45</sup> More generally, the use of game and sports analogies is so common and accepted that we barely notice it.

The quote from Bush, above, illustrates the complicated ways that sports analogies are deployed in international relations. "The game is over" has an air of finality. Not only is the phony war phase of the process over, it suggests, but there is more than a hint here that the United States is ready now to impose its will. In other words, Saddam has lost even before the war (game) has begun. "The game is over" also suggests that the dealings with Iraq have thus far been regarded by at least one party (presumably, the intimidation is, Iraq) as a game. International relations is serious business, however, and we now need to get back to the business at hand, the disarmament of Iraq. At the same time, Bush's phrase belittles the process of weapons inspections by suggesting that they are no more than a game.

Similarly, while Harry and his team generally take the game very seriously, he is increasingly distracted and less interested in Quidditch, particularly in his sixth year, and this is echoed at the end of that year when he determines that he will not return for his seventh (HBP, 382-83, 606).

The extent to which sports and violent figures work as efficient explanations of American politics is revealed by the following offhand comment by an official, "You can go up to Congress and you can hit them over the head with a baseball bat once, then you have to allow them a period of time to recover from that before you can hit them again" (unnamed American official quoted by Kingdon 1995: 130-31). By contrast, Hermione Granger's comment quoted above reflects the joy of victory, the solidarity and collective identification engendered by Quidditch, and the centrality of Quidditch to her and her friends' world.<sup>46</sup> Recently it has been suggested that we have entered a period of international relations in which western populations and their governments engage in "spectator sport war," equating supposedly distant wars with a spectacle. In contrast to the semblance of equality that appears to be essential to most games, spectator sport war is hardly based on equality. Thus, although McInnes is correct to focus on the media presentation and theatrical aspects of contemporary war as it is presented in many Western countries, the connection with sport is weak.<sup>47</sup>

My analysis has suggested that a black and white reading of Quidditch as the parallel of the contest between good and evil will not do. Quidditch

has a rich and varied history. It has a number of associations with war, aggression, a modern form of collective solidarity, and so on. In addition, Quidditch, like other sports, involves a degree of risk, unpredictability, and spontaneity. Harry is not, however, a traditional sports hero, a figure that incidentally has been long in decline as a literary form, particularly the school sports hero.<sup>48</sup> And the notion that sports are character building is almost universally dismissed these days in the face of criticisms of the impact on self-esteem, the occasional incitement to violence, and the dubious consequences of the drive to win (as in the extensive use of drugs and other cheating).<sup>49</sup> In its place are studies that suggest that sport is manipulated by states as part of their cultural policy and international competition,<sup>50</sup> as well as those that indicate the link between sports and identity formation, in terms of nation but also of race.<sup>51</sup>

These considerations, along with the implications of Quidditch as a violent spectacle, suggest that good and bad in the sport are more interwoven and mixed up than the mundane reading tells us. More generally, the role of Quidditch as a social institution tells us something of the wizarding world, a world of aristocratic privilege and inequality, tinged with imperialism. With regard to personalities, if we can abandon our prejudices concerning the goodness of Harry, it is difficult to see why we criticize Malfoy for having bought his way onto the Slytherin Quidditch team because his father purchased new high-tech brooms for the team, and yet not similarly censure Harry when his godfather buys him the most expensive broom that can be obtained, a world-class broom no less! Surely, if one is pursuing victory in one case, one is doing the same in the other. Snape's assessment of Harry is also apposite: "Famous Harry Potter is a law unto himself. Let the ordinary people worry about his safety." Comparing Harry to his father, Snape suggests that "a small amount of talent on the Quidditch pitch made him think he was a cut above the rest of us. . . . Rules were for lesser mortals, not for Quidditch Cup-winners" (PA, 209). At a number of points, Harry breaks rules but is forgiven because of who he is. Dumbledore sends Harry the Invisibility Cloak which is little short of an incitement to wrongdoing, and the same could be said of Lupin returning the Marauders Map. McGonagall overlooks Harry's infractions so that he might win the Quidditch Cup for Gryffindor. And Cornelius Fudge prefers not to punish Harry for breaking the International Statute on Wizarding Secrecy Regarding Under-Age Wizards.

Yet, Quidditch is more than a reflection of social privilege and inequality. Most of the time, Harry's concern with Quidditch is playing the game, although this changes when he is banned from playing during his

fifth year and as he becomes more concerned with battling the intrigues of the Death Eaters during his sixth year (OP, 5; HBP, 391). But in playing the game, as I note above, we are in a realm of play as much as of rules and thus the spontaneous and nonutilitarian elements are what are most important to Harry and his friends. To understand the importance of Quidditch is not only to see the metaphors of good and evil teams nor the cultural context of the sport, it is to appreciate that in the end it is the play itself that matters to the players.<sup>52</sup>

## Notes

1. Rapoport 1960.
2. Snidal 1986.
3. Axelrod 1984, 6-7; Oye 1986, 2.
4. Manning 1962, 207.
5. Manning 1962, 215.
6. Shapiro 1989.
7. Ashley 1988, 230, 238-41.
8. The heroic practice not only reduces Harry's world in this way. It also reduces the stories themselves to the product of a muggle world and a muggle author, to a world that is as disenchanting as ours (Osling 2003), and represents a reading perpetuated by those unable and usually unwilling to see the magical qualities of Harry's world and ours. On this curious lack of curiosity, see Scamander 2001.
9. Campbell 1993, 8. This means of course that the distinction of fact and fiction cannot be maintained and I consider Quidditch here much as one might consider rugby or cricket in the muggle world. Some may wonder whether I am justified in labelling the consideration of a magical sport in terms parallel to those of a muggle sport as a "magical reading." The point is to avoid the reduction of Quidditch to nothing more than literature and worse still, metaphor. As a muggle myself I can only suggest that in the end the reader must decide whether what I have offered can justifiably be so described, although I think I can defensibly claim that my reading is not mundane. To my social science critics, I hope that even if this paper is not magical it may to some degree be logical.
10. For a children's story featuring the interplay of hockey and international relations, see Roy MacGregor 2001, *Power Play in Washington*.
11. Gmelch 1999.
12. Compared to the games in Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland* stories, which also feature, among other things, chess. In *Alice*, however, at times the whole world is a chess board and the pieces change into other things. For the magical elements of the games in the *Alice* stories, see Blake 1974, especially on chess at 105. On Carroll's dislike of sport, which he equated with hunting and dueling, and thus as intrinsically violent and destructive, see Blake 1974, 158.
13. Gutmann 1978, 3.

14. Guttmann 1978, 4-9.
15. Weiss 1969, 77-78; McInnes 2002, 149.
16. The most extreme version of this combativeness is hunting (insofar as this can be regarded as a sport at all) where the aim is often though not always the destruction of the hunted. Hunting was common in the wizarding world we are told, and of course persists in various manifestations in our world.
17. Dunning and Sheard 1979, 9.
18. Compare to the reference in Blyton's *In the Fifth at Mallory Towers*: "'You will play well, *n'est-ce pas?* You will win all the goals. I shall come to watch. And for the girl that wins a goal. . . . 'Shoots a goal, Mam'zelle,' said Susan. 'Shoots! Ah yes—but you have no gun to shoot a goal,' said Mam'zelle, who never could learn the language of sports." Blyton 1995 [1950], 94-95.
19. Rather than the grand legends revolving around good and evil, an alternate would highlight the prevailing myth in the magical tales of Harry Potter, of the suburban English life and of school for a reasonably well-to-do English schoolboy.
20. Although Harry does at one point resort to gamesmanship against Slytherin when chasing the Snitch (HBP, 278).
21. At the time of writing, it is unclear whether Snape might be similar to Saruman. This author suspects not, in fact.
22. Although Quidditch reportedly has queer origins. According to the authoritative account of Kenilworth Whisp (2001), the game that became Quidditch was first reported being played at Queerditch Marsh in England in the fourteenth century.
23. Elias 1978; Malcolm 2002, 39.
24. Whisp 2001.
25. The idea for the Snitch came when a Golden Snidget was released into the middle of a game of Quidditch. After that, Snidgets were for a time sought and killed during Quidditch games. Snidgets had been hunted almost to extinction by errant wizards. It appears that there was increasing pressure to end the hunting and killing of the Golden Snidget and a ban was placed on the practice by the Wizards Council. This generated the need for a replacement in the form of a metal Snitch, precharmed to stay on the Quidditch pitch.
26. Malcolm 2002.
27. One aspect of the folklore origins of Quidditch resembles cricket: the length of the game is determined by the teams. Traditionally, especially before the invention of the Snitch, games could last for days.
28. Dunning and Sheard 1979.
29. The references to countries in the first three books are Romania (PS, 80; CS, 40), Transylvania (CS, 122), Africa (PS, 80), England (PS, 126; PA, 61), and Norway (PS, 170), Albania (CS, 242), Egypt (CS, 40; PA, 12), France (PA, 14), Ireland (PA, 43). In GF, the countries referred to in the context of Quidditch are Britain (32 and others), Bulgaria (37, 55, and others), Egypt (96), Ireland (32, 55 and others), Luxembourg, Peru, Scotland, Transylvania, Uganda, Wales (all at 59).

References other than in the context of Quidditch include Albania (58, regarding the disappearance of Bertha Jorkins), Andorra (482), Australia (58, again concerning Bertha Jorkins), Brazil (76), Norway (60), Rumania (48, regarding dragons), and China and Sweden (287, again concerning dragons, this time as used in the first task of the Triwizard Tournament).

30. Interestingly, it doesn't seem as if there is much internationalization of the players on Quidditch teams—that is, there are no mentions of any Europeans or other nationals in British Quidditch teams. The Bosnian decision does not seem to have had an impact on the wizard sporting community.

31. And also the Official Gobstones Club and the Ludicrous Parents Office.

32. Allison and Monnington 2002, 114-15.

33. Barnier 2001, 17.

34. In the author's personal experience, these heroes are often drawn from among the imperial conquering heroes and explorers, for instance, Francis Drake and Walter Raleigh. The founders of Hogwarts include women suggesting once again that there is more gender equality in the wizarding community than in our muggle world.

35. Mangan 1986.

36. This narrative not only relates the interwar period but also *The Lord of the Rings*. The connection of these two narratives is made by Alison Lurie 1990, 189-90.

37. Whisp 2001, 43. Quodpot developed from the import of a Snitch from "the old country" by a wizard who accidentally charmed it so that it exploded. In an interesting aside, Whisp notes that the development of Quidditch in North America was also inhibited by "the great intensity of 'anti-wizarding feeling.'" There are parallels of Quidditch and Quodpot to the relationship of rugby and (American) football.

38. Mangan 1998.

39. Mangan 2001, 5.

40. Veblen 1978, 43. Veblen also suggests that "[t]he addiction to sports . . . marks an arrested development of the man's moral nature." Sports are a product of "boyish temperament."

41. In a demonstration of dueling for second years in CS, Lockhart is dealt with severely by Snape, for instance, as a way for Snape openly to humiliate Lockhart in front of his pupils.

42. Sipes 1973, 67.

43. Guilbert 2004.

44. Geertz 1983.

45. At one of my son's recent hockey games, one of his friends showed off his new \$200 stick. One parent, looking over the gathered players and parents as they pored over and passed the stick on in turn, remarked, "Just like Harry Potter!" Compare to PA, 171, 184, 188-90. The U.S. army's illicit use of Harry Potter figures a character named Topper who attends Mognarts School of Magic by the