Uncertainty, Shame and Consumption: Negotiating Occupational and Non-Work Identities in Community Sports Coaching

Ben A. Ives[a]*, Laura A. Gale[a], Paul A. Potrac[b], and Lee J. Nelson[c]

[a]*Cluster for Research into Coaching (CRiC), Department of Sport and Exercise Sciences, Manchester Metropolitan University, UK;* [b]*Department of Sport, Exercise, and Rehabilitation, Northumbria University, UK and the School of Public Health, Physiotherapy and Sport Science, University College Dublin, Republic of Ireland;* [c]*Department of Sport and Physical Activity, Edge Hill University, UK.*

*Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Ben Ives, Cluster for Research into Coaching, Department of Sport and Exercise Sciences, Manchester Metropolitan University, Oxford Road, Manchester, M15 6BH. Email: B.Ives@mmu.ac.uk

Uncertainty, Shame and Consumption: Negotiating Occupational and Non-Work Identities in Community Sports Coaching

This paper addressed the lived experiences of two community sports coaches in an era of neoliberal capitalism, consumerism, and insecure employment. Specifically, we considered a) their attempts to develop a desired occupational identity in a casualised and audit-driven industry and b) their experiences of the tensions that existed between the conditions of their employment and their ability to effectively enact other (important) identities outside of the workplace. Data were generated via 45 hours of participant observation and 42 hours of in-depth interviews. The fieldnotes and interview transcripts were iteratively analysed. Symbolic interactionist and postmodern theorisations of identity, work, and consumption were integrated to interpret the participants' experiences. Our analysis highlighted how the participants' identity management was influenced by the expectations of work and non-work social audiences and the motivational weight of their future aspirations. It also illustrated how the participants' readings of their employment conditions, dominant societal discourses regarding consumption, and subcultural expectations of success and failure informed their respective decision to leave this form of work. Based on these findings, we believe this study makes a substantive contribution to the evolving literature base addressing the identity management of sports workers, as well as our micro-level understandings of the impacts and consequences of neoliberal capitalism in sport.

Keywords: sports work, identity, precarious work, neoliberalism, consumerism, community sports coaching, sport policy, symbolic interactionism

Introduction

As an ideology, a form of government, and a set of economic and political policies, neoliberalism has attracted increasing scholarly attention (e.g. Hewison, 2016; Kalleberg & Vallas, 2018). The available literature has suggested that neoliberalism has, and continues to, significantly impact on the shaping and refashioning of social relations, especially in terms of subjecting people to new forms of financial insecurity and social uncertainty (Datta & Chakraborty, 2018; Kalleberg, 2018; Verhaeghe, 2014). In the context of employment, for example, the growth in nonstandard employment practices, outsourcing, low pay roles, as well as the decline in workers' social benefits and statutory protections, are commonly associated with neoliberal values and policy making (Kalleberg, 2011; Verhaeghe, 2014). Such developments are popularly justified in terms of helping employers to maintain their financial flexibility, reducing costs and overheads, optimising profit margins in a 'hyper-competitive' private sector and, in the public sector, lowering taxation and government spending (Crowley & Hodson, 2014). Many private and public sector organisations have also adopted intense approaches to quantifying or auditing the performance and productivity of their respective employees (Verhaeghe, 2014). It has been suggested that these regimes of performance management can not only contribute to a sense of anger, guilt, fear, and paranoia among workers, but they can also have a pervasive effect on their behaviour, as employees focus 'less on the work itself and more and more on administration, management, and monitoring' (Verhaeghe, 2014, p. 135). It has also been reported that young people (generally defined as those aged 16-24 years) are particularly vulnerable to the difficulties and challenges that are a consequence of neoliberal policies, practices, and values (Kalleberg, 2018). For example, it has been shown that the jobs generally available to young people in industrial countries such as the United Kingdom and United States of America are usually low wage, unlikely to offer career prospects that lead to better jobs in the future, and often result in young workers being overqualified and underemployed (e.g. involuntary temporary or part-time work) (Kalleberg, 2018; Rao, 2018).

Alongside the developments and changes in the workplace outlined above, neoliberal discourses have increasingly framed personal 'success' in terms of the accumulation of wealth, the consumption of various goods and services, aggressive individualism and interpersonal competition, an entrepreneurial self, and the ability not to use, or become reliant upon, state provided public services and support mechanisms (Conley, 2009; Datta & Chakraborty, 2018). Given its values and priorities, it is perhaps unsurprising that neoliberalism, in its various forms, has not been unproblematically experienced by people in their everyday lives (Connell, 2011). Indeed, its impacts are not solely connected to rising anxieties about 'job security' and 'career progression', but also a variety of non-work choices, ambitions, experiences, and activities (Hewison, 2016; Kalleberg & Vallas, 2018). The latter have included a deterioration in the physical and mental wellbeing of individuals, postponed decisions to marry or start a family, the inability to secure a foothold in the property market, increased personal borrowing and debt, and a decline in community relations (Datta & Chakraborty, 2018; Kalleberg, 2018).

Despite the advances made in the mainstream sociology literature, the micro-level experiences and consequences of neoliberalism and free-market capitalism for sports workers have received little comparable attention within the sociology of sport sub-discipline (Roderick, Smith, & Potrac, 2017). Indeed, while scholars have provided some valuable insights into the precarious nature of employment in education (e.g. Evans & Davies, 2014) and professional sport (e.g. Gilmore, Wagstaff, & Smith, 2018; Purdy & Potrac, 2016; Purdy, Kohe, & Paulauskas, 2019; Roderick & Schumaker, 2017), there remains little critical consideration of the ways in which other sports workers experience, understand, and respond to neoliberal ideology in their relationships with other people, both inside and outside of the workplace (Costas-Batlle, Carr, & Brown, 2017; Gale, Ives, Potrac, & Nelson, 2019). As such, this paper seeks to break new ground in the sociology of sports work by presenting the findings of a field-based study that explored the lives, practices, and meaning making of two working class, male community sports coaches (aged 18 and 21 years), who were employed to deliver a government sponsored initiative to promote prosocial behaviour through sporting activity.

At the heart of this investigation was a desire to examine two interrelated issues. The first concerned the participants' interpretations of what constituted a 'good' employee and, relatedly, their efforts to survive and thrive in an uncertain and audit-driven form of employment. Here, the investigative lens specifically focused on the interactions that shaped their respective outlooks to everyday practice in the workplace, as well as the strategies that the participants utilised to enhance their standing in their respective organisations. The second related to the participants' understandings of the interconnections between their workplace (or occupational) identity and their relations with friends, partners, and family outside of work. Specifically, this component of the study examined those tensions that existed between their employment conditions and their ability to perform other valued identities (e.g. son, partner, friend) in a manner considered desirable to both themselves and these particular significant others (Hickey & Roderick, 2017).

The significance of this paper lies in the generation of new knowledge regarding the political, relational, and emotional nature of identity work in community sports coaching specifically, sports work more generally, and the neoliberal climate within which this identity work occurs. The general invisibility of these sports workers in the sociology of sport literature base is surprising, especially given the significant role they play in facilitating various health and social policy priorities (Cronin & Armour, 2015; Ives, Gale, Nelson, & Potrac, 2016; Morgan & Bush, 2016). To date, scholarship examining community sport provision has tended to focus on the design and evaluation of specific interventions (e.g. Adams, Harris, & Lindsey, 2018; Draper & Coalter, 2016), as well as the increasingly commodified and outsourced nature of this form of policy work (e.g. Costas-Batlle et al., 2017; Thorpe & Reinhart, 2013). However, little attention has been given to the micro-level experiences of those people undertaking this work, inclusive of the everyday challenges, dilemmas, contradictions, and emotions that they experience inside and outside of the workplace (Gale et al., 2019). By considering the entwinement of the participants' professional and personal worlds (and social selves), we illuminate some of the interdependencies between different spheres of their respective lives and, importantly, the consequences that these had for them (Hickey & Roderick, 2017). This study not only challenges the idealism that has traditionally surrounded the use of sport and physical activity to achieve a multitude of desired policy outcomes, but also the unidimensional representations of identity that have characterised the study of sports workers (Hickey & Roderick, 2017). In doing so, we believe this study can provide a stimulus for further examinations of the multi-layered, relational, and inherently human dimensions of sports work and identity management and their connection to neoliberal policies, practices, and values (Gale et al., 2019; Roderick et al., 2017). Such inquiry has much to offer if our accounts of social life are to better recognise how 'actors "do" the social world and collectively determine the fate of their peers' (Crossley, 2011, p. 21).

Theoretical Framework

A symbolic interactionist conceptualisation of *identity* (e.g. Burke & Stets, 2009; McCall & Simmons, 1978) was utilised to examine and interpret how the participants' identity work was intricately shaped by their past, present, and anticipated future experiences of social life, both within and beyond the workplace. Here, identity is understood as 'the set of integrated ideas about the self, the roles we play, and the qualities that make us unique' (Scott, 2015, p. 2). Rather than being a fixed and stable entity, identity is considered to be processual, performative, and pragmatic in nature

(Scott, 2015). In other words, it is something that a) is capable of continuous change, b) is formed, reformed, or discarded in our interactions and relationships with others, c) is actively accomplished, and d) is made tangible through specific, concrete lines of action (Scott, 2015).

In symbolic interactionist thinking, *role identities* are defined as the positions that one holds and enacts in the social structure (e.g. being an employee, son/daughter, spouse, or friend) (Burke & Stets, 2009; Thoits, 2012). Attached to social positions are sets of normative *behavioural expectations* that guide a person's everyday conduct (Stryker, 1980; Thoits, 2012). People learn the role requirements for the enactment of different social positions in interactions with others (Thoits, 2012). These include, but are not limited to, family members, workplace colleagues, educators, friends, and the media (Burke & Stets, 2009; Thoits, 1983).

When individuals enact *performances* that are in keeping with the meanings and expectations associated with role identities, they obtain approving social feedback (Burke & Stets, 2009; Thoits, 2003). The rewarding feedback of other people leads to a sense of self as a meaningful, purposeful entity (Burke & Stets, 2009; Thoits, 2012). Meeting role identity standards can also result in other social rewards such as money, employment, favours, power, or prestige (McCall & Simmons, 1978; Thoits, 2003). Further still, it can foster a belief in one's ability to achieve desirable possible future selves (Markus & Nurius, 1986). These are 'specific, individually significant hopes, fears, and fantasies', which derive from an 'individual's particular sociocultural and historical context and from the models, images, and symbols provided by the media and by an individual's immediate social experiences' (Markus & Nurius, 1986, p. 954).

However, when perceptions of self in situation, as determined by *actual appraisals* (i.e. direct feedback from others), *reflected appraisals* (i.e. individuals' perception of how they think others' view them), or both, do not correspond with the meanings and expectations attached to the social role, *identity nonverification* arises (Savage, Stets, Burke, & Sommer, 2017). Such disapproving social feedback can produce negative emotions because one's self-concept (including possible selves), self-efficacy, and self-esteem have been disconfirmed (Burke & Stets, 2009; McCall & Simmons, 1978). In response, individuals often employ various behavioural or cognitive *strategies* to regain social approval and other social rewards (Burke, 1991). They might, for example, alter or rationalise their behaviour, make external attributions, selectively perceive or reject disapproving social feedback, withdraw from situations where self is not confirmed, or even change identities (see Turner & Stets, 2006).

Symbolic interactionism also recognises that people hold *multiple role identities*, which are ranked in terms of their subjective importance (e.g. Burke & Stets, 2009; McCall & Simmons, 1978). The perceptions of *salience* (Thoits, 2012) or *prominence* (McCall & Simmons, 1978) for each role identity is influenced by various factors. These include, for example, the investment of time, energy, and material resources in the role, the rewards acquired from its performance, and the amount of support and validation provided by significant others (Thoits, 2012). According to symbolic interactionist theorising, multiple role identities function together within the self in a variety of different ways. In situations where two or more identities are simultaneously activated, role identities that are more salient for individuals' self-conceptions will guide behaviour more than those with lower levels of importance (McCall & Simmons, 1978). Moreover, identities can share common meanings and expectations and exchange information or other resources (Burke & Stets, 2009). That is, some role identities, especially less salient ones, may act 'in the service of' other ones (Burke &

Stets, 2009, p. 136). For example, one might use the salary from their work role to help legitimate their spouse, friend, or homeowner identities.

Interactionist thinkers also stress that human beings are influenced by the social context in which they live (Charmaz, Harris, & Irvine, 2019; Stryker, 1980). They argue that social forces at the level of governments, organisations, and social institutions are implicit in shaping the judgement and enactment of role identities and in-role behaviour (Shulman, 2017; Stryker, 1980). Therefore, to facilitate a critical examination of the relationship between the social structure and the participants' individual identity management, we have also drawn on research addressing the micro-level consequences of neoliberal trends, ideas, and policies (i.e. Bauman, 2007; Verhaeghe, 2014). This evolving line of social thought has provided important insights into the formation of the *neoliberal self*, which imbibes the values of success, competition, individualism, sovereign consumption, flexibility, self-entrepreneurship, and instant gratification (Datta & Chakraborty, 2018; McGuigan, 2014). Under neoliberal restructuring, every individual regardless of their background can (and must) 'make' a success of their lives, which is demonstrated through the consumption of goods and services (Datta & Chakraborty, 2018; Verhaeghe, 2014). Consequently, neoliberal subjects 'are, simultaneously, *promoters of commodities* and the *commodities they promote*' (Bauman, 2007, p. 6); their identities are products to be bought, sold, and marketed in ways that increase their demand (Bauman, 2007; Datta & Chakraborty, 2018). Such identity work includes consuming, discarding, and replacing goods (e.g. clothes, cars), jobs, or relationships in a continuous effort to become, and remain, a sellable commodity (Bauman, 2007). Those who attain the status of a 'hot' commodity can often reap the rewards of social approval, recognition, and inclusion, while those who do not may frequently experience isolation, disorientation, and despair (Bauman, 2007; Verhaeghe, 2014).

Research Process and Procedures

Research Context

Community sports coaches are employed to deliver initiatives where sport and physical activity are used to achieve a variety health, education, and social policy outcomes (Cronin & Armour, 2015; Gale et al., 2019). These include, for example, tackling obesity and promoting healthy lifestyles, reducing crime and developing pro-social behaviour, overcoming social isolation and exclusion, promoting psychological wellbeing, and raising educational aspirations and attainment (Ives et al., 2016). It is also important to note that the data for this study were generated prior to the June 2016 Brexit referendum (also known as the United Kingdom European Union referendum), and at a time when the UK Government was implementing a wave of austerity-driven policies in an effort to address the extensive debt incurred by the financial crash (Widdop, King, Parnell, Cutts, & Millward, 2018). The impact of these austerity politics and policies were especially severe for local councils, who had previously led the delivery of community sport projects and provision. In order to cope with significant budget shortfalls, local authorities increasingly outsourced their community sport provision to charities and private enterprise groups (Parnell, Millward, & Spracklen, 2015). Alongside the increasing casualisation of community sport work, the government-led austerity policies also included the implementation of a more rigorous, targeted, and payment-by-results approach to public spending in community sport, where 'the most successful organisations [were] rewarded and those which [didn't] deliver [saw] their funding reduced or removed' (Jeremy Hunt quoted in DCMS/SE, 2012, p. 2). In other words, casualisation, benchmarking, audits, and performance management are very much part of the sport policy agenda and frontline sport development work in the UK (Ives et al., 2016).

Participant Recruitment

Criterion-based selection was used to obtain a sample from which we could learn a great deal about the management of identities among community sports coaches (LeCompte & Schensul, 2010). The criteria we established were that participants had to be a) aged 18 years or above, b) employed as a community sports coach on a part-time or full-time basis, and c) currently delivering initiatives where sport and physical activity were used to achieve a variety of health, education, and social policy outcomes.

A local authority in the North-East of England were contacted initially. They introduced the lead investigator to the principal gatekeepers, who were the owners of 12 coaching service providers in the region. He then held conversations with these individuals via meetings, telephone, and/or emails to discuss the purpose of the study and to find out more about what their organisation did and the make-up of their workforce. Following this, two service providers shared the contact details of employees who met the study's inclusion criteria and who might provide information rich cases (Patton, 2015). These individuals were contacted via email and formally invited to participate in the study.

Our final sample comprised two community sports coaches, namely Greg and James. Greg was a white British male from a traditionally working class background (i.e. a social group that consists of people who have low socioeconomic status, do not own much property, and who typically work blue-collar jobs that involve using physical rather than intellectual skills). At the start of data collection, he was 18 years old and had been employed on a *zero hours contract* at Coaching 'R' Us, a charitable enterprise, for two years. By zero hours contract, we refer to ‘a type of contract used by employers whereby workers agree to be available for work although have no guaranteed hours’ (Pyper & Harari, 2013, p. 1). Greg held a United Kingdom Coaching Certificate (UKCC) Level Two coaching qualification and he was in his final year of A-Level study (i.e. a UK-based qualification taken by college/school students aged 16-18). When working for Coaching ‘R’ Us, Greg was responsible for the coaching of diverse groups such as adolescents from socially deprived communities, disabled people, and schoolchildren. On completion of his A-Levels, Greg hoped to secure a full-time position with Coaching ‘R’ Us. He viewed his work as a community sports coach as an opportunity to get a foothold in a career path that would lead to progressively better jobs and thus allow him to construct a strong and purposive career narrative in an industry that mattered to him (Hauhart, 2019).

James was also a white British male from a working class background. At the start of data collection, he was 21 years of age and had been working as a zero hours employee at Active Coaching, a private sector company, for four years. James held a United Kingdom Coaching Certificate (UKCC) Level Two coaching qualification, as well as a BTEC (Business and Technology Education Council) Level 3 Extended Diploma in Sport. James’s main responsibilities at Active Coaching were to deliver bikeability training for schools and local authorities, provide PE provision in primary schools, offer specialist sports sessions and camps for children and young people, and deliver sports coaching initiatives to underrepresented groups such as the elderly, disadvantaged youth, and the unemployed. Like Greg, James also ascribed a deep level of commitment and dedication toward the protection and advancement of his work as a community sports coach. His short-term career ambition was to secure a promotion to a full-time, senior member of staff at Active Coaching, while his long-term aspirations were to set up his own community sports coaching business.

Both participants provided informed consent at the conclusion of an introductory meeting that focused helping Greg and James to understand fully the nature of the research and their involvement. Pseudonyms have been used throughout this article to protect the anonymity of the participants, as well as any other individual or organisation that were mentioned during the research process (Tracy, 2019).

Data Generation: Participant Observations and In-Depth Interviews

87 hours of data were generated for this field-based study via multiple qualitative research methods during a 12-month period. The lead investigator engaged in 45 hours of participant observations that focused on the interactions, actions, and emotions of Greg and James as they undertook their respective community sports coaching roles (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). Specifically, he observed them delivering a government sponsored sport and physical activity initiative to promote prosocial behaviour among young people in socially deprived communities in the North-East of England. Exploring the participants' life in-situ allowed us to record the mundane, taken for granted, and occasionally extraordinary features of their practice, as well as be party to conversations and events that may not have been otherwise shared in a research interview (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2019).

The first author observed Greg for 25 hours across twenty sessions during a seven-month period. The sessions took place at a multi-purpose outdoor sports facility, lasted between 30 and 120 minutes, and typically attracted up to twenty participants. James, on the other hand, was observed for 20 hours over ten sessions during a three-month period. His sessions were based at a local youth centre, attracted between 15 and 35 participants, and were two hours in duration. In order to generate rich and insightful data, the lead author did not adopt a static position as an observer (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2019). Rather, he regularly moved along a continuum of researcher involvement, from *participant-as-observer* (one who participates in activities and interactions, but not in everything) to *observer-as-participant* (one who participates moderately, but primarily observes from the sidelines) (Atkinson, 2019). Decisions about whether to participate more or less depended on a variety of factors, including the goals and agendas of our research, the nature of interactions, events, and scenes, and his relationship to the group (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2019). Immediately following the completion of each observation, the lead investigator transformed his experiences into full, elaborated written notes (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 2011). Writing these fieldnotes was an active process of selection and interpretation, with the researcher incorporating or rejecting noteworthy events based upon their relevance to our research aims (Emerson et al., 2011). The lead researcher also maintained a research journal. This document provided an important space for critically reflecting on the research process, keeping notes about reoccurring behaviours and issues observed in the field, and identifying topics and issues to explore or examine in the interviews with the participants (Emerson et al., 2011).

Alongside the participant observations, the lead investigator engaged in recurring in-depth interviews with each participant to generate richer insights into their thoughts and feelings, and their interpretations of the actions and behaviours of themselves and others (Brinkman, 2018). These interviews also enabled us to access information concerning events that occurred outside of the observations, as well as on the participants' backgrounds, interests, and motivations (Patton, 2015). Furthermore, each follow-up interview provided Greg and James with an opportunity to discuss their recent experiences and/or any changes that had occurred in their personal or working lives (Bone, 2019). Thus, the combination of observation and interview data allowed us to generate a rich and detailed understanding of the participants' identity management experiences, sense making, and strategies (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2019).

The interviews took place at times and locations that suited the participants, especially in terms of them feeling comfortable and relaxed in their surroundings (King, Horrocks, & Brooks, 2019). As an interviewer, the lead author positioned himself as an *active listener* (Sparkes & Smith, 2014) and employed various probing questions to enhance the richness of the data (Seale, 2018). This included the use of a) *elaboration* probes to elicit more in-depth responses about a particular point, idea, or event (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015), b) *clarification* probes to explore any points that were unclear, and open to misunderstanding (Patton, 2015), c) *detailed orientated* probes to enhance the descriptions and insights shared by the participants (Smith & Sparkes, 2019), and d) *completion* probes when an explanation or story seemed to have broken off before its natural end (King et al., 2019). The lead author also regularly provided the participants with various fieldnote excerpts and asked a series of questions about them. This further encouraged meaningful talk by helping Greg and James to recall particular actions, interactions, and emotions, as well as providing them with an opportunity to speak vividly about the ways in which they interpreted and understood the events documented in the fieldnote excerpts (Smith & Sparkes, 2019). In total, over 42 hours of data were generated via the in-depth interviews. Greg was interviewed on 12 separate occasions and James on 14 different occasions, with each interview lasting approximately 100 minutes. All interviews were recorded on a digital audio device and transcribed verbatim.

Phronetic Iterative Data Analysis

For this investigation, a *phronetic iterative qualitative data analysis process* was employed (Tracy, 2019). This was an abductive, problem-based approach that alternated between 1) data collection, 2) examining emergent findings from the data, and 3) consulting existing literatures and guiding research interests (Tracy, 2018). The moving back and forth between these three phases continued until the focus of the analysis attended to the research purpose in a way that we believed key audiences would deem significant and interesting (Tracy, 2018). As soon as possible after each data collection episode, the lead author (re)read the observation fieldnotes and interview transcripts to develop an empathetic understanding of the participants' lifeworld. He also engaged in regular dialogue with the rest of the research team about what he believed were the most promising directions and places to focus. These verbal interactions were particularly useful for sharpening and strengthen the ongoing collection and analysis of data, as it enabled us to play devil's advocate, where we tried to poke holes into each other's initial interpretations and suggest alternative (and perhaps even better) arguments for 'what is happening here' (Tracy, 2019). The lead author then engaged in *primary cycle coding* (e.g. who, what, when, where), which included using first-level descriptive codes to capture the essence of the data (Tracy, 2019). Once few new codes were emerging, the lead author moved onto *secondary cycle coding* (e.g. how, why, because), which involved the consideration of past theory and literature that best illuminated Greg and James's understandings of their experiences (Tracy, 2018). This principally involved the use of symbolic interactionist and postmodern theorisations of identity, work, and consumption. During secondary-cycle coding, the lead author also began to group smaller first-level codes together into a hierarchical category, identify codes that were a consequence of another, and examine how the codes attended to our previously developed research questions and/or were connected to an alternative research direction that we, as a research team, were interested in pursuing (Tracy, 2019). Throughout both coding phases, codes and data were regularly reviewed (and modified) to avoid definitional drift (Gibbs, 2018). Furthermore, by engaging in this analytical process throughout data collection, we were able to develop a 'follow-up' list of questions to ask in the next interview, or issues to concentrate on in the next fieldwork session (Tracy, 2018).

Our phronetic iterative analysis involved more than the coding strategies described above. Indeed, we found the act of writing itself to be an important way of thinking and knowing (Richardson & Adams St. Pierre, 2018). Throughout this research project we (re)crafted analytical memos about emerging insights and their meanings, developed analytical outlines that focused on examining the ways that our data and theoretical interpretations were serving to answer the research objectives, and we (re)wrote this research paper several times over (Tracy, 2018). By engaging in these writing practices, we were able 'reflect on, to alter, to reconsider' our interpretation of the research findings (Madden, 2010, p. 156). It allowed us to share new reading material, new understandings of theory and the data, and air and debate our developing ideas (Gale et al., 2019). Therefore, as part of our phronetic iterative approach, each author acted as a *critical friend* (Smith & McGannon, 2018). This involved a process of critical dialogue where we continuously listened to and challenged one another's interpretations and theoretical explanations as these emerged in relation to the collection and analysis of data and writing (Cowan & Taylor, 2016). What follows, then, is an interpreted thematic discussion of what we consider to be the important and interesting features of Greg and James's experiences of identity management. This reading, which is represented in the form of realist tale (King, 2019), was inevitably influenced by our paradigmatic and theoretical allegiances and, relatedly, the aims and purposes of our research (Denzin, 2017).

Findings and Analyses

The findings and interpretations presented below highlight Greg and James's respective experiences of identity management, both inside and outside of the workplace. Central to our discussion is how their identity management was influenced by the expectations of work and non-work social audiences, uncertain and audit-driven working conditions, and their hopes, fears, and aspirations regarding their future possible selves. In the first section, we illustrate how Greg and James learned the behavioural expectations attached to their workplace roles and how they attempted to enact in-role performances that met others' expectations in order to protect and advance their employment status. In the second section, we focus on why Greg and James respectively resigned from their community sports coaching positions for careers in alternative occupations. Here, the emphasis is on highlighting the relationship between their low pay, insecure working conditions, and the consumerist lifestyles that each wanted for themselves and that they believed others (e.g. partners, friends, and family members) expected of them.

Managing Occupational Identity: Audit Cultures, Career Aspirations, and Material Goals

> ***Research Diary: James's Observations***
> Just finished another session with James. He organised a tournament on the video games console rather than delivering the multi-sports he is expected to provide. This is the second time this has happened. Why does he do this? This needs to be explored in the next interview.

> ***Research Diary: Greg's Observations***
> He did it again. He spent more time focusing on collecting the participant details rather than delivering sporting activity. Over 40 minutes were given to collecting register details. Why does he dedicate so much time to this? I will follow this up in our next interview.

From a symbolic interactionist perspective, it could be argued that Greg and James considered their community sports coaching role to be a salient (Thoits, 2012) or prominent (McCall & Simmons, 1978) one; that is, one they actively sought to protect, develop, and advance. Through interactions with contextual others, Greg and James learned the essential behavioural expectations tied to this particular role identity (Burke & Stets, 2009). Most notably, they learned that recruiting and retaining appropriate numbers of young people in their coaching sessions largely defined the success of their workplace performance in the eyes of significant others. For example, Greg revealed how his views on this matter were primarily shaped through a 'meeting' he had with his line manager shortly before the start of his government sponsored initiative. At the meeting, Greg was told that not only was the income awarded to the company based on the achievement of pre-defined sessional participation targets, but also that his wage would be determined in this way:

> My boss said that if I didn't collect the register and hit the numbers then I won't be getting paid for delivering the session because they won't be getting the funding. We never spoke about the content or the quality of the session. He just said, 'We need to hit these targets to help fund different parts of the company and pay salaries and if you're not meeting the targets, we are not going to pay you'. (**Greg**).

James also shared with us how he had a similar encounter with his line-manager:

> My boss rang me before this scheme started and she said that it is imperative that I have high numbers and that I collect participant details because without them they won't be able to evidence that they have hit their targets. […] She said that she expected me to deliver high numbers and prioritise participant details because that's what Active Coaching needed to evidence to get their funding. (**James**).

Importantly, Greg and James explained how their interactions with various working others helped to further cement their beliefs that their pedagogical performances were principally judged against the number of young people that attended their sessions (Burke & Stets, 2009). For example, Greg highlighted how the nature and direction of his conversations with his peers, as well as his ongoing engagements with his line manager, served to further confirm his thoughts about the importance of the participation rates:

> Whenever I spoke to the other coaches, the first thing we would talk about is the numbers. It was always, 'How many are you getting at your sessions? Are you hitting your target?' We never talked about the drills that we did or anything like that [and] it was the same with the people who worked in the office too. And then whenever I spoke to Alan, the only question he would ever ask is, 'How's the numbers? How many did you have this week?' (**Greg**).

The participants' descriptions of the workplace are reflective of the highly individualised, market-orientated, neoliberal agenda that prioritises short-term financial performance and encourages public and private sector organisations such as Coaching R' Us and Active Coaching, to adopt increasingly flexible employment relations and an audit culture mentality (Roderick et al., 2017). Indeed, Greg and James explained how their employment conditions were characterised by insecure, nonstandard employment contracts (i.e. zero hours contracts) and 'extreme' performance monitoring and evaluation (i.e. their workplace performance was intensely quantified, measured, and ranked) (Crowley & Hodson, 2014; Verhaeghe, 2014). In other words, they recognised that they were performing *precarious work* (Kalleberg, 2018). By this, we mean 'work that is uncertain, unstable, and insecure and in which employees bear the risks of work (as opposed to businesses or the government) and receive limited social benefits and statutory protections from the point of view of the worker' (Kalleberg & Vallas, 2018, p. 1).

These neoliberal employment practices had significant implications for how Greg and James performed their occupational roles (Burke & Stets, 2009; Stryker, 1980). Verhaeghe (2014) maintains that a key consequence of the proliferation of rules, regulations, and monitoring created by neoliberalism is that 'everything is sacrificed to the juggernaut of measurability' (p. 134). In much the same way, Greg and James modified their behaviours in response to the demands of the neoliberal evaluation system to which they were subject. These strategic coaching practices included offering each participant a reward (e.g. a key ring, confectionery, or a water bottle) in exchange for their attendance and prioritising the attainment of contact details and completed attendance registers. As Greg noted, 'it was all about getting those forms filled in […]. For the first 20 to 30 minutes I would just focus all of my energy on getting the details of every single participant who was at the session'. Both coaches also sought to deliver the sport and leisure activities demanded by the participants, even if it was not congruous with the stated goals and objectives of the sport and physical activity initiative that they were helping to deliver. For example, Greg often chose to deliver soccer-focused coaching sessions rather than the rugby-orientated provision he was supposed to provide. Similarly, James would use the equipment available at the youth centre to deliver non-sport related activities such as soccer tournaments on video games consoles and cooking lessons. As James explained:

> Because my wages were dependent upon the participation rates, I needed to make sure that the participants enjoyed my sessions […]. I told her (his line-manager) about the [games consoles] and stuff and asked if I could use them. She said, 'Yes, of course'. She said that I could do whatever I want, as long as the participants had fun and we got lots of people at the session. (**James**).

These extracts highlight how Greg and James's in-role identity behaviours were very much goal-directed or motivated efforts (Burke & Stets, 2009; Markus & Nurius, 1986). Both individuals sought to enact role performances that would meet the expectations of their respective employer (i.e. high participation rates) and client groups (i.e. 'fun' and 'enjoyable' coaching sessions), in order to obtain social approval and other social rewards (McCall & Simmons, 1978; Thoits, 2012). Greg and James not only hoped that their in-role behaviours would safeguard their immediate income, but that they would also impress their respective line manager enough to be offered full-time employment in the future. In many ways, then, the identity performances offered by Greg and James were strongly influenced by the motivational weight of their various possible selves (Markus & Nurius, 1986; Osyerman & Markus, 1990). On one level, the feared possible self, which was associated with a reduced income, inspired their in-role behaviours. On another level, the hoped for possible self of becoming a full-time community sports coach influenced the regulation of their identity enactments:

> I did all of these things because I wanted to impress my boss […]; I wanted them (Coaching 'R' Us) to see me as a valuable member of staff and that would give me job security and hopefully it would mean that they will put me on even more sessions, which would mean more money. I was also looking for a full-time position, so if I could turn around to them and say that I have got good numbers and that everyone enjoyed it then that will put me in a very good position to get a full-time job […]. Basically, I wanted to make myself look good and the best way to do that was to make sure I got really good numbers. I knew that my current job and future opportunities depended on these things, so I just did everything in my power to try to achieve them. (**Greg**).

> Getting a promotion [to a full-time position] at Active Coaching is the most important thing at the moment. If I work up the ladder, I can get the qualifications and experience that I need to become stinking rich (said in a jesting tone). That is why it is so important for me to impress my boss by hitting the targets. I know I have to hit them if I want to get a promotion. (**James**).

Alongside developing a preferred career narrative, Greg and James's respective wish to achieve their desired possible self was also driven by their need to verify their respective friend, family, and boyfriend identities. Specifically, they sought to use the money earned through the enactment of their community sports coaching role to obtain the materialistic goods and services deemed necessary to legitimate these important, non-work identities (Burke & Stets, 2009; Verhaeghe, 2014); that is, to demonstrate that they were 'successful' individuals to people who mattered to them outside of work. In this way, Greg and James's working and non-working lives were not separate and distinct, but, instead, were interconnected (Charmaz et al., 2019). Here, their occupational identity acted in the 'service' of their friend, family, and boyfriend identities (Burke & Stets, 2009). As they explained:

> I wanted to earn a wage that would allow me to buy a car and nice clothes, go out with my friends and my girlfriend, pay board at home, and maybe move out. I needed to be able to afford to do those things to be happy and respected […]. If you want to have any social value, you have to go on 'lads' nights out and post pictures of it on [Social Media]. It's the same with my girlfriend really. I need to be able to afford to pay for food, the cinema, or some drinks, or a hotel to keep her happy and to be a good boyfriend […]. It's also really important for me to be able to pay board at home. I have to be contributing because I know it makes my mum feel proud. I know she thinks that I am a success and a good son when I pay her board […]. These were the main reasons behind my determination to protect my job and to try to get a promotion. Basically, I saw my job as a way to achieve these things. (**Greg**).

> I obviously want to look successful and that means I need to have a whole host of materialistic things. I need to have nice clothes, a good-looking bird [girlfriend], a nice house, a good car. If I have those things, I will get lots of attention. People will want to talk to me and be around me, and that makes you feel great […]. I also need to be able to afford to take her (James's girlfriend) away and do nice things for her. I need to be able to buy her clothes, take her out for meals, and take her on holiday and stuff. […] It's the same with my friends really. I have to be

> able to afford to go on nights out, 'booze ups' in the day, holidays, city breaks, and all that […]. I suppose these were the real reasons why I wanted to protect my job and achieve a promotion. (**James**).

In addition to demonstrating the ways in which their work and non-work identities impacted on each other and were relationally and collectively lived-out, Greg and James's comments also highlight how, as neoliberal subjects, they fetishised over the consumption of material objects and immaterial services (Datta & Chakraborty, 2018; Verhaeghe, 2014). Indeed, both individuals believed that they had to have money and consume goods and services if they were to meet the behavioural expectations associated with their non-work identities (Bauman, 2007). Given the personal importance of these identities in terms of the social rewards that could be gained from their role performance (i.e. success, happiness, pride, respect, and enjoyment), it is not surprising that Greg and James placed such emphasis on successfully enacting their respective occupational identity.

Discard and Replace: Time for a New Occupational Identity

> ***Research Diary: Text Message from Greg***
> Hi Ben, just to let you know I handed in my notice last week, so I won't be running the session anymore. I am working as a plumbing apprentice now. If you still need to interview me then we can sort something out.

> ***Research Diary: Text Message from James***
> Now then Ben […], I don't work for [Active Coaching] anymore. I couldn't live off of the money I got off of them, ha ha, new job now though. Not in coaching, in an office. I can still meet you for a coffee and another interview if you'd like though?

The participants' decisions to withdraw from their coaching work in favour of jobs in other sectors was largely unexpected, especially given the nature and direction of our previous conversations (as documented above). When asked why they relinquished their roles as community sports coaches for employment in alternative occupations, Greg and James revealed how their decision was informed by recent critical incidents that led each of them to reflect on and redefine their respective situations in terms of pay, job security, and anticipated future self (Charmaz et al., 2019). Through a combination of actual appraisals and reflected appraisals (Savage et al., 2017), Greg and James concluded that the salary gained through the performance of their occupational role was not sufficient to allow them to verify their friend, boyfriend, and son identities (Burke & Stets, 2009). This self-reflection and self-evaluation, which was grounded in their interpretations of their interactions with their respective friends, parents, and partners, evoked a strong sense of shame (including a sense of failure, rejection, worthlessness, and inadequateness). Indeed, Greg and James believed that they were violating the attributes and social standards that they held in common with these particular significant others (Tangney & Tracy, 2011). Importantly, their shame signified a perceived threat to these social bonds; it indicated trouble for these valued relationships (Scheff, 2003). This finding also reflects the recent work of Hauhart (2019), who, in his insightful analysis of self-identity in contemporary Western society, suggested that working class men may be especially affected by the neoliberal labour market forces 'due to their often continuing psychological investment in traditional masculine roles' (p. 136). Here, he described how working class men, who are unable to fulfil their economic obligations as a 'breadwinner' (i.e. a person who earns a livelihood that supports the needs of dependants), can often experience psychological, emotional, and relational problems (Hauhart, 2019). This certainly appeared to be the case for Greg and James.

In response, Greg and James decided to change their work identities (Thoits, 2003; Turner & Stets, 2006). They did this is in an attempt to access a wage that would allow them to regain the social approval of these individuals (Burke & Stets, 2009). Importantly, they understood that the approval of these important, social others were inextricably tied to the acquisition of various extrinsic factors (e.g. clothing, dining in restaurants, a car, an overseas holiday, and a general ability to 'pay their way', among others) (Burke, 1991; McCall & Simmons, 1978). Thus, Greg and James's respective workplace identity management was motivated and influenced by the amalgamation of the presence and expectations of their friends and family and their feared and hoped for possible selves (Hauhart, 2019; Hickey & Roderick, 2017). As they explained:

> I got my end of year payslip and do you know how much I got? Five grand (£5,000.00) for the whole year! I looked at that and thought that's fucking disgusting […]. It made me realise how unsuccessful and unhappy I was because I couldn't afford to do the things in life I wanted […]. I wanted money to be able to learn to drive and buy a car, to be able to afford a mortgage on a house and to have a social life, but the reality was that I couldn't afford any of those things. […] My girlfriend wanted to go abroad but I couldn't even think about taking her out for a meal let alone abroad [and] whenever I spoke to my friends to tell them that I couldn't afford to hang out, they were always like 'Why the fuck are you still coaching? You're going nowhere with your life, you can't afford to come out with us, you can't afford a car, and look what you're wearing; you look like a piece of shit' […]. I just felt so embarrassed, like such a failure, and that just started to make me realise that coaching was a 'dead end' job that wasn't allowing me to buy the things I needed to be viewed as a success. (**James**).

> She [ex-girlfriend] finished [with] me because I couldn't afford to take her out and do things. Imagine a girl saying to you 'I am finishing you because you are broke'. It felt horrific; I had lost a girl I really liked because I was doing a job that was paying shit money […]. My mum and dad were also getting angry because there were some months when I couldn't afford to pay board. They kept telling to sort myself out and find a job that will allow me to pay my own way. […] All of my friends were buying nice things and going out on the piss all of the time and I could

> only afford to go out once a month and couldn't afford to buy any new clothes. When I saw them they kept telling me to sort my life out and do a better job […]. These things just made me realise that I needed to change my job and earn more money. I was losing my friends and I had lost my girlfriend, and that was why I left community coaching. (**Greg**).

The outlooks of Greg and James and, indeed, their friends and family were arguably shaped by the dominant discourse of consumerism (Bauman, 2007; Datta & Chakraborty, 2018; Verhaeghe, 2014). As members of a society of consumers (Bauman, 2007), Greg and James's success and happiness were explicitly linked with the consumption of goods and services as they were, in turn, connected to their relationships with various significant others (Datta & Chakraborty, 2018; Verhaeghe, 2014). They felt obligated (and wanted) to practice certain consumerist lifestyles in order to promote and sell themselves as attractive and desirable commodities (Bauman, 2007; Datta & Chakraborty, 2018). Failing to live up to these expectations, which were reinforced by '"significant others", the "others who count", and whose approval or rejection draws the line between success and failure', not only translated in the searing pain of rejection and personal inadequacy, but it also motivated Greg and James to engage in *identity building* (Bauman, 2007, p. 82; Charmaz et al., 2109). Specifically, they discarded and disposed of their identity as a community sports coach and experimented with new (and as yet untested) work identities in the hope that it would bring 'a high market value and a profusion of demand (both translated as a certainty of recognition, approval, and inclusion)' (Bauman, 2007, p. 83).

Importantly, Greg and James explained how their decision to quit their jobs as community sports coaches and pursue employment in alternative occupations was motivated by the anger, alienation, and anomie produced by the low quality jobs that were available to them within the sports industry (Kalleberg & Vallas, 2018). Both participants explained how they had the opportunity to undertake employment with alternative community sports coaching providers but declined to do so because they were only offering similarly low wage and insecure employment contracts that were unlikely to lead to progressively better jobs in the future (Kalleberg, 2018). Given their previous problematic experiences of precarious work, especially in terms of its impact for their career progression, mental wellbeing, social relationships, living arrangements, and consumption activities, it is perhaps not surprising that Greg and James chose to avoid these jobs and pursue a career narrative in a job outside of sport (Kalleberg & Vallas, 2018). Arguably, their decision represented a protective strategy to defend themselves against the rise in low quality and precarious work in the sports industry and societal norms surrounding financial, materialistic, and relational success:

> I actually got the chance to go for an interview for a couple of community coaching jobs, but one wanted me to go and do a two-month unpaid trial, which I obviously couldn't afford to do. And then the other place offered me a chance to do some part-time stuff, but that was earning the same as I was on at Coaching 'R' Us, and I was trying to leave to earn a better wage, so I said no to that […]. There were just no opportunities to make a good career in community coaching [and] that was the main reason why I left. There was no money and no guarantee of a secure job. It is just impossible to make a career in this line of work. There was just no way that I was going to be able to go out with my mates or save up for a house or a car if I took these jobs, so I decided to get out and change profession. No matter how much you enjoy doing your job, it's all about job security and earning enough money to be happy outside of work. (**Greg**).

> I did look at other jobs, but they were all shitty zero hours contracts. You can't have a successful career in these jobs, you just can't earn enough money; I am living proof of that. So, I decided to get out when I had the chance […]. The [office job] doesn't sound great, but the salary is so much better and there is a proper career ladder. People actually get promoted, drive nice cars, and own their own houses. That's what I want and need. Don't get me wrong, I loved coaching but, at the end of the day, you have to protect yourself and you have to earn enough

> money to make something of your life. The harsh reality is that community coaching doesn't allow you to do that. (**James**).

Conclusion

In seeking to make a significant contribution to the literature base addressing the spaces, times, and complexities of sports workers' identity management (e.g. Hickey & Roderick, 2017; Gale et al., 2019), this paper examined the identity work of two young, working class, male community sports coaches in an era of neoliberal capitalism, consumerism, and insecure employment. Our findings reflect the wider sociological insights into the everyday impacts of neoliberalism and austerity measures on young, male workers (Kalleberg, 2018), especially in terms of their negative impact on their idealised dream selves (e.g. to have a stable, living wage job and fulfilling social and personal relationships) (Hauhart, 2019). Furthermore, in contrast to many empirical investigations in the sports arena that have privileged the notion of a singular and fixed identity, this study highlighted the intersectional and fluid nature of identities and their associated management. Indeed, we demonstrated a) how the participants' identity management was connected to, and influenced by, the expectations of work and non-work social audiences, as well as the motivational weight of their own hopes, fears, and aspirations for the future and b) how neoliberal values and practices informed the in-role behaviours and reflections of our participants. Here, the employment conditions of community sports coaching work, alongside societal demands for financially and materially visible success, led our participants to question their occupational identity and ultimately withdraw from this form of work. The significance of this paper resides in the provision of a more realistic and less naïve portrayal of the political, emotional, and relational nature of identity work in community sports coaching specifically (and, indeed, sports work more generally) than has been achieved to date (Gale et al., 2019;

Ives et al., 2016; Roderick et al., 2017). In terms of their applied utility, we hope that these findings can help researchers, policy makers, educators, and those organisations that employ or deploy community sports coaches to generate the understanding required to 'manage, support, and resource them effectively to ensure that they are best equipped to provide the best possible experience' (Sport England, 2016, p. 25). Such knowledge would appear essential given that community sports coaches are being increasingly recognised as the 'customer service team of sport' responsible for the enactment of policy designed to contribute to the health, wellbeing, and development of individuals and communities (HM Government, 2015; Sport England, 2016, p. 25; UK Coaching, 2018).

Finally, we believe that this study can provide a stimulus for further investigations into sports workers identity management. In particular, we would encourage scholars to examine the specific emotions that features in the creation, enactment, negotiation, and reinvention of identities, especially as they are connected to notions of gender, ethnicity, race, age, and social class (Hauhart, 2019). Indeed, the consideration of the interconnections between these identities, embodied experience, and social relations has potentially much to offer in terms of better understanding important societal issues regarding neoliberalism, employment trends, job satisfaction and productivity, and the health and wellbeing of sports workers (Gale et al., 2019; Ives, Gale, Potrac, & Nelson, 2019). Given our findings, we also feel that there is much to be gained from a detailed exploration of the role that community sports coaches play in the enactment of various policy directives and initiatives (e.g. overcoming social isolation, reducing crime, promoting and developing health lifestyles). Inspired by the ground-breaking research of Ball and colleagues in education (e.g. Ball, Maguire, & Braun, 2012; Braun, Ball, & Maguire, 2011), such work might, for example, address 'how' and ‘why’ community sports coaches a) translate and enact policy directives at the micro-level of practice, b) employ specific interactional and pedagogic strategies to achieve desired outcomes, c) make sense of and respond to the issues, challenges, and dilemmas that they encounter in this form of work, and d) perceive the relative value of available training and development programmes in assisting them to deal with these issues productively (Ives et al., 2016). From our perspective, such ‘reality’ grounded knowledge will enable us to move beyond naïve and overly straightforward accounts and representations of community sports coaching work. Indeed, rather than continuing to position community sports coaches as merely ‘ciphers’ who unproblematically facilitate various policy goals, it will allow us to better recognise how these workers, like all social actors involved in the enactment of policy, ‘have aspirations, hopes, fears, and worries and are bound up in networks of relations that are influenced by economic and social forces, institutions, people and interests, and sometimes pure chance’ (Ives et al., 2016, p. 561).

Reference List

Adams, A., Harris, K., & Lindsey, I. (2018). Examining the capacity of a sport for development programme to create social capital. Sport in Society, 21(3), 558-573. doi: https://doi.org/10.1080/17430437.2017.1346627

Atkinson, M. (2019). Ethnography. In B. Smith, & A. C. Sparkes (Eds.), *Routledge handbook of qualitative research in sport and exercise* (pp. 49-61). Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge.

Ball, S. J., Maguire, M., & Braun, A. (2012). *How schools do policy: Policy enactments in secondary schools*. London: Routledge.

Bauman, Z. (2007). *Consuming life.* Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.

Bone, K. D. (2019). 'I don't want to be a vagrant for the rest of my life': Young peoples' experiences of precarious work as a 'continuous present'. *Journal of Youth Studies*, 1-20. doi: https://doi.org/10.1080/13676261.2019.1570097

Braun, A., Ball, S. J., Maguire, M., & Hoskins, K. (2011). Taking context seriously: Towards explaining policy enactments in the secondary school. Discourse: *Studies in the cultural politics of education*, *32*(4), 585-596. doi: https://doi.org/10.1080/01596306.2011.601555

Brinkman, S. (2018). The interview. In N. K. Denzin, & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 576-599). London: SAGE Publications.

Burke, P. J. (1991). Identity processes and social stress. *American Sociological Review*, *56*(6), 836-849. doi:10.2307/2096259

Burke, P. J., & Stets, J. E. (2009). *Identity theory.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Charmaz, K., Harris, S. R., & Irvine, L. (2019). *The social self and everyday life: Understanding the world through symbolic interactionism.* Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Conley, D. (2009). *Elsewhere, U.S.A.: How we got from the company man, family dinners, and the affluent society to the home office, blackberry moms, and economic anxiety*. New York: Pantheon Books.

Connell, R. (2011). *Confronting equality: Gender, knowledge and global change*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.

Costas Batlle, I., Carr, S., & Brown, C. (2017). 'I just can't bear these procedures, I just want to be out there working with children': An autoethnography on neoliberalism and youth sports charities in the UK. *Sport, Education and Society*, 1-13. doi: https://doi.org/10.1080/13573322.2017.1288093

Cowan, D., & Taylor. I. M. (2016). 'I'm proud of what I achieved; I'm also ashamed of what I done': A soccer coach's tale of sport, status, and criminal behaviour. *Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise and Health*, *8*(5): 505-518. doi: https://doi.org/10.1080/2159676X.2016.1206608

Cronin, C., & Armour, K. M. (2015). Lived experience and community sport coaching: A phenomenological investigation. *Sport, Education and Society*, *20*(8), 959-975. doi: https://doi.org/10.1080/13573322.2013.858625

Crossley, N. (2011). *Towards relational sociology*. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge.

Crowley, M., & Hodson, R. (2014). Neoliberalism at work. *Social Currents*, *1*(1), 91-108. doi: https://doi.org/10.1177%2F2329496513511230

Datta, A., & Chakraborty, I. (2018). Are you neoliberal fit? The politics of consumption under neoliberalism. In O. Kravets, P. Maclaran, S. Miles, & A. Venkatesh (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of consumer culture* (pp. 453-477). London: SAGE Publications.

Denzin, N. K. (2017). Critical qualitative inquiry. *Qualitative Inquiry*, *23*(1), 8-16. doi: https://doi.org/10.1177%2F1077800416681864

Department for Culture, Media and Sport/Sport England (DCMS/SE). (2012). *Creating a sporting habit for life: A new youth sport strategy*. London: DCMS.

Draper, C. E., & Coalter, F. (2016). 'There's just something about this club. It's been my family': An analysis of the experiences of youth in a South African sport-for-development programme. *International Review for the Sociology of Sport, 51*(1), 44-60. doi: https://doi.org/10.1177%2F1012690213513783

Emerson, R. M., Fretz, R. I., & Shaw, L. L. (2011). *Writing ethnographic fieldnotes* (2nd ed.). Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Evans, J., & Davies, B. (2014). Neoliberal freedoms, privatisation and the future of physical education. *Sport, Education and Society*, *19*(7), 869-884.

Gale, L., Ives, B., Potrac, P., & Nelson, L. (2019). Trust and distrust in community sports work: Tales from the 'shop floor'. *Sociology of Sport Journal.* doi: https://doi.org/10.1123/ssj.2018-0156

Gilmore, S., Wagstaff, C., & Smith, J. (2018). Sports psychology in the English Premier League: 'It feels precarious and is precarious'. *Work, Employment and Society*, *32*(2), 426-435.

Gibbs, G. (2018). *Analysing qualitative* (2nd ed.). London: Routledge.

Hammersley, M., & Atkinson, P. (2019). *Ethnography: Principles in practice* (4th ed.). Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge.

Huahart, R. C. (2019). *The lonely quest: Constructing the self in the twenty-first century United States*. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge.

Hewison, K. (2016). Precarious work. In Edgell, S. Gottfried H. & Granter E. (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of the sociology of work and employment* (pp. 428–443). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.

Hickey, C., & Roderick, M. (2017). The presentation of possible selves in everyday life: The management of identity among transitioning professional athletes. *Sociology of Sport Journal*, *34*(3), 270-280. doi: https://doi.org/10.1123/ssj.2017-0018

HM Government. (2015). *Sporting futures: A new strategy for an active nation*. London: HM Government.

Ives, B., Gale, L., Potrac, P., & Nelson, L. (2019). The interplay between emotion, identity, and workplace relations in community sport coaching. In C. L. T. Corsby, & C. N. Edwards (Eds.), *Exploring research in sports coaching and* *pedagogy: Context and contingency* (pp. 49-56). Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishers.

Ives, B., L. Gale, L. Nelson., & P. Potrac. (2016). Enacting youth sport policy: Towards a micro-political and emotional understanding of community sports coaching work. In A. Smith, & K. Green (Eds.), *The Routledge handbook of youth sport* (pp. 559-570). Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge.

Kalleberg, A. L. (2011). *Good jobs, bad jobs: The rise of polarized and precarious employment systems in the United States, 1970s to 2000s*. New York, NY: Russell Sage Foundation.

Kalleberg, A. L. (2018). Precarious work and young workers in the United States. In L. S. Chancer, M. Sánchez-Jankowski, & C. Trost (Eds.), *Youth, jobs, and the future: Problems and prospects* (pp. 35-52). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Kalleberg, A. L., & Vallas, S. P. (2018). Probing precarious work: Theory, research, and politics. In A. L. Kalleberg, & S. P. Vallas (Eds.), *Precarious work: Research in the sociology of work volume 31* (pp. 1-29). Bingley: Emerald Publishing.

King, N., Horrocks, C., & Brooks, J. (2019). *Interviews in qualitative research* (2nd ed.). London: SAGE Publications.

King, S. (2019). In defence of realist tales. In B. Smith, & A. C. Sparkes (Eds.), *Routledge handbook of qualitative research in sport and exercise* (pp. 291-301). Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge.

LeCompte, M. D., & Schensul, J. J. (2010). *Designing and conducting ethnographic research* (2nd ed.). Plymouth, UK: AltaMira Press.

Madden, R. (2010). *Being ethnographic. A guide to the theory and practice of ethnography*. Los Angeles, CA: SAGE Publications.

Markus, H., & Nurius, P. (1986). Possible Selves. *American Psychologist*, *41*(9), 954-969. doi:10.1037/0003-066X.41.9.954

McCall, G. J., & Simmons, J. L. (1978). *Identities and interactions: An examination of human associations in everyday* life. New York: Free Press.

McGuigan, J. (2014). The neoliberal self. *Culture Unbound: Journal of Current Cultural Research*, *6*(1), 223-240. doi: https://doi.org/10.3384/cu.2000.1525.146223

Merriam, S. B., & Tisdell, E. J. (2015). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation* (4th ed.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Morgan, H. J., & Bush, A. (2016). Sports coach as transformative leader: arresting school disengagement through community sport-based initiatives. *Sport, Education and Society*, *21*(5), 759-777. doi: https://doi.org/10.1080/13573322.2014.935319

Oyserman, D., & Markus, H. R. (1990). Possible selves and delinquency. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, *59*(1), 112-125. doi: https://psycnet.apa.org/doi/10.1037/0022-3514.59.1.112

Parnell, D., Millward, P., & Spracklen, K. (2015). Sport and austerity in the UK: An insight into Liverpool 2014. *Journal of Policy Research in Tourism, Leisure and Events*, *7*(2), 200-203. doi: https://doi.org/10.1080/19407963.2014.968309

Patton, Q. M. (2015). *Qualitative Evaluation and Research Methods* (4th ed.). Newbury Park: SAGE Publications.

Purdy, L. G., & Potrac, P. (2016). Am I just not good enough? The creation, development and questioning of a high performance coaching identity. *Sport,* *Education and Society*, *21*(5), 778-795. doi: https://doi.org/10.1080/13573322.2014.941795

Purdy, L. G., Kohe, G. Z., & Paulauskas, R. (2019). Coaches as sport workers: professional agency within the employment context of elite European basketball. *Sport, Education and Society*, *24*(2), 195-207. doi: https://doi.org/10.1080/13573322.2017.1323201

Pyper, D., & Harari, D. (2013). *Zero-hours contracts*. London: UK Parliament.

Rao, A. H. (2018). 'You don't dare plan much': Contract work and personal life for international early-career professionals. In Kalleberg A. L., & Vallas S. P. (Eds.), *Precarious work: Research in the sociology of work volume 31* (pp. 427–452). Bingley, UK: Emerald Publishing.

Richardson, L., & Adams St. Pierre, E. (2018). Writing: A method of inquiry. In N. K. Denzin, & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 796-817). London: SAGE Publications.

Roderick, M., & Schumaker, J. (2017). 'The whole week comes down to the team sheet': The problem of work and non-work in professional football. *Work, Employment and Society, 31*(1), 166-174. doi: https://doi.org/10.1177%2F0950017016672792

Roderick, M., Smith, A., & Potrac, P. (2017). The sociology of sports work, emotions and mental health: Scoping the field and future directions. *Sociology of Sport Journal*, *34*(2), 99-107. doi: https://doi.org/10.1123/ssj.2017-0082

Savage, S. V., Stets, J. E., Burke, P. J., & Sommer, Z. L. (2017). Identity and power use in exchange networks. *Sociological Perspectives*, *60*(3), 510-528. doi: https://doi.org/10.1177%2F0731121416644788

Scheff, T. J. (2003). Shame in self and society. *Symbolic interaction*, *26*(2), 239-262. doi:10.1525/si.2003.26.2.239

Scott, S. (2015). *Negotiating identity: Symbolic interactionist approaches to social identity*. Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.

Seale, C. (2018). *Researching society and culture* (4th ed.). London: SAGE Publications.

Shulman, D. (2017). *The presentation of self in contemporary social life.* London: SAGE Publications.

Smith, B., & K. R. McGannon, K. R. (2018). Developing rigor in qualitative research: Problems and opportunities within sport and exercise psychology. *International Review of Sport and Exercise Psychology*, *11*(1): 101-121. doi: https://doi.org/10.1080/1750984X.2017.1317357

Smith, B., & Sparkes, A. C. (2019). Interviews: Qualitative interviewing in the sport and exercise sciences. In B. Smith, & A. C. Sparkes (Eds.), *Routledge handbook of qualitative research in sport and exercise* (pp. 103-123). Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge.

Sparkes, A. C., & Smith, B. (2014). *Qualitative research methods in sport, exercise and health: From process to product.* Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge.

Sport England. (2016). *Coaching in an active nation: The coaching plan for England 2017-21.* London: Sport England.

Stryker, S. (1980). *Symbolic interactionism: A social structural version.* Caldwell, NJ: The Blackburn Press.

Tangney, J. P., & Tracy, J. L. (2011). Self-conscious emotions. In M. R. Leary and J. P. Tangney (Eds.), *Handbook of self and identity* (pp. 446-478). New York: Guilford Publications.

Thoits, P. A. (1983). Multiple identities and psychological well-being: A reformulation and test of the social isolation hypothesis. *American Sociological Review*, 48(2), 174-187. doi:10.2307/2095103

Thoits, P. A. (2003). Personal agency in the accumulation of multiple role-identities. In P. J. Burke, T. J. Owens, P. A. Thoits, & R. T. Serpe (Eds.), *Advances in identity theory and research* (pp. 179-194). New York: Kluwer Academic/Plenum.

Thoits, P. A. (2012). Role-identity salience, purpose and meaning in life, and well-being among volunteers. *Social Psychology Quarterly*, *75*(4), 360-384. doi: https://doi.org/10.1177%2F0190272512459662

Thorpe, H., & Rinehart, R. (2013). Action sport NGOs in a neo-liberal context: The cases of Skateistan and Surf Aid International. *Journal of Sport and Social Issues*, *37*(2), 115-141. doi: https://doi.org/10.1177%2F0193723512455923

Tracy, S. J. (2018). A phronetic iterative approach to data analysis in qualitative research. *Journal of Qualitative Research*, *19*(2), 61-76. doi: https://doi.org/10.22284/qr.2018.19.2.61

Tracy, S. J. (2019). *Qualitative research methods: Collecting evidence, crafting analysis, communicating impact* (2nd ed.). Hoboken, USA: John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.

Turner, J. H., & Stets, J. E. (2006). Sociological theories of human emotions. *Annual Review of Sociology*, *32*, 25-52. doi: https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.soc.32.061604.123130

UK Coaching (2018). *UK Coaching: Applied coaching research journal*. Leeds, UK: UK Coaching.

Verhaeghe, P. (2014). *What about Me?: The struggle for identity in a market-based society*. London: Scribe Publications.

Widdop, P., King, N., Parnell, D., Cutts, D., & Millward, P. (2018). Austerity, policy and sport participation in England. *International journal of sport policy and politics*, *10*(1), 7-24. doi: https://doi.org/10.1080/19406940.2017.1348964