Please cite the Published Version

Additional Information: This is an open access article which originally appeared in Sport, Education and Society
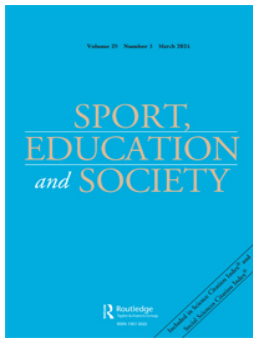
Dramaturgical analysis of a coaching team's interactional performances: an ethnography of video-based coaching in a paralympic sporting context

Ian Britton, Ryan Groom & Lee Nelson

Published online: 02 Mar 2024.

Submit your article to this journal ⬈

Article views: 310

View related articles ⬈

View Crossmark data ⬈

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group

Dramaturgical analysis of a coaching team's interactional performances: an ethnography of video-based coaching in a paralympic sporting context

Ian Britton ⓘ [a], Ryan Groom ⓘ [b] and Lee Nelson ⓘ [c]

[a]Department of Sport and Exercise Sciences, Manchester Metropolitan University Institute of Sport, Manchester Metropolitan University, Manchester, UK; [b]Human Science Research Centre, University of Derby, Derby, UK; [c]Department of Sport and Physical Activity, Edge Hill University, Ormskirk, UK

ABSTRACT

Sport coaching scholars have increasingly utilised the work of Erving Goffman to theoretically interpret and understand the complexities of coaching practice from a dramaturgical perspective. While this area of scholarship has advanced our sociological understanding of sport coaching, there remains a paucity of literature addressing how coaches work in conjunction with others and stage social interactions as performance teams. Utilising an 18-month ethnographic case study of video-based coaching in a Paralympic sporting context, data were gathered via participant observations, field notes and interviews, which were analysed using Goffman's *The Presentations of Self in Everyday Life* as a heuristic framework. Findings and analysis revealed: (a) the coaching staff completed significant preparatory backstage work as a performance team prior to their frontstage delivery of video-based coaching which involved a select group of athletes, (b) the coaching staff found themselves presenting on the frontstage as a performance team to an audience comprising of interested and disinterested athletes, which caused feelings of frustration in response to athlete disengagement, (c) despite the significant backstage preparatory work completed by the coaching team, inconsistencies in their video-based coaching delivery contributed to a spoiled performance team identity in the eyes of their athlete audience. This study contributes new knowledge to the field of sport coaching through its novel dramaturgical analysis of video-based coaching, in particular, the complexity of team-based scripted interactions. Findings and analysis present in this article have important applied implications for preparing coaches for the teamed nature of this aspect of their work and the enactment of performance teamwork.

Introduction

Scholars have called for a dramaturgical analysis of sport coaching, arguing that Erving Goffman's sociological ideas offer a particularly useful framework for furthering theoretical interpretations of coaching practice (Cassidy et al., 2023; Jones et al., 2011; Potrac et al., 2022). Coaching studies that have drawn upon Goffman's theorisation of social interactions have reported the use of dramaturgy to understand the complex relationship between how the coach presents themselves to

athletes through strategic interactions to achieve role-related goals. For example, research has demonstrated how coaching behaviours form part of performative acts aimed at sustaining credible personas in the eyes of athletes and working others (Partington & Cushion, 2012; Potrac et al., 2002). Performances by the coach can be influenced by role and contextual expectations, a desire to maintain face and avoid spoilt professional identities, and exert influence over athlete behaviour (Consterdine et al., 2013; Jones, 2006). In addition, humour has been used as a specific tool in the coach's strategic interactional 'tool kit' to manage such issues as the balance between seriousness and fun, distance and closeness, authenticity and performance, and discipline (Adams, 2020; Ronglan & Aggerholm, 2014). Recent work has also considered how coaches utilise interactional strategies (i.e. uncovering moves, secret monitoring and exploitation fabrications) to assess the trustworthiness of colleagues as well as strategically managed frontstage and backstage interactions based on these assessments (Gale et al., 2019). Gale et al. (2023) explored the causes that trigger relationship conflict and how the community sport coaches attempted to repair their damaged working relationships by adopting remedial moves (i.e. accounts, apologies and demonstrations of concern), with varying levels of success. Finally, the work of Corsby et al. (2023) illustrated how coaches construct, manage, sustain and interpret everyday coaching order through strategic monitoring and the strategic management of their social (coaching) performances.

While this scholarship has usefully advanced our sociological interpretations of sport coaching from a dramaturgical perspective, there needs to be more in-depth analysis of the collaborative activities that social actors engage to sustain group as well as individual social performances. Indeed, while coaching scholars have effectively applied many aspects of Goffman's (1959) *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, the dramaturgical analysis of sport coaching would arguably benefit from a more thorough consideration of his theorisation of performance teams. An important feature of Goffman's (1959) dramaturgical metaphor was his observation that social actors do not solely perform as individuals, rather their social performances regularly form part of what he termed *performance teams*. While coaching scholarship acknowledges that coaches interact with a diverse range of stakeholders to fulfil their coaching duties, Goffman's (1959) theorisation in this area encourages us to consider if, how, and why coaches work alongside other staff, as part of performance teams, to develop and sustain certain social performances for personal and collective gain. This is particularly pertinent in performance sport settings given the number of staff who support athletes at major competitions (e.g. Olympics, Paralympics, European Championships and World Championships, etc.). Specialist roles include coaching, performance analysis, psychology, strength and conditioning, injury and rehabilitation, nutrition and associated disciplines. Whilst each of these specialists provide subject specific expert support, the challenge for coaches with this increase in support staff is the management of people towards the performance goals. That is, the coach is a central agent responsible for shaping the dynamics of coaching teams and their performances (Cushion, 2010). Managing the complexity of group dynamics and interactions requires further consideration, as the performances of coaching teams has yet to receive explicit inquiry. Through an investigation of identifiable performance teams and their staged social performances within a case-study high-performance setting, this study begins to redress this situation by generating novel insights that extends the dramaturgical analysis of sport coaching by exploring the outcomes of the studied coaching team's performances.

To achieve these ends, the present study considered the activities of identified performance teams and audiences involved in the delivery of video-based coaching. The investigation of video-based coaching was deemed particularly pertinent for present purposes and remains an under-investigated feature of sport coaching. Indeed, despite the widespread application of video-based coaching in elite sport, there remains a paucity of critical social analysis addressing the everyday realities of its delivery in applied settings. Foundational work in this area has begun to investigate how coaches' understand the socio-political demands of the organisation and how this influences their video-based coaching (Booroff et al., 2016; Groom et al., 2011). Research has studied the potential harmful and controlling impacts of the coaches' uses of video-based coaching

(Taylor et al., 2017; Williams & Manley, 2016). Additionally, the work of Groom et al. (2012) and Nelson et al. (2014a) highlighted the challenges that coaches face when navigating the exchange of social power and respect between coaches and athletes during video-based coaching sessions. Building on this, Magill et al. (2017) explored how athletes respond and manage their emotions in response to video-based coaching. While these studies have provided some compelling initial insights, additional scholarship is required if the field is to advance its understanding of this increasingly prominent aspect of coaching. Studies in this area of coaching practice would also benefit from giving greater consideration towards those team configurations, interactions and performances that form part of video-based coaching sessions. The present study directly addresses this area. As such, this article not only contributes new knowledge to the social analysis of video-based coaching practice but importantly extends a growing dramaturgical analysis of sport coaching.

Theoretical framework

The theorising of Goffman (1959) was used to provide a rich interpretation of the observed video-based coaching practices. In his 1959 book *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, Goffman introduced the dramaturgical metaphor of social life as theatre. Whilst Goffman's work has been well utilised within the sports coaching literature and proven to be a useful analytical tool to understand how coaches individually present themselves to athletes, central to Goffman's thesis was his belief that interactions occur at an individual and *team* level. For Goffman, the study of individual performances while certainly important presented a limited frame of reference, as it obscured much of the cooperative activities that are an important facet of social interaction. Indeed, Goffman (1959) argued that 'whether the members of a team stage similar individual performances or stage dissimilar performances which fit together as a whole, an emergent team impression arises which can conveniently be treated in a fact in its own right' (p. 85). It was this observation that led Goffman (1959) to conclude that for those interested in the study of impression management 'the team and the team-performance may well be the best units to take as the fundamental point of reference' (p. 86). Therefore, as a framework to understand how coaches work together as part of a performance team, Goffman's work offers an as yet unexplored lens to study sport coaching practice, with potential to develop a more complete and nuanced understanding of the realities of practice.

Goffman (1959) went on to explain that the settings in which team interactions occur are typically assembled and managed by one of the teams, known as the *performers*, who put on a show for the other team, referred to as the *audience* or the *observers*. Applying Goffman's (1959) analysis to the present study enabled us to distinguish between the coaching staff (performers) and playing staff (audience). While individuals can normally be categorised as being a performer or audience member, Goffman noted that *discrepant roles* (i.e. informer, shill, spotters, professional shoppers, go-between and non-persons) also exist, where an individual may not be easily isolated to one team. For example, Goffman (1959) identified a *go-between* (or *mediator*) as being someone who 'learns the secrets of each side and gives each side the true impression that he will keep its secrets; but he [she] tends to give each side the false impression that he is more loyal to it than to the other' (p.148). In the present study selected athletes were identified as go-betweens; individuals located between coaching and playing staff.

For Goffman (1959), individuals and teams deliver performances to create *idealised* images of themselves to others. Goffman's (1959) dramaturgical framework also considered the regions in which these social performances occur, distinguishing between *frontstage* and *backstage* regions. The frontstage region was described as locations where performances are delivered before a scrutinising audience. In the present study, this represented the rooms in which video-based coaching sessions were delivered to athletes. The backstage region, in contrast, was identified as those 'place[s] where the performer can reliably expect that no member of the audience will intrude' (Goffman, 1959, p. 113). In the present study, the backstage region represented spaces where the coaching

staff met, away from the gaze of their athletes, prior to and following their delivery of video-based coaching sessions.

For Goffman (1959) members of the same team find themselves in an important relationship, explaining that 'any member of the team has the power to give the show away or to disrupt it by inappropriate conduct' (p. 88). Team-mates, according to Goffman's analysis, are reliant on the good conduct and behaviour of one another. To sustain desired images in the eyes of others, Goffman (1959) explained that performers need to implement what he termed *the arts of impression management*, which included his discussion of *dramaturgical loyalty* (i.e. not betraying the secrets of the team), *dramaturgical discipline* (i.e. acting with self-control, suppressing emotional responses and avoiding unmeant gestures and faux pas when performing) and *dramaturgical circumspection* (i.e. creating a favourable impression by determining in advance how to collectively stage the show). In addition to this, Goffman also spoke about *protective practices* which refers to 'the tactful tendency of the audience and outsiders to act in a protective way in order to help the performers save their own show' (p. 222). According to Goffman (1959), audiences can be tactful by using proper etiquette in a given situation, such as paying attention and interest, to avoid creating a faux pas. Goffman's discussion of the arts of impression management provided a reading of the coaches' and athletes' interactions, including those performances that failed to bring about desired impressions in their respective audiences.

Methodology

Ethnographic approach

The aim of ethnographic research is to understand the culture of a particular group, from the perspective of the group members, via prolonged engagement in the field (Cushion, 2014; Tedlock, 2000; Wolcott, 1995). The ethnography focused on video-based coaching activities that occurred over a period of 18-months in a case study sport. Prior to the study commencing, it was agreed that Ian the first author would play a dual role, collecting data in his capacity as a researcher while also providing performance analysis support to a Paralympic team. During this period, 17 training camps and 5 international competitions were attended, including a 9-month period of preparation prior to a Paralympic Games, delivery during the Games and the subsequent debrief and preparation for future competitions (i.e. European Championships). Video-based feedback sessions were delivered throughout this period, both in training camps and whilst away at competitions, which consisted of reviewing training sessions, pre- and post-competition analysis, and pre- and post-match analysis. Table 1 illustrates the data that was collected over the course of the ethnographic study.

To protect the identity of those studied as part of this ethnography, participants were given pseudonyms and the sport has not been named. To aid with the understanding of who was involved within the team and their roles, Table 2 shows each individual and their position within the sport as well as the year in which they started working or competing with the team. Institutional ethical approval was received [Faculty Research Degree Committee, Manchester Metropolitan University, 11.12.14(i)] and prior to data collection all participants provided written informed consent.

Table 1. Overview of source and process of data collection.

Source of data collection	Method of data collection	Quantity of data collection
Training camps	Ethnographic observational data	17 training camps (circa 68 Days)
	Audio recordings	25 team meetings (circa 23 hours)
International competitions	Ethnographic observational data	5 competitions (circa 40 days)
	Audio recordings	24 team meetings (circa 10 hours)
Meetings outside of camps and competitions	Audio recordings	17 Skype conversations (circa 11 hours)
Individual coaching staff	Semi-structured interviews	6 interviews (circa 8 hours)
Individual players	Semi-structured interviews	5 interviews (circa 6 hours)

Table 2. Participants and their positions.

Name	Position	Years with team
Matt	Performance Director	4
Greg	Head Coach	4
Barry	Assistant Coach	4
Sam	Psychologist	4
Rich	Performance Analyst	3
Ian (first author)	Performance Analyst	2
Pete	Captain	4
Mark	Vice-Captain	4
Simon	Player	4
Josh	Player	13
Adam	Player	2
Ben	Player	4
Elliot	Player	22
Cameron	Player	12
Liam	Player	4
Sean	Player	3
Oscar	Player	6

Participant observations

Participant observation is often referred to as the main method of data collection within ethnographic studies (Adler & Adler, 1994). Following the award of an integrated PhD scholarship (research and performance analysis support), the lead author became a member of the support team, participating in the day-to-day activities of the squad, which enabled him to develop a rapport with both the coaching staff and players. As such, the lead author acted as a participant observer, which Krane and Baird (2005, p. 95) explained as someone who participates 'in the daily activities of the social group while conducting observations'. The lead author used a Dictaphone to audio-record meetings as well as any pre or post meeting conversations that he had with the coaches or players. These meetings would sometimes occur face-to-face with the coaches before the players arrived or occurred electronically over Skype outside of training camps. In total, 45 hours of audio files were recorded. In addition to the capturing of audio recordings, the lead author also kept extensive written notes about reactions and behaviours that occurred within meetings or conversations that occurred outside of meetings. Concise field notes made at the end of each day would be further expanded upon once the training camps and tournaments had finished.

Participant interviews

Individual participant interviews were also undertaken with the Head Coach, Assistant Coach, Sport Psychologist and five players, totalling 14.5 hours of interview data, which were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim. As Ely (1991, p. 58) stated, 'interviews are at the heart of doing ethnography because they seek the words of the people we are studying, the richer the better, so that we can understand their situations with increasing clarity'. In keeping with the adopted ethnographic approach, participant interviews and observations were used in combination. During the completion of ethnographic fieldwork participants were informally interviewed about events that had been observed (Krane & Baird, 2005). These informal conversations tended to be relatively short in duration and occurred during daily working activities, breaks and when travelling. These presented opportunities to gather additional insights, alternative perspectives as well as clarifications about observed ongoings. Towards the end of the ethnographic fieldwork participants were also invited to attend formal individual interviews. These interviews tended to be longer in duration and were more structured in format. Here, semi-structured interview guides were utilised to explore particularly pertinent findings and associated analysis. Central to these formal interviews was a desire to

understand occurrences in more detail from the perspectives of those social actors that participated within the studied setting (Atkinson, 2012; Krane & Baird, 2005).

Data analysis

According to Nelson et al. (2014b), research is inevitably shaped by the underpinning paradigmatic perspectives and associated theoretical positions of those scholars conducting the project. They acknowledge that these influence not only which topics are of scientific interest and how they should be methodologically investigated, but also researchers' views about the place of theory in the research process which includes the analysis of data and research findings. The present study adopted a dramaturgical perspective which framed the investigation including the collection and analysis of data.

The analysis of data occurred over several years and followed several iterations. The themes identified then followed a process of 'backwards and forwards work' followed by peer review and revision:

(1) During the data collection phase, the primary researcher compiled data from training and performance observations, audio recordings of team meetings, individual interviews and personal reflections. As data were collected the initial process of grouping related to time and setting (e.g. early team meetings, training camps, pre/post-match meetings, etc.).
(2) Once grouped into temporal and contextual themes, data was analysed in a narrative manner and divided into separate stories which captured conceptually bound events during the 18-month period of data collection. For example, specific incidents that happened within the team.
(3) Following a systematic review of literature that highlighted the use of sociological concepts within sport, Goffman's work on presentation of self was identified as being well used, particularly within sports coaching, but the activities of performance teams were uncovered as an underutilised and potentially useful approach to understanding team-based interactions that had been occurring within Stage 1 and 2.
(4) Following the identification of performance teams, the initial stories generated in Stage 2, were re-analysed against Goffman's performance teams framework, which illuminated additional areas of insightful data not captured in the narrative analysis in Stage 2.
(5) The additional concepts from Goffman's work were applied to the full corpus of data and relevant data extracts added into the original analysis and further developed into three new themes.

Data collection and data analysis, then, were not separate and distinct phases. Rather, the analysis of data occurred alongside the collection of data as well as continuing after the lead author had withdrawn from the site of investigation. Indeed, the analysis of data also continued throughout the writing phase. It was during research team meetings that the focus of this article and identified themes were collectively agreed. Consistent with the observations of Groom et al. (2014), the writing of this paper was an analytical process in and of itself; whereby the meaning of our findings came into being and the content of our ideas slowly took form through an iterative process of collaborative thinking, writing, ongoing discussion, re-writing, and editing which included responding to the recommendations of the reviewers.

While Goffman's (1959) dramaturgical framework was particularly useful for understanding the teamed nature of those social interactions and performances that formed part of the observed video-based coaching in the studied environment, we do not consider our analysis to be a definitive reading of events. It is acknowledged that researchers are the instruments through which data are collected and analysed, and hence we inevitably shape the outcome of the presented analysis (Nelson et al., 2014b). As authors, we accept that our findings and analysis were constructed by us and that we have emphasised certain aspects over others. What we present in this paper, then, is not to be considered 'a true representation of an objective reality, out there, waiting to be seen' (Richardson, 1990, p. 9) but rather one reading; a reading that offers an informative and

insightful interpretation of important and under-investigated features of (video-based) coaching practice. Scholars have identified several criteria for judging the logic of qualitative research (e.g. Smith et al., 2014; Tracy, 2010). Here we offer a number of suggestions for the reader to consider the quality of the present study, namely *substantive contribution* (i.e. a contribution to our understanding of social life), *impact* (i.e. does the work generate new questions), *width* (i.e. the comprehensiveness and quality of evidence), *coherence* (i.e. how the work can be evaluated against existing theories and previous research), *worthy topic* (i.e. the work is relevant, timely, significant and evocative), *resonance* (i.e. the research provides naturalistic generalisations and transferable findings) and *credibility* (i.e. the researcher has spent significant periods of time with the participants) (Smith et al., 2014; Tracy, 2010).

Findings

Backstage video-based coaching work: 'We're our own little team'

While the observation of video-based coaching was a central concern of the present study, it soon became apparent that this aspect of coaching practice entailed more than the delivery of sessions by coaches to athletes within the performance analysis room. Analysis of the ethnographic observations and interviews identified that video-based coaching performances to athletes in meetings were planned, managed, and conducted by a 'performance team' which included the coaches, performance analyst, sport psychologist and occasionally senior players. Indeed, rather than video-based meetings being delivered simply by a head coach to a group of athletes, a complex and multi-layered planned performance ensued. Such activity required the performance team to work together towards a unified performance, where each performer supported the members of the team. Such interactions were based upon trust and mutual cooperation towards a central 'script'.

Importantly, during the initial stages of his integration into the coaching team, the principal investigator endeavoured to become a trusted member of the coaching staff to effectively fulfil his role as performance analyst, positively impact on the team, as well as gain greater depth of access to aid the collection of rich data for his doctoral research. Conversations between the lead author and coaching staff during this initial period were more formal and guarded in nature. However, as time progressed, and the principal author increasingly secured the trust of the coaches, conversation developed to being more open and informal in nature. Indeed, the lead author was invited to attend and actively engage in pre-meeting planning sessions with increasing regularity. When interacting with the coaches during this phase of the applied fieldwork, the principal author tried to present himself in the best possible light, by focusing on the provision of a high standard of performance analysis support to the coaches, to secure their buy-in.

Ian, Performance Analyst, First Author Field Note: Skype Call

It has taken a while, but I'm now beginning to feel a more valued member of the coaching team. As I sit at my desk, laptop open, waiting for the Skype call to begin, I get a text from Greg saying he is running a couple of minutes late, but will be on shortly. Whilst I am waiting for him, Barry joins the call and the usual greetings occur before we start joking about what might be delaying Greg. A couple of minutes pass and then Greg joins us, we welcome him before finding out that neither of us had correctly guessed why he had been delayed, we make light of the situation and chat about the football results from the weekend. Did you see Palace won at the weekend (I said to Greg proudly referring to my team Crystal Palace FC)?! Greg the Manchester United FC fan just laughed: mmm yeah, we didn't, again! Finally, we get down to business, Greg then shared which players he will be looking at closely for selection during the camp ahead of the upcoming competition – 'can you make sure you get plenty of clips of these three players, Ian?'

On reflection, this relaxed and jovial atmosphere was a stark difference to when I first started with the team. Whilst everyone was always very welcoming, at the start, I could tell they were slightly guarded with the information and details that they would share with me. I would frequently hear the coaches say: 'oh, you don't need to know/worry about that yet' (e.g. sport specific technical, tactical and selection matters). Perhaps I was initially viewed as an outsider, particularly as I did not have prior knowledge or experience working with the sport. I felt I

had to learn quickly and prove myself to the coaches, and players. In the early days, the coaches would sometimes give me tasks in-between training camps. These were often simple in terms of watching particular aspects of previous matches and highlighting key points, which aided my learning and knowledge of the sport. However, it felt that my skills and understanding were being tested, as the coaches probably already knew the answers to these questions. Nothing was specifically said, but during those initial interactions I sensed that they were evaluating the quality of my work and the answers that I generated to their questions. It felt like I was back to being a student again! But I needed to prove myself to become part of the coaching team. I wanted to be part of the coaching team to help the squad achieve its performance goals, to be an accepted and valued member of staff to be trusted to gather data and create future career opportunities. Simply put, I needed to perform!

Prior to the delivery of each video-based session, the coaches engaged in planning meetings (face-to-face and/or virtually) which included the performance analyst, sport psychologist and/or senior players. During these meetings, staff discussed and agreed the overall narrative of the video-based coaching, identified which video clips and performance data they would present, and how they would pedagogically deliver the session to engage their player audience. When asked to explain why they held these pre-meetings, the coaches shared how it was necessary to openly discuss what they wanted to achieve and how these objectives might be best accomplished. For example, Barry described how:

> The initial discussion is what do we want to get out of the classroom session and then we come to you cause we need stuff. […] I think we've become more conscious of making sure we've got our message that we want to get across whatever happens, but to do it in a way that they still, you know, they [the players] are still having input and valuable input from the beginning … A lot of it is about how that session will work as a process, how do we get engagement from players? (Barry, Assistant Coach, Interview Data)

While Greg added:

> We do discuss how it's being delivered. So, the order of the clips, the order of the session itself so to make sure that it's sort of fluent that we're not keep going backwards and forwards. (Greg, Head Coach, Interview Data)

Such meetings were an opportunity for the coaches to make sure they were clear on who was delivering each section of the meeting, as well as ensuring that they had a clear and unified message to present to the athletes. As Barry explains:

> I mean we definitely look to have a united front […] I mean, me and Greg are working together and we're our own little team so we have to have each other's backs, we just have to have each other's backs, and, if you feeling you're being undermined you're not gonna work effectively together. (Barry, Assistant Coach, Interview Data)

The preparation process was also supported by the Sport Psychologist (Sam) who assisted the coaches by ensuring that the messages that they were striving to convey to their athletes were clear. When the squad were away at a competition, the coaches would work closely with Sam in order to ensure the tone and language used during meetings, including video-based coaching sessions, was appropriate (e.g. to foster effective group dynamics). Greg stated:

> At the beginning of a tournament, Sam will help me with the content sometimes, just so I'm saying the right things to the players and […] I'm using the right language when I'm talking to them, you know? That's why you'll see Sam in the meetings cause then I'll ask him to review what I did. (Greg, Head Coach, Interview Data)

Sam further explained how he supported the coaching team:

> I guess what I've encouraged them to do, well particularly Greg to do, is when he is talking to a player, either an individual player or the group, about a particular point is to provide evidence. So I definitely encouraged him to use videos where he might not have done in the past to individual players to provide evidence of either where they need to develop or shortcomings in their game if he is giving them a more harsh message if that makes sense. (Sam, Sport Psychologist, Interview Data)

As part of their preparatory work, the coaches also worked closely with a select group of senior players. This enabled the coaches to encourage senior players to reinforce key messages and

approaches as well as help to develop an awareness of how the players received their video-based coaching sessions. This select group of players acted as a conduit for information to be indirectly shared between coaching and wider playing staff which included information about video-based coaching sessions. As one of the players explained:

> … when they're [the coaches] planning classroom sessions, you know meetings stuff like that, they do involve the captains and some of the other players, so I think people have the opportunity to put remarks or comments forward to them before meetings before classroom sessions. (Adam, Player, Interview Data)

Therefore, analysis of the data illustrated how 'performance teams' operated within the investigated coaching context and how each of the members of the performance team and audience were aware of their existence. The process of becoming integrated within a performance team was demonstrated to take time and concerted effort. Once accepted as part of the performance team new members were invited to backstage conversations and activities to support the performance. Such discussions tended to be informal, relaxed, open and less guarded with the aim of generating a united front. Within these discussions, members of the performance team were able to make suggestions and co-create the script of the performance team. However, as will become clear, despite their preparatory efforts the performance team were not always able to successfully engage and influence their athlete audience as desired.

A disinterested video-based coaching audience: 'This is going to be another one of those meetings'

A key feature of the coaches' delivery of the video-based coaching sessions was the use of inclusive and engaging approaches. This was driven by their reflections upon the perceived weakness of a didactic approach. However, some of the athletes did not engage as the coaches hoped and presented themselves to be a disinterested and disengaged audience. This behaviour not only angered the coaching staff but also senior players within the squad. Indeed, players viewed the disengagement within the video-based coaching sessions to be 'unprofessional' in respects to what is expected of elite athletes. Such resistance to participation within the sessions and unsupportive behaviours of some of the athletes led to the coaches compromising their desire to enforce acceptable behaviours as they wanted to maintain a positive group dynamic. In addition to a lack of engagement from some of the athletes, at times the coaches felt as though their performances within meetings were being judged by senior staff.

Gaining the trust of the coaching staff permitted the lead author to develop rich insights into their pedagogical uses of video-based coaching. For example, the coaches shared with the principal investigator that prior to his involvement with the squad their delivery of video-based coaching largely focused on the didactic provision of information and feedback. However, following a period of reflection, the coaches decided to experiment with more interactive and inclusive video sessions which aimed to be more engaging and less critical in approach. It was hoped that this would help to foster greater player engagement and enjoyment, which they felt were not optimally achieved in the past. Greg commented that:

> I think we've tried to make it [video-based coaching] more interactive now, so that they [the players] can't disengage. I think that's just learning from the mistakes we've made in the past … because I'm not the most confident in that respect when it comes to those types of meetings. (Greg, Head Coach, Interview Data)

Relatedly, Sam explained how the coaches had adapted the way they conducted their coaching during video-based coaching sessions as a result of a reflective process:

> I think it's been learning by experiences and learning by mistakes […] I think they've moved more and more away from that lecturing/teaching style towards a more collaborative approach, where they still know what the points they want to make, but they get the players to answer the questions before they tell them […] it's gone from a very much teacher style 'we're going to show you a clip, we're going to tell you what's going wrong', through to a more 'we're going to show you a clip and we're going to ask you what's going wrong',

through to a more 'right, we're going to show you an instant clip as soon as its happened and we're all going to talk about it' and now much more into 'we're just going to share clips via social media and get everyone pitching in' and there's been a phase in that somewhere where 'we're not even going to show you a clip you all need to go away and generate your own clips or look at the video and come back with your own comments.' (Sam, Sport Psychologist, Interview Data)

Despite their attempts to utilise more interactive approaches to their delivery of video-based coaching sessions, it became clear to all involved that some members of the playing squad were not enamoured with these approaches and actively resisted the coaches by withdrawing their best efforts while in attendance. At times, this made for an uncomfortable and unproductive learning environment in which certain players were clearly disengaged and disrupted the goals of the sessions. This angered the coaching staff who openly discussed their frustrations when away from the players.

Ian, Performance Analyst, First Author Field Note: Video-Based Session

I head to the front of the room and sit at the table next to Greg with Barry on the other side and the whiteboard behind us. The captain puts his head round the door and asks if the coaches are ready for them to come in, Greg agrees and the players begin to enter. Barry begins the session and explains to the players that this evening will focus on playing against our next opponent. He emphasises that a session like this only works well if the players help and contribute their thoughts and ideas with the rest of the group. I wonder how much engagement the coaches will get from certain players, they were notoriously quiet during team meetings, so why would it be any different today? I could see that some of the players sitting towards the back of the room were already starting to gaze out the window and had put their hoodies up. That answers that question then! Standard. Greg then takes over and begins to ask general questions about the opposition, 'who are their strongest and weakest players?' and 'what can we do to neutralise/take advantage of them?' The usual suspects begin to share names and their ideas, which gets a positive response from the coaches and initiates more discussion from other players. Greg moves the session on and starts to target some of the individuals who are yet to share their thoughts, 'Callum, if we are losing, what should we do differently?' Silence. Greg and Barry waited patiently, the players sat nearer the front turn to look at Callum awaiting his response. 'Um, sorry, what was the question?' A few of the other players start to laugh. Greg repeats the question and awaits a response. More silence. 'Um, I'm not sure' responds Callum. It felt like being back in a school classroom with a naughty child who didn't know what to say to the teacher. It was hard to witness as this was a semi-regular occurrence within the evening team meetings, despite the best efforts of the coaches to keep the sessions shorter. I think how frustrating the situation must be for the coaches, as well as the players who willingly contribute in most sessions. Do they even want to be in the room or squad?

While coaching staff were angered and disappointed by the lack of engagement and professional conduct evidenced by some members of the playing squad during video-based coaching sessions, they did not feel they were able to directly address these behaviours due to the constant pressure of competitions and the desire to maintain a positive environment around the team to aid their performance. Barry explained:

I think we're on message to be positive, which at this point is fair enough, but you know we've got enough competitions that essentially there's always been another big competition coming up or there's always been something important not to upset somebody. I think there's fragility that we feel about upsetting people, and clearly setting out how you want behaviours to be in any particular environment and I don't think we've really agreed as a staff team about this learning environment. (Barry, Assistant Coach, Interview Data)

In addition, Sam further highlighted that at times Greg felt as if he was being judged by senior members of staff such as Matt (Performance Director) when they attended his team meeting:

I think sometimes Greg felt like staff were sitting in judgement watching him and there was quite a lot of interplay between Greg and staff, Barry and staff, so a lot of sort of chat behind the scenes and so I think there could have been some undermining going on, not necessarily on purpose, but I think Greg could have felt undermined at times. (Sam, Sport Psychologist, Interview Data)

Here, Greg and Barry attempted to negotiate the complexities of a planned and scripted performance to the team audience, whilst attempting to maintain a positive group dynamic within a tournament situation. Both Greg and Barry were particularly mindful of being seen to single out players for criticism, whilst trying to support a positive group dynamic. The desire for a positive group

environment led Greg and Barry to avoid addressing situations of potential conflict, even when they witnessed behaviours or cultures starting to form in the team that they viewed as dysfunctional.

This development not only disappointed the coaching staff but was a source of frustration for some of the more engaged members of the playing squad. For example, Adam shared how video-based coaching sessions were often reliant upon the input of certain players with other squad members contributing very little to group discussions. In his own words:

> From a players' point of view, there are some players that will ignore that and won't participate no matter how much you ask them, cause that's what they've been allowed to do. That's what they've been allowed to almost get away with. They've been allowed to not participate to the same level as say other players who are always commenting in whatever classroom session. So, I think players need to participate more. At the minute, it's the same 5 or 6 people that are always answering questions, commenting on stuff and putting forward stuff in classroom sessions or in meetings. So, yeh, I think everybody needs to participate better and more […] We are an elite level of sport and, no matter what sport you're in, at this level there is classroom work. It doesn't matter what sport you're in, there is a certain element of video analysis or you know that sort of stuff that you have to do. […] I'm definitely aware there's stuff that you have to do that you might not like. It is not necessarily down to how the sessions or lessons are being put across, it's just an unwillingness to be part of a classroom session of any kind … The easiest thing to say is 'oh well it's the coaches they need to do more' and quite frankly that's just wrong. You know, coaches can try different techniques to get people involved and participating in classroom sessions or meetings, but players have to be involved in that. If players are not participating, it looks like they don't give a shit, so all players need to be involved, to keep their end of the bargain up as it were. (Adam, Player, Interview Data)

The findings presented here demonstrates the complex nature of delivering a performance as a team to a partially disinterested and disengaged audience. Furthermore, the staff outlined a number of complexities that they had to negotiate in this situation whilst attempting to maintain a positive group dynamic within the tournament. For example, the coaches had to balance addressing their displeasure of the behaviours and poor levels of engagement, with a desire to avoid singling athletes out in the meetings or through videos of poor performance. In addition, the attendance of senior staff within meetings and a lack of confidence and fragility within their own practice created self-doubt and uncertainty.

Spoilt coaching performances: 'Their performances are the meetings'

Despite the pre-planning meetings and preparation work that coaches and support staff engaged in to ensure that the video sessions ran smoothly, engaged the athletes and made a valuable contribution to team performance, at times individuals within the performance team (i.e. coaches) went 'off script' causing a disagreement between members of the performance team in front of the audience (i.e. athletes and support staff). Such situations led to a number of negative unintended outcomes. Specifically, Greg and Barry were found on occasion to openly contradict and question one another's analysis in front of the playing squad. The following extract demonstrates an illustrative example:

> *Ian, Performance Analyst, First Author Field Note: Video-Based Team Meeting*
>
> It was astandard team meeting set-up. The players seemed to be responding positively, even if a negative clip was shown (e.g. loss of possession), and were providing constructive comments on what could have been done differently and how they could improve if they were in a similar position in future. After the next clip was shown Barry asked the players for their opinions on what they had just seen and a few of the usual voices were more than happy to give their opinion. Barry then asked a few squad memebers who had been fairly quiet up until that point what their opinions were too. One of these players made a comment which then prompted another player to ask a question to the coaches about what they had seen. Barry looked towards Greg to see if he was going to answer this question but when it appeared that he was not going to give an answer Barry gave his opinion. The way in which he spoke made it sound like they had discussed this situation before the meeting and that they both agreed on what he was saying. However, once he had finished talking, Greg disagreed with what he had just said and gave an alternative opinion. Most of the players went a bit quiet (popcorn time, sit back and watch the show unfold!), whilst the player that had asked the question looked a bit confused

and unsure on which answer he was supposed to take away from the meeting. Barry looked flustered (moving paper and pens around hurriedly) as he clearly wasn't expecting Greg to intervene like that during the meeting, especially after he had just given the players an answer that he thought was correct. I felt really awkward and shifted in my seat (almost physically distancing myself from what had just happened). I remember thinking, 'that's nothing to do with me! I don't want the players thinking it was my mistake.' There was no more discussion around the point from either the players or the coaches and after a brief period of silence (like tumbleweeds in cartoons and a sea of blank faces!) Barry asked me to move onto the next clip. Awkward.

At a subsequent team meeting, players were asked to critically reflect on their training camp experience to generate ideas and suggestions that could guide future actions. During this exercise, one of the players highlighted the negative impact of those disagreements between Greg and Barry that been observed by the playing staff during video-based coaching sessions:

Recorded Extract from Team Meeting

Elliot (Player): Negative wise I think sometimes you're sort of, although you're working together you've got separate views on things and … whether I think you should either discuss and talk about the situation but sometimes you look a bit disjointed by situations that happen.

Barry (Assistant Coach): Is that stuff about sort of tactical skills or technical stuff or is that ermm how we're going to run this drill sort of thing?

Elliot (Player): I think it's happened not just this camp but over different camps. It's not massively bad for us as a group, it's not going to hold back our development but I think it almost looks a little bit fractured and I don't think it gives a good impression and if you have just a little bit of hearsay 'well fucking hell he's doing this and he's doing that' and I don't think it's very professional.

This highlighted how certain players were aware of such incidents and wanted them to be avoided in the future. When later probed on the potential consequences of coaches disagreeing with each other during video-based sessions in this way, the players explained that these incidents cause them to question the level of preparation, professionalism and unity of coaching staff. Pete and Adam shared the following:

I think it was a while ago they just disagreed. I think Barry said something and then Greg was like 'well, I'm not actually sure' and then it was like 'man that should really have been done before.' If you're going to disagree about something, well you need to agree to not show that video to maintain that professionalism. You know, I think their performances are the meetings and when they deliver stuff to us, like our performances are our games, so they need to prepare for their performances. (Pete, Player/Captain, Interview Data)

If there is a coach and an assistant coach, they should both be telling us exactly the same thing that they want from us. There should be no disagreement there. If there's disagreement then that needs to be addressed during the planning stage of the session, rather than the lesson because to have a disagreement in front of all of the players is a little […] That should not happen if I'm honest. If the assistant and head coaches are both trying to get across their idea then almost arguing in front of the players is not a good thing, so neither of them are actually sure of what they're doing. (Adam, Player, Interview Data)

The findings presented here demonstrated how, at times, the coaches openly contradicted each other and veered away from the carefully planned script into unplanned discussion. Straying from a carefully constructed script and team performance left athletes with a negative experience of the session and a feeling of poor preparation and planning by the coaches. On occasions, this also led athletes to be unsure about what the coaches wanted from them in situations where coaches had disagreed.

Discussion

The present case study can be understood in relation to Goffman's dramaturgical sociology. When viewed through the lens of Goffman's (1959) *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* coaching and playing staff often represented distinct *teams* and *audiences* when enacting their video-based coaching roles. Consistent with Goffman's (1959) thesis, as members of a performance team coaching staff

collectively (as well as individually) wanted to present a knowledgeable, professional and unified coaching *front* to their athletes by delivering high-quality and engaging video-based coaching sessions. It was reported that coaching staff regularly held pre-session meetings during which they co-created materials and scripts for their *frontstage* video-based coaching performances via *dramaturgical circumspection*, and that these *backstage* discussions tended to be informal, relaxed and open in nature (Goffman, 1959). Consistent with Goffman's (1959) analysis, then, the *backstage* region provided the coaching staff (performers) opportunity to collectively plan, rehearse and critically reflect upon their performances, away from the glaring eyes of their athlete audience (Potrac et al., 2022). Our findings here not only contribute to a growing body of dramaturgical scholarship addressing the impression management strategies of sport coaches (e.g. Cassidy et al., 2023; Consterdine et al., 2013; Corsby et al., 2023; Jones, 2006; Partington & Cushion, 2012; Potrac & Jones, 2009), but empirically and theoretically extend the analysis of this feature of coaching through its consideration of how coaches work not in isolation but within teams.

While the tone of these meetings eventually progressed to Goffman's (1959) description of expected backstage interactions between team members bound by reciprocal dependence and familiarity, it took time for social relations to develop to this level. Indeed, during his attendance of pre-session meetings occurring in the initial phases of the fieldwork, the lead author felt somewhat of an outsider who needed to prove his value, competency and trustworthiness as an analyst to colleagues. These early meetings were more formal in tone, requiring the lead author to manage the impressions he conveyed to coaching staff through his *frontstage* performances. However, over time, the lead author was increasingly made to feel an accepted member of the performance team evidenced by pre-session meetings (as well as interactions in other settings) becoming more informal in style. This is perhaps to be expected as Goffman (1959) reminds us that, 'one ought not to expect that concrete situations will provide pure examples of informal or formal conduct' explaining that team-mates will to 'some extent be performers and audience' in different performances over time (p. 130).

This reminds us that when studying coaching contexts we cannot assign social actors statically to performance teams and audiences; rather teams and their uses of regions are dynamic in nature. There can be a blurring of frontstage and backstage work with more or less authentic performances occurring between actors (Casanova et al., 2020). Goffman's (1959) dramaturgical framework, therefore, provides a scaffold that can be built to illuminate the structure of social encounters that may otherwise remain invisible. However, importantly, this scaffolding needs to be taken down and subsequently rebuilt to avoid static representations of what are in reality dynamic social relations and interactions (Goffman, 1959). On becoming an accepted member of the performance team the lead author found himself contributing with increasing regularity to open *backstage* discussions about how to design and deliver sessions as well as those messages they would collectively seek to convey to their athletes on the *frontstage* via *impression management* (Goffman, 1959). Gaining access to backstage regions permitted the lead author to develop greater insights into the types of information that the coaching staff discussed when preparing their delivery of video-based coaching.

While the investigation of video-based coaching led to the identification of distinct performance teams and audiences (i.e. coaching staff, engaged athletes and disengaged athletes), the coaches' decision to consult senior squad members when preparing these sessions can be understood in relation to Goffman's (1959) discussion of *discrepant roles*. When interpreted in relation to this aspect of Goffman's (1959) theorisation, senior squad members were performing the role of a *go-between* by appearing a member of the audience (i.e. athlete) while supporting the interests of the performing team (i.e. coaches). While coaching scholarship has recognised the analytical value of Goffman's (1959) discussion of frontstage and backstage work there remain few attempts to empirically investigate the performative work that occurs on the backstage between coaches (and athletes) in preparation for their frontstage performances. Findings of the present study therefore present new insights into this important feature of coaching practice.

Despite the performative efforts of the coaches and athletes to sustain desired impressions in the eyes of each other, a closer inspection revealed events that brought into question what Goffman (1959) referred to as the *dramaturgical discipline* of their individual and team performances. On occasions, the coaches openly disagreed with each other in front of their athletes during video-based coaching sessions. Unsurprisingly, this proved somewhat problematic for the coaches as 'public disagreement among the members of the team not only incapacitates them for united action but also embarrasses the reality sponsored by the team' (Goffman, 1959, p. 91), which 'make the audience privy to a view that ought to be reserved for team-mates' (Goffman, 1959, p. 94). This resulted in the athletes perceiving the coaching team's performances as disjointed and lacking professionalism as well as leaving them unsure about what was expected of them by the coaches. In addition, we found that some athletes also failed to sustain an appropriate front when in attendance of the video-based coaching sessions; permitting their disdain to become identifiable within their demeanour, which angered the coaching staff and other (more engaged) members of the playing squad. However, due to the fragility of their positions and concerns about the potential consequences of openly challenging the lack of engagement by some athletes in the build-up to competition, the coaching staff refrained from directly addressing examples of player disengagement during video sessions. These findings highlight that, at times, both the coaches and athletes were unable to utilise *protective practices* to save their performances. Here, findings from the present study empirically and theoretically contribute to existing dramaturgical coaching scholarship (e.g. Cassidy et al., 2023; Consterdine et al., 2013; Corsby et al., 2023; Jones, 2006; Partington & Cushion, 2012; Potrac & Jones, 2009) through our identification and analysis of spoiled team performances.

Conclusion

This article makes an original contribution to the dramaturgical analysis of sport coaching by drawing on multiple data sources via an 18-month ethnographic case study of video-based coaching in a Paralympic sporting context. Through the in-situ longitudinal investigation, this article has provided novel insights that coaching staff operated as a performance team in relation to the aspect of video-based coaching practice. Additionally, members of the coaching team were found to invest considerable time and effort, on the backstage, preparing and evaluating their frontstage coaching performances. Despite the coaches' efforts, some athletes were critical of the benefit of attending these sessions and their discontent was observable by their lack of engagement during these sessions. Collectively these findings and analyses advance existing dramaturgical understandings of sport coaching by placing greater emphasis on how social actors can and do work as part of performance teams when presenting to audiences that judge the quality of their actions. These insights also make a substantive contribution to a limited critical social analysis of video-based coaching by providing a novel empirical and theoretical contribution.

Future research should seek to further the analysis of team performances in sport coaching contexts. Researchers may wish to explore the planned and ad hoc nature of frontstage and backstage coaching work as well as offstage social activities occurring between performance team members outside of the workplace (cf. Lewin & Reeves, 2011). Scholars might also usefully consider the place of team secrets. Indeed, in his discussion of discrepant roles, Goffman (1959) not only acknowledged the different types of roles social actors can play but importantly the place of secrets in social interaction and team performances. Secrets have yet to be the explicit focus of coaching study. It is our belief that the investigation of coaches' uses of secrets presents one particular area worthy of critical coaching scholarship. This should include what types of secrets are constructed, who is and is not privy to these secrets and why, how these secrets are devised, performed and sustained, as well as the intended and actual outcomes of identified coaching secrets. Additionally, we support Parnell et al. (2018; 2023) and Thomas et al.'s (2022) call for a relational analysis of sports coaching roles and contexts (i.e. sporting director, talent identification and development, etc.) that uses

sociological theorisation to develop enhanced understandings of the interdependencies, ties, dialectics and co-constructed interactions that comprise social relations and interactions between actors in coaching environments. Such analysis should not only identify important social configurations but the meaning making of those actors that comprise these relational networks and the enabling as well as constraining features of their social relations and interactions (Parnell et al., 2018, 2023; Thomas et al., 2022).

The findings of this study have important practical implications. Despite the widespread delivery of video-based coaching in many high-performance sporting contexts, this aspect of coaching tends not to receive adequate attention within the formal education and development of practitioners. This would appear somewhat problematic as it leaves coaches having to experientially learn about this feature of applied practice, which may contribute towards uncritical applications of video-based coaching. Findings of the present study, alongside other foundational publications identified earlier in the article, demonstrate that video-based coaching is a complex social and pedagogical endeavour that requires significant planning and effective delivery to achieve desirable (and avoid undesirable) outcomes. While video-based coaching can be (and is) delivered by individual coaches to their athletes, this study evidenced that coaches also work alongside others when performing this aspect of their job. It is our belief that coach education needs to devote significantly more curriculum time to video-based coaching to more adequately prepare coaches for this aspect of their work. Here, coaches should not only be encouraged to think carefully about how and why they would deliver video-based coaching sessions to their athletes, but how they could effectively work alongside contextual others (in performance teams) to achieve identified coaching objectives. While this study has focused on video-based coaching, it is our belief that coach education should also help coaches to think more critically about how practitioners might work alongside other support staff, within performance teams, to effectively complete other aspects of their coaching work.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

ORCID

Ian Britton 🄳 http://orcid.org/0009-0003-9600-7177
Ryan Groom 🄳 http://orcid.org/0000-0001-7633-3846
Lee Nelson 🄳 http://orcid.org/0000-0002-7491-2382

References

Adams, A. (2020). Humour, masculinities and youth sport coaching: 'Good morning, ladies!' *Sport, Education and Society*, *25*(4), 463–474. https://doi.org/10.1080/13573322.2019.1595566

Adler, P., & Adler, P. (1994). Observational techniques. In N. Denzin, & Y. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 377–392). Sage.

Atkinson, M. (2012). The empirical strikes back: Doing realist ethnography. In K. Young, & M. Atkinson (Eds.), *Qualitative research on sport and physical culture* (pp. 23–49). Emerald Group Publishing Limited.

Booroff, M., Nelson, L., & Potrac, P. (2016). A coach's political use of video-based feedback: A case study in elite-level academy soccer. *Journal of Sports Sciences*, *34*(2), 116–124. https://doi.org/10.1080/02640414.2015.1039464

Casanova, E. M., Brenner-Levoy, J., & Weirich, C. (2020). All the world's a con: Frontstage, backstage, and the blurred boundaries of cosplay. *Symbolic Interaction*, *44*(4), 798–818. https://doi.org/10.1002/symb.533

Cassidy, T., Potrac, P., & Rynne, S. (2023). *Understanding sports coaching: The pedagogical, social and cultural foundations of coaching practice*. Routledge.

Consterdine, A., Newton, J., & Piggin, S. (2013). 'Time to take the stage': A contextual study of a high performance coach. *Sports Coaching Review*, *2*(2), 124–135. https://doi.org/10.1080/21640629.2014.908626

Corsby, C., Jones, R., Thomas, G., & Edwards, C. (2023). Coaching and 'self-repair': Examining the 'artful practices' of coaching work. *Sociological Research Online*, *28*(2), 577–595. https://doi.org/10.1177/13607804211064911

Cushion, C. (2010). Coach behaviour. In J. Lyle, & C. Cushion (Eds.), *Sports coaching: Professionalisation and practice* (pp. 43–83). Elsevier.

Cushion, C. (2014). Ethnography. In L. Nelson, R. Groom, & P. Potrac (Eds.), *Research methods in sports coaching* (pp. 171–180). Routledge.

Ely, M. (1991). *Doing qualitative research: Circles within circles*. Falmer Press.

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*, *36*(3), 244–253. https://doi.org/10.1123/ssj.2018-0156

Gale, L., Ives, B., Potrac, P., & Nelson, L. (2023). Repairing relationship conflict in community sport work: "Offender" perspectives. *Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise and Health*, *15*(3), 417–430. https://doi.org/10.1080/2159676X.2022.2127861

Goffman, E. (1959). *The presentation of self in everyday life*. Doubleday.

Groom, R., Cushion, C., & Nelson, L. (2011). The delivery of video-based performance analysis by England youth soccer coaches: Towards a grounded theory. *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology*, *23*(1), 16–32. https://doi.org/10.1080/10413200.2010.511422

Groom, R., Cushion, C., & Nelson, L. (2012). Analysing coach–athlete 'talk in interaction' within the delivery of video-based performance feedback in elite youth soccer. *Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise and Health*, *4*(3), 439–458. https://doi.org/10.1080/2159676X.2012.693525

Groom, R., Nelson, L., Potrac, P., & Smith, B. (2014). Writing and representing research. In L. Nelson, R. Groom, & P. Potrac (Eds.), *Research methods in sports coaching* (pp. 86–97). Routledge.

Jones, R. (2006). Dilemmas, maintaining "face," and paranoia: An average coaching life. *Qualitative Inquiry*, *12*(5), 1012–1021. https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800406288614

Jones, R., Potrac, P., Cushion, C., & Ronglan, L. (2011). *The sociology of sports coaching*. Routledge.

Krane, V., & Baird, S. (2005). Using ethnography in applied sport psychology. *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology*, *17*(2), 87–107. https://doi.org/10.1080/10413200590932371

Lewin, S., & Reeves, S. (2011). Enacting 'team' and 'teamwork': Using Goffman's theory of impression management to illuminate interprofessional practice on hospital wards. *Social Science & Medicine*, *72*(10), 1595–1602. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2011.03.037

Magill, S., Nelson, L., Jones, R., & Potrac, P. (2017). Emotions, identity, and power in video-based feedback sessions: Tales from women's professional football. *Sports Coaching Review*, *6*(2), 216–232. https://doi.org/10.1080/21640629.2017.1367068

Nelson, L., Potrac, P., & Groom, R. (2014a). Receiving video-based feedback in elite ice-hockey: A player's perspective. *Sport, Education and Society*, *19*(1), 19–40. https://doi.org/10.1080/13573322.2011.613925

Nelson, L., Potrac, P., & Groom, R. (2014b). The place of theory. In L. Nelson, R. Groom, & P. Potrac (Eds.), *Research methods in sports coaching* (pp. 76–85). Routledge.

Parnell, D., Bond, A. J., Widdop, P., Groom, R., & Cockayne, D. (2023). Recruitment in elite football: A network approach. *European Sport Management Quarterly*, *23*(5), 1370–1386. https://doi.org/10.1080/16184742.2021.2011942

Parnell, D., Widdop, P., Groom, R., & Bond, A. (2018). The emergence of the sporting director role in football and the potential of social network theory in future research. *Managing Sport and Leisure*, *23*(4-6), 242–254. https://doi.org/10.1080/23750472.2018.1577587

Partington, M., & Cushion, C. (2012). Performance during performance: Using Goffman to understand the behaviours of elite youth football coaches during games. *Sports Coaching Review*, *1*(2), 93–105. https://doi.org/10.1080/21640629.2013.790167

Potrac, P., Ives, B., Gale, L., Nelson, L., & Morgan, C. (2022). Community sport coaching and impression management. In B. Ives, P. Potrac, L. Gale, & L. Nelson (Eds.), *Community sports coaching: policies and practice* (pp. 210–223). Routledge.

Potrac, P., & Jones, R. (2009). Power, conflict, and cooperation: Toward a micropolitics of coaching. *Quest*, *61*(2), 223–236. https://doi.org/10.1080/00336297.2009.10483612

Potrac, P., Jones, R., & Armour, K. (2002). 'It's all about getting respect': The coaching behaviors of an expert English soccer coach. *Sport, Education and Society*, *7*(2), 183–202. https://doi.org/10.1080/1357332022000018869

Richardson, L. (1990). *Writing strategies: Reaching diverse audiences*. Sage.

Ronglan, L., & Aggerholm, K. (2014). 'Humour helps': Elite sports coaching as a balancing act. *Sports Coaching Review*, *3*(1), 33–45. https://doi.org/10.1080/21640629.2014.885776

Smith, B., Sparkes, A., & Caddick, N. (2014). Judging qualitative research. In L. Nelson, R. Groom, & P. Potrac (Eds.), *Research methods in sports coaching* (pp. 192–202). Routledge.

Taylor, W., Potrac, P., Nelson, L., Jones, L., & Groom, R. (2017). An elite hockey player's experiences of video-based coaching: A poststructuralist reading. *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, *52*(1), 112–125. https://doi.org/10.1177/1012690215576102

Tedlock, B. (2000). Ethnography and ethnographic representation. In N. Denzin, & Y. Lincoln (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research* (2nd ed., pp. 455–486). Sage.

Thomas, R., Hall, E. T., Nelson, L., & Potrac, P. (2022). Actors, interactions, ties, and networks: The 'doing' of talent identification and development work in elite youth football academies. *Soccer & Society*, *23*(4–5), 420–431. https://doi.org/10.1080/14660970.2022.2059870

Tracy, S. (2010). Qualitative quality: Eight "Big tent" criteria for excellent qualitative research. *Qualitative Inquiry*, *16*(10), 837–851. https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800410383121

Williams, S., & Manley, A. (2016). Elite coaching and the technocratic engineer: Thanking the boys at Microsoft! *Sport, Education and Society*, *21*(6), 828–850. https://doi.org/10.1080/13573322.2014.958816

Wolcott, H. (1995). *The art of fieldwork*. AltaMira.