## *"Lest We Forget": Sport in the Cultural Memory of Australians*

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### Introduction

During the Rugby Union World Cup held in Australia in 2003, the nationally circulated Australian newspaper printed a picture of Jonny Wilkinson on the front page of the sports section with the headline: "Is that all you've got?" London's Daily Mirror responded with the same caption and a picture of Kylie Minogue. But this isn't all Australia has got. It has Kylie and sport. Many scholars might argue there is a great deal more to Australia than sport, but at the same time, sport has been a significant force in defining the national consciousness. Scholars such as Cashman have called Australia a "paradise of sport",<sup>1</sup> while there are innumerable books on the history and sociology of Australian sports.<sup>2</sup> From the beginnings of the colony Australia was ferociously egalitarian in everything except sport. In sport alone, Australia has been unabashedly elitist and that is because sport matters so much. Understanding sport is central to understanding Australian culture and Australians' sense of who they are in the world. Australia's biggest cultural events are sporting events. Sport is part of dayto-day discourse and a central part of Australian culture, yet receives comparatively little attention as an area of serious academic study. Despite the extent to which sport permeates society and culture, it is so often seen as trivial, unimportant and unworthy of serious intellectual attention. While Australians have many fine achievements outside sport to be proud of, they are typically obfuscated by the dominance of sport. There are few countries in the world where sport is so deeply entrenched in mainstream culture. Understanding the practice and meaning of sport in Australia can provide a deep understanding, not only of the unique nature of Australian sport, but

<sup>1</sup> Richard Cashman, *Paradise of Sport The rise of organised sport in Australia* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1995)

- <sup>2</sup> Cf. Daryl Adair and Wray Vamplew, *Sport in Australian history* (Melbourne. Oxford University Press, 1997); Richard Cashman and M. McKernan, *Sport in history. The making of modern sport history* (St Lucia, QLD: The University of Queensland Press, 1979).
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also of broader Australian culture. No examination of culture in Australia would be complete without looking at sport.

Despite claims that sport should be separate from politics, business and other aspects of society ("sport and politics don't mix"), it forms a part of society and operates as a significant and dynamic cultural practice. The work of sociologist Pierre Bourdieu<sup>3</sup> suggests that culture undergoes a constant process of reproduction and that the body plays a central role in this process. It suggests that culture exists not so much in works of art and literature, but more in the bodies of people who live it. He is one of the few mainstream sociologists to recognise the role that sport plays in the production and reproduction of culture. Owing to its cultural prominence. sport has played a significant part in the production and reproduction of culture in Australia but this is not always a uniform process. Particular sports with particular histories tend to reproduce different aspects of culture. Sports with long histories such as cricket. Australian football and rugby maintain and reproduce forms of culture tied to a particular past. As the work of Williams<sup>4</sup> and Hobsbawm and Ranger<sup>5</sup> suggests, history and tradition are radically selective and operate to validate current positions and relations of power by linking them to a particular past. Sport plays a significant part in this process.

This chapter examines the ways in which sport maintains links with a cultural past and operates as cultural memory. It does so by briefly examining the two sports of cricket and surf lifesaver. Both these sports (we focus on the sporting side of surf lifesaver) have long histories and very strong links with a particular cultural past that is remembered through their practice and the discourse that surrounds it. They maintain and reproduce their own sporting cultures but these are inextricably linked to what might be termed mainstream culture. While the role that film, theatre and art play in producing and reproducing culture has been extensively explored, sport's explicitly physical nature leads to it being overlooked as a very significant cultural practice. The relative lack of academic attention paid to its role in producing and reproducing culture means that its powerful influence often goes unnoticed.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> For example, see Pierre Bourdieu's *Outline of a theory of practice*, trans Richard Nice (Cambridge, UK; New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1977) and *Distinction. A social critique of the* 

judgement of taste, trans. Richard Nice (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1984)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Raymond Williams, *Marxism and literature* (Oxford, UK: Oxford Press, 1977).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (eds), *The unvention of tradution* (Cambridge, UK; New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

Culture & Memory. Special Issue of Modern Greek Studies (Australia and New Zealand) 2006: 235

### Sport as cultural memory

The ways in which we remember the past are integral to our experiences of the present. While the past itself may indeed be "a foreign country", our conceptions of it pervade our everyday lives.<sup>6</sup> We engage with the past to give us a sense of security in the present or to guide us in shaping our future. Increasingly the past has been used in a nostalgic sense to provide us with a sense of who "we" are as individuals and as members of a society. Nostalgia confronts us every day from our longings for the "good old days" to the sense of insecurity in an ever rapidly changing world. Lowenthal argues that nostalgia "can also shore up self-esteem, reminding us that however sad our present lot we were once happy and worthwhile... nostalgia is memory with the pain removed. The pain is today".<sup>7</sup> In Australia, nostalgia for our colonial past is playing a role as we move economically, politically and culturally towards closer ties with Asia. In particular, cricket links with the imperial ties with England. The use of sport and the history of sport has been one of the most significant areas in the process of sustaining identities. In Australia, nostalgic use of sport has served as a conservative force to persevere with past glories or for the fading social values in the face of immigration and changing values. For example, in cricket, commentators make reference to the great eras, such as the Bradman years, the Benuad years or the Chappell years.

Cricket (Test cricket in particular) is a sporting anachronism in a world of fast-paced media sport. The idea of taking five days to complete a game that may well result in a draw is at odds with the nature of contemporary sport as entertainment. It is certainly odd for those from non cricketplaying nations. It is literally foreign to the North American students that we teach in the area of sport studies in Sydney. While processes of sport's commodification (the process through which sport develops as a market commodity) and commercialisation have produced one-day cricket and, more recently, twenty/twenty cricket, Test matches still hold public attention. Looking back over the 2005/2006 season in Australia, it was the Test series with South Africa which most grabbed public attention, and there have been few sporting contests in recent times that have grabbed extended world attention like the Ashes series contested in England. For Australians, the fact that the contest was against its former colonial master made it particularly important. Taking five days to complete a game is out of place in contemporary societies. So are the rituals of the game and its overt emphasis on fair play and gentlemanly behaviour that, for example,

would be unimaginable in the US baseball major league. It is out of place in contemporary societies in which media-sport so often emphasises sensationalism and winning at all costs. These rituals of cricket and artefacts such as the baggy green cap link it to a particular culture that keeps us in touch with a simpler and comforting past in which we remember sport as being better, more moral than it is now.

## Cricket

Sport has formed a dominant cultural practice from the first settlement and has played a pivotal role in the development of a national identity. Within a context of anxiety over the future of the colony, arising from concerns with the convict origins of most of the population and the harsh natural conditions of a foreign and threatening environmen, sport provided what was seen as a bulwark against these threats.<sup>8</sup> The colony's expansion over the second half of the nineteenth century occurred at a time of British faith in the capacity of games to engender positive social and moral learning encapsulated in the notion of the games ethic.<sup>9</sup> It was also a time during which a distinctly Australian approach to playing sport emerged that was very competitive, relatively free of the influence of class and more innovative.<sup>10</sup> Of all sports, cricket was one that was seen by the English and Australians as a game that fostered and exhibited the utmost morality and civility. Victories over touring English teams in the second half of the nineteenth century thus had an immense impact upon the faith of the colonialists in their ability to develop a civil society. As the only real national game, cricket has since maintained a position of great importance in Australia, where it has often acted to confirm faith in the country during testing times over Australia's history. Most noticeably this occurred through the extraordinary talents of Don Bradman during the depression years. Bradman's efforts on the cricket pitch inspired Australians and embodied culturally admired qualities. In the late 1990s, Australia's Prime Minister John Howard called Don Bradman the greatest living Australian. In a recent online poll conducted by the Sydney Morning Herald on which Australians have had the biggest impact upon contemporary Australia, Don Bradman was ranked fourth after Sir Howard Florey, Eddie Mabo and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> David Lowenthal, *The past is a foreign country* (Cambridge, UK; New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1985).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Lowenthal, *The past is a foreign country*, p. 8.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Stratton, John, "Australia: This sporting life, in Geoffery Lawrence & David Rowe (eds) *Power Play Essays in the sociology of Australian sport* (Sydney: Hale & Ironmonger, 1986, p 4).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> See J. A. Mangan's Athleticism in the Victorian and Edwardian Public School The emergence and consolidation of an educational ideology (Cambridge, UK; New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1981) and The games ethic and imperialism, Aspects of the diffusion of an ideal (Harmondsworth, UK; New York, NY: Viking, 1986).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Cashman, Paradise of Sport, p.121.

Gough Whitlam.<sup>11</sup> Captain of the Australian cricket team is widely claimed to be the most important office in the country by sports lovers and politicians alike.

In the absence of an upper class in Australia, the middle classes had more access to sport than the English did in the nineteenth century. Australians also approached cricket with a far more competitive attitude and were more inventive than their English counterparts. They were competitive in fielding and bowling but tended to be inferior in batting technique to the early touring teams. The first English cricket team visited Australia in 1862 and this was followed by another two visits in 1864 and 1873. During early games by touring English teams they played handicap matches against the colonials. The fourth tour was different, and on 15 March 1877, Australia won the first Test at the Melbourne Cricket Ground. This provided a significant boost to local cricket and the aspirations of the colony. At the time, England had Shakespeare and Agincourt and Darwin and an empire that stretched to the four corners of the world. Australia had none of these, but had youth. How better to express this youth than in sport? How better to define a nation than by playing sport with a seriousness of purpose? For Australia it seems that the less history a nation has the more it needs sport to define its national consciousness. Other nations have their history but Australians have sport.

In the second half of the nineteenth century, cricket played an important role in the development of an Australian national identity. This made sense because Australia was young with no illustrious history. The victories over England laid to rest the fears of genetic decline, which haunted the nineteenth-century colonials. Australia defined itself through cricket from the mid-nineteenth century. This was further enhanced with events which took place in Gallipoli, where once again sport and nationalism combined. So much so that in 1981 Peter Weir directed the movie *Gallipoli*, which combined sport, nationalism and colonial self-sacrifice. The story is about two sprinters, one from the country and the other from the city. Both answer the call to arms. The plot reflects myths of Australian culture, the sports carnival setting, the amateur ideal and sport as a symbol of manliness. Cricket's place at Gallipoli is well documented. Bean's *Official History of Australia in World War I* has a photograph of a game in progress on Shell Green on 17 December 1915, just before the withdrawal.<sup>12</sup> This

Culture & Memory. Special Issue of Modern Greek Studies (Australia and New Zealand) 2006: 238

also not only indicates the importance of cricket for Australians but also links cricket to our ties with the mother country and the emergence as a nation in its own right that Gallipoli is seen to mark.

Cricket was the first team sport to be transplanted to Australia and was the closest to being the national game. It was played in Sydney from 1803, but reports of the game were infrequent until 1826, when the Australian Cricket Club was formed. Many more clubs were formed in the 1830s, with most organised around public houses. Perhaps the most notable club established was the Melbourne Cricket Club, founded in 1838, which became the most powerful Australian Club, organising national tours in the late nineteenth century. It was not until 1856, when New South Wales defeated Victoria at the Melbourne Cricket Ground, that intercolonial matches became an annual event.<sup>13</sup> The first Australian team to tour England was made up of Aboriginals from Victoria in 1868 vet it receives little attention in general sport history publications. It was also from this noint that Aboriginal involvement in cricket declined rapidly.<sup>14</sup> This was largely due to the growing faith placed in sport to develop and maintain a civil society within the context of views of Aboriginals as having been degraded by the harsh Australian environment.<sup>15</sup> It was not until a decade later that a white team toured England in 1878, and this is more widely recognised as the first tour. The third Australian tour of England in 1882 proved the most memorable when the touring side captained by William Murdoch - the strongest team in the nineteenth century - won the first Test in England and helped create the Ashes mythology. By the time of Federation, "Australia" had forged a strong sense of national identity well before it had become an independent country.<sup>16</sup>

Interest in cricket was heightened by the emergence of the legendary Donald Bradman in the late 1920s. "The Don" has become a cultural icon and has come to embody what is culturally valued in Australia. Bradman's dominance in international cricket led to one of the most sensational incidents in cricket; the bodyline series. The furor that emerged during the bodyline series provides evidence of the place and cultural meaning that cricket holds in Australia. The tactic of bodyline was designed to curb the phenomenal talent of Bradman. The tactic involved bowling at the body of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Max Prist, "The singer, the crim and the scientist: who we look up to", *Sydney Morning Herald*, 13 February, 2005, p. 3.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> C. E. W. Bean, Official History of Australia in the War of 1914-1918, Volume 12, Plate 153 "The Evacuation of Anzac", referred to in Richard Fotheringham, "Sport and Nationalism on Australian Stage and Screen From Australian Felix to Gallipolli", Australian Drama Studies, vol. 1, no. 1 (October, 1982), pp. 65-88.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> Jas Scott, Early cricket in Sydney, 1803 to 1856 (Sydney: New South Wales Cricket Association, 1991).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> Cf. Derek Mulvaney and Rex Harcourt, *Cricket walkabout the Australian Aborigines in England* (South Melbourne: Macmillan in association with the Dept of Aboriginal Affairs, 1988); Bernard Whimpress, *Passport to nowhere. Aborigines in Australian Cricket 1853-1939* (Sydney: Walla Walla Press, 1999).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> Stratton, John, "Australia: This sporting life, p.5).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> Cashman, Paradise of Sport, p.57.

Australian batsmen and saw sickening injuries inflicted upon many of them.<sup>17</sup> Just like the Hansie Cronje scandal 70 years later, it just "wasn't cricket". The public was outraged and relations were tested between the two countries. The issue was raised in both parliaments and England were seen to lose their moral superiority. Forty years later, however, it was Australia that was the villain when Trevor Chappell deprived New Zealand of any chance of victory by rolling the last ball of the match underarm along the ground to prevent a six being scored. This incident triggered a furious response in New Zealand and was widely criticised in Australia.<sup>18</sup> Like the bodyline series, cricketers had not broken the laws of the game but had not played in the spirit of cricket.

Larrikinism and an intensely competitive, innovative approach to sport is a distinctly Australian trait, yet the stress placed on fair play may reflect more of the games English origins. While Australian sides are renown for "sledging" on the field, there is still a strong emphasis on fair play and sportsmanship. Adam Gilchrist attracted media attention by "walking" before being given out by the umpire. His captain did not encourage all his players to do the same but he accepted Gilchrist's decision. Would this happen in other sports in Australia such as AFL or rugby? Would it happen in the US major league baseball or in ice hockey? We may laud "Boony" for his in-flight drinking feats but if a batsman "lingers" at the crease when given out before walking back to the pavillion he is typically criticised in the press and by much of the public. The manners and behaviour of cricketers is under constant surveillance and assessment in a sport that aspires to the highest moral standards. Yes, we can cite endless examples of poor behaviour in the middle and elsewhere, with players like Shane Warne instantly coming to mind. However, if we think about in the context of élite professional sport played in other countries, or even in Australia, it highlights the underpinning emphasis on morality in cricket. While baseball players and AFL players can get away with physically attacking umpires (just "bumping" them in AFL), over-enthusiastically questioning the umpire's decision can land a player in deep trouble and cost him dearly in fines in cricket.

There has always been the pretence in this country that cricket is played for pleasure and not to win; winning is considered incidental to the enjoyment of the game. That is why Australian cricket teams are affronted when their opponents go in - patently - to win. The blown-up scandal

# about the bowling in 1932 had to do with the understanding that the England team were not playing for fun, as gentlemen should. The same understanding shapes the treatment of Tests against non-Anglo teams. The Indians (and later as well the Pakistanis), the West Indies, the Zimbabwe team and the rest are perceived as needing to win to prove themselves, to be fanatical about winning and likely to play illegally if need be in order to beat Australia. Whereas we have no need to do such things, we can afford to be nonchalant.

Cricket has been the main testing ground for Australian sporting prowess. The point of the international matches has been to prove how good we are in comparison with nations we considered our superiors, our peers, our inferiors. But not all sports have involved national comparisons. Until the past forty years, which have seen international surfing competitions all around the world, for a hundred years before that swimming and surfing were the private/internal concern of Australians, especially the lifeguard aspect. In California and other places where the beach was a playground, the lifeguards were paid. In Australia, in contrast, lifesaving was matter of voluntary service and a unique cultural practice.

### **Surf Life Saving**

Australians have a long history of attachment to the water. White Australia's association with water began with their arrival by sea in 1788. The beach forms an unusually prominent and integral part of Australia's "cultural envelope".<sup>19</sup> The beach and the cultural activities it generates have been central to much Australian art, film and writing. Along with the Opera House, the Harbour Bridge and Uluru, the beach defines Australian identity. The Cronulla race riots in 2005 highlighted the significance of the beach for what might be seen as "traditional", and mainly Anglo, culture. As much as a clash of races it might more usefully be seen as a clash of cultures. We suggest that the location of this unrest at the beach attracted more media attention than if it had occurred elsewhere. Significantly, it began with the bashing of two young lifesavers: an act seen by many Australians, including the NSW Premier, as abhorrent. Few things represent so strongly what has been traditionally admired in Australian culture as lifesavers and surf clubs. Of the images that define Australian culture, surely the bronzed, toned lifesaver and the red and yellow flags rank near the top. There is little we can think of that is more distinctly and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> Brian Stoddart, Saturday Afternoon Fever Sport in the Australian Culture (North Ryde, NSW: Angus and Robertson, 1984).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> Jack Pollard, The Bradman years: Australian cricket 1818-1948 (North Ryde, NSW: Angus and Robertson, 1988).

Culture & Memory. Special Issue of Modern Greek Studies (Australia and New Zealand) 2006: 240

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Douglas Booth, Australian beach cultures the history of sun, sand, and surf (London: Frank Cass, 2001); Richard Light and T. Rockwell, "The cultural origins of competitive swimming in Australia", Sporting Traditions, vol. 21, no. 2 (2005), pp 21-38.

Culture & Memory. Special Issue of Modern Greek Studies (Australia and New Zealand) 2006: 241

uniquely Australian than the surf lifesaver movement with its thousands of volunteer lifesavers and the surf clubs that are so prominent on most popular Australian beaches.

The formation of the first surf clubs in Sydney during 1907 was driven by an alarming rise in drowning that followed the 1903 repeal of laws banning daylight bathing. Since then, surf clubs have come to form unique cultural institutions, with 34,000 volunteer lifesavers now actively patrolling on 304 beaches in Australia. Surf clubs' prime duty is to provide for the safety of bathers, including a range of tasks from performing lifesaving rescues and resuscitation to providing minor first aid and looking after lost children. While surf clubs provide a community service in making bathing safe, they have, from their inception, promoted the sporting dimension of surf lifesaving. As Booth suggests, "Within a decade of SLSA's formation sport had become the raison d'etre for most lifesavers".<sup>20</sup>

Interclub competition was ostensibly introduced to keep lifesavers fit for duty, but also fitted in with a well-established competitive sporting culture in Australia that had emerged in the latter part of the nineteenth century.<sup>21</sup> Following the establishment of the first three surf clubs in 1907 (Bondi, Bronte & North Steyne), competition quickly developed as an integral part of surf club culture and by 1915 the Surf Bathing Association of New South Wales (SBANSW) staged the first NSW championships. Indeed. Booth argues that the surf lifesaver movement was driven by a strong inclination toward competitive sport from its very beginnings. He suggests that, in the early stages of the surf club movement, the SBANSW tended to emphasise sport over community service to "advance the sport and pastime of surf bathing".<sup>22</sup> From their inception, Australian clubs had embraced the culture of competitive sport and it continues to form an essential aspect of surf club culture. As colourful and spectacular as surf lifesaving carnivals are, they have not developed into valuable media products such as cricket and the football codes. They do, however, have enormous numbers of participants. Unlike the most popular media sports such as cricket, Australian Football League, rugby union and rugby league, involvement in the sport of surf lifesaving is through participation and not media consumption. The annual national surf lifesaver championships attracts 7000 participants and the NSW nippers (junior surf lifesaver activities program) championships is the biggest junior sport event in the southern hemisphere, with over 4,000 young competitors and 20,000 spectators.

Once the bastion of exemplary military manliness, almost half of the Surf Life Saving Association's (SLSA) members are now female. There is also a large number of nippers, children between the ages of 5 and 13, in the junior activities programs run by most surf clubs in Australia, with 70,000 registered in 2005. On any Sunday morning in Sydney, for example, beachgoers can struggle to find space, with hundreds of nippers training in front of surf clubs. Like adults in surf clubs, their activities are instified in terms of moving them toward becoming a lifesaver but the very strong emphasis on competitive sport involved in beach sprints, the board naddle and surf swim races is very evident. Traditionally surf sport and carnivals have not only kept members fit but have also acted to demonstrate or "prove" that they were also "highly disciplined athletes".<sup>23</sup> Discipline, self-control and moral integrity have been embedded in the sport of surf lifesaving throughout its history and have marked it off from other users of the beach such as "hedonistic" surfers. As Booth points out, lifesavers also indulged in larrikinism but when on show displayed discipline and athleticism.<sup>24</sup> The beach is an open, natural space that generates a sense of freedom and hedonism and this forms the main attraction for many beach goers. Surf lifesaving, however, has long been highly disciplined and has aspired to high levels of morality. While the lure of the beach and the ocean is always present, surf lifesaving embeds selfdiscipline and a certain asceticism in its members. Certainly up until the 1960s, when numbers dropped and the nippers programs were introduced. surf lifesavers were seen as exemplars of a traditional "hard core" Australian masculinity. The guardians of the beach were courageous, selfsacrificing, and stoic; standing straight, tanned and toned.

Walk into any surf club and its history will be on display. Few other organisations, sporting or otherwise, place such importance on their history, as is evident in ongoing disputes about the dates from which particular surf clubs were established and which was *the* first. This history confirms surf lifesaving's links to a particular past associated with particular cultural values. Like cricket, the practice, discourse, rituals and artefacts of surf lifesaving act to reproduce and remember a sporting culture that is, in many ways, out of place in contemporary Australia. Despite the growing number of females in surf clubs and the large numbers of children, surf clubs hold on to traditions of exemplary manliness. They

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> Booth, Australian beach cultures, p. 83

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> Cashman, Paradise of Sport, p.57.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> Booth, Australian beach cultures, p. 72.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> Booth, Australian beach cultures, p. 83.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> Booth, Australian beach cultures,

are also strongly linked to the ideals of fair play and morality. They reflect a particularly Australian approach to sport that is highly competitive, promotes "mateship", tolerates a little larrikinism and aspires to morality. In the 1960s this concern with morality extended to beach inspectors acting as enforcers of morality on beaches in their clashes with women wishing to wear bikinis that were deemed to be too revealing. During this same period they also enforced council laws that required the registration of surfboards.

Much has changed over the past forty years and members of surf clubs are no longer seen so much as the enforcers of morality on the beach. Although differences between surfers and surf clubs exist, the tension between "clubbies" and "surfies" is a thing of the past. However, surf clubs still operate to remember a particular cultural past associated with discipline, self control, courage, humanitarianism, intense competitiveness and morality. One has only to witness a surf carnival to see this on display. In addition to events like beach sprinting, surf swims, board paddling and the iron person there are a range of events explicitly tied to the past. Inflatable rescue boats have replaced the cumbersome surfboat, but the surf boat race is a very important event in carnivals. There is also the "march past" and highly ritualised rescue and resuscitation events using equipment and techniques that have long been abandoned. Artefacts like the surfboat and the rescue reels and belts make very strong connections with a nostalgic past. Such artefacts and practices act to remember "traditional" Australian cultural values in an increasingly multicultural nation in a time of uncertainty and anxiety.

Despite the influx of females into the surf lifesaving movement, it, and cricket, are predominantly male institutions. They promote what Connell terms a hegemonic form of masculinity, tied into being strong, stoic, self-sacrificing and valuing "mateship".<sup>25</sup> Their practices and discourses link them to long histories and to culturally valued traits tied into Australia's past but not necessarily Australia's future. Both sports remember traits of individualism, inventiveness, intense competitiveness and larrikinism while aspiring to a high level of morality. Like the ways in which the Don is remembered as a cultural icon and a romantic symbol of an idealised Australia that did not really exist, surf lifesaving as a sport and a cultural practice operates to promote what is in some ways a mythical past. Certainly the past remembered through the practices, rituals and artefacts of surf lifesaving and cricket is different to contemporary, multicultural Australia. It is different to the complexity of a dynamic contemporary

Australia, yet the cultural memory of sport continues to shape contemporary Australian culture and remember the past.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> R. W. Connell, *Masculinities* (St Leonards, NSW. Allen & Unwin, 1995)