Journal of Arts & Humanities

Attacking the Body in Mixed Martial Arts: Perspectives, Opinions and Perceptions of the Full Contact Combat Sport of Ultimate Fighting

Magnus Stenius[1]

ABSTRACT

This article explores the sensuous experience of full contact fighting through ethnographic research in mixed martial arts clubs. Presenting its first card in 1993 in Denver, Colorado, the Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC) stunned martial artists while thrilling and frightening spectators. Mixed martial arts (MMA) is an evolving combat sport pitting elite athletes trained in a variety of combat arts against each other in the "Octagon". Contestants are permitted to kick, punch, elbow and knee as well as use grappling submission techniques to defeat opponents. Despite criticism, supporters claim that the efficiency of non-violent grappling techniques has made MMA much safer than boxing, where fighters absorb repeated blows to the head. As the sport developed, fighters adjusted their bodies in order to better utilize the positional and tactical techniques that proved more successful than brute force. The mediated representation of fighting revealed that despite of being in a state of rage, MMA was a technically challenging sport based on the sublime performance of participant's bodies. However, MMA remains the subject of debate in popular culture and the media, and medical expertise argues that the sport is dangerous and puts participants in harm´s way. On the other hand, proponents of the sport argue that health risks are overstated and that other, far less safe sports exist. The aim of this article is to scrutinize fighters as well as the opinions of media and the medical humanities in order to achieve an overview of the image of this combat sport. Convinced that the debate needs to be more nuanced, this paper examines how MMA

[1] Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology, Umeå Universitet, Department of Culture and Media Studies, Humanisthuset, Grad Research School (UCGS), 901 87, SE, email: magnus.stenius@umu.se.

encounters and mitigates scientific discourse and attitudes. The results also show that MMA is an ambiguous sport, taking responsibility for the well-being of its fighters while encouraging spectacle in the arena.

Keywords: MMA, media, medical humanities, new materialism, posthumanism.
Available Online: 26th February 2015.
MIR Center for Socio-Economic Research, USA.

1.0 Introduction

On 21, November 1993, the Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC) held its first prize-fighting gala in Denver, Colorado, called "UFC 1: The Beginning." The event was arranged by Brazilian jujutsu instructor Rorion Gracie, whose son Royce emerged victorious from the eight-man strong tournament (Downey, 2007, 201). The champion had to go three matches in a single night to take home the 50,000-dollar pot. While the promoters publicized the first UFC events as a no rules, "anything goes", there were in fact exceptions: no hitting below the belt and no fish-hooking, i.e. face gouging (Spencer, 2012). The combatants came from a wide variety of martial arts backgrounds, including boxing, judo, karate, Thai boxing and even professional, Greco-Roman and Sumo wrestling. Each bout continued until one contestant was knocked unconscious, the referee stopped the match, a fighter signaled surrender by tapping out, or the corner threw in the towel. Critics reacted harshly to the event's sensational campaign, its imbalanced match-ups, and its liberal rules. Traditional martial artist enthusiasts were more stunned by the outcome (Bolelli 2008; Downey, 2007, 202).

Following the victory of the smallest fighter in the tournament, who went on to win two of the next four tournaments before finally fighting to a draw with American Ken Shamrock in the UFC 5 finale, the paradigm of martial arts fighting shifted dramatically. Gracie had defeated bigger, stronger challengers using grappling techniques alone. He had not thrown a single blow against any opponent. Fighters all over the globe were surprised by the chokeholds that defeated gigantic, heavyweight athletes. Many martial artists started to reassess their knowledge of fighting techniques and tactics and how the human body functions in unarmed combat sports (Downey, 2007, 202). Trainers realized that grappling was essential to survival. A sound wrestling background was the key to success in this new sport.

Commentators observed that following UFC 1, the martial arts community concluded that fighting was not really what they thought it was (see Bolelli 2008; Ching and Mayeda, 2008 etc.). It was more than punches and kicks to the body of the opponent, more than rage and chaos. Most martial artists had expected that big guys with big muscles would dominate smaller opponents, but saw instead that well-grounded and well-rounded grappling techniques and positional tactics were in fact superior to traditional "brawling" in these no-holds-barred matches.

The new bodily defenses derived from jujutsu, wrestling and ground games proved that the human body was not well systematized for generating incapacitating power against a well-trained rival (Downey, 2007, 202). The best fighters were more technically prepared and sophisticated than those entering the cage in a mock "savage rage" (Plotz, 1999; Stenius 2011; Van Bottenburg and Heilbron, 2010). Spectators were surprised at how few matches ended with a knockout. Referees stopped many bouts but in most cases either the corner threw in the towel or fighters tapped out, surrendering to chokeholds and joint locks diversified into numerous submission techniques (see Sanchéz García and Spencer, 2013).

Long before what came to be known as mixed martial arts (MMA) emerged, similar contests had been staged in Japan and Brazil. In Brazil, competitions like Vale Tudo had been going on for some seventy years and Japan's Pancrase presented its first card of "hybrid wrestling" more than a month before the UFC debuted (Spencer 2012). In Thailand, Muay Thai boxing had been around for decades (Gentry, 2011). However, it became apparent to martial arts devotees across the globe that ultimate fighting was

a new science of combat performed on a highly technical and challenging level. What had been assumed crude turned out to be sophisticated, rapidly evolving effective tactics to avoid permanent bodily harm and counter malicious behavior (Gentry, 2011).

Despite this breakthrough, there were still plenty of critics in the media and health care community claiming the sport was dangerous; in fact, was no sport at all, and should be banned from the US (Bishop, 2013; Vaccaro et al., 2011). In order to achieve a better understanding of MMA practice, I will examine and summarize these concerns and juxtapose them with a socio-cultural perspective, in an attempt to provide a balanced assessment. Below, I will explain the background of this study, its explicit aim and theoretical framework. I will proceed to demonstrate how this methodology is appropriate to gathering solid empirical evidence and conducting a materialistic analysis while advancing further into the posthuman debate on the socio-cultural gap in the MMA body. Hopefully, this will crystallize the complexity of MMA and its link with sports culture in general.

1.01 Background - The new materialist turn

In its infancy, the UFC pitted different martial arts styles against one another in a bid to see what form would prove superior – a karateka fought a sumo wrestler, a Brazilian jujitsuist a kickboxer or a judoka a practitioner of Muay Thai. In these "no-holds-barred" elimination tournaments, martial artists fought bloody battles by kicking, punching, elbowing, and kneeing or forcing their opponents into submission with arm bars or chokeholds (Spencer, 2012: 4-5). There were few rules and bouts typically ended by knocking an opponent unconscious or forcing him to tap out (Spencer, 2012: 5). What is particularly notable is that during this early phase, individual fighters each stuck to his own particular style; MMA was not considered a sport in itself but rather a contest *between* sports. As ultimate fighting progressed, it became clear that elements of certain styles were susceptible to the strengths of others and vice-versa (Spencer, 2012: 6).

The sport has undergone exceptional development in recent years, but due to its perceived violent constituency (Seungmo, et al., 2008: 109), MMA is commonly considered riskier than traditional martial arts. Further criticism has addressed the efficiency of the safety rules of MMA, where fighters clad only in shorts and wearing thinly-padded gloves may find themselves too exhausted or overpowered or may have a hard time deciding whether to concede defeat in the heat of battle. There is an embedded conduct of upholding a demonstrative manhood (see e.g. Vaccaro, et al., 2011), a sort of implicit pride or codex among practitioners not to surrender lest you lose your honor. Thus, it is subjectively difficult to live up to these standards in the midst of explosive combat, even though every fight is destined to end with one of the contestants defeated. This gap makes the MMA the subject of heated debate.

1.02 Aim and purpose of the study

The present study examines the bodily techniques of ultimate fighting in order to illustrate the complexity in which human proficiency is subject to practical modification, improvement, and the acquisitions of materialistic knowledge. The streamlined effect of procedural revolution in combat sports, which has spread to martial arts practitioners worldwide and demonstrates how perceptive phenomenologist Maurice Merleau-Ponty was when he asserted that its body was the foremost instrument with which a person is born (Merleau-Ponty, 1963). An individual's first and most technical object is his or her body, the flesh and the bones and the thinking that comes with it. Which means that, the body itself can be refined and like a tool be modified, adjusted and fine-tuned to perform special tasks (Merleau-Ponty, 1967; Mauss, 1934, 75).

As sociologist Marcel Mauss argues, the supplementary use of the human body is the result of the internship in physical techniques (Mauss, 1934). Consequently, the experience of the UFC suggests that these fighting maneuvers, implemented in the body, can be seen as scientific artifacts or even as artificial technology (Downey, 2007, 203). Dale C. Spencer (2012, 88) assumes the presence of material

tools in his discussion of MMA, stating that reflexive body techniques (RBT) are physical techniques whose primary purpose is to work upon the body, so as to modify, maintain or somehow thematize it in (Crossley, 2005). At the "cutting edge" (see Barad, 2007), what fits and what does not fit the emic image of the social and cultural body of ethics and morality? There are specific rules dictating what a human being is allowed to do with his or her body. Our bodies are monitored and regulated with symbols, taboos and assumptions about what is violent and what is not.

Technological objects are impracticable without the "know-how" to use them effectively. "Know-how knowledge" without tools is frequently labeled "tacit knowledge" (Polanyi, 1958). Thus, the main aim of this study is to closely observe the technical performance of full contact fighting in order to ascertain what kind of key knowledge fighters adopt via ethnographic field work, media and the theoretical perspectives of new materialism. Hence, the purpose of this study is to deepen the situated knowledge of the bodily technical awareness of ultimate fighters and how this has affected martial arts practice. To sum up, scrutinizing ultimate fighting through the lenses of materialistic, technological and mediated medical humanities may help to reassess combat science research and significantly advance contemporary knowledge.

2.0 Theoretical framework

The study of bodily techniques, specifically fighting skills, illustrates the degree to which all forms of embodied tacit knowledge may be like other machineries affected by social forces and procedural expansion over time (Downey, 2007, 202; Spencer, 2012). Even when using no tool other than the human body, it is obvious that a close examination of elite athletic fighting techniques clearly reveals that a major paradigm shift and new discourse significantly reshaped the sport and the MMA fighters´ skills, and that fighters were adept at making tacit dimensions of practice explicit or finding ways of using them effectively (Downey, 2007, 203; Stenius, 2012, 87).

New materialistic theory taps into this paradigmatic shift of tacit explicit knowledge when unfolded in bodily awareness and a system of consciousness practicality. The discourse of the new view of fighting seems to be a network that presents fighters as a possible hybrid of violent forms that we recognize as sportive and social acceptable. Hence, the notion of signification in violent behavior through the use of a skilled, technologically advanced body reveals that the apparatus that upholds MMA logic allows another reality to play out before our very eyes. There is no reality on the one hand and a representation of that reality on the other (Callon and Law, 1995, 494). Earlier materialistic theory was keen to adopt human relationships on the basis of technologically implicit symbols, material resources and models of social theory, conceived as if it were constructed by human beings (Downey, 2007, 203).

Bruno Latour compared human sociality with technological resources and argued that social relationships among human beings necessarily implicated technology, because human beings always make use of materialistic symbols (Latour, 1999). Ultimate fighting, from the perspective of new materialism, proves that the limited violence of MMA appears to be on a normal level, though on a human or non-human level, it appeared to be a "product" (Callon and Law, 1995, 502), in the form of attributes that generate agents of restricted violence. Social forces in MMA fighting produce violent norms as something "real" taking the form of attributes, which in turn localizes the culture of ultimate fighting in "changing" human bodies, restricted to certain places (Callon and Law, 1995, 498; Smith and Sparkes 2008), places that in Latour´s argument indicate that technology "plays such an important role in human life that to neglect it in social and cultural theory produces models of sociality only suitable for non-technological species" (Downey, 2007, 203).

Observing the UFC more meticulously, it becomes apparent that a comparable case can be made about corporeal performance. Is the nearly naked body of the MMA fighter a technological artifact? Can we really even say that the human body is an object, an artifact, and if so, how can we interpret the subjectivity of each individual human body? The body is shaped and molded by cultural training and is

therefore subject to social subtleties and accumulative practical knowledge. In order to answer questions like these, we cannot take for granted that the human body is not already a hi-tech "cyborg" (Haraway 1991, 150). The body of the cyborg is our ontological being, a mundane, political artifact, designed by cultural training techniques, and calibrated with expertise and modernization to epistemological perceptions (Van Bottenburg and Heilbron, 2006; Haraway, 1991).

The human body is therefore not an empty vessel at birth. According to Donna Haraway, the body is made from social behavior, and likewise MMA fighters are attuned to changes in UFC rules in an effort to adapt their bodies to its limited-violence regulations in order to perform more successfully while remaining moderately safe (Downey, 2007, 204). Though the social strategies and structuring of the MMA milieu seemed non-existence, reflections on the temporal structure of matches were conclusive, as they showed fighters mitigating their strengths and their bodily techniques in order to adapt to the game plan. Fighters adjusted their skills to changes with the material means at their disposal (Downey, 2007).

Moreover, spectators and commentators were intrigued when new grappling techniques proved effective in counteracting the enormous lateral forces generated by punching and kicking. The emergence of the UFC has had a tremendous impact on our understanding of the martial arts and the culture of fighting. Previously, a technically sophisticated fighter who found himself on his back had little chance, but through exposure to Brazilian jujitsu and various styles of unarmed combat, practitioners were introduced to the "guard", a position in which the passive fighter holds on to his opponent. From now on, martial artists could adjust to these submission techniques and develop new forms of grappling and chokeholds. The enormous impact of these new trends showed how human bodies could effectively transform our understanding of combat sports. The new order in martial arts can be examined with an academic approach in which the new materialistic turn can explain and reveal significant facts about the "cutting edge" of 1993 and how we perceive human bodily paradigms in contemporary society (Barad, 2007).

3.0 Data and methodology

In order to gather empirical facts, I conducted over twenty months of ethnographic fieldwork at three MMA gyms, following the training regimen of over eighteen fighters, as well as autoethnographic field site participation for nearly three years, training in a Swedish gym. In doing so, I became familiar with the premises and intimate with the informants. My interview subjects let me practice and train with them on a regular basis twice a week. Every Tuesday and Thursday for three hours, I conducted participant observation using my body to understand MMA (Woodward, 2008).

While training on-site, I interviewed several athletes and took notes. I also both entered into spontaneous conversations and posed questions composed advance. This method of participant observation brought me into extremely close contact with my informants, allowing me to seamlessly interact with the cultural environment. I saved all social data on my computer and divided it into categories. Observations on bodily techniques were entered into a special folder where I compared answers and data with discussions on topics such as masculinity and violence. Reviewing my notes, I tried to avoid any answers based on preconceived notions in order to deepen the societal impression of the gym. The interviews were later analyzed using thematic coding.

In order to understand a fighter's perception of the body, I conducted five months of fieldwork in Japan, Hong Kong and Macau, carrying out interviews at three MMA clubs (e.g. Sparkes, 2009). Most of the men I interviewed (ten fighters with professional MMA records – four in Osaka, three in Hong Kong and three in Macau) expressed frustration at the criticism to which MMA is subjected, especially from medical science and the media, protesting that people who had never practiced MMA misunderstood the sport, lacking sufficient knowledge and experience to deal fairly with the MMA context. Moreover, many informants felt that the main reason for the criticism of the medical profession was actually

founded on moral and ethical issues about what we are allowed to do with our bodies. Fighters seemed perplexed by this polarized debate, feeling the urge to explain and defend their dedication to the sport.

This interrelationship between MMA combat fighting, the media and medical science revolves upon the composition of the body insofar as the body is not the product or object of discursive construction or situated within the symbolic order. The existence of the body is, therefore, disclosed in the interrelationship between models of moral and ethical discourse on the matter. Commenting on this means that the existence of the body in MMA is culturally and socially constructed on a bias that focuses on the role of the body as an external object (Spencer, 2012: 25). Medical research on conceives the body as finite.

While conducting a qualitative cultural analysis of the fighting body, I studied the six most frequently cited articles on MMA written by medical experts.[2] I have compared recurring concepts, representations and statements both from my informants and the articles that directly confront MMA fighting as harmful to the body. I have then analyzed the results, matched the empirical data and field work, and explored how views of the cultural body from the perspective of "inside knowledge" stand in relation to the conclusions of medical scientists.

By approaching the material in this manner, I have attained valuable knowledge about how the MMA body is built and constructed from two very different perspectives. This methodological approach seeks to open up a discussion about the MMA body without excluding any relevant facts, results, or opinions about the fighting body. In contrast, the six medical articles see the MMA body as a moving target.

4.0 A Post human stance

Since a knockout in MMA is defined as being adjudicated unconscious rather than incapable of continuing to fight, medical specialists claim that the body in MMA is subject to severe risk (Kochar, et al., 2005). With this in mind, the present article investigates MMA from a bodily practitioner's point of view. In doing so, it analyzes the ways in which the informant's own knowledge of the bodily experience of full-contact fighting can contribute to our understanding of the fighting body. Moreover, this site study is one of the first relating to the sport that contrasts a medical perspective with ethnographic, phenomenological and ultimately post humanistic approaches in order to move beyond the "natural" idea that there is "only" such a "thing" as an objective body. The body is inserted into the world and the world is inserted into the body (Spencer, 2012: 25). Hence, we can approach and apprehend the body from many angles, taking other perspectives into account, perspectives that view the fighting body from both a subjective position and an object view and consider the living body much more than a collection of positivistic statistical data but rather as the holistic outcome of the impact of powerful forces.

The world does not form an "objectifiable" outside that accompanies the body through life. The world is something that the body itself constitutes in its secretion and projection of a horizon of sense. The body, in its material existence, is inserted into the world of things. Our intimate corporeal confrontation with things makes the world intelligible. Our animate bodies swell with sense and take on meanings that are spatiotemporally ordered (Merleau-Ponty, 1968). Merleau-Ponty (and later Clifford Geertz) used the term "thickness" to describe this facet of bodies. The thickness, or as cultural analysts prefer, "stickiness" (Ahmed, 2004) of the body, far from rivaling the world, is on the contrary the sole means of doing things, by making the body the world (Merleau-Ponty, 1968: 135). Seen as such, the body is

[2] [2] The six medical articles analyzed in this article were once the most frequently cited in science related to MMA studies. Additionally, these six articles I have examined in terms of their view on the fighting body in MMA consist of: *Risk of cervical injuries in mixed martial arts*, *Incidence of injury in professional mixed martial arts competitions*, *No-Holds-Barred fighting: A 10 year review of mixed martial arts competition*, *Ethical and Social issues in Combat Sports: Should combat sports be banned?*, *Injuries in martial arts: A Comparison of five styles*, and *Assessment of injuries sustained in mixed martial arts competitions*.

thicker than mere bone and muscle, full of life and resource that affects the meaning we add to the world by using it in our cultural and social milieu and with the understanding of its possessed subjectivity by its performers´ spatiality or auditors´ percepetion (Geertz, 1973: 11; Spencer, 2012). Correspondingly, ethnography makes the researcher´s body "sticky", becoming the "glue" that attaches the bodies of informants to the researcher while under the somatic pressure of pain and suffering (Ahmed, 2004; Stenius, 2012, 88).

Thus the core of MMA fighting consists of undermined pain and suffering, where a body becomes attuned to the world (c.f. Howe, 2004). This is something German anthropologist Gernot Böhme has studied in his *Anthropologie in pragmatischer Hinsicht*, presenting what he thinks self-knowledge allows human beings to make of themselves, against the intellectual backdrop of 20th century human sciences. In an increasingly technological civilization, human values can only be preserved in defiance of the main technological status of the culture – a view that also characterizes Böhme's philosophy of tacit embodiment. In the task of embodiment, Böhme shows that the body is no longer simply a given; human beings in technologically advanced civilizations increasingly understand and treat themselves and their bodies as raw physical material (Böhme, 2010). The body is the "part" of nature that is us. The body is our own nature as given in our experience of ourselves; the material body, by contrast, is our nature as given in the experience of others. Experience of ourselves is something we must seek out anew in the form of particular practices so that we can build up a consciousness of ourselves based on the "susceptible givens of the self." Since our sense of susceptibility is something we are least able to evade in negative circumstances, pain moves to the center of Böhme´s anthropology. He speaks of the birth of the subject out of pain, into the object, in order to avoid suffering, by switching to an excited mode, into the thrilling "flow mode" (see Atkinson, 2008). According to Böhme, an existential familiarity with our own body is the only possible basis for the decisions required of human beings undergoing medical treatment, if they are to remain autonomous agents (Böhme, 2010). The body is recoded to allow more than ideas pertaining to corporeal reality (which neglects the sublime, intersubjective aspect of the powerful, violent body in action) to become visible (Van Bottenburg and Heilbron, 2006). Gender stories provide the deep focus necessary to see how MMA works and understand how bodily suffering can freight the combat arts with valid data (Spencer, 2009).

There has hitherto been little scholarly research on mixed martial arts that examines comparative perspectives of the fighting body from either a medical or socio-cultural point of view and focuses on the MMA informant's self-perceived experience. Two major articles examine the rate of injury (Bledsoe, et al., 2006) and another includes a ten-year study of the content of mixed martial arts competitions (Buse, 2006). To the present researcher's knowledge, no literature regarding the juxtaposed and comparative analysis of medical opinion on the fighting body and the humanities´ viewpoint from inside the emic experience of the athlete have been published. In addition, Merleau-Ponty views the body of mind and soul as understood only in relation to thinking bodies. As he states in his final work, *The Visible and the Invisible*, "We have no idea of a mind that would not be doubled with a body, that would not be established on this ground" (Merleau-Ponty, 1968: 259). Hence a phenomenological, posthuman stance, moving beyond the concept of a specific "human nature" as far as the body is concerned, shows that consciousness or perception is attended by an intentional arc that "projects round about us our past, present and future, or human setting, our physical, ideological and moral situation, or rather which results in our being situated in all these respects" (Merleau-Ponty, 1968: 136). Attributing a cultural element to MMA, its bodily and material being, can reveal necessary critical facts to understanding injury in sports (see Smith and Sparkes, 2005).

As a consequence, the present study is distinctive insofar it applies cultural research to an emergent, profoundly bodily sport (Seungmo, et al., 2008). In addition, MMA athletes are ideal contributors to this analysis, as they are embedded in and embody the tacit experiences of full-contact encounters. Aside from broadening the general debate on the sport, I hope to see MMA restudied by a variety of disciplines, including cultural studies and social science, in order to address the syntheses and realities of mixed martial arts in postmodern society. How we interpret bodily culture and consider phenomena

like MMA fighting, perceiving bodies as violent or not, acceptable or not, dangerous or not, sportive or not is important, in order to avoid ending up in a dichotomy of oversimplification. In extracting embodied ethnographic material, data about MMA must be dissected and the manner in which it has spread and prospered and its link to both ancient warfare and modern postsocial society must be scrutinized.

5.0 Mixed martial arts: An ancient approach to the fighting body

In 649 B.C.E., the sport of *pankration* was introduced into the Olympic games. The name of the sport came from a combination of two Greek words, *pan*, meaning "all," and *kratos*, connoting strength and power (Kochar, et al., 2005: 444). Described as a mixture of Hellenic boxing and wrestling, pankration is considered to be the origin of mixed martial arts (Buse, 2006: 62 and Gautier, 2009).

Born out of unarmed battlefield combat, the martial arts have become extremely popular, with every region in the world having its own historical variation, with its own primary ethos and principle goals (Cheever, 2009). Over the past hundred years, masters of multiple martial arts have realized that no one martial art is superior and that a fusion of techniques makes the student more versatile and effective (Krauss and Aita, 2002). Since 2001, interest in UFC in America has grown dramatically, attracting a wide variety of martial artists to events staged all over the world (Seungmo, et al, 2008). The story of MMA, from its initial perception as a violent aberration to its current state of worldwide popularity, means it must be taken seriously as a new science of strategy for success in the arena.

6.0 Toward a Post humanist perspective of the violent body

The model used in medical analysis of MMA (case control design[3]) is quantitative (Kochar, et al., 2005: 444-5). Studying MMA solely from a medical standpoint and concluding that the sport is dangerous without interviewing or conducting ethnographic fieldwork among its practitioners provides an incomplete image of what happens to the body in MMA practice. Furthermore, these medical exams deal most commonly with fighters who have been knocked out or rendered unconscious by a submission hold (Bledsoe, et al., 2006). The posthumanist view of the body, according to psychophysiological theorist Phillip Zarrelli, is that *no single object can be read in terms of an objective discourse and ideology*; the body is a vector of energy that learns to handle the force and strength of violence and to resist the rigors of the sport's impact (Zarelli, 2009: 94-5).

In medicine, of course, assessing the state of a physical body does not require a social science perspective (Mol, 2002:7). For social science, however, the body is a multiple habitat (Mol, 2002). In posthumanist interpretation, a body is the possessor of various postures. Accordingly, I stress that MMA turns the body into a "lived reality and thereby evacuates the reality of another body in that specific situation" (Mol, 2002: 6-7). Consequently, a body trained in MMA is built to control a high level of stamina, skill, and flexibility in a repertoire of effective defense techniques (Hopton, 2002: 5). Assessing the body from a single scientific standpoint, without taking into consideration the multifaceted techniques of a shifting, continuous body, is to ignore essential facts about fighters' "societal" bodies. Likewise, MMA practitioners' bodies are in constant dynamic progression, in that fighters teach themselves to transact with and transgress their bodies to cope with the physical challenges of MMA (Hopton, 2002).

By controlling and disciplining their bodies, MMA practitioners undergo a process of continuous modulation, which is associated with the perception of one type of force that often seems to be transcribed in terms of inhumane violence (Hamilton, 1995; Sánchez García and Malcolm, 2010). This is something that also underlines the perceived impression of what counts as brute bodily force from a

[3] "The medical studies are mostly based on cases where fighters who sustained an injury during matches are examined. Fighters who were not injured during bouts serve as controls. Matches in which both competitors were injured or both were uninjured are often excluded from the conditional logistic regression." (Bledsoe, et al., 2006: 137)

medical point of view (Amtmann, 2004). Seen from a posthumanist perspective, however, the cultural practice of the human body is represented multiple times and affirmed in its variety of contexts, separating itself from the rest of the domain of the living body by being the only aspect to escape subjection to deconstructive force (Wolfe, 2010: 156-7). Posthumanist theory demonstrates that medical expertise would benefit from a situated attitude toward combat sports, by adopting a posthuman approach in analyzing fighting bodies, underlining the importance of focused enquiry on the active body in its distinct area of operational conduct. In these cases, fighting occurs within the strict limits of whatever force is allowed to be applied. In MMA, the body exists within a restricted framework of rules; a fact omitted in medical study (Spencer, 2012).

It is thus important to exhibit how the prepared fighting body in an MMA action situation is constantly shaped and reshaped, is in a state of constant bodily metamorphosis of fluid, fluctuating fighting positions. From a cultural point of view, the body is engendered, multiplied, and fortified while engaged in combat fighting (Zarilli, 2009). In one of my interviews, an informant with a record of four professional UFC matches stated, "It is not static mechanical bodies that go up to fight." Yet a specific, controlled individual inhabits that very body when it clashes with another trained body and uses acquired skills to withstand a certain degree of physical pain (Hopton, 2002: 6). Whereas medical opinion perceives the fighter's body as fragile and thus deems the sport of MMA unsafe (Zetaruk, Violan, Zurakowski and Micheli, 2005), the application of more nuanced evaluations can help engender a holistic view of MMA practice.

7.0 A cultural approach to Mixed Martial Arts

There is no denying that attacking the body fighting exposes it to a powerful force. While the goal of the sport is not to deliberately cause injury, MMA fighting is about bodies and the intentional use of massive force to succeed in breaking down one´s opponent. However, how a fighter defends and controls that force depends as much on physical force as on his or her disciplined training, which includes a tactical framework that challenges the idea of the broken, "damaged" body. How this contravention of the culturally constructed body is achieved and perceived differs greatly (Spencer, 2012).

When I asked two professional fighters in Japan about their bodily experience of MMA and the view of medical expertise, their answers were remarkably similar. "We're fed up," said one. "Basically, I have never sustained any injury or seen anyone be seriously hurt in MMA yet. My body is just fine. There is this exaggerated opinion that MMA should be banned 'cause it's violent, but it doesn't differ much from other sports or martial arts sports that I have tried. Take boxing: you only punch toward the head; there is no wrestling in it". The second fighter stated, "Yes, I agree. I can't really see why it is so provocative. Our bodies are well prepared and I have never seen anyone severely harmed. Most fights consist of grappling and no striking at all. They should try it themselves". These answers recall the research presented by (Sparkes and Smith, 2003), who claim that the narrative of the athletes provides us with deep bodily insight.

Furthermore, a match between two MMA athletes is also dependent on a strategic and positional composition that consists of a pre-game plan in which fighters go through the bout beforehand and prepare not only bodily, but *mentally* for the upcoming fight. MMA fighting may look chaotic to the untrained eye, but the contestants prepare as meticulously as any elite athlete (Scoggin, et al., 2010: 247). These skills consist of steeling the body to tolerate pain and withstand attack, so MMA training and practice entails exercise that causes calluses to form on the body and hardens it over time (Spencer, 2009: 127).

There is a preconceived notion among outsiders that the fighters are not prepared for full-contact fighting (Sánchez García and Malcolm, 2010). Nevertheless, the MMA fighters interviewed in this study all share the opinion that in full-contact fighting, their respective bodies are controlled, focused, and

disciplined. One professional UFC fighter in Sweden claimed that when he was fighting, he existed "outside" his body. In response to the question, "Can you describe how your body reacts to the violence when you are in a fighting situation?" he stated, "It's like I disappear somewhere else, I'm just in a deep flow. I am not present in my body anymore; I am outside my body, not feeling the blows. They run off my body like water and fade away." Asked how his body feels after a match, another answered, "It depends. If my opponent got a lot of shots in, I can feel a bit sore, but it's nothing to worry about, it doesn't bother me anyhow. Mainly we grapple on the ground, not kicking." When asked about the sport being branded unsafe, he responded, "They should try it. There is mutual consent between my combatant in the ring and me. We are just like any sportsmen. We don't try to injure each other, that´s not what MMA is about." And when asked what MMA meant to him personally, he replied, "It's a game between two sportsmen; they respect fighting abilities and they are there to protect themselves, their bodies. We control our bodies and we know how to exercise self-restraint."

Much of what is assumed dangerous about combat sports is clearly contradicted by its practitioners, which is not to say that there is no risk involved in training and participating in MMA competition. Other sports also involve the overhanging risk of injury. Although rarely acknowledged, many professional boxers suffer from chronic joint pain, while others have been killed or permanently injured as a result of injuries sustained during a match (Hopton, 2002: 5). A key claim in demands to ban MMA is the deliberate attack on a fighter's head. Though blows to the head are permitted, it is the nature of mixed martial arts that aiming for the head is not usually the best strategic option, not least because fights are more often won by submission (Hopton, 2002: 5-6).

In contrast to medical opinion, MMA training methods are intended to increase the fighter´s stamina and flexibility in order to withstand the rigors of the sport. It seems reasonable to conclude that MMA competitors are no less skilled than athletes in other sports (Cheever, 2009). The body appears to be axiomatic, in that the greater the pressure of the techniques an MMA fighter may have to defend against, the higher the level of skill required (Hopton, 2002).

Following the informants' rejection of the opinion of outsiders, it might be argued that MMA, an explicit simulation of street fighting but with clearly defined restrictions, is less of a threat to the body than violence that ignores taboos and violates codes of conduct in an unrestrained modus (Hopton 2002: 5-6). Endeavoring to promote safety in the octagon advances toward a more post humanist era of anti societal norms, where the vulnerable body is subject to protection.

8.0 Broadening the debate: Perspectives on MMA practice

The martial arts have specific ways of conceptualizing and exercising the body (Gentry, 2002). A posthumanist view of the active body analyzes its agency in terms of what it does when fighting rather than solely relying on the scientific examination of what the body sustains. The notion of an objective body posits the idea that bodies maintain a strict format. I emphasize that in combat, the body changes depending on how it is culturally diversified. Since fighters´ bodies multiply through a variety of actions, a shift must occur whereby the cognitive and medical sciences acknowledge the performative aspects of the fighting body that don´t jibe with the objective body upheld by medical expertise (see van Bottenburg and Heilbron, 2006). It is important to note that the present study does not challenge the accumulated neurological data but assumes a perspective that takes into account the sociology and philosophy of the body's being in MMA.

By applying a posthumanist understanding of the body, we can gain new knowledge of MMA performance, knowledge that is more in line with the personal experience of its practitioners. A new kind of post humanity responds to the redefinition of the human body in the world by way of the technological, biological and cultural continuum in which the body is but one life form among many (Wolfe, 2010: 23-5). When read closely, it is possible to summarize the theme of experienced contra inexperienced MMA fighters in the medical studies. However, none of them problematizes this issue or

explains the difference between them, which would underline the implications of this theme. Knockout rates are lower in MMA than other combat sports (Bledsoe, et al., 2006). And yet, this set of six studies claims that the "true" nature of these injuries and the cumulative effects upon the individual fighters requires further investigation, despite the fact that the low knockout rate suggests a bias in perception of the "fighting body." Due to the fact that the fighters´ own perspectives are not taken into account, I question the urgency of this call. Ignoring them engenders preconceived imperviousness toward MMA athletes and prejudice in terms of how to "interpret" them based on outward appearance. A posthuman perspective that endeavors to move beyond archaic concepts of "human nature" and constantly adapts to contemporary techno-scientific knowledge is vital to understanding MMA.

Likewise, fighters have criticized the medical profession for overlooking psychophysical matters, for being so eager to examine injuries that they rarely ask their patients what being hurt *means* to them (Mol, 2002: 9). Aside from treating lacerations and other physical injuries, physicians should be attentive to the experiences of the informants, as Howe describes in his ethnographic study of rugby (see Howe, 2001: 295). An injury represents the fighter's interpretation of his or her experience, the feeling that accompanies it, what the body it turns into (Mol, 2002). Injury may be inside the body, but what is said about it is not. Bodies only speak if and when they are made heavy with meaning (Mol, 2002: 10). These challenges to the body can only be experienced in relation to the degree of force permitted by the rules of the game (Hopton, 2002). Yet, in these matches, in a defined area, and in controlled games, the body is an object to transcend and, as transgression, a conscious bodily act (Hopton, 2002: 6). This is qualitatively divergent from the image provided by medical reports, since the body is learning by confronting an experience that in any other circumstance would pose real danger to it (Hopton: 6-7).

9.0 Conclusion

Mixed martial arts is a popular combat sport whose violent, full contact battles offer a spectacular if seemingly chaotic show, which has deepened a pre-understanding that favors an image of the fighting body as vicious and at risk. Nonetheless, this representation of MMA is not supported by its practitioners, who assert that the fighting is instead instrumentalized in a safe, controlled environment and is no more harmful than any other extreme sport, like football, soccer, skydiving, downhill skiing or ice hockey. Fighters take no unnecessary risks, as they operate within a tactical framework with the explicit consent of all involved.

From this study of MMA fighters' perceptions, bodily risk-taking is seen as the experience of controlled, disciplined, and safe bodies, rather than their exposure to unpredictable harm, as often argued by medical experts. The entertaining quality of watching bodies in combat changes the way we view the violent body in the martial arts and will continue to develop our understanding as we gain more understanding of violence visited on bodies in sportive terms. Adding a cultural element to the sport may serve to heighten the phenomenon of the violent body, as MMA has clearly defined boundaries within which to operate. This space, between the ropes, must first be learned in order to fully validate combat sports.

Further, this research shows that relating to the fighting bodies of MMA offers the opportunity to broaden the conception of its violence. Medical experts who criticize MMA argue that these events are harmful. The phenomenon is also perhaps better understood as one of the predestined significances of posthumanism, as bodily MMA fighting is experienced through the use of our bodies in the reasonably safe environment of the octagon, with a referee enforcing restrictive regulations. In examining the metaphysical, transformational and perceptual views of culturally constructed and reconstructed violence that occurs in MMA fighting, the erasure of distinction between affective and rational forms of violence can be conceptualized as a form of *autotelic violence* (Spencer, 2012: 117). Autotelic violence is a form of violence that is self-referential, in which individuals engage in violence for the sake of violence

– as an end in itself. Viewing the violence of MMA in this sense is an aesthetic approach that seeks to uncover the intrinsic features of violence (Spencer, 2012: 117).
The conjecture that MMA is a form of autotelic violence does not imply that violence in MMA should remain unfettered. MMA operates as a platform for the practice of secure martial arts in extreme terms. The effect of this more pleasurable aspect of pain and violence indicates that means and ends become fluid, inseparable concepts. As such, form and meaning, dangerous or not, are sublimated. As noted, rules are instituted to curb certain forms of violence. In training, there is an accepted normative level of violence specific to each individual club. Fighters must not exceed levels of violence that would inhibit the building of bodies (Spencer, 2012). Thus in varying degrees, MMA consists of what I consider autotelic violence framed by the consent of mediatized dimensions. I claim that MMA is built on the repetition of physical movements that set off a flow mode in contestants utilizing their combat art skills.

The present study is an attempt to elucidate adequate parameters of MMA violence from a humanistic perspective and is intended to push beyond traditional approaches to the study of violence. It examines the collective somatic pleasure and pain experienced by MMA practitioners and consumers invested in the pureness of the sport. The image of two men or women battling each other in an enclosed violent act sparks images of Roman times, as gladiator slaves fought each other to the death for the enjoyment of the *publicum*, who eventually tired of the spectacle and upped the stakes by compelling the wretches of society to do battle with wild animals (see Poliakoff, 1987). However, mixed martial artists are hardly chattel and the beauty of the sport lies in its simplicity. The rules are so basic and unrestrictive that they lend themselves to elegant exchanges between bodies. These elite bodies have transformed savagery intto strategy, barbarism into science and brutality into sport.

More information about injury incurred in MMA exposes the insufficiency of simply listing bodies and counting stitches and broken bones in analyzing the dangers inherent in the sport. I also see a need for a greater overview of combat sports in general and positivist epistemologies underpinning the mediated image of MMA as strictly "violent". The posthuman perspective advocated by the data outcome differs from and is preferable to the positivist approach. It is my hope that the results offered by the present essay contribute to further empirical study of the mixed martial arts.

As a dialectic between pleasure and pain for competitor and viewer alike, and as one of the fastest growing sports in the world, MMA is caught in the intersection of medical judgement and mediated assessment. For the fighter, giving and receiving physical pain is intrinsic to the art of competition. For the spectator, witnessing this pain evokes a range of embodied sensations, from the thrill of victory to the flinch reflex avoiding a prolonged gaze at the bloodied, distorted visage of the defeated. The present article has sought to explore the collective somatic experience of pleasure and pain from a variety of epistemological perspectives. General topics deserving further study include but are not limited to:

- Racializing, gendering, and/or sexualizing pleasure and pain
- The ultimate fighter and the pleasure and pain of reality TV
- Somatic responses to violence
- The fighting habitus
- Fan motivation and pleasure
- Developing the sporting body through pain
- Motives for fighting

MMA is one of the most ubiquitous sporting activities of contemporary society, its pervasiveness substantiated by the size of the primary and secondary involvement in it by people of all ages and social background. Violent combat sports penetrate all social institutions and play a significant role. The function of play, games and sport is an oft-recurring theme in social and cultural research, divided into seven major themes: instinct, developmental cognitive, mastery, social integration, socialization, social

control, and personal expressive. There is a substantial body of social science literature that discusses the importance of each. Having only just begun its journey, MMA needs to be integrated into the scholarly discourse of social and cultural theory in order to be more accurately understood.

In summation, we should bear in mind that MMA serves as a compass the reader can use to orient him- or herself when probing the terrain of full contact, combat sports. Providing MMA with a sufficient understanding of how violence is played out and culturally "sportified" in relation to other human activities in which malicious, brute force is implemented can raise the level of future research and debate on culture and sports violence.

10. Policy implication

There has been no conflict of interest with any other party, before, during or after conducting this research. I agree to bear the consequences if there is any conflict of interest with any other party.

Reference

Ahmed, S. (2004). *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*. Edinburgh University Press. Routledge. London.

Amtmann, J.A. (2004) "Self-reported Training Methods of Mixed Martial Arts at a Regional Reality Fighting Event." *Journal of Strength Conditioning Research*, 18: pp. 194-96.

Atkinson, M. (2008). Triathlon, Suffering and Exciting Significance. *Leisure Studies*, 27: 2, pp. 165-180.

Barad, K (2007). *Meeting The Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and The Entanglement of Matter and Meaning*. Duke University Press. Durham and London.

Bishop, G. (2013). *A Pioneer, Reluctantly*. www.nytimes.com. Sports. May 10th. New York.

Bledsoe, Gregory H., Hsu, Edbert B., Grabowski, Jurek G., Brill, Justin D. and Li, G. (2006) "Incidence of Injury in Professional Mixed Martial Arts Competitions." *Journal of Sport Science and Medicine*, Combat Sports Special Issue, pp. 136-42.

Bolelli, D. (2008). *On the Warrior's path: Philosophy, Fighting, and Martial Arts Mythology*. Second Edition, Blue Snake Books: Berkeley CA.

Buse, G.J. (2006) "No Holds Barred Sport Fighting: A 10-year review of Mixed Martial Arts Competition." *British Journal of Sports Medicine*, 40: 2, pp. 162-72.

Böhme, G. (2010). *Antropologie in Pragmatisher Hinsicht*. Germany: Aesthethis Verlag.

Callon, M, and Law, J. (1995) "Agency and the Hybrid Collectif." *South Atlantic Quarterly* 94, pp. 481-507.

Cheever, N. (2009) "The Uses and Gratifications of Viewing Mixed Martial Arts." *Journal of Sports Media*, 4: pp. 25-50.

Ching, D and Mayeda, D. (2008). *Fighting For Acceptance: Mixed Martial Artists and Violence in American Society*. IUniverse, Inc. New York, Licoln, Shanghai.

Crossley, N. (2005) "Mapping Reflexive Body Techniques." *Body and Society* 11: 1, pp. 1-35.

Downey, G. (2007). "Producing Pain: Fighting Techniques and Technologies in No-Holds-Barred" in *Social Studies of Science*, 37: pp. 201-26.

Gautier, J. (2009) "Ethical and Social Issues in Combat Sports: Should Combat Sports Be Banned?" In *Combat Sports Medicine*, pp. 1-16. London: Springer Science.

Gentry, C. (2002) *No Hold Barred*. Ramsbottom, Lancs: Milo Books Ltd.

Gentry, C. (2011) *No Holds Barred: The Complete History of Mixed Martial Arts in America*. Triumph Books: Chicago, Illinois.

Geertz, C. (1973). *The Interpretations of Cultures*. New York: Basic Books.

Hamilton, K. (1995) "Brawling over Brawling: Politicians Try to Finish off 'Human Cockfighting.'" *Newsweek*, 126: 26, pp. 80.

Harraway, J, D. (1991). *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women: The Reinvention of Nature*. Free Association Books. London.

Hopton, J. (2002) "Combat Sports: Validation of Male Violence or Solution to a Crises of Masculinity." Submission Fighting UK articles and interviews: http://sfuk.tripod.com/articles_02/keel_mma1.html. June 28th.

Howe, D. (2001) "An Ethnography of Pain and Injury in Professional Rugby Union: The Case of Pontyridd RFC." *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, 36:3, pp. 289-303.

Howe, D. (2004). Sport, Professionalism and Pain. London: Routledge.

Kochar, T., Back, D. L., Mann, B., Skinner, J. (2005) "Risk of Cervical Injuries in Mixed Martial Arts." *British Journal of Sports Medicine*, 39: pp. 444-47.

Krauss, E. and Aita, B. (2002). *Brawl: A Behind-the-scenes Look at Mixed Martial Arts Competition*. Toronto, Canada: ECW Press.

Krauss, E. (2004). *Warriors of the Ultimate Fighting Championship*. New York: Citadel Press.

Latour, B. (1999). *Pandora's Hope: Essays on The Reality of Sciences Studies*. Harvard University Press. Cambridge and London.

Mauss, M. (1934, online, 1973). Techniques of the Body. *Economy and Society* 2, pp. 70-88. Routledge.

Merleau-Ponty, M. (1963). *The Structure of Behavior*. Boston: Beacon Press.

Merleau-Ponty, M. (1967). *Existentialist of the Social World*. New York: Colombia University Press.

Merleau-Ponty, M. (1968). *The Visible and the Invisible*. Northwestern University Press. Evanston and Illinois.

Mol, A. (2002) *The Multiple Body: Ontology in Medical Practice*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Plotz, D. (1999) "*Fight Clubbed*." November 7th. www.slate.com, retrieved October 3rd.

Polanyi, K. (1958). *Personal Knowledge: Towards a Post-Critical Philosophy*. The University of Chicago Press. Chicago, US.

Poliakoff, B, M. (1987). *Combat Sports in the Ancient World: Competition, Violence, and Culture*. Yale University Press. New haven and London.

Sánchez García, R and Dominic, M. (2010) "Decivilizing, Civilizing or Informalizing? The International Development of Mixed Martial Arts." *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, 45: pp. 39-58.

Sánchez García R, and Spencer, D. (2013). *Fighting Scholars: Habitus and Ethnographies of Martial Arts and Combat Sports*. Anthem Press. London, New York, Dehli.

Scoggin III, F. James., Brusovanik, Georgiy., Pi, Michael., Izuka, Byron., Pang, Pierre., Tokumura, S., and Scuderi, G. (2010) "Assessment of Injuries Sustained in Mixed Martial Arts Competition." *The American Journal of Orthopedics*, 39:5, pp. 247-251.

Seungmo, Kim T., Greenwell, Christopher, Andrew, Damon P.S., Lee, Janghyuk, and Mahony, Daniel F. (2008) "An Analysis of Spectator Motives in an Individual Combat Sport: A Study of Mixed Martial Arts Fans." *Sport Marketing Quarterly*, 17: pp. 9-19.

Smith, B. and Sparkes, A. (2005) "Men, Sport, Spinal Chord Injury and Narratives of Hope." *Social Science and Medicine*, 61, pp. 1095-1105.

Smith, B. and Sparkes, A. (2008) "Changing Bodies, Changing Narratives and the consequences of tellability: a case study of becoming disabled through sport." *Sociology of Health and Illness*, 30:2, pp. 217-236.

Sparkes, A. (2009). Ethnography and the Senses: Challenges and possibilities. *Qualitative Research in Sport and Exercise*, 1: 1, pp. 21-35.

Sparkes, A. and Smith, B. (2002) "Sport, Spinal Chord Injury, Embodied Masculinities and the Dilemmasof Narrative Identity." *Men and Masculinities*, 4:3, pp. 258-285.

Sparkes, A. and B. Smith. (2003) "Men, Sport, Spinal Chord Injury and Narrative Time." *Qualitative Research*, 3:3, pp. 295-320.

Spencer, D. C (2009) "Habit(us), Body Techniques and Body Callusing: An Ethnography of Mixed Martial Arts. *Body and Society,* 15(4): pp. 119-143.

Spencer, D. C. (2012) *Ultimate Fighting and Embodiment – Violence, Gender and Mixed Martial Arts*. London: Routledge, London & New York.

Spencer, D.C. (2012) Narratives of Despair and Loss: Pain, Injury and Masculinity in the Sport of Mixed Martial Arts. *Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise and Health*, 41: pp. 117-137.

Stenius, T. M. (2011) "Actors of Violence: Staging the Arena in Mixed Martial Arts." *Nordic theater Studies*. Nordic Theatre Scholars, 23: pp. 86-97.

Stenius, T. M. (2012). *Kroppens inre och yttre visar HUR: Autofenomenologisk etnografi I mixed martial arts*, In, *Mitt i metoden, kulturvetenskapliga reflektioner*. Red, Bo Nilsson & Anna Sofia Lundgren. Institutionen för kultur och medievetenskaper, Umeå Universitet. Print & Media: Umeå.

Vaccaro, A. Christian, Douglas P. S. and Janice M. M. (2011) "Managing Emotional Manhood: Fighting and Fostering Fear in Mixed Martial Arts." *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 74: pp. 414-37.

Van, Bottenburg, M and Heilbron, J. (2006) "De-Sportization of Fighting Contests: The Origins and Dynamics of No Holds Barred Events and the Theory of Sportization." *International Review for The Sociology of Sports* 41:3-4, pp. 259-282.

Van, Bottenburg, M and Heilbron, J. (2010) "Informalization or de-sportization of Fighting Contests. A Rejoinder to Raul Sanchez Garcia and Dominic Malcolm." *International Review for The Sociology of Sport*, 45: pp. 125-127.

Zarilli, P. B. (2009). *Psychophysical Acting: An Intercultural Approach after Stanislavski*, London and New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.

Zetaruk, M.N., Violan, M.A., Zurakowski, D., and Micheli, L. J. (2005) "Injuries in Martial Arts: A Comparison of Five Styles." *British Journal of Sports Medicine*, 39: pp. 29-3.

Woodward, K. (2008). "Hanging Out and Hanging About: Insider/Outsider Research in The Sport of Boxing." *Ethnography* 9: pp. 536-556.

Wolfe, C. (2010). *What is Posthumanism?* USA: University of Minnesota Press. Minneapolis, London.