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To cite this article: Morten Renslo Sandvik (2021) 'Fair Play' as a Larger Loyalty: The Case of Anti-Doping, *Sport, Ethics and Philosophy*, 15:2, 185-198, DOI: [10.1080/17511321.2020.1740308](https://doi.org/10.1080/17511321.2020.1740308)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/17511321.2020.1740308>



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Published online: 23 Mar 2020.



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## 'Fair Play' as a Larger Loyalty: The Case of Anti-Doping

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### ABSTRACT

This paper explores a redescription of 'fair play' as loyalty. Focusing on the context of elite sport and the case of anti-doping, the paper develops an adaptation of Richard Rorty's call to dispense with the opposition between loyalty and justice. The gist of the loyalty redescription of fair play is twofold. First, the redescription aligns with a conception of moral athlete identity as starting with thick narratives of closely-knit small groups (e.g. teams) and expanding outwards to embrace the thinner narratives and abstract principles of larger groups (e.g. 'the Olympic movement'). Thus, moral progress occurs when an athlete's loyalty towards her team is balanced by her loyalty to competitors or to the sport as a whole, to the extent that she plays fair even when she knows that 'foul play' will benefit the team. Second, the redescription places the burden on the shoulders of larger sporting communities, such as the 'Olympic movement', of recreating themselves as inviting and attracting more and more athletes' loyalty. The latter point has implications for anti-doping policy and rhetoric that I discuss towards the end of the paper. In brief, I argue that the loyalty redescription of fair play substantiates a philosophical critique of surveillance-based policies such as the whereabouts system and the wider individualization of responsibility shaping current policy and rhetoric.

### KEYWORDS

Anti-doping; fair play;  
loyalty; Rorty; redescription

## Introduction

What happens if we start treating 'fair play' as the name for loyalty to a certain very large group, for example 'the Olympic movement' or 'the international sporting community'? Rorty (2007) has suggested that we redescribe dilemmas between loyalty and justice as conflicts between loyalty to a smaller community (e.g. a family or a tribe) and loyalty to larger community (e.g. a nation or a Rawlsian 'society of peoples'). Focusing on the case of anti-doping, this paper develops an adaptation of Rorty's redescription to the context of sport and the concept of fair play.

The paper proceeds as follows. The first section introduces the redescription of fair play as a larger loyalty, drawing on the example of anti-doping. As is the case with Rorty's moral and political philosophy in general, the loyalty redescription triggers a number of possible objections concerning, in particular, relativism and ethnocentrism. Some of these objections are discussed in the second section. Thereafter, I explore the implications of the redescription for anti-doping policy and rhetoric. I suggest that the redescription

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encourages a shift away from surveillance-based policies and individualization of athletes' responsibility for doping. From the discussion of implications, a new possible objection arises, namely that the redescription challenges the 'anti' in anti-doping. Towards concluding, I discuss this objection and partly accept it, arguing that the redescription of fair play as a larger loyalty is no less defensible for it.

### 'Fair Play' as a Larger Loyalty

In the opening paragraphs of 'Justice as a larger loyalty', Rorty (2007) considers the moral dilemma of a person who commits perjury to supply a close family member with a false alibi and, in doing so, contributes to the wrong conviction of an innocent person. Rorty's point is that we are likely to experience this as a conflict between loyalty and justice, but only 'to the extent to which we can identify with the innocent person whom we have harmed':

If the person is a neighbour, the conflict will probably be intense. If a stranger, especially one of a different race, class, or nation, it may be considerably weaker. There has to be *some* sense in which he or she is "one of us," before we start to be tormented by the question of whether or not we did the right thing when we committed perjury. So it may be equally appropriate to describe us as torn between conflicting loyalties—loyalty to our family and to a group large enough to include the victim of our perjury—rather than between loyalty and justice. Rorty (2007, 42)

A sense of loyalty, thinks Rorty, forms the most compelling basis not only for helping our closest ones but for moving us to remedy injustices suffered by distant others. Thus, he suggests that dilemmas between loyalty and justice are more fruitfully understood as conflicts between loyalties to smaller groups and loyalties to larger groups.

With this redescription, Rorty wants to dissolve the Kantian distinction between sentiment (as a source of loyalty) and reason (as a source of justice) and renounce the associated image of moral progress as resulting from some peoples' improved use of reason to access universal moral principles (e.g. justice). In its place, he inserts a historicist and highly contextualized image of moral progress as a story of expanding loyalties. Conceptualising justice as a larger loyalty allows Rorty (2007, 45, note 3) to conclude that, if some communities did become more just during the course of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, they achieved this not by making better use than other communities of a universal capacity for reasoning but by expanding 'the circle of beings who count as "us"'.

The aim of the present paper is to develop an adaptation of Rorty's redescription to the context of sport and the concept of fair play as discussed by Loland (2002) and others in relation to Rawls' concepts of justice and fairness. To paraphrase Rorty (2007, 44): Would it be a good idea to treat fair play 'as the name of loyalty to a certain very large group rather than the name of something distinct from loyalty?'. I approach this question by focusing on deliberate doping as a paramount case of 'foul play'.<sup>1</sup> At its core, the redescription I suggest entails viewing athletes' doping dilemma—the dilemma of whether to dope or not; whether to 'play foul' or to 'play fair'—as a conflict between smaller loyalties and larger loyalties. With the term smaller loyalties, I have in mind the kind of groups that unite in a common quest for performance and results, such as teams or athlete-coach relationships. The doping dilemmas I discuss are of the kind that occur when such smaller groups encourage, facilitate, support, or require doping and where the supposed performance gains of doping are thought to benefit not just the athlete but (other members of) the group.

The larger loyalties I have in mind can perhaps be given names such as the ‘Olympic movement’ or ‘professional road cycling’. It should be noted that smaller and larger are relative terms and that depending on the case at hand, some types of communities can represent the smaller loyalty that encourages foul play in one example and the larger loyalty that fosters fair play in another. For instance, this could hold for national elite sport systems (consider, for example, Russian sport as a smaller loyalty opposed to the larger loyalty of the Olympic movement prior to the 2014 Olympics; and the elite sport systems of some European countries as larger loyalties opposed to the smaller loyalties of professional road cycling teams in the 1990s and 2000s). I will stick with the Olympic movement and present-day professional road cycling as examples of larger loyalties. The International Olympic Committee (IOC), the International Cycling Federation (UCI) and, in terms of anti-doping, the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA), see themselves as the coordinating bodies of these communities. What would be the consequences if we viewed these organizations’ efforts to universalise anti-doping policy and rhetoric as an attempt not to persuade athletes everywhere to ‘play fair’ but to reinvent their task as that of appealing to more and more athletes’ sense of larger loyalty?

One place to start looking for answers is in the link between the loyalty redescription of fair play and a narrative and historicist picture of moral athlete identity. In the picture of moral identity underlying the Kantian anchoring of fair play in reason, Rorty suggests, moral development begins with access to universal moral principles through reason and progresses as one learns to apply these principles in real-life situations, through the use of reason. Considering an athlete in a doping dilemma, developing a moral athlete identity entails looking beyond the expectations and encouragements of certain smaller loyalties (e.g. teams, athlete-coach relationships, or certain national elite sport systems) to discovering, through reason, some universal principles of justice and fairness underlying the ideal of fair play. In this picture, larger sporting communities can appeal to athletes’ capacity for reasoning through rational arguments about what sport ‘really’ is supposed to be or how it is most reasonably practiced—summed up in capitalised terms such as ‘the Spirit of Sport’, slogans such as ‘Play true!’ and distinctions such as ‘clean sport’ versus ‘dirty sport’. If the athlete plays fair, he does so, presumably, because there is something appealing or satisfying about ‘being reasonable’, acting in line with ‘the Spirit of Sport’, ‘Playing True’, or ‘being clean’. Supposedly, he finds this appealing, even if it means being disloyal to a group to which he ‘cannot be disloyal and still like [himself]’ (Rorty 2007, 45). For example, upon this description, a teammate and friend of cyclist Lance Armstrong riding for the US Postal Team in 1999 could be expected to refuse to dope for the sake of reason, even if unable, in consequence, to assist Armstrong deep into the mountain stages of the Tour de France.

In the place of this description, Rorty inserts a picture in which moral development starts within the smaller, closely-knit loyalties such as families, that are woven together by relations of reciprocal trust, common interest and interdependence. At this early stage, morality typically corresponds with ‘what comes naturally’ in one’s interactions with other members of the group. Then development progresses as people expand ‘the circle of beings who count as “us”’ and develop larger loyalties: as families merge into tribes, who merge into nations, who merge, perhaps, into a global community. Such larger communities are knit together more loosely: reciprocal trust must be built, common interest and interdependence created and loyalty fostered. In these larger communities, morality sometimes requires that we go against ‘what comes naturally’. In order to hold

increasingly multifaceted constituencies together as communities of trust, larger communities construct abstract principles designed to secure sufficient overlap across wide ranges of different beliefs and purposes. Choosing a larger loyalty when it stands in conflict with a smaller one amounts to abiding by such principles even when the principles run into conflict with 'what comes naturally' in one's close relations within the smaller group. This is the sort of thing that happens, says Rorty (2007, 45), when you 'rule against your own village in your capacity as a federal administrator'.

To Rorty, the capacity of larger communities to attract individuals' adherence to abstract, overriding principles rests not on the reasonability of the principles but on the communities' identifiability in the eyes of individuals. In a narrative conception of moral identity, the communities that we consider ourselves members of provide the kinds of compelling narratives that we draw on to give meaning and normative direction to our lives. 'In non-traditional societies', says Rorty (2007, 45), 'most people have several such narratives at their disposal, and thus several different moral identities. [...] Moral dilemmas are not, in this view, the result of a conflict between reason and sentiment but between alternative selves, alternative self-descriptions, alternative ways of giving a meaning to one's life'. Thus, the appeal of larger communities rests on the stock of compelling narratives they have at their disposal and the capacity of these narratives to influence the moral identity of individuals. Abstract and overriding principles, then, work when they align with a compelling narrative or web-of-narratives that people draw upon to identify themselves *as* members of a community. For example, one is committed to principles of justice and equality because one finds the narratives offered by societies embodying these values attractive and identifies oneself in some sense as, say, a Scandinavian.

On this reading, athletes commit themselves to principles of fair play because they find the narratives offered by, for instance, the Olympic movement or professional road cycling attractive, and identify themselves accordingly as Olympic athletes or professional road cyclists. On the conception I propose, the development of an athlete moral identity starts in the closely-knit communities of trust in which athletes live and share their sporting experiences: clubs, teams, training groups, and athlete-coach relationships. In an early stage of the development of a moral athlete identity, loyalty to these smaller communities' uniting purposes of performances, teamwork, and results appears as 'what comes naturally' to the athlete. In this stage, athletes might identify themselves as (some haphazardly chosen examples follow) 'George, the US Postal Team cyclist' or 'Alexander, the Russian cross-country skier'. Moral development progresses as athletes expand their loyalties to direct competitors, other practitioners of the sport, and ultimately to the larger, international or even global sporting communities such as professional road cycling or the Olympic movement. Like Rorty's larger groups, the sporting communities coordinate through the creation and enforcement of abstract principles designed to balance potentially conflicting beliefs and purposes among their constituencies. In this view, progress has occurred when the footballer's compassion for his teammates extends to his rivals to the degree that he abides by a principle of fair play and kicks the ball out of play rather than pursuing a clear goal-scoring opportunity upon noticing a rival player laying down injured.<sup>2</sup>

In this way, moral development in sport starts 'thick' and move towards 'thin' in Walzer's (1994) terminology. This is not to say that sporting beliefs, ideas and values necessarily originate in smaller communities of teams or training groups and extend outwards to wider communities. Rather, the relationship between smaller and larger,

thicker and thinner, is reciprocal, meaning that abstract principles developed and redeveloped in larger sporting communities continuously inform the web-of-beliefs athletes face and embody in their interactions within smaller communities.<sup>3</sup> The understanding Rorty would fend off is that these abstract principles gain traction in teams, training groups, and in the moral identities of athletes, because of their sheer reasonability. Rather, Rorty would ask how 'George' can come to see himself a little less as 'a US Postal Cyclist' and a little more as 'a professional road cyclist'. Understanding moral athlete identity in this way, we can yet again rephrase the athlete's doping dilemma. Now the dilemma becomes a conflict between, on the one hand, 'George, the US Postal Team cyclist' or 'Alexander, the Russian Olympic cross-country skier', and on the other hand, 'George, the professional road cyclist' or 'Alexander, the Olympic athlete'.

What can provide the larger loyalty of professional road cycling or the Olympic movement with sufficient appeal to individual moral athlete identities for more and more athletes to abide by these communities' principles of fair play? The answer, I suggest, lies in the capacity of the communities to supply athletes with a range of compelling narratives providing meaning and normative direction to their lives as athletes. The catch of this way of looking at things is that the coordinating bodies of these communities—e.g. the IOC, UCI, or WADA—take on the responsibility of constructing these narratives. As I will discuss more below, this is not merely a matter of telling stories (even though storytelling is important and, I would argue, something larger sporting communities already tend to be very good at). Rather, what is centrally at stake is the development of a social and political culture conducive to the nurturing of reciprocal relations of trust, common interest and interdependence. In order to explore this point in more detail, and discuss its implications for anti-doping policy, I will take a detour through a possible objection to the loyalty redescription, namely that of relativism and ethnocentrism.

### Fallibilistic, Reflective Ethnocentrism

The objection of relativism and ethnocentrism stems from a vulgar interpretation of the loyalty redescription. On this interpretation, larger sporting communities such as the Olympic movement or professional road cycling can be constructed around just about any principle or belief and still count as progressing morally as long as their current constituencies vouch for their beliefs and the communities carry sufficient appeal for others to join in. In the following, I suggest two steps to hinder this vulgar interpretation and to allow the loyalty redescription to foster the kinds of communities of trust envisioned above. The first step is to go with Morgan and think about sporting communities as reflectively ethnocentric; the second is to follow Rorty and develop sporting communities whose ethnocentrism is not merely reflective but explicit in a fallibilistic endorsement of values such as solidarity, tolerance, and fair play.

Morgan (1998, 1994) introduces the first step when he distinguishes between vulgar and reflective ethnocentrism and attaches his social criticism of sport to the latter. He sees three key differences between vulgarly ethnocentric cultures and reflectively ethnocentric ones, concerning the relationship between what he calls 'second-order, justificatory beliefs' and the application of these to 'first-order, actual beliefs' (where 'second-order, justificatory beliefs [concern] what kinds of first-order, actual beliefs it is rationally and normatively acceptable to hold' (Morgan 1998, 83)). First, for vulgar ethnocentrists, second-order beliefs

'are simply read off whatever happen to be the prevailing conventions of a culture at any given time' (Morgan 1998, 83). Reflective ethnocentrism, on the other hand, implies awareness that some prevailing beliefs are bad and supported by bad reasons. Thus, reflective ethnocentrist social critics subject second-order beliefs to reflective scrutiny and work back-and-forth between present, prevailing beliefs and 'the deep, reflectively secured, critical norms of a culture (such as the present belief in equality and fairness) that form a background repository of beliefs that can be tapped to criticize its dominant beliefs' (Morgan 1994, 190). As Morgan's (1994, 191) points out, this 'reliance on the conceptual resources of [one's] own culture ... is a historically qualified, fallibilistic, and contingent one'.

Second, where vulgar ethnocentrism has no issue with inconsistent and incoherent beliefs, Morgan writes, 'the identification and elimination of inconsistent beliefs is a central preoccupation' of reflectively ethnocentric social critics: 'Looking at gaps, fissures, and inconsistencies between reflectively secured ideals and our actual forms of life ... is one of the central things a social critic does.' (1998, 84). The third difference concerns the space made available for argument and deliberation. In vulgarly ethnocentric cultures, the role of argument and deliberation is all but negligible as there are no standards to evaluate a belief beyond the currency it holds in the present situation. By contrast, Morgan (1998, 84) maintains that argument and deliberation 'play a large and defining role' in reflectively ethnocentric cultures as the means through which critical scrutiny of beliefs as well as the identification and elimination of inconsistencies enter the public realm. Morgan's idea of reflective ethnocentrism is captured in Elcombe and Hardman's (2019, 11) insistence that 'vibrant practice communities' do 'not avoid the emergence of problems' pertaining to their practices and webs-of-beliefs, but actively seek out problems and potential problems through the process of 'problematization'. Vibrant communities, argue Elcombe and Hardman (2019, 11), do 'not only remain open to criticism from all corners but seek out and/or intentionally intensify problems to set the process of normative inquiry in motion' (Elcombe and Hardman 2019). Fallibilistically reflectively ethnocentric sporting communities embody the willingness and need to 'problematize' its beliefs and practices.

The second step I suggest is to conceive of reflectively ethnocentric sporting communities as explicitly liberal in a Rortyan, fallibilistic and 'ironic' sense (Rorty 1989). Like Morgan, Rorty sees no non-question-begging way around ethnocentrism that allows members of a community to evaluate its beliefs or the beliefs of others. Thus, the problematization and critical scrutiny of beliefs and practices start from 'somewhere' and, in Rorty's case, from an idiosyncratically liberal, fallibilistic endorsement of values such as solidarity, tolerance, equality and justice. Rorty's utopian liberal and fallibilistic communities can only evaluate beliefs from within this liberal and fallibilistic vocabulary. Out of fallibilism, thinks Rorty, grows an urge to continuously redescribe beliefs in the search for better, more fruitful descriptions. Rorty's preferred means of redescription is the kind of stories, such as the novel, that fosters imaginative identification with unfamiliar others (2016, 1989). I think that the fallibilistic urge to (imaginatively) identify with unfamiliar others favourably can be associated with a much wider range of sources, ranging from fiction through documentary, social research, and journalistic reports to interaction and conversation, and so on. Nevertheless, if one accepts the loyalty redescription and the view of moral progress as expanding loyalties, the liberal and fallibilistic vocabulary is at an advantage because of its urge to continuously reweave itself in search

of better, more encompassing descriptions of values such as solidarity, tolerance, equality and justice (or, in sport, fair play). By securing space for the sources of (imaginative) identification that drive such continuous redescription, liberal, fallibilistic and reflective communities can make themselves look more attractive to more and more people by letting these people's experiences feed into their deliberative ponderings about what their beliefs actually entail and require from them.

I believe that anti-doping offers a good example of how this can play out. I move forward, thus, with an image of fallibilistically liberal, reflectively ethnocentric sporting communities seeking to continuously redescribe themselves as inviting and attracting more and more athletes' loyalty.

### Implications: The Case of Anti-Doping

The loyalty redescription of fair play starts out as a rhetorical shift that places emphasis on larger sporting communities' task of constructing meaningful narratives for athletes to draw upon in the narration of their identities as athletes. I have suggested that this endeavour is not just a matter of telling stories as meaningful redescription cuts deep into practice. What is practically at stake is the willingness of communities to continuously seek better descriptions of themselves, come up with more encompassing interpretations of their beliefs and adopt better versions of their practices. Concerning anti-doping, there are numerous prevailing beliefs and practices to put forward for critical scrutiny. In the following, I will merely sketch some preliminary problems and criticisms that social critics of sport would be likely to raise upon accepting the loyalty redescription. Specifically, I address two prevailing aspects of current anti-doping policy and rhetoric: The reliance on surveillance-based policies, and the individualization of athletes' responsibility for doping.

#### *Loyalty and Surveillance-Based Policy*

At present, anti-doping policy in Olympic sport is heavily biased towards measures of control and surveillance, notably biological testing of athletes' blood and urine and the so-called 'whereabouts' system, designed to facilitate efficient unnoticed out-of-competition testing (Moston and Engelberg 2017; WADA 2019). Critics of these policies typically talk in terms of a conflict between athletes' rights to doping-free competition and their privacy rights (Hanstad and Loland 2009; MacGregor 2015; Tamburrini 2013), or problematize their effectivity vis-à-vis the purpose of detecting and deterring doping (Moston and Engelberg 2017). For the present purpose, I will focus on a different line of criticism raised by the loyalty redescription, namely the notion that high levels of surveillance risk changing the meaning of the term loyalty in a manner that strips the loyalty redescription of its liberal anchoring.

The first part of this argument reads that as the level of surveillance increases beyond a certain tipping point, the meaning of loyalty shifts from something that is fostered, in communities of trust, to something that is forced as coordinating bodies develop and act on a certain mistrust of the members of a community. Consider for example a scenario in which the whereabouts system so effectively facilitates reliable out-of-competition testing that the chance of doping without testing positive are near zero. In all probability, this scenario is way beyond the tipping point, as surveillance has developed into a means of



making loyalty as sentiment superfluous and 'loyalty' as a form of dictated behaviour all but inevitable. Beyond the context of sport and anti-doping, George Orwell's *1984* is a familiar depiction of such a scenario and vividly describes the discrepancy between high levels of surveillance and the image of communities built on trust, common interest and interdependence. In brief, *1984* underlines the unlikelihood that 'desired behaviour' dictated by the presence of surveillance measures, and decoupled as such from sentiment, is the kind of behaviour that larger sporting communities should seek—the kind of loyalty at play when members take on the narratives of the communities in the narration of their moral athlete identities. It seems highly doubtful, that is, that Winston Smith would narrate himself as loyal to Big Brother in the same sense that sporting communities would want 'Alexander' to narrate himself as a loyal 'Olympic athlete' or 'George' as a loyal 'professional road cyclist'.

It can, perhaps, be objected that biological testing or the whereabouts system are neither very invasive nor 'extremely efficient' and hence that the parallel to *1984* is exaggerated at least. However, conceiving of 'Olympic sport' or 'professional road cycling' as communities of trust inviting of athletes' loyalty through compelling narratives leaves, I think, relatively little space for surveillance. Rather, the loyalty redescription points towards an ideal state in which surveillance is rendered redundant as athletes throughout large, international, or even global sporting communities understand themselves on and off the field within the boundaries set by the loyalties woven into their moral athlete identities. However, moving towards this ideal state requires more than the downscaling of surveillance-based policy. Indeed, there is an argument to be made that, in the present situation, such downscaling would, by itself, probably lead to growing mistrust.<sup>4</sup> Thus, the criticism of surveillance-based policy resulting from the loyalty redescription of fair play must be seen in the context of a wider shift in how sporting communities conceive of and practice anti-doping. As argued by Rorty (2007, 53), the difference between the implications of a Kantian view of justice as reason and those of a historicist view of justice as loyalty, 'is the difference between a threat and an offer—the offer of a new moral identity and thus a new and larger loyalty, a loyalty to a group formed by an unforced agreement between smaller groups'. For fruitful critical scrutiny of prevailing anti-doping beliefs and practices, the main task is not to highlight how policies seem to force rather than foster loyalty. The main task, rather, is to indicate how a threat, once identified, can be replaced with an offer—the offer to athletes of a new moral identity and a new and larger loyalty formed by an unforced agreement on, among other things, anti-doping rules. I believe that an important first step to take in the direction of such 'offering' policy and rhetoric, is the strengthening of policies addressing the precariousness of elite sport as a career choice and profession. I return to this argument in the following section. For now, the point of this section has been to show that the loyalty redescription provides a philosophical basis for arguments in favour of downscaling surveillance-based policy, but only if such downscaling is part of a wider shift in policy and rhetoric away from force towards fostering.

### ***Loyalty and Individualization of Responsibility***

A second aspect of current anti-doping policy and rhetoric to put forward for critical scrutiny with the lenses provided by the loyalty redescription, is the individualization of athletes' responsibility for doping. As Waddington and Møller (2019, 225–226) observe, 'anti-doping policy has been based on a highly individualized conception of the elite

athlete, who is presented as an asocial, isolated individual who is able to make more or less free and unconstrained choices' and of doped athletes as 'isolated and deviant individuals, the occasional "bad apple"'. This 'individualistic bias' is reflected in a pervading prioritisation of control measures aimed at deterring and detecting doping by testing the individual athletes—that is, collecting evidence directly from their bodies. Arguably, this bias in policy is paralleled by a public discourse, salient in many Western sporting communities at least, in which individual athletes involved in doping cases are regularly singled out for public condemnation and stigmatization (Dimeo and Møller 2018). Dimeo and Møller (2018) document a wide range of scientific and anecdotal evidence of the harmful consequences that such condemnation and shaming can cause for athletes, including a relatively high risk of severe depression and even suicide. Several authors have highlighted the ethical problems of these practices (e.g. Dimeo and Møller 2018; Macedo et al. 2019; Sandvik 2019).

Contrast to the individualistic bias, sociological research paints a picture of doping as a predominantly social phenomenon that occurs within networks of social relationships (Brissonneau 2015; Hoberman 2003; Ohl et al. 2015; Waddington 2000). This research describes such smaller loyalties of athletes and, typically, coaches, physicians, dealers and so on, as important both practically, in order to organise, administer, and cover doping, and psychologically, to encourage, rationalise, and support it. On this basis, Waddington and Møller (2019, 212) argue that the individualistic bias restrains 'fresh thinking and new approaches to anti-doping' more suited to the social network picture of doping practices. The question 'how to describe anti-doping, if doping is described as a predominantly social rather than individual phenomenon?' is not sufficiently addressed by policy makers and the result seems to be a steadily intensified focus on seemingly ineffective biological testing and surveillance-based policy.

By itself, I would argue, the clear findings of social scientific research make the individualistic bias an unlikely survivor of critical scrutiny in a fallibilistically liberal, reflectively ethnocentrist sporting community that draws on research—among other sources—to distinguish useful beliefs from less useful ones. Nevertheless, I argue that the loyalty redescription of fair play adds significant pragmatic force to the critique of individualization of responsibility and, correspondingly, to arguments for more socially oriented approaches to anti-doping. Viewed through the lenses of the loyalty redescription, the social network picture of doping appears less as a vaguely complex disturbance to the straightforward picture of the isolated and deviant cheater, and more as a direct challenge to sport communities' project of reinventing themselves as inviting of more and more athletes' loyalty. With the loyalty redescription, social doping networks are conceptualised as conflicting loyalties to the larger ones—as smaller communities spread throughout the sporting world, often appearing more compelling to many athletes.

Viewing the social network conception of doping through the lenses of the loyalty redescription can inform fresh thinking in two directions: one concerned with measures designed to make doping networks less attractive; and one with measures designed to make larger sporting communities more attractive. A study by Aubel and Ohl (2014) concludes with policy proposals that arguably cut in both directions. In a project funded by the UCI with a view to reform its anti-doping policy, the researchers found that the working environment of top-level athletes in road cycling in the 1990s and 2000s increased the risk of doping. The organisational structure of road cycling involved

a majority of riders on short-term contracts with a majority of employers (i.e. teams) financially dependent on short-term sponsorships, low wages, a norm of a painstaking 80–120 racing days a year per athlete, little follow-up in training and preparation, no representative body to protect athletes' interests, and so on. Unsurprisingly, this organisational structure put many riders in a vulnerable and precarious situation and many found their loyalties not in the team or in the larger professional road cycling community, but in external networks of physicians, coaches, and other riders in similar situations.

Surveillance and biological testing do not pull such structural issues up by the roots. Rather, as Aibel and Ohl (2014, 1101) suggest, in such a situation, wider social policy is needed 'to challenge the precariousness of the riders' careers and also that of teams'. One example of such policy can be measures that promote 'dual vocational projects (in sport and outside sport)' that increase athletes' chances of securing a rewarding job in the highly likely event that athletic results and long-term employment in sport fail to materialise (Aibel and Ohl 2014, 1101). Different examples could be minimum salaries, workload restrictions and, as none are better placed than athletes to draw attention to other structural issues previously unattended to: athlete representation in policy making processes. If individualized control measures were subordinated to wider social policy, I suggest, the coordinating bodies of larger sporting communities would operate more trustworthily with the athletes' best interests in mind—that is: more inviting of their larger loyalty.

### ***What about the 'Anti' in Anti-doping?***

Admittedly, the loyalty redescription carries a challenge captured by the question: 'What about the "anti" in anti-doping?' This question partly arises from the elevation of the goal of creating communities of trust, common interest and interdependence above the presently overarching goal of eradicating doping. The loyalty redescription of fair play leads to this shift because, while the eradication of doping could represent an achievement of an extremely appealing larger sporting community, it could also be something different: a result of loyal behaviour being forced on athletes in an Orwellian sense. With the shift I am suggesting, sporting practices with zero doping but with, for example, high levels of surveillance are less likely to survive critical scrutiny than are sporting practices with some doping but low levels of surveillance. However, I would argue that the challenge that stems from downgrading the eradication aim is better understood as a challenge for political rhetoric than a threat to a, however subordinated, aim of reducing the prevalence of doping in sport. Empirical evidence suggests that current policy is not very efficient with regards to the eradication aim as doping seemingly remains widespread in many sports (de Hon, Kuipers, and van Bottenburg 2015; Moston and Engelberg 2017; Ulrich et al. 2017). Thus, whereas downgrading this aim certainly marks a rhetorical shift, it does not mean throwing overboard demonstrably efficient policies for new and assuredly less efficient policies.

There is at least one more way in which the question 'What about the "anti" in anti-doping?' can be aimed at loyalty redescription. This concerns the role that fallibility plays in the argument. Fallibilistically liberal, reflectively ethnocentric sport communities welcome the realisation that what most of their members believe now might be found out to be wrong, or become wrong, as context changes through future contingencies. In other words, the 'anti' in anti-doping might come to be seen as irreconcilable with the communities' commitments to, for instance, solidarity, tolerance, and fair play. As a philosophical standpoint, recognising

the contingency and fallibility of anti-doping as an ethical standpoint is not very controversial. Philosophers from many traditions can make a wide range of convincing arguments for the justification of anti-doping in the current situation and with the currently available facts and premises. These arguments are no less convincing, I think, if the philosophers admit that their argument would not have carried the same weight if presented to the riders and organisation of, say, the 1923 Tour de France,<sup>5</sup> or when they explicitly restrict their argument to ‘the current situation’. After all, one can easily imagine future scenarios in which anti-doping policy in its current form becomes increasingly difficult to reconcile with the principle of ‘fair equality of opportunity’ (Loland 2002), for example in a context where some athletes are born with genetically modified traits or other innate technologies. For anti-doping advocates, I suppose, the fallibility of anti-doping as an ethical position in the current situation is less intuitively appealing. However, it follows the same line of thought: Admitting to anti-doping’s present fallibility amounts to saying that there might be relevant facts about the current situation yet to be discovered or accounted for that can alter the premises of the arguments rested upon to justify anti-doping.

In terms of how they affect political rhetoric, however, larger sporting communities ought to consider both these challenges carefully. How can one rhetorically go about downgrading the aim of eradication? What is lost for the anti-doping movement if sport communities introduce a certain amount of fallibility to their cultural politics and let go of the rhetorical point of being ‘essentially’ *anti*? I admit that something important might be lost and that, rhetorically, both consequences of the loyalty redescription are better conceived as humble afterthoughts rather than central tenets. Rather than presenting their anti-doping regulations and policies as more tolerant and provisional, larger sport communities are better off treating these shifts in an implicit manner, as when slogans like ‘Play with us!’ replace slogans like ‘Play true!’

## Concluding Remarks

Members of larger sporting communities that are consensually anti-doping regularly accuse members of smaller sporting communities that are tolerant to doping of having got sport wrong. For example, over the last few years, many have criticized leaders of Russian sport of conflating sport with soft power politics. In the years before, leaders of professional road cycling regularly criticised groups of practitioners for practising sport in a way that was perversely focused on performance and results, neglectful of health and vulgarly disrespectful of rules and fair equality of opportunity. To be clear, I do not wish to imply that the criticisms directed at Russian sport or certain practitioners of professional road cycling necessarily miss the mark. Neither do I want to imply that members of larger sporting communities are wrong in advancing these criticisms, nor that there is anything problematic about their strong encouragement that Russian sport or certain cycling practitioners begin to understand sport more in the same manner as they themselves do. What I suggest is that the rhetoric of such criticisms and encouragements would be greatly improved if the message that “‘we’ have got sport right whereas ‘you’ have got sport wrong’ were replaced with compelling stories of ‘what “we” provide that might be of interest to “you”’.

With this rhetoric, leaders of the Olympic movement would not accuse leaders of Russian sport of conflating sport with soft power politics but frankly tell stories about how they, too—since Coubertin—have conflated sport with politics, with the difference that

their politics, from their fallibilistically liberal, reflectively ethnocentric vantage point, are more fruitful: more favourable to the flourishing of what Murray (2018) calls 'Good Sport', more conducive to values such as solidarity, tolerance, and fair play. Similarly, leaders of professional road cycling would cease criticising some past and present practitioners for their dedication to a vulgar image of sport and instead tell stories about how they, too, are dedicated to an image of sport, only that this image, from their vantage point, seems more fruitful. By this token, members of larger sporting communities can cease thinking about themselves as playing 'true' or 'clean' while others play 'untrue' or 'dirty' and start characterising their play as more attractive than currently available alternatives.

The first aim of this paper has been to make such a shift in rhetoric look attractive. The second aim has been to show that the shift in rhetoric can only be successful if it is supplemented with political reform. Larger sporting communities need to continuously redescribe themselves as more favourable to the flourishing of 'Good Sport', more conducive to values such as solidarity, tolerance, and fair play. Through such redescription, they can attract the loyalty of more and more athletes. At present, anti-doping policy presents substantial challenges to the possibilities of such an endeavour.

## Notes

1. The reference to doping as a paramount case of foul play rests on a tacit acceptance of the ethical justifiability of the current ban on doping. From this acceptance, I lean on Loland and Hoppeler's (2012, 352) observation that 'when a ban on doping is justified without reference to the wrongness of breaking it, ... the fairness argument becomes valid as well'. In other words: Breaking justified rules is foul play. As it happens, I do believe that the current ban on doping is justifiable from within a Rortyan, non-foundationalist perspective but that discussion belongs to a different paper.
2. That these incidents can run into conflict with 'what comes naturally' suggests that moral progress does not necessitate larger loyalties outgrowing smaller loyalties in terms of individuals' emotional attachment. Larger communities need only foster loyalty to the degree that individuals wish to abide by principles of fair play, and even if this is not a small task, it can hold even for people strongly attached to smaller loyalties. After all, even the most devoted team players in football, even in the most decisive moments of the game, tend to kick the ball out of play in the situation just described.
3. See Elcombe and Hardman's (2019) account of pragmatic conventionalism, and in particular their use of the Emersonian staircase analogy, for a resonant and elaborating understanding of how sporting beliefs, ideas and values develop in the sociohistorical contexts of sporting communities, in a reciprocal relationship between the thick and the thin.
4. I wish to thank an anonymous reviewer for *Sport, Ethics and Philosophy* for pointing out this particular challenge to my argument about the relationship between surveillance, trust and loyalty.
5. The 1923 Tour de France was won by Henri Pelissier, who, after quitting the race the year after, gave a famous interview together with his brother Francis and a rider named Maurice Ville:

'You have no idea what the Tour de France is,' Henri said. 'It's a cavalry. [...] We suffer on the road. But do you want to see how we keep going? Wait..' From his bag he takes a phial. That, that's cocaine for our eyes and chloroform for our gums..' 'Here,' said Ville, tipping out the contents of his bag, 'horse liniment to keep my knees warm. And pills? You want to see the pills?' They got out three boxes apiece. 'In short,' said Francis, 'we run on dynamite.'

(McGann and McGann 2006, 73–74).

## Acknowledgments

I am grateful to Sigmund Loland and the anonymous reviewers of *Sports, Ethics & Philosophy* for critical and valuable feedback on earlier drafts of the paper.

## Disclosure statement

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

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