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I first encountered the work of Elias as a postgraduate student at the University of Leicester. Here I was taught by Eric Dunning, Patrick Murphy, Ken Sheard and Ivan Waddington and was introduced to the seminal work that figurational sociologists have produced in relation to sport. After 15 years in Leicester I moved to Loughborough University, a world leader in the study of sport and a “second home” for figurational sociologists of sport.

My research has sought to develop knowledge of both sport and figurational sociology. My first significant work entered an international debate about whether cricket – a non-contact sport, stereotypically characterised as gentlemanly and, above all, English – had undergone similar developmental processes to those already evidenced in boxing, football, and rugby. In demonstrating that it had, the work showed the broader applicability of (Dunning and) Elias’s work on sport and civilizing processes. My research subsequently developed core figurational ideas about the role and control of violence in relation to sport-related injury before more broadly addressing various aspects of medicine and health in sport. I have edited a number of books, including *Sport Histories: Figurational Studies in the Development of Modern Sport*, *Matters of Sport* (a festschrift for Eric Dunning) and *Figurational Research in Sport, Leisure and Health*.

Elias’s influence over British sociology has been particularly significant. Anglophone scholars are blessed with access to Elias’s collected works plus readers, commentaries and, of course, a constantly evolving body of research articles. Even in a field like the sociology of health and medicine which I recently reviewed, it was possible to identify a critical mass of work guided by various Eliasian principles, much of which had been authored by British scholars. But Elias’s influence on the main empirical focus of my research - sport - is probably unparalleled within sociology. A survey of journal article keywords published in 2012 showed that Elias was the most frequently cited author in the two main journals in the area. Following Elias and Dunning, UK-based figurational sociologists have also been highly influential in shaping the field, having both a significant research presence, but also holding key international administration and journal editorship roles.

In the UK more generally, probably the most prominent Elias scholar is Jason Hughes. He recently returned to the Leicester Sociology department to continue Elias’s legacy in the English midlands. Colleagues at Leicester include John Goodwin, Henrietta O’Connor and most recently Michael Dunning. Elsewhere Richard Kilminster has written extensively on figurational theory, Andrew Linklater has applied and developed Elias’s ideas through his work on international relations, and Tim Newton has used figurational sociology to inform his study of organizations and organizational theory. By way of comparison, UK-based figurational scholars are even more numerous and notably include: Daniel Bloyce, Ken Green, Katie Liston, Louise Mansfield, Andy Smith and Philippa Velija. Working in the UK, and focussing on sport, is a particularly welcoming environment for figurational sociologists.

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