In the majority of countries discussed in Chapter 3, it was evident that cricket was diffused at a time when it strongly reflected types of nationalism and masculinity. Wherever cricket was played in the ICC full member countries, it was played first and foremost as a male sport that reflected particular views of masculinity. Cricket also embodied a type of nationalism, firstly English nationalism, but in many later contexts cricket was shaped and developed in ways that reflected the national character of where it was played. The exception in this case is clearly in Ireland and Holland where varying patterns of diffusion can be seen and the game was different for men’s and women’s cricket in these case studies. This is a reminder as Malcolm (2013) highlights that diffusion processes are not linear and there is no clear pattern of diffusion and acceptance of a sport; instead there are complex social processes that influence the acceptance or rejection of particular sport forms. However, it is important to consider in relation to gender the way cricket came to embody particular types of national identity and character. National identities related to nationalism are fluid and subject to change. The majority of research on sport and national identity is written about men’s sport (Bairner, 2001). National cultures are formed and transformed in relation to specific social relations and may at times be ‘imagined’ or reinvented, these processes mean that national identity is not fixed but fluid (Maguire, 1993). In particular, dominant groups construct identities about the nation through stories, often invented, which reflect or reinforce their ideas about the nation. This was the case in the transformation of cricket from a violent sport to a sport which was considered
to embody qualities of fair play, valour and gentlemanly conduct. This was a habitus particularly associated with upper-class gentelmanliness, through reimagining the game, cricket came to embody or represent what it meant to be English at a specific time (Maguire, 1993). In addition cricket often reflects a tendency to romanticise the past and the dominance of England in the Empire. Yet for those who were colonised, and in countries where cricket became a dominant sport, cricket came to reflect struggles between England and those countries that had been under British rule. In particular, beating the mother country came to symbolise struggle and the development of national identities and character in specific countries. For example, in Australia cricket became a vehicle for the forging of a national identity that sought to oppose the mother country (Maguire, 1993). Yet parts of these national identities are invented traditions and stories which serve to reinforce types of national identities that become dominant (and are largely based on masculinity and masculine national identities). However, in all instances, cricket was reinvented to capture a sense of national identity and masculinity. As part of this war-like imagery is used when describing matches such as The Ashes and the desire to ‘beat’ the mother country at its own game. This draws on masculinity and notions of colonialism and brutality associated with war and masculinity to describe a sporting event. As sports have become increasingly globalised, the balance between local, global and national identities is simultaneously weakened and strengthened and through such processes. Maguire (2011) suggests that the relationship between sport, identity policies and ‘wilful nostalgia’ should be considered.

Modern sport as identified in many texts was created for men, and through the development of sport and the nation the legacies of masculinity and sport are well established. In particular, global flows and labour migration are highly gendered despite there being little research in this area. In Chapter 3, I noted how women have always supported cricket and women are part of the ‘nation’ which celebrates male cricketing success as it is male cricketers who embody this sense of nationalism and it is their success that nations celebrate. Women, both presently and historically, have supported male national cricket teams and largely accept this form of national identity, although little is known about female sport fandom and how females identify