



Bridge: A MindSport For All

Connects People, Challenges Minds

Summary Report BAMSA Spring Webinar 2021

The *Bridge: A MindSport for All* (BAMSA) webinar was attended by academics, administrators and bridge players from across the world. The full report compiled by Jordan Maclean and the recording can be accessed [here](#).

Professor David Scott has a long-standing interest in leisure social worlds, with a focus on serious leisure, recreation specialisation, leisure constraints and non-participation. He conducted his PhD on the social world of bridge in the early 1990s because it was an accessible game that he could study whilst in college. Two research questions guided his project: one that was specific to the segments of bridge groups examined through a social world theoretical lens; the second was more specific to individuals, recreation and specialisation. Methodologically, his project was ethnographic, consisting of observations and interviews at five different sites over one year.

The panel speakers spoke about the main findings and posed questions from each of David's 1990s bridge papers. Miriam spoke about David's (1991a) study on the constraints of leisure uptake. Jordan presented Scott and Godbey's (1992) paper on bridge as existing in two worlds. Zoe discussed their 1994 paper on recreation and specialisation in contract bridge. Samantha presented on David's (1991) paper related to the growth and wane of bridge.

In response to Miriam's question on digital bridge in comparison to face-to-face bridge, David suggested that the internet might help to "resuscitate bridge" by attracting a younger generation of players. In response to Jordan's question on social and serious bridge, David indicated that he did not foresee any other depictions of bridge from the groups that he observed. In response to Zoe's question on partnerships and elite bridge, partnerships are seen as a unique feature of bridge because the game is partner dependent and elite bridge is consistent with serious bridge for players who train and play in tournaments and seek progression in skill development. In response to Samantha's question on serious leisure, David states that bridge has a certain "proprietary" for which it can be constituted as a serious leisure activity.

Several questions from the audience related to topics including transitions between sub-groups, social class, social capital, technology and inclusivity. David noted that transitions depend on how players are introduced into different types of bridge. For bridge to thrive among all classes of society, we need to find role models or "people who look like us". Social capital is seen as a by-product of bridge and not a principle that can be integrated per se. Technology is both a barrier and an enabler, and serious bridge clubs are considered more inclusive than social bridge clubs.

The webinar has both academic and bridge implications. Academic implications include research dedicated to gendered, sexual and racial segregation of the game; the history of bridge from archival research; the impact of playing in online digital worlds; post-mortems or the post-game analysis; and the materialities of the game. Four bridge implications were identified:

1. Capacity building of coaches and mentors within bridge organisations, specifically for training and educating bridge within clubs and (online) communities
2. Altering behaviour to promote a more inclusive game
3. Service provision of clubs and organisations for promoting bridge to a wider audience of more diverse players and communities
4. Promoting bridge as an attractive game for different audiences.

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