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# “It’s Like We Are Free”: An Analysis of Soccer-Based Programming in a California Prison

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**“It’s Like We Are Free”:  
An Analysis of Soccer-Based Programming in a California Prison**

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In Partial Fulfillment of a Bachelor of Arts Degree in  
Environmental Analysis  
&  
Global-Local Community Development Through Soccer

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Pitzer College  
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Readers:  
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**ABSTRACT**

The concept of space goes well beyond just buildings and infrastructure; it can represent feelings of attachment and belonging, it can interact with us and generate meaning. The built environment is not just the “backdrop” of our lives, but rather it plays a major role in them. In the state of California prisons have become a prominent element of our communal landscape, now housing 2.4 million Americans today. This paper explores prisons as a rich site of analysis in terms of how our built environment affects our daily lives. In order to delve into this analysis, I will explore sport-based programming in the prison context and how these programs can create alternative spaces to foster social capital and improve the relationship between the individual and his or her surroundings. In order to bring these theories to life, I conducted a case study through the Prison Education Project at The California Rehabilitation Center to explore the efficacy of academic soccer-based programs within this context specifically.

## INTRODUCTION

### *Personal Statement*

*It all started with a ball between the feet. I was on a small concrete handball court crammed in between a twenty-foot tall barbed wire fence and a decrepit trailer. We played six a side, two teams rotated in and out of the game and at least a hundred inmates watched from outside the court. It all clicked; I was no longer so overwhelmingly conscious of my whiteness, my femininity, and my able-bodiedness - I was a soccer player. The wards of the state were my teammates, opponents, and the cheering spectators around the perimeters of the pitch.*

*The men cheered in a low pitch roar, throwing their crinkled blue shirts in the air with gasps. To "meg" is a soccer term used to describe when a player taps the ball through an opponent's legs to be retrieved on the other side. I "megged" Martin, recovered the ball from behind him, and hit the ball on the right side of mini goals, just centimeters away from the keepers fingertips.*

*Goal.*

*We had created an alternative reality. In this new, shared context, the concrete field became our unique common denominator.*

In my four years at the Claremont Colleges I have become consumed with the power of sports. I was guided by my mentors in Claremont and have had incredible opportunities to work with two of the leading Sport For Development and Peace (SDP) programs worldwide: StreetSoccer USA and Mathare Youth Sports Association. I have facilitated grassroots initiatives with the Day Laborers Centers in Pomona and Rancho Cucamonga, kids in the slums of Nairobi, and elementary school programs in the Los Angeles Unified School District. Though the contexts differ amongst these groups, the game of soccer has had an inexplicable ability to bring people together. Whether it be through actual play, watching games together, or rooting for like teams, this collective experience is unmatched to almost anything else in the modern day. I have witnessed the power of the game through these various community engagement opportunities these past four years and my continued engagement naturally resulted in the writing of this thesis. I began implementing a soccer-based program at the California Rehabilitation Center

(CRC) in Norco, CA in the fall of 2013. This thesis is my understanding of the successes, limitations, and critiques of these SDP programs, focusing primarily on CRC as my case study. Through my research, community work, and personal connection to this subdiscipline I have become an advocate of this mission; my goal for this thesis is to illustrate soccer and development programs and detail the process for creating sport-based communities so that others can access the success I have encountered. I will combine my personal experiences with the academic research of others.

According to Spaaij, the value of sport and social development interventions can only be examined by undertaking a “reflexive analysis of the political-cultural context” in which communities and individuals are embedded.<sup>1</sup> This notion is a main drive for my thesis: sport development is a process which includes close attention to environmental make-up, both physical and social. In my experiences, I have reinvented and re-learned ways to implement this soccer-based programming in various settings and I have been continuously reminded that there is no one fixed formula. Space, participants, and time are all variable, and without the consideration of these minutiae, SDP programs will fail to create sustainable change.

I am interested in the concept of space, and the impact that one’s surrounding, both natural and built, has on behaviors, emotions, and relationships. I began to wonder if there were correlations between the lack of green space and high crime rates. Take Boyle Heights, a neighborhood with virtually no park space. The city has more than 80,000 residents and has ten public parks, which classifies it as one of the most “park poor” neighborhoods in the city of Los Angeles.<sup>2</sup> The City Project’s, a non-profit, did a study in 2010 on parks, classifying any

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<sup>1</sup>Ramón Spaaij, “Sport as a vehicle for social mobility and regulation of disadvantaged urban youth: Lessons from Rotterdam,” *International Review for the Sociology of Sport* 44, no. 2-3 (2009), 247–264.

<sup>2</sup>Jennifer Lam, "Boyle Heights Lacks Park Space." *Boyle Heights Beat*, 5 Dec. 2012.

neighborhood with fewer than three acres of parkland per 1,000 residents as 'park poor.' At the most famous park in Boyle Heights, Hollenbeck Park, soccer is forbidden because the area has been designated a "leisure park" only. The study found that Boyle Heights had .72 acres of park per 1,000.<sup>3</sup> Even when there are spaces for recreation, the city requires permits for many sport games. These permits are difficult to obtain and parks like Hollenbeck then ban sports to avoid loitering. The lack of green space for recreation results higher youth crime rate. In a very loose understanding, without natural landscapes for youth to congregate and build holistic social bonds, they are driven to other physical spaces where influences like gangs and drug lords are active.

The environment impacts our general well-being, whether that be physical or mental health, social and interpersonal behaviors, ultimately our surroundings influence our decisions and our way of life. In Chapter one, I will be exploring the term "built environment," describing different factors that affect one's wellbeing in a space and the relationship one has with their surrounding environment and landscape. With this framework, I will focus on prisons as a built environment. Chapter two will present a new set of theories and ideas about sport and development with two main arguments: one regarding sport-based programming and the other centered on the development of social capital. In the third chapter I will be analyzing a case study, using my personal experiences at CRC guided by the theoretical frameworks of the previous two chapters.

### ***Overview***

There has been very little research on sport-based programming in prisons but there is an extensive theoretical framework on sports as a medium for social development. In efforts to reinforce previous theories and research on sports as a means of social development, I carried out

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<sup>3</sup> Lam, "Boyle Heights Lacks Park Space."



observational data and implemented a case study in CRC. Policymakers use non-professional sports to address social, health, and economic outcomes. Nelson Mandela argued, "Sport has the power to change the world, it has the power to inspire. It has the power to unite people in a way that little else does. It speaks to youth in a language they understand. Sport can create hope where once there was only despair. It is more powerful than government in breaking down racial barriers."<sup>4</sup> To someone well-versed in such community work this seems obvious, however, the lack of scholarship and implementation begs the question: how come SDP programs are not more widespread in prison?

While there are a variety of benefits to sport-based programming, I will focus primarily on social impacts of these programs. A wide range of authors have carried out research on sports impact on social capital. In *Sport and Social Capital* Matthew Nicholson and Russell Hoye argue that the more connections individuals make within their communities the better off they will be emotionally, socially, physically and economically."<sup>5</sup> The term social capital has gained wide popularity in recent years and many authors' have contributed to this ongoing academic and policy discourse. According to Spaaij the core idea of social capital is that social relationships can positively impact individuals and communities as a whole. Social capital accrues through social connections and more broadly interactions with others.<sup>6</sup> Moreover, Nicholson and Hoye discuss the notion of participating in sports as engaging in informal social connections as a vehicle for development of social capital in place of socialized aggression that is propelled by

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<sup>4</sup> Nelson Mandela, Speech at Inaugural Laureus Lifetime Achievement Award, Monaco May 25, 2000.

<sup>5</sup> Matthew Nicholson, and Russell Hoye, eds., *Sport and Social Capital*. (Oxford: Elsevier, 2008), 3.

<sup>6</sup> Ramón Spaaij, *Sport and Social Mobility: Crossing Boundaries* (New York: Routledge, 2011), 26.

structural and otherwise violence.<sup>7</sup>

As mentioned above, there is sparse scholarship on sport-based rehabilitation in prisons but there are a few key articles. In *Playing in the Jail: sport as psychological tool for inmates*, Simone Digennaro touches on major themes discussing sport-based programs in prisons. The first main theme is sport's ability to maintain and improve prisoner's general health, whether that be mental or physical well being. Inmates are not able to practice sports regularly, which makes the population at risk for hypokinetic diseases such as heart disease, obesity and diabetes. The second major theme is sports ability to teach a certain set of valued skills, such as team-work, discipline, and accountability, which benefit inmates once they are released upon parole.<sup>8</sup> Digennaro continues to argue that sport programs alone will not impact antisocial behaviors, as it is defined in different race and class standards. It is only effective when the programs are working in conjunction with other educational and rehabilitative programs. There are broader factors to assist in the development of social and emotional characteristics such as personal attributes, and positive relationships with others such as teammates and coaches.<sup>9</sup>

Digennaro discussed three different phases during which sport can be used: prior to incarcerations; during detention; and throughout parole. He begins his argument detailing how sports can be used as prevention, rehabilitation, and release and reentry into the community respectfully.<sup>10</sup> The author discusses important ideas about prevention and the socialization of youth in urban areas, promoting outdoor adventure activities and physically demanding skills. Many of the personal and social skills used in rehabilitation programs to target at-risk populations can spread to wider social contexts. Many of these skills can also be disseminated

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<sup>7</sup> Nicholson and Hoye, *Sport and Social Capital*, 10.

<sup>8</sup> Simone Digennaro, "Playing in the jail: sport as psychological tool for inmates," *International Review on Sport and Violence*, no. 2 (2010): 4-24.

<sup>9</sup> Digennaro, "Playing in the jail: sport as psychological tool for inmates."

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

through the use of sports rather than conventional rehabilitation programs that often are less engaging for the inmates.

The second phase of Digennaro's argument discusses sport-based programs as being centered around the way in which inmates spend time in prison. The author discussed that these programs are an asset to rehabilitative programs - by engaging in sport activities inmates can reduce anti-social behaviors, create a sense of belonging, and increase cohesion.<sup>11</sup> The prison is referred to as a social organization and sports can be used, just like in any other setting, to contribute to the prison community and assist inmates in developing certain valued personal skills. Prisons are their own separate entity with their own social capital; sports can help foster trust, cohesion, and positive interaction within the inmates. It is hard to quantify concepts such as trust and cohesion, especially since this greatly differs based on social groups and the individual.

Digennaro's final phase refers to the period of time after a prisoner is released back into their community. This can be a crucial moment, as many parolees return to their communities in which they used to live before incarceration. Some parolees feel pressured to rebuild their identity and either reinforce relations or bridge them.<sup>12</sup> In all of these phases, sports can be used to build capital and reinforce positive personal development, perhaps by teaching parolees values of camaraderie and conflict resolution.

James Frey and Stanley Eitzen take a different approach in *Sport and Society*, using sport as a lens through which to understand various relationships and complexities of our greater society. According to the authors' field research, sports provide a unique opportunity for structured conflict, competitiveness, all in a controlled setting, that is rarely found in other

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<sup>11</sup> Digennaro, "Playing in the jail: sport as psychological tool for inmates," 9.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

aspects of social life.<sup>13</sup> The authors state, “sport like other institutions is a microcosm of society.”<sup>14</sup> As many other authors have previously discussed, Frey and Eitzen compare sports to religion arguing,

At the same time that sport is a product of social reality, it is also unique. No other institution, except perhaps religion, commands the mystique, the nostalgia, the romantic ideational cultural fixation that sport does. No other activity so paradoxically combines the serious with the frivolous, playfulness with intensity, and the ideological with the structural.<sup>15</sup>

Frey and Eitzen also point to socialization and the push to get youth involved in organized sports at a young age. While society believes sports ability as a social change agent on various levels from parents school administrators, community leaders and so on, there is little evidence to support this claim. The authors argue that there is very little research present that shows large differences between athletes and nonathletic in building social capital or other traits just as character building, moral development, good citizenship, or valued personality traits.<sup>16</sup>

Sport sociology, according to Frey and Eitzen is an “orphan specialty,” that has not yet emerged, and the acceptance of sport sociology has only recently, and only slowly, been accepted into the mainstream academia. Many researchers argue that the theoretical development of sport sociology is weak. As Jay Coakley argues,

Unfortunately, much of the research in sociology of sport has been neither cumulative or theory-based, nor has it been dedicated to theory development. More often, research has been designed to describe sport in ways that call popular beliefs into question, or to document the existence for an issue or problem. This is true of the field as a whole, but it is especially true of work done in the U.S. This is not to say that theory has not informed some of the work done by American sport sociologists, but little of their research has

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<sup>13</sup> James Frey and Stanley Eitzen. "Sport and Society." *Annual Review of Sociology* 17 (1991), 503.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Frey and Eitzen, “Sport and Society,” 504.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

grown directly out of concern for theory testing or theory development in sociology.<sup>17</sup>

The debate over how this research is conducted and analyzed is an ongoing debate, and will be addressed later in the paper. As mentioned above, sports can be used as a rehabilitation tactic in the prison setting but the research is limited thus far. In efforts to contribute to the sparse scholarship, I have conducted ethnographic research, such as interviews, focus groups, and written responses. What I hope to decipher in my thesis is how sport-based programming can function as a constructed space within the prison setting while simultaneously adding to the limited and no less important academic dialogue. This idea will unfold through an interdisciplinary approach and I hope to convey a unique perspective on both prisons and sports and the intersection of the two.

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<sup>17</sup> Jay Coakley, "Sociology of Sport in the United States," *International Review for the Sociology of Sport* 22 (1987), 14.

## CHAPTER 1: SETTING THE SCENE: THE “BUILT ENVIRONMENT”

In this chapter, I will break down the term “built environment,” which in the most basic definition means buildings, spaces, and products that are made or modified by human beings.<sup>18</sup> I will do this in an attempt to detail the concepts that create the spaces we operate in daily. The intent of defining these terms is to help create a foundation on which the rest of my thesis will be based. After I broadly frame the built environment, I will employ a micro level examination of the prison environment to more concretely detail these ideas. In addition to the literature, I will be including excerpts from an interview. This methodology is used in order to best measure an actual experience to that of the scholarship. The study of the built environment is crucial today where the current urban population has exceeded the total population of the world since 1960.<sup>19</sup> There has been considerable research conducted on the growth of cities, and the growing number of urban dwellers but not as much focus has been done on the interior characteristics of these infrastructures. While there are multiple frameworks to view the built environment, both from an external and internal perspective, I argue there has not been enough consideration of prisons as a central part of our collective landscape. In efforts to highlight prisons as a structural space in our built ecosystem, I will broadly outline prisons from a spatial perspective, focusing on the environment’s impact on social interactions and personal health and wellbeing.

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<sup>18</sup> Susan L Handy, Marlon G. Boarnet, Reid Ewing, and Richard E. Killingsworth. "How the Built Environment Affects Physical Activity." *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* 23, no. 2 (2002) 64-73.

<sup>19</sup> Mike Davis. "How Eden Lost Its Garden." *Ecology of Fear: Los Angeles and the Imagination of Disaster*. (New York: Metropolitan, 1998). 57-72.

## **Built Environment**

The built environment provides us with the setting of our lives, the lens in which we view our world, our memories, “our home, our community, and our well being.”<sup>20</sup> As our world continues to progress and develop, we become accustomed to the human-made surroundings and see these provisions as a sort of “natural” landscape. How are we shaped by our environment? How does the built environment impact our general well being? Does our ‘backdrop’ impact our ability to form community? I will be examining how people are affected by their physical environment, focusing on how the environment shapes social interaction. I will be using the framework and categories of Iain Butterworth and Irwin Altman, but will be amending their subtopics in order to fit the purpose of my paper. I am choosing these groupings because they are the major subcategories of the field and best align with my paper’s objectives.

### *Aesthetics of Place*

The concept of space goes well beyond just buildings and infrastructure; it can represent feelings of attachment and belonging. The physical environment symbolizes individual and collective memories. Butterworth states, “spaces, places and buildings are more than just props in people’s lives; they are imbued with meaning and resonance, as they symbolize people’s personal histories, interpersonal relationships, and shared events in people’s extended relationships, families, communities and wider culture.”<sup>21</sup> In general terms space, and lack thereof, evokes emotion. More concretely, when it is forced on people, or when people are forcibly removed from it, the space can become charged with a variety of sentiments. As landscapes become more artificially constructed and green spaces become subsequently less

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<sup>20</sup> Iain Butterworth, “The Relationship Between the Built Environment and Wellbeing: a Literature Review” (PhD diss., Victorian Health Promotion Foundation, 2000), ii.

<sup>21</sup> Butterworth, “The Relationship Between the Built Environment and Wellbeing: a Literature Review,” ii.

natural and more deliberate, our existences within these landscapes will also change. Most people have some sort of relationship to the natural world, and for many urban-dwellers, the natural ecosystem is an escape from their daily routine.<sup>22</sup> Natural environments can often impact our senses engaging our sight, hearing, touch, smell, and even taste.<sup>23</sup> Without retreating from the urban landscape, many of us can still experience sparse natural beauty that engages our senses.

### *Community*

Within these spaces we develop relationships and bonds, not only with the physical landscape but also with others who share the same space. The feeling of community relates to sentiments of belonging. As modernity progresses, this belonging spreads beyond just our shared geographical regions. Communication via technology that supersedes borders so that community transcends immediate surroundings.

Engagement in the community, of different variations, is critical for individual success in an environment. People want their voices, and needs heard and they want to participate in the decision making process of their environment. Butterworth states,

The opportunity to participate in civic life has been identified as a core human need, and essential to the psychological health of individuals and communities. Aspects of the built environment influence participation, in terms of architectural design, population density, and control over environmental stressors; the geographical and built characteristics of a particular district, place or space; and a community's demographic profile, sociocultural norms, traditions, and social and neighbourhood networks.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Dilani, Alan. "Psychosocially Supportive Design: A Health Promoting Approach on Prison Environments." *Design & Health* (2008).

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Butterworth, "The Relationship Between the Built Environment and Wellbeing: a Literature Review," V.



Community involvement is vital in accruing the social capital of individual inhabitants of a given environment. All of the above subtopics interact with one another and create an environment that is either empowering or detrimental to one's own personal and psychosocial well-being.

### ***Privacy***

In basic terms, people need both solitude and social interaction. People need the ability to retract from a social setting and have the private space, both mentally and physically, to reflect and develop one's own territory and existence. Irwin Altman explains that privacy is central to understanding the relationship between environment and behavior.<sup>25</sup> The notion of privacy is studied across disciplines of psychology, sociology, anthropology, and political science, among others. Scholars discuss a range of definitions surrounding sentiments of withdrawal, seclusion, avoidance, and control. Using different scholars and disciplines, I define privacy as the value of being by oneself; a relief from the pressures of the presence of others,<sup>26</sup> the ability to control interactions and prevent unwanted interaction,<sup>27</sup> and obtaining freedom of choice.<sup>28</sup> For the sake of this paper I will use Irwin Altman's definition of privacy as a "selective control of access to the self or to one's group."<sup>29</sup> Altman's definition raises three important notions when understanding privacy. First, there are a variety of social interactions at play, ranging from individuals with other individuals, individuals relating to groups, groups relating groups, among others.<sup>30</sup> Secondly, Irwin states that privacy is a "bidirectional process" releasing information

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<sup>25</sup> Irwin Altman, *The Environment and Social Behavior* (Monterey: Brooks/Cole, 1976), 6.

<sup>26</sup> Stuart Chapin, "Some Housing factors related to mental hygiene" *Journal of Social Issues*, 7 (1951), 164-171.

<sup>27</sup> Amos Rapoport, "Some perspectives on human use and organization of space." Paper presented at Australian Association of Social Anthropologists, Melbourne, Australia, May 1972.

<sup>28</sup> William Ittelson, Harold Proshansky and Leanne Rivlin "A study of bedroom use on two psychiatric wards." *Hospital and Community Psychiatry* 6, 21 (1970), 177-180.

<sup>29</sup> Altman, *The Environment and Social Behavior*, 6.

<sup>30</sup> Altman, *The Environment and Social Behavior*, 18

from self to others and collecting from others to self.<sup>31</sup> Irwin concludes that privacy assumes selective control, implying that privacy is dynamic and can change over time and with varying circumstances.<sup>32</sup>

### ***Crowding***

Crowding often refers to the number of people in a certain area or the amount of space surrounding a person.<sup>33</sup> Crowding and overpopulation can cause serious direct and indirect health problems and raise concerns about an individual's emotional well-being. There are a variety of scales to look at issues regarding crowding – while there are large-scale analysis on spaces such as cities, my analysis will focus primarily on a micro-scale, looking at the social interactions between people.<sup>34</sup>

The absence of one's personal space can be detrimental to one's well being and greatly impact one's social relationships. While there are positive impacts of crowds in intentional spaces such as concerts or political rallies, I will be focusing on crowding and density in terms of the intrusion of one's personal space. When one's "territory" is obstructed, it can, for obvious reasons, incite aggression and other negatively perceived behavioral responses. Healthy environments must be designed to protect a person's need for privacy and social interaction.<sup>35</sup> If these precautions are not addressed, as a result conflict, stress, and anger ensue in order for one to achieve the necessary balance between interactions and privacy as a pseudo-survival technique. According to Altman, the common fears of overcrowding include, "physical,

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<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> Dilani, "Psychosocially Supportive Design: A Health Promoting Approach on Prison Environments."

<sup>34</sup> Altman, *The Environment and Social Behavior*, 146.

<sup>35</sup> Butterworth, "The Relationship Between the Built Environment and Wellbeing: a Literature Review," IV.

physiological, and psychological damage as a result of overcrowding, in the form of disease, aggression, suicide, crime, and other social pathologies.”<sup>36</sup>

It is important to note the differences between crowding and density, many articles use these terms interchangeably but I argue that the two are vastly different. Daniel Stokol is a professor of psychology and social behavior whose research interests include social ecology, focusing on environmental impacts on health discusses the differences.<sup>37</sup> Stokol understands density in relation to the physical condition involving spatial limitation and therefore crowding refers more specifically to the experiential state, which refers to an individual perception of limited physical space.<sup>38</sup> Altman refers to Stokol’s definitions of crowding in his book by summarizing; “first, crowding is a personal, subjective reaction, not a physical variable. Second, it is a motivational state that often results in a goal-directed behavior, to achieve some end or to relieve discomfort. Third, crowding centers around a feeling of too little space. Density, on the other hand, is strictly a physical quality with no inherent psychological meaning; it is merely a measure of people per unit of space.”<sup>39</sup> Both Stokol and Altman create an important distinction between these definitions that are crucial to my arguments throughout this paper.

### ***The Built Environment: A Context for Social Change***

Understanding the complexities of the specific environment and the interrelationships of that space is vital in order to understand the deep complexities and interwoven nature of a space that one can change or interact deeply with that setting. Success can only “be determined by the degree to which it is based on a realistic conception of the complexity and distinctiveness of that

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<sup>36</sup> Altman, *The Environment and Social Behavior*, 146.

<sup>37</sup> “UC Irvine: School of Social Ecology,” <https://socialecology.uci.edu/faculty/dstokols>

<sup>38</sup> Daniel Stokols, “On the distinction between density and crowding: Some implications for future research,” *Psychological Review* 79, (1972), 275.

<sup>39</sup> Altman, *The Environment and Social Behavior*, 146.

community.”<sup>40</sup> Keeping the above in mind, I will focus on a subcategory of built environments that has, in the last fifty years, become a prominent element of our communal landscape, housing more than 2.4 million Americans today: the prison. The American prison system maintains 1,719 state prisons, 102 federal prisons, 2,259 juvenile correctional facilities, 3,282 local jails, and 79 Indian Country jails, in addition to military prisons, immigration detention facilities, civil commitment centers, and prisons in the U.S. territories.<sup>41</sup> In the state of California, the prisoner population grew approximately 500% between 1983 and 2000.<sup>42</sup>

Between 1852 and 1964 the state of California only built twelve prisons and since 1984 the state has built twenty-three massive prisons, with a price tag of \$280-\$350 million apiece.<sup>43</sup> There needs to be more attention drawn to these infrastructures as significant spaces and draw our attention closer to the impact these physical spaces have on the rehabilitation process of the individuals who inhabit them.

### **Prisons as a Built Environment**

The study of prisons is multidisciplinary and can be addressed through a variety of lenses. Even though an abundant amount of information surrounds the injustices of the prison system today, there is a lack of scholarship surrounding the study of prison from a spatial perspective. While examining the Prison Industrial Complex is not the main focus of my paper, I believe it is necessary to understand mass incarceration and the reality that one in every 100 adults is currently incarcerated.<sup>44</sup> The state will spend approximately \$60,000 for each inmate

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<sup>40</sup> Seymour B. Sarason, *Psychological Sense of Community: Prospects for a Community Psychology* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1974).

<sup>41</sup> Peter Wagner and Leah Sakala, "Mass Incarceration: The Whole Pie." *Prison Policy Initiative*. 2008.

<sup>42</sup> Ruth W. Gilmore, *Golden Gulag* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2007), 7.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> One in 100: Behind Bars in America 2008, n.d.

between 2013-2014, compared to the \$8,219 spent on K-12 students.<sup>45</sup> Michelle Alexander discusses the Prison Industrial Complex in her piece *The New Jim Crow*, where she defines prisons as “a system that locks people not only behind actual bars in actual prisons, but also behind virtual bars and virtual walls – walls that are invisible to the naked eye but function nearly as effectively as Jim Crow once did at locking people of color into permanent second-class citizenship.”<sup>46</sup> The structures not only physically warehousing bodies, but essentially create unseen prisons of the mind.

Here I will look at prison as a geographical space, looking at infrastructure as a concrete place to understand the theories briefly mentioned above. Space and place dictate social practice and personal experience. Crewe et al. notes that prisons are institutions, “where body and soul are disciplined through a more repressive spatial apparatus, geographers have described how prisoners reclaim and protect the official functions and meanings of space.”<sup>47</sup> Just as many other public spaces of this time, prisons were designed to function like factories and warehouses, positive environmental qualities such as those that support psychosocial behavior have been largely ignored.<sup>48</sup>

Prisons are designed and constructed through a security and functionality standpoint.<sup>49</sup> It is important to question these facilities, especially in regards to rehabilitation because it is clear that the design of these prisons do not take into account notions of physical and mental health and are constructed to serve security and mass numbers purposes. The state of California has

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<sup>45</sup> Scott Graves, "Fewer State Prisoners, Higher Cost Per Inmate." California Budget Project.

<sup>46</sup> Michelle Alexander, *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness* (New York, NY: New Press, 2012) 12.

<sup>47</sup> Ben Crewe, Jason Warr, Peter Bennett, and Alan Smith. "The emotional geography of prison life." *Theoretical Criminology* 18, no. 1 (2013), 60.

<sup>48</sup> Dilani, "Psychosocially Supportive Design: A Health Promoting Approach on Prison Environments."

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

among the highest recidivism rates in the nation. According to the 2012 report approximately 65% of all those released from the prison system return within three years.<sup>50</sup> While there are many factors that contribute to this number, one of main factor in this is that prisons do not offer a therapeutic, supportive, and healthy environment - they do not offer spaces where personal success can be realized. Thus, any form of rehabilitation or personal growth is almost consistently negated.

“Carceral geography” is a recently-coined term that describes the geographical research of incarceration, and it seeks to examine prisons as a type of institution, looking at the internal and external social and spatial relations.<sup>51</sup> The sub-discipline is a new field, based off dialogues that have been at the foreground of discussions surrounding incarceration for decades. Informed by the work of Goffman in 1961 on the ‘total institution’ and Foucault in 1979 on the development of prison and space, this discipline may be newly termed but it has in more long-standing disciplines such as criminology and prison sociology.<sup>52</sup>

Carceral geography examines incarceration in regards to space, “both in terms of the individual’s movement into and out of the space and his or her experience within it, as well as the physical manifestation of the penal institution in space.”<sup>53</sup> Prison, as a space, is fixed and prisoners are both immobile and forcibly placed in the space. Inmates can also experience an opposite reality: being transported to other prisons because of overcrowding, risk of transferring disease, and population caps. Martin and Mitchelson discuss this contradictory reality of prison spaces where “contemporary practices of imprisonment are characterized by [the] tensions

<sup>50</sup> [http://www.cdcr.ca.gov/Adult\\_Research\\_Branch/Research\\_Documents/ARB\\_FY\\_0607\\_Recidivism\\_Report\\_\(11-23-11\).pdf](http://www.cdcr.ca.gov/Adult_Research_Branch/Research_Documents/ARB_FY_0607_Recidivism_Report_(11-23-11).pdf)

<sup>51</sup> Moran Dominique, "Carceral geography and the spatialities of prison visiting: visitation, recidivism, and hyperincarceration." *Environment and Planning* 31 (2013), 175.

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<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

between apparent fixity and forced mobility.”<sup>54</sup> Morton’s extensive work thinks about carceral geography’s notion of ‘disciplined’ mobility, outlining ideas regarding autonomy and freedom.

Prisons are forced environments, and are thereby charged with their own unique set of requirements. In short, individuals must adapt themselves to an environment, as opposed to adapting their environment to meet his or her own needs. While Morton outlines carceral geography, Crew et al. present prisons as complex emotional worlds, with a distinctive emotional geography. Kim Dovey discussed in his book, *Framing Place: Mediating Power in Built Form*, the context in which we operate in and the invisible power that is within these structures. Dover states,

Designed in accord with certain interests- primarily the pursuit of amenity, profit, status and political power. The built environment reflects the identities, differences and struggles of gender, class, race, culture and age. It shows the interests of people in empowerment and freedom, the interests of the state in social order, and the private corporate interest in stimulating consumption.<sup>55</sup>

The intersection of space, emotion, and power can be seen through examining prisons as space. As outlined above, prisons are becoming one of the largest and fastest growing public buildings projects of the 21st century.

## **Prisons: A Spatial Perspective**

### *Aesthetics of Place*

Prisons are not just comprised of prisoners; the sights, sounds, and smells maintain prominent roles in creating this space. The physical components are laden with memories, significance, customs, and rules. In the 19th century, Nightingale developed a theory on health that stresses how physical elements are vital to one’s health. These elements, such as noise,

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<sup>54</sup> Dominique, "Carceral geography and the spatialities of prison visiting," 177.

<sup>55</sup> Kim Dovey, *Framing places: Mediating power in built form* (London: Routledge, 1999) 1.

lighting, and daylight have a significant affect on one's mood.<sup>56</sup> Research carried out in a prison in Michigan observed whether or no there was any correlation between view from the windows and the health of inmates. Results showed that the inmates who had windows facing the forest and farming fields visited the health center less than the inmates who had windows facing the prison yard.<sup>57</sup> In addition, colors can greatly impact emotional well-being and create positive brain activity.<sup>58</sup> Additionally, there have been numerous studies surrounding the affect of different colors' on mood and mental health. "Warm colors" such as red, yellow, and orange are known to have an activating effect, whereas "cold colors" such as blue, purple, and green are said to have a calming effect.<sup>59</sup> Prisons today appear to not take into account the above theory behind color schemes, these large warehouse like structures are dull and monotone, usually shades of beige, white and grey. Similar to cities, they are commonly referred to as "concrete jungles."

I conducted an interview with Ernst Fenelon Jr., the program coordinator for the Prison Education Project at CRC who served fourteen and a half years in the California penal system and was released September 12<sup>th</sup>, 2005. Ernst reflected on his time incarcerated, remembering the twenty-four hour neon fluorescent lighting, concrete grays and whites, and the lack of sunlight and airflow.<sup>60</sup> When Ernst was first admitted into prison, the institution was on lockdown because of a murder. This meant that the men were required to stay in their dorms at all times, they took "bird baths," and used the toilet in their room and stayed in their dorm twenty-four hours a day. This lockdown lasted for four months; he did not feel direct sunlight or

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<sup>56</sup> Dilani, "Psychosocially Supportive Design: A Health Promoting Approach on Prison Environments."

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> Ernst Fenelon Jr., interview with author, April 15, 2014.



the outside air for the duration of the lockdown period.<sup>61</sup> The ancient word for “prison” in the first written language, Sumerian, dates back to the first civilization on earth. The word, was a combination of symbols which meant, “house” and “darkness.”<sup>62</sup> Though much has changed since earliest imprisonment, the denial of basic human needs is still present in the current prison system.

### ***Community***

Inmates are forced to create hard facades and maintain a certain amount of aggression in order to survive among other inmates. As Crewe et al. discuss, public projections of hardened masculinity are overwhelming present outwardly, while private feelings of anxiety, sadness and defeat are overwhelming present inwardly.<sup>63</sup> The prisoner’s veneer of hardened manliness is rooted in deep feelings of self-doubt and social rejection.<sup>64</sup> Goffman discussed in *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, the idea that life is a performance, and we are all actors with roles and scripts that are socially determined and enacted.<sup>65</sup> In conjunction with Crewe et al.’s assertion, there is a frontstage and backstage, two distinct arenas where individuals play vastly different roles. The frontstage is given to an audience, for whom the actor displays an intentional display of roles, whereas the backstage is the private region in which these roles can be relinquished. This notion is complicated in the prison setting where there simply are no backstages. In the prison, private spaces are communal so there is no escaping social pressures, no option of renouncing the frontstage appearances. Within disciplines such as prison sociology,

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<sup>61</sup> Ernst Fenelon Jr., interview with author.

<sup>62</sup> James Gilligan and Bandy Lee, "Beyond the Prison Paradigm: From Provoking Violence to Preventing It by Creating “Anti-Prisons” (Residential Colleges and Therapeutic Communities)." *Annals New York Academy of Sciences* 1036 (2006):,300-24.

<sup>63</sup> Crewe, Warr, Bennett, and Smith. "The emotional geography of prison life," 59.

<sup>64</sup> Crewe, Warr, Bennett, and Smith. "The emotional geography of prison life," 63.

<sup>65</sup> Erving Goffman, *Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (New York: Doubleday, 1959).

there has been very little done on the emotional complexities of prison life and understanding the different domains besides the front and back stage metaphor. This simple metaphor is not inclusive for all the various systems at play, the binary explanation is simplifying a much more complex relationship. There are a variety of social and personal pressures which affect one's social ability and ability to be alone. As Altman discusses, "if privacy and its associated mechanisms are ignored or rigidly incorporated into designs, or if the meaning of different levels of personal space and territory is not recognized, then people will have to struggle *against the environment* to achieve what they consider to be appropriate degrees of interaction."<sup>66</sup> In other words, to achieve the necessary balance between frontstage and backstage that is available outside prisons, inmates have to develop new mediums for reaching this balance, which can possibly result in violence, retaliation, or complete withdrawal.

In "free communities" (i.e. outside of prison) daily life is not as controlled. Still operating under a variety of restrictions depending on intersectional constraints, most individuals do maintain the most basic degree of free will and can move through space accordingly. In prison this reality is vastly different; the inmates are strictly regimented. With a formal and fixed routine for prisoners. John Irwin lays out these routines in his piece, *Prisons in Turmoil*. Though it was written in the 1980s, the regime stands essentially identical over thirty years later. Irwin states,

the prisoners rose early; hurriedly ate breakfast; returned to their cells for one of the four or five daily counts; proceeded to work, school, or the yard for the day of idleness; hurriedly ate lunch; counted; went back to work, school, or idleness; hurriedly ate dinner; and returned to their cells for the night. After count, they read, wrote letters or literary works, pursued hobbies, talked to

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<sup>66</sup> Altman, *The Environment and Social Behavior*, 211.

other prisoners, listened to the radio on their ear phones, and then went to sleep when the lights were turned off...<sup>67</sup>

While the inmates are abiding by these formal codes, they are also following a less visible, covert one. When looking at social relations within the correctional context it is vital to note the most normative form of community and social control: prison gangs. In the early 1950s, the “old inmates” soon began to experience changes. There was no longer a sense of “doing your time” in a solitary fashion and instead there was a shift to a new inmate code. These new inmates followed leaders who gained their status by resisting prison authority, and exercising power over the other inmates through violence or threat of violence.<sup>68</sup> In *From Self-Preservation to Organized Crime: The evolution of Inmate Gangs*, Paige Ralph discussed how inmates have always formed social groups primarily based on ethnicity, criminal history, neighborhood or city connections. Gangs inherently exhibit racial conflict, violence, and other various illicit activities.

During my interview with Ernst, he discussed the racial divisions in prisons, especially those in California and he illustrated the complex racial lines between a variety of groups and the risks involved with challenging these racial divides. Ernst is a charismatic, warm, and engaging man who resented these socially constructed regulations. In efforts to avoid being consumed by the environment, Ernst surrounded himself with “lifers” who were very serious about their programming and associated with other inmates equally as serious, regardless of race. These inmates mentored him in navigating these highly politicized spaces. As a result, Ernst spent the majority of his time at the law library, regular library, art programming or he kept to himself.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> John Irwin, “Prisons in Turmoil” in *Correctional Contexts: Contemporary and Classical Readings*, (Los Angeles: Roxbury Publishing Company, 1997), 160.

<sup>68</sup> James W Marquart and Jonathon Sorensen, eds. *Correctional Contexts: Contemporary and Classical Readings* (Los Angeles: Roxbury Publishing Company, 1997),182.

<sup>69</sup> Ernst Fenelon Jr., interview with author.

He discussed the very deliberate decisions regarding social interactions within this space, one must be aware at all times who they associate with.

### ***Privacy***

There is an abundance of scholarship relating to notions of privacy in prisons. As previously discussed, it is important to understand the general idea of privacy as a dynamic interplay of people coming together and moving apart, where people have some degree of control, choice, and options. All of the fundamental definitions of privacy are ones that are inherently diminished in the prison space. This dynamic relationship between seeking out others and having the freedom to be alone and out of contact is virtually nonexistent in the prison setting, where, as discussed, there is no “backstage.” However, the ultimate privacy, solitary confinement, is incredibly harmful to one’s sociability and personal well-being.<sup>70</sup> Clearly, the typical go-between of interaction and non-interaction is crucial to an individual’s sanity. Ernst experienced a variety of living conditions and went from a two-person room, to a six person, eight person and then fifty man dorms.<sup>71</sup> The living situation and security measures vary based on the security level of the prison. In California there are four levels of security, I is the lowest security prison and IV is the highest, Ernst described the lower the security prison as more communal, open, and crowded the living spaces. Level I facilities have open dormitories without a secure perimeter, Level II have open dormitories with secure perimeter fences and armed coverage, Level III have individual cells with fenced perimeters and armed coverage and lastly level IV facilities have cells with fenced perimeter, electronic security and more armed staff both inside and outside the prison.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> Altman, *The Environment and Social Behavior*, 23.

<sup>71</sup> Ernst Fenelon Jr., interview with author.

<sup>72</sup> [http://www.cphcs.ca.gov/docs/resources/cdcr\\_map.pdf](http://www.cphcs.ca.gov/docs/resources/cdcr_map.pdf)

### ***Crowding***

The spatial dimensions of prison life greatly impact emotional well-being; the living quarters are not only overcrowded but this overcrowding creates unsafe conditions, often violent. There is an overwhelming feeling of insecurity that is created by the proximity of untrustworthy strangers. State authorities and formal sanctions add another element of distrust and add extra emotional stressors and threats. Altman states, “conflict, stress, and other costs are likely to the extent that people have to struggle with inappropriately designed environments.”<sup>73</sup> As Ernst discussed in his interview, the State of California is not taking into account the effects that living conditions have on one’s emotional wellbeing and physical health. Ernst discusses the state’s design to maximize space, “in their mind utilizing space was creating triple bunk tiers and using a gym area and so to be subjugated to that level of noise 24/7 and utilizing space that way, I don’t think has been effective in helping to rehabilitate.”<sup>74</sup> Altman and Stokol found that crowding is a personal and subjective experience, which not only can occur spatially but also within interpersonal relationships. Ernst continued to discuss the struggle to fight against the environment. In order to obtain sanity, he said one must be intentional to create distance and mindfulness within this overpopulated, loud, and aggressive atmosphere.<sup>75</sup> This relates to Altman’s theory on harmful designs, as a result, those occupying these spaces need to work against the environment in order to acquire personal needs.

There are a lot of different perspectives in which to look at prisons, within the scope of this thesis I have chosen to focus on the spatial perspective because I think it is important to look at how spatial surroundings impact an inmate’s ability to rehabilitate. As the literature states

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<sup>73</sup>Altman, *The Environment and Social Behavior*, 211.

<sup>74</sup> Ernst Fenelon Jr., interview with author.

<sup>75</sup> Ernst Fenelon Jr., interview with author.

clearly the built environment is not only the “backdrop” but it also interacts with those living amongst it. In efforts to most accurately illustrate the case study, it is crucial to understand the context in which it occurred. In the following chapter I will be outlining another form of space, a more metaphorical space: sports. Where this chapter focused primarily on the physical aspects of space, I will argue that sports, more specially sport-based programming, can create an alternative, neutral, and therapeutic zone for participants.

## CHAPTER 2: SOCCER-BASED PROGRAMMING: A MEDIUM FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

There is a widespread discourse around the ability of sports' to make 'society' more equal, socially cohesive and peaceful.<sup>76</sup> Sport is becoming 'a new engine of development' and social development through sport is considered a 'new social movement.'<sup>77</sup> This chapter will focus on non-professional sport and its relationship to social capital. My main argument is that by participating in sport-based programming, in particular soccer programs, participants are able to develop social networks and relationships that are vital for their personal development and the development of their community. I believe that one's sociability not only impacts one's ability to participate in rehabilitation programs but also is important in one's identity after completing these programs. Social scientists understand sport-based programming limitations, more specifically the difficulty to assess whether these programs work and the lack of 'hard,' or quantitative, evidence.<sup>78</sup> The term "social development" often refers to collective social improvement within and between given groups. This paper will be focusing more on the individual and their own personal development.

### **Sport-Based Programming**

#### *What is sport?*

The word "sport" has a variety of meanings and represents a wide range of activities. I will be focusing on non-professional sports, primarily using the word "sport" in conjunction with development practices. As Ramón Spaaij a leading scholar in sports, defines sport as

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<sup>76</sup> Ramón Spaaij, "The Social Impact of Sport: Cross-Cultural Perspectives." *Sport in Society* 12, no. 9 (2011), 1.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

institutionalized, competitive and ludic physical activities.<sup>79</sup> Spaaij argues that sports are institutionalized, meaning they are governed by rules relating to time and space. The rules, time and space manifest in a variety of ways, such as dimensions of field, time limits and codes of conduct.<sup>80</sup> Secondly, sports are competitive. Though the stakes range, the game is a site for contest and conflict. The third aspect of sport is its ludic nature. As Spaaij outlines the word “ludic” derives from the Latin word “ludus,” which means play or game.<sup>81</sup> Though this aspect of the game may not always be highlighted I think it is important to note the excitement and playful facet of sports. In 2003, the UN Inter-Agency Task Force on Sport for Development and Peace defined sport as “all forms of physical activity that contribute to physical fitness, mental well-being and social interaction, such as play, recreation, organized or competitive sport, and indigenous sports and games.”<sup>82</sup> Sport has the capacity to address and encourage social development, social cohesion, and create relational ties. For the purposes of this paper I will be primarily discussing the sport of soccer and my experiences with soccer-based programming. Soccer is the global game and is the most utilized game in sport development programs worldwide.<sup>83</sup> Sports build character - they develop personal and social skills such as discipline, honesty, integrity, generosity and trustworthiness.<sup>84</sup> The sports realm is a neutral social space, where everyone is on the same *playing field*.

### ***Why soccer?***

Soccer is the most widely used sport in sport-based programming worldwide and the

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<sup>79</sup> Spaaij, *Sport and Social Mobility: Crossing Boundaries*, 17.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid.

<sup>82</sup> “United Nations Sport for Development and Peace,”

(<http://www.un.org/wcm/content/site/sport/home/sport>)

<sup>83</sup> Spaaij, *Sport and Social Mobility: Crossing Boundaries*, 18.

<sup>84</sup> Fred Coalter "The Politics of Sport-For-Development: Limited Focus Programmes and Broad Gauge Problems?" *International Review for the Sociology of Sport* 45, no. 3 (2010), 296.



game is referred to as the 'international language' with an intriguing transnational scope. As David Goldblatt, the author of *The Ball is Round*, argues in an interview,

soccer attracts populists, rather than elitists. I think the fact that it is starkly obvious to anyone who travels in the global south, that there is a lot of soccer going on, this is a big thing. It is almost obvious in a way, if you were going to do something with sport and development, what is going on already that you want to tap into because you don't want to reinvent the wheel. In much of the world, really outside of India, at street level, soccer is the game.<sup>85</sup>

Soccer is a low-maintenance game. At its simplest form it only requires a ball and it can be played on grass, concrete, dirt, virtually anywhere and by anyone ranging in skill-levels and ages. Unlike American Football whose rulebook is 114 pages,<sup>86</sup> soccer does not have conventional rules; it has seventeen guidelines that are called "laws." Though most of us see the high-powered, profit driven, globalized version of soccer, there is a lesser told story about soccer, one that is primitive, grassroots, and raw.

Goldblatt touches on the accessibility of the game stating, "it is easy to play, simple rules and these rules are easily variable and almost intuitively obvious. It is very flexible of surface, it requires minimalist equipment, you can play it without a referee, it offers space for individual genius but it is also absolutely a team game."<sup>87</sup> The grassroots-level game is less focused on winning and more focused on how the inherent characteristics of the game can be used to promote positive values and philosophies that can extend beyond the field, such as punctuality, accountability, teamwork, self-discipline, truthfulness, and communication.

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<sup>85</sup> David Goldblatt, interview with author, March 13, 2014.

<sup>86</sup> "Official Playing Rules of the National Football League," <http://static.nfl.com/static/content/public/image/rulebook/pdfs/2013%20-%20Rule%20Book.pdf>

<sup>87</sup> David Goldblatt, interview with author.

### *Examining sports-based programming and its history*

The idea that sport can have impacts outside just the game itself is not a new concept. Since the late 1990s, SDP has been widely regarded for its powerful prosocial components as well as its ability to suspend conflict. History suggests that the theory behind SDP has been used as a peace-creating tactic for years. The Olympic Games are the most prominent and long standing sporting event to examine this phenomenon. The Olympic Trust was developed in Ancient Greece as early as the ninth century BCE, aiming to assuage military conflicts and create a safe place for athletes and spectators to enjoy the games. Baron Pierre de Coubertin, the founder of the modern Olympics, believed that the event would promote internationalism and bring nations and people together.<sup>88</sup> The story of the 1914 Christmas Truce between the British and German Soldiers sentimentally illustrates this - where the two opposing sides met in 'no-man's land,' to sing songs and play soccer.<sup>89</sup>

Other examples include the 'rational recreation' interventions in Britain in the late nineteenth century, the 'playground' movement in the twentieth century, and the confessional and workers' sports movement of the interwar period.<sup>90</sup> In the late 19th and early 20th century, school administrators implemented sport programming to redirect the disobedient behavior of upper and middle class school boys in private schools. Sports were even a part of colonization politics. In the colonies, the British Games revolution was used to build social interactions and social capital between the colonial classes and indigenous elites. It was also used to indoctrinate indigenous people into accepting ideologies such as "Muscular Christianity" and Anglocentric

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<sup>88</sup> Richard Giulianotti, "The Sport for Development and Peace Sector: An Analysis of its Emergence, Key Institutions, and Social Possibilities," *Brown Journal of World Affairs* 18, no. 11 (2012), 279-93.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid.

<sup>90</sup> Spaaij, "The Social Impact of Sport: Cross-Cultural Perspectives" 2.

“fair play” that helped to normalize colonial rule.<sup>91</sup> Soccer was exported throughout Africa to assist the “civilizing process.”<sup>92</sup>

More recently, the soccer world rings with the notion of ‘development.’ While there has been a longstanding history in regards to sports and international peacebuilding, this paper focuses instead on modern sport’s role dissolving social subjugation, fostering pacification, and integrating diverse populations.<sup>93</sup> Due to the success of sport programming, various aid organizations, both in the private and public sector, now look to these successes to inform their own campaigns. In other words, a new paradigm has begun to materialize, where large agencies like the UN look to partner with organizations based around soccer in order to foster greater interest and involvement for their own agendas. Soccer is a medium through which to expose and connect people to issues that affect them and their communities. This trend can be seen in,

Multilateral institutions like the United Nations Office of Sport for Development and Peace (UNOSDP) and the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF); international nongovernmental organizations like CARE international and Right to Play; governmental bodies like the Australian Sports Commission and the UK Sport; international corporations like Nike; local, grassroots organizations like the CAN futbol Foundation in Honduras; and even academic institutions like the University of Toronto and the Interdisciplinary Centre of Excellence for Sports Science and Development at the University of the Western Cape.<sup>94</sup>

Fred Coalter explains this phenomenon by noting,

Like most social policies, sports policies in industrialized societies have been characterized by an essential duality, with government involvement and investment reflecting the dual purposes of extending social rights of citizenship, while also emphasizing a

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<sup>91</sup> Giulianotti, "The Sport for Development and Peace Sector."

<sup>92</sup> Joel Rookwood, "Soccer for Peace and Social Development." *Peace Review: A Journal of Social Justice* 20, no. 4 (2008), 473.

<sup>93</sup> Giulianotti, "The Sport for Development and Peace Sector."

<sup>94</sup> Douglas Hartmann and Christina Kwauk, "Sport and Development An Overview, Critique, and Reconstruction." *Journal of Sport & Social Issues* 35, no. 3 (2011), 285.

range of wider individual and collect benefits presumed to be associated with participation in sport.<sup>95</sup>

Affiliating sports with existing social agendas works. In an earlier publication Coalter adds a nuanced classification on these programs dividing them into three distinct objectives: *sport*, *sport plus*, and *plus sport*. *Sport*, in general, is provided with both the explicit and implicit understanding that such programming will be beneficial for the continued development of the program's participants. *Sport Plus*, is when sports are adapted and carried out with parallel programs to achieve developmental objectives. With *Plus Sport*, sport's popularity is used as a mechanism to attract people to programs with varying objectives.<sup>96</sup> As Coalter states, "increased emphasis on social relationships and networks, on the development of human capital as well as the investment of economic capital, on bottom-up community development rather than apparently wasteful top-down investment in often corrupt governmental agencies" leads to more sustainable change.<sup>97</sup> Sports-based programming creates options for involvement and leadership in huge organizations like UNICEF and connects people to real issues through community-building, hands-on, and plain fun activities - a facet not to be discounted in social development rhetoric.

## **Social Development**

### ***What is social capital?***

The essence of the social capital theory is the idea that social networks have value and affect the productivity of individuals and groups.<sup>98</sup> Putnam states that the term has been used and

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<sup>95</sup> Coalter "The Politics of Sport-For-Development: Limited Focus Programmes and Broad Gauge Problems?" 296.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid., 298.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid., 304.

<sup>98</sup> Robert D. Putnam, *Bowling Alone* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2000), 19.

reinvented at least six times over the twentieth century. While the contexts vary, all the definitions relate back to this notion that lives are made more productive by social ties.<sup>99</sup> The term itself may be relatively new, but the idea behind it is one that has always been acknowledged and given high esteem. Included in Spaaij's, *The Social Impact of Sport: Cross-Cultural Perspectives*, Vermeulen and Verweel cite Putnam who argues that social capital is best developed through participation in shared activities. These activities vary and can be formal or informal in nature ranging from sport clubs, civic organizations to neighbors or personal relations. Putnam categorizes these into two types of social capital: bonding capital and bridging capital. In the most simple definition bonding capital refers to ties and relations between homogenous groups, such as people with similar socioeconomic and ethnic backgrounds. Bridging social capital refers to ties and relations between different groups.<sup>100</sup> As Putnam states, "bonding social capital is, as Xavier de Souza Briggs puts it, good for 'getting by,' but bridging social capital is crucial for 'getting ahead.'"<sup>101</sup>

Spaaij discusses the importance of not only understanding what makes social capital distinct, but also how it relates to other forms of capital.<sup>102</sup> Spaaij used Bourdieu's conceptualization of social capital in explaining the difference between it and economic and cultural capital. The first main difference is that social capital is relational, whereas economic and cultural tends to be associated with the individual. Secondly, social capital is produced by investments of time and effort, however, less directly than that of economic or cultural capital.<sup>103</sup> "Just as physical capital and human capital facilitate productive activity, social capital does as well. For example, a group within which there is extensive trustworthiness and extensive trust is

<sup>99</sup> Putnam, *Bowling Alone*, 19.

<sup>100</sup> Spaaij, "The Social Impact of Sport: Cross-Cultural Perspectives," 100.

<sup>101</sup> Putnam, *Bowling Alone*, 23.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid., 26.

able to accomplish much more than a compare group without the trustworthiness and trust."<sup>104</sup>

There has been recent debate among the scholarship in regards to the bias representation and emphasis on the positive aspects of social capital.<sup>105</sup> One must be aware that the relationship between sport and social capital has an equal chance of being positive or negative and can manifest itself based on location, participant diversity, time, among other variables.<sup>106</sup> In understanding social capital and its relationship to sports I hope to convey a holistic picture and include both the positive and negative aspects of social capital.

## **Soccer and Social Capital**

### *An overview*

The core idea of obtaining social capital via soccer-based programming is that the skills will be transferable to the broader lives of the participants.<sup>107</sup> Soccer is a game that emphasizes both the individual and the team and most importantly it's a game, a simple form of entertainment. Since the United Nations' adoption of Resolution 58/5 in 2003, sport has become an emerging tool for development on the international level.<sup>108</sup> According to Hartmann and Kwauk who published an article in 2011, almost double the number of organizations have registered on the International Platform on Sport for Development and Peace since 2008.<sup>109</sup> Peter Donnelly et. al. discuss, from this global and economic development perspective,

sport encourages social investment in health, education, and

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<sup>104</sup> James S. Coleman, "Social Capital in the Creation of Human Capital." *American Journal of Sociology* 94 (2012), S95-S120.

<sup>105</sup> Nicholson and Hoye, *Sport and Social Capital*, 11.

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*, 12.

<sup>107</sup> Jonathan Magee and Ruth Jeanes, "Football's coming home: A critical evaluation of the Homeless World Cup as an intervention to combat social exclusion." *International Review for the Sociology of Sport* 48, no. 1 (2013), 5.

<sup>108</sup> Hartmann and Kwauk, "Sport and Development An Overview, Critique, and Reconstruction," 284.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*, 285.

physical fitness; in local business structures and opportunities; in fair competition; in way and disease prevention; in building bridges across cultural divides by nonverbal interaction; in globally common forms of social bonding and symbol exchange; and in a transcendence of traditional social inequalities such as class, race, and gender.<sup>110</sup>

Sports can be used as a tool to aid in development projects both international in scope and those on a grassroots level.

### ***Challenges, Critiques, and Limitations***

While key institutions have noted the value and power of sports, there are also significant challenges that need to be included when understanding the full scope of these programs. Now that sports have become a well marketable tool for development, the sport and development field seems to be lacking a conceptualized, organized structure.<sup>111</sup> There is a lack of data in regards to which programs work and which do not. On the other hand, there is a displacement of scope, micro-level effects are generalized to the macro-level.<sup>112</sup> Organizations make large claims based off small observations, for example, a pick-up game between Israeli Palestinian children means they have solved the problems in the Middle-East. Most of the micro level outcomes are anecdotal evidence by from heartfelt narratives and evocative images.<sup>113</sup> There seems to be a need for a quantitative method of gauging outcomes or as Donnelly et al. call "healthy dose of normal science." The author's continue to critique SDP programs arguing that practitioners need to monitor and evaluate these problems more in depth. More specifically, they note that closer

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<sup>110</sup> Peter Donnelly, Michael Atkinson, Sarah Boyle, and Courtney Szto. "Sport for Development and Peace: a public sociology perspective.," *Third World Quarterly* 32, no. 3 (2011), 591-592.

<sup>111</sup> Hartmann and Kwauk, "Sport and Development An Overview, Critique, and Reconstruction," 285.

<sup>112</sup> Coalter "The Politics of Sport-For-Development: Limited Focus Programmes and Broad Gauge Problems?" 305.

<sup>113</sup> Hartmann and Kwauk, "Sport and Development An Overview, Critique, and Reconstruction," 286.

attention must be given to the funding of these projects with a mindfulness of fairness.<sup>114</sup> I argue that this is a critique of international Non-Governmental Organizations at large, rather than Sport for Development in particular. Another common critique is that SDP serves sportspeople or the practitioners, rather than the beneficiaries. Those that have enjoyed sports and have benefited from engaging in the activity believe others will benefit the same, a large claim that does not take diversity of participants into consideration.<sup>115</sup>

All these claims are respectable critiques of this sector, however, the reality is that SDP is still in its infancy. The varying critiques seem to be rather harsh and can only truly be applied to development programs and sectors that are already deeply established. Goldblatt counters these arguments stating:

One of the programs I was checking out provides coach education in Kenya for young men and for young women and they train the coaches and what they do is they train and teach them to use a whole sort of training regimes in games that do HIV education, as well as a good laugh and great soccer. One of the training drills is you play a game where one player is the virus and if the virus touches you during the game you are out, and you have to go off. But if you have got the ball, which is the condom, you are protected. So after 20 minutes you have a bunch of 13 year old girls shouting 'give me the condom! Give me the condom!' how do you quantify the meaning that for the first time in your life you have been able to shout the word condom and not feel embarrassed?<sup>116</sup>

Goldblatt illustrates an important unquantifiable aspect of these programs. I believe the academy plays an important role in the development of SDP. Since much time is spent by governments

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<sup>114</sup> Donnelly, Atkinson, Boyle, and Szto, "Sport for Development and Peace: a public sociology perspective," 592.

<sup>115</sup> Donnelly, Atkinson, Boyle, and Szto, "Sport for Development and Peace: a public sociology perspective," 592.

<sup>116</sup> David Goldblatt, interview with author.



and NGOs on program monitoring and evaluation it is crucial that research be carried out on long-term benefits and on the challenges of sport and development.<sup>117</sup> In efforts to contribute to the scholarship I will be providing an evaluation of a sport-based program conducted in the 2013-2014 academic year. Though I will be unable to provide the long-term benefits because of the recent nature of my research, I will evaluate the short-term successes and challenges.

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<sup>117</sup> Bruce Kidd, "A new social movement: Sport for development and peace." *Sport in Society* 11, no. 4 (2008), 337.

### **CHAPTER 3: CASE STUDY: CALIFORNIA REHABILITATION CENTER**

This section of the paper will be based on my experience developing, implementing, and evaluating a soccer-based initiative in a medium security prison in Norco, California. The research and scholarship on sport-based programming spans many different disciplines and applies to a variety of community settings, however, research specifically concerning sports in prison is limited. In efforts further the discourse, I will attempt to outline the successes and challenges of my case study. Recognizing the limitations of my thesis, I have decided to specifically focus on the social impacts, while only briefly touching on the psychological and physical ramifications of the programs. My research is mainly an evaluation of my soccer-based programming; there is no emphasis on individual cases or sentences. For obvious security reasons, I was unable to conduct interviews with inmates and this research is limited to in class focus groups, writing reflections by the inmates, observational research, and anonymous surveys. I conducted in-person interviews with prison staff and others who witnessed the soccer-based programming. Within this chapter you will find an in-depth and comprehensive application of the terms and theories discussed in the previous sections. It is important to note that these findings are case specific and can only be evaluated within this context and time period.

Before beginning the case-study portion of the paper, it is important to understand the context in which the study occurred and provide information behind how this program could be carried out. As previously mentioned, I am interested in this concept of space, and understanding how sport-based programming could be applied to a variety of locations, demographics, and communities. Stemming from work in a variety of communities, I became interested in instituting programs in previously unexamined spaces when it comes to sports based programming.

In the Spring of 2013, in some work of fate, I was introduced to Professor Renford Reese, a leading political science academic from Cal Poly Pomona and the founder/director of the Prison Education Project (PEP), by a mutual colleague who heard him speak on the power of sports. After exchanging a few emails, we decided to meet in person to simply discuss sports as a social change agent. With very little idea about all the successes and accomplishments of Professor Reese, I assumed this would be a friendly chat between two sports enthusiasts. I did not know his extensive track record of personal sports achievements, the multitude of publications he has authored, his revered status at Cal Poly Pomona, or the incredible scope and effectiveness of his organization, the Prison Education Project. Professor Reese became a great inspiration to me and incited my initial desire for collaboration.

Our conversation morphed from the aforementioned discussion between sports enthusiasts to one centered around involvement, change, and future collaborations between two people who truly believe in the power of the sports. I remember so vividly Reese stating, “you should teach in the prison,” I recall feeling both humbled and horrified. I had never played soccer in prison, taught in a prison, or even been to a prison of this caliber. I agreed to take on this challenge and join the Prison Education Project in the Fall of 2013. That night I went home I began furiously scrambling to put together a syllabus, trying to include all of the lectures, readings, films, and stories that motivated me to pursue a degree in a sports related field. The next morning I called Dr. Reese and told him about my plan to conduct a class centered on guest lectures, films to supplement the lectures, and actual physical play. Dr. Reese was excited about the prospects of this course – he saw how its unconventional elements could work well in this unconventional setting. I realized how much importance he felt resides in making learning work relevant to the learners at hand, which was a continued goal throughout the project. Professor

Reese enthusiastically approved this plan and the class was scheduled to launch in October of 2013.

In September 2013, after the summer break, I returned to the PEP preparation and discussed with my academic advisor and four-year mentor, Nigel Boyle, the prospect of him joining the PEP team and teaching the course with me. I attribute much of my current involvement in soccer-based programming in social justice contexts to my work with Professor Boyle, a political scientist at Pitzer. After two years on the varsity soccer team at my college, I realized my interest and energy was no longer in playing at the college level. Soccer was, as it is for many girls from my neighborhood in the Midwest, *my thing*. I felt anxious with the prospect of losing something that had been such a large part of my identity. Throughout my last season, during this time of confusion, I was simultaneously helping as a teaching assistant in Professor Boyle's class, "Soccer as a Vehicle for Social Change." It was there that I realized soccer's reach in other spheres beyond the field. The previous summer I had traveled with Professor Boyle and other educators, to Germany to study the women's world cup, only superficially understanding, at the time, the depth of the social change themes we were looking into. Professor Boyle's class brought those concepts home with force and I felt energized by the thought of retaining this aspect of my identity, and pushing it to new limits, that would fuse my arising understanding and passion for issues of social justice. From there, I collaborated with Professor Boyle on several more projects.

As previously mentioned, I wanted the inmates to engage with the course material on a variety of levels and from a wide range of voices. I could think of no better individual than Professor Boyle, one of the most knowledgeable soccer scholars I know, to partner with. Professor Boyle's extensive knowledge and experience with soccer programming made him the

perfect fit for this enticing collaboration. After the first several meetings, it became clear that we both had personal goals for the project that would work well in tandem – I, of course, was looking forward to implementing the research into my thesis, and he, as the Associate Dean of Global-Local Programs, looked forward to morphing this project into a sustained program that other students could access over the years. I, too, was interested in the sustainability of this program and that the prison could continue to experience exposure to this kind of education that can be so beneficial on a variety of cognitive and emotional levels. The team naturally fell into place.

### ***Prison Education Project: An Overview***

The Prison Education Project is a volunteer program that provides educational opportunities to inmates in California's thirty-three state prisons and the state's juvenile facilities. The program is centered on the idea of creating a prison-to-school pipeline by utilizing resources from college and universities. PEP aims to bridge these institutions by utilizing faculty and student volunteers to help foster an academic space of learning in the prison. There is a college within a fifteen-twenty mile radius of each of the state's thirty-four prisons. PEP aims to collaborate with CDCR in efforts to lower recidivism rates and aid in the rehabilitation process for individuals incarcerated and on parole. The program believes that education is the key to reducing recidivism and aiding in the development and growth of the inmates. The program takes an "inside and outside approach," and this is unlike any other program offered in the country.<sup>118</sup> PEP has a seven-week program within the prisons themselves, and a seven week program, The Reintegration Academy, offered on the outside for recent parolees.

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<sup>118</sup> Ernst Fenelon Jr., interview with author.

As mentioned above, PEP also revolutionizes prison education by not only engaging with inmates on the inside, the program also has an outside component called the Reintegration Academy, where recent paroles are brought to a college campus for ten weeks. Individuals are immersed in academic, life skills, and career development modules. The “inside-outside approach” is incredibly valuable. In an interview with program coordinator Ernst, he discussed the impact on participants who are able to complete seven week’s of PEP and then enroll in Reintegration Academy for another seven weeks upon parole. There is a current participant in the Reintegration Academy, who completed the PEP program and is currently interviewing at Pitzer College for the New Resources Program, a program geared toward students ages, twenty-five and older, who are seeking a college degree. Ernst described this scenario as the “exact vision Dr. Reese had,” when beginning the program in 2011.

For the sake of this paper I will discuss “the inside” aspect of PEP’s programming, which are seven-weeks in duration with one session at ninety minutes per week. These sessions are offered fall, spring, and winter. The program is open to all inmates, and participation in the class is voluntary. PEP educational programs include: Academic Orientation, Tutoring in Pre-GED Math and Literacy, Career Development, Enrichment Courses, an Interdisciplinary Enrichment Program, and the case-study that I am discussing was an enrichment course entitled *The History and Politics of World Soccer*.

Ernst described the PEP seven-week program as an “appetizer, a starter” he said, “we aren’t the full meal.” Instead the “idea is to plant seeds, spark ideas, create initiatives amongst the inmates to take action.”<sup>119</sup> With that notion in mind, for the duration of the chapter I will provide an in-depth analysis of two seven-week PEP programs in the California Rehabilitation

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<sup>119</sup> Ernst Fenelon Jr., interview with author.

Center. There are many different voices, stories and perspectives; this is my analysis on the enrichment module titled, *The History and Politics of World Soccer*.

### ***California Rehabilitation Center***

May 8th, 2012 was the first time I visited the California Rehabilitation Center; I drove up to the prison gates and saw an infrastructure that to me, resembled army barracks. There were rows and rows of buildings covering an area of ninety-eight acres. California Rehabilitation Center is one of California's "best" prisons and is intended to hold 1,800 inmates.<sup>120</sup> The state's "best" facility is now home to a cramped 3,615.<sup>121</sup> Parts of the buildings, built in the 1920s, are so out-of-date that electricity shuts off during rainfalls to protect the inmates from electrocution.<sup>122</sup> During heavy rainfall, the dorms and the classroom are excessively leaky. There are very little amenities, there is no air conditioning and no heating, and the facilities are not up to par with today's standards.<sup>123</sup> The prison is a Level II facility, with both open dormitories and large hundred man dormitories. Outside of the prison gates, the natural beauty of the area is tranquil with a lake just south of the facilities, mountains off in the distance. Dr. Reese discusses the infrastructure of the facilities adding, "in terms of infrastructure it is not one of the best, the newer facilities are the best in terms of infrastructure, but again bricks and mortars are not everything that makes a space."<sup>124</sup> Dr. Reese continues to argue that the environment becomes electric through it's programming and surrounding beauty. All men are serving a sentence of ten years or less, with the average term in CRC being four years. The facility places a large emphasis

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<sup>120</sup> John Pomfret, "California's Crisis In Prison Systems A Threat to Public." Washington Post. 2009, 1.

<sup>121</sup> "California Department of Corrections & Rehabilitation," [http://www.cdcr.ca.gov/Facilities\\_Locator/CRC-Institution\\_Stats.html](http://www.cdcr.ca.gov/Facilities_Locator/CRC-Institution_Stats.html)

<sup>122</sup> Pomfret, "California's Crisis In Prison Systems A Threat to Public."

<sup>123</sup> Zach Parker, interview with author, April 17, 2014.

<sup>124</sup> Renford Reese, interview with author, April 17, 2014.

on rehabilitation and dedicates much of their attention to such related programming. Despite the old “bricks and mortars” the prison is known for being the most progressive in the state. The prison hosts a variety of programs such as the Actor’s Gang, Substance Abuse Program, College Programs, and the Prison Education Project.<sup>125</sup>

Once slated to close by 2012, CRC is overcrowded and bursting at its seams, it is understaffed, and its oldest architecture dates almost a century back. The closing of the state prison would have saved California \$1.5 billion a year.<sup>126</sup> In 2013, however, Governor Jerry Brown changed the blueprint that was outlined the year before for the closing of the facility, stating that the prison will remain open.<sup>127</sup>

### ***Social Development: Contextual Change***

This chapter will transition into measuring social capital, as previously stated social capital has become the popular term to discuss the notion of sociability. For the sake of this chapter I will understand social capital at its core to mean the idea that positive social relationships can have positive consequences for an individual and community.<sup>128</sup> The normative social capital in prison is gang related and based around a colloquial politics of race. This results in stark divisions in terms of race, where prison gangs enforce racial divisiveness through rules around association and boundary crossing.<sup>129</sup> In turn prison gangs offer protection and resources to affiliates and members, which can be considered a positive benefit.

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<sup>125</sup> Zach Parker, interview with author.

<sup>126</sup> The Press-Enterprise. "NORCO: State proposes closing prison."

<sup>127</sup> Jim Miller "PRISONS: Norco facility will stay open, governor says." The Press-Enterprise .

<sup>128</sup> Spaaij, *Sport and Social Mobility: Crossing Boundaries*.

<sup>129</sup> Susan Phillips, *Wallbangin: Graffiti and Gangs in L.A.* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999).



I will explore new forms of social capital around soccer programming either developed or intersected with existing forms of gang-related social capital.<sup>130</sup> Trust and support are integral parts of obtaining social capital -- two entities that sport programming can facilitate. Sports can be considered "a form of social capital that can 'bridge' social relations effectively, fostering community development, upward mobility and attainment of individual or social goals."<sup>131</sup> Sport and physical activities can provide inmates a meaningful vehicle for both social and personal development, leading to the forging of relationships and their potential positive outcomes, i.e. social capital.<sup>132</sup> Social and individual progress can be evaluated in a variety of ways. Here, I will measure the benefits in the following ways:

1. Social Cohesion
2. Minimization of masculine facade
3. Personal development
4. Interpersonal development

I chose the above four categories based off my own findings. It is important to note that this project is intentional, controlled, and within the support of a larger umbrella program. Professor Boyle argues that what makes this idea of sport and programming unique is the outside impact on an internal space. For example, when looking at the yard, one can see the yard as high politicized, where people move about according to their own rules and regulations. Ernst discusses this notion,

Oh yeah, the yard absolutely is politicized. It is completely politicized in how people move about and who gets access to what. Whenever you deal with groups of people and you have limited resources than you end up having a structure rather than a free flow where everybody can do whatever. Blacks will have the basketball courts; they'll play on this court. Somewhere along the lines it was established than it becomes known. You come in and you know

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<sup>130</sup> Tony Rafael, *The Mexican Mafia*. (New York: Encounter Books, 2009).

<sup>131</sup> Spaaij, "The Social Impact of Sport: Cross-Cultural Perspectives."

<sup>132</sup> Digennaro, "Playing in the jail: sport as psychological tool for inmates," 5.

you have to look for your own kind to know, 'well ok *that's* the basketball court I can play on.' It is a question of survival.<sup>133</sup>

The recreation and sports exist within the social structure prescribed to the yard, this takes the agency away from the individual. This program is significant in a variety of realms, and in regards to actual play, Professor Boyle and I aimed to create a recreational space outside the conventional prison spaces, like the yard, and into nonconventional ones, like the handball court, in an effort to de-politicize the actual physical setting in which we were working.

Later in the chapter, I will discuss successes and challenges in the program within the constraints of institutional rules and the informal social rules prescribed by the inmates themselves and gang affiliations outside the prison context. First, though, it is important to understand that this program provided an alternative set of rules and perspectives. Professor Boyle states that, "when you've got an external actor, there is some other agent that is coming in that is then fermenting this activity, that is what changes things from the normal programming that they get."<sup>134</sup> In other words, we thought that our status as "outsiders" (though often fraught in community work) would work with our agenda to de-politicize the space we were trying to create. Simply the fact that we were not a part of these socially created and enforced rules, the fact that we did not exist on one side or the other of a certain boundary, had potential for altering the atmosphere. Undoubtedly this raised many anxieties and apprehensions relating to my positionality and privilege as someone who is "free" and also an upper class, white, undergraduate student. In the same vein, we also had no explicit roles to play in these games, so perhaps the inmates could relax theirs too, if only for ninety minutes once a week.

***Class at the Prison: The History and Politics of World Soccer***

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<sup>133</sup> Ernst Fenelon Jr., interview with author.

<sup>134</sup> Nigel Boyle, interview with author, April 18, 2014.

Sport and education have been associated throughout history with notions of social mobility, social capital, and social transformation.<sup>135</sup> Dr. Reese discussed the power of sports arguing, “sports [are] inspirational, in so many ways. It brings people together, it creates a esprit de corps, it creates a team spirit. It creates talking points. A chance for people to story tell and in many ways that is what our society is lacking. We are lacking these shared experiences that we can talk about.”<sup>136</sup> Our soccer-based program was implemented both within the Sensitive Need Yard, commonly referred to as the “Uppers,” and with the General Population, or the “Lowers.” The syllabuses did change throughout the duration of the courses, but the initial syllabus for the program on the Uppers and Loweres can be found in Appendix B and Appendix C respectively. The course is centered on High-Impact Practices, the concept that participants benefit from programming when they are engaged on a variety of levels. As Professor Boyle argues,

normal classes revolve around class time, examinations, and papers. But I think if you can mix it up and do other kinds of activities and projects that this creates a lot of possibilities for students to engage with ideas in different ways. Internships, fieldtrips, group projects. This just creates a different set of educational opportunities and I think it is really valuable. Of course the beauty of soccer, particularly of playing pick-up soccer is that it gets to this idea of everyone getting out on the field and once you are on the field you are just a player. Whether they are inmates, or students, men or women, old or young, everyone can get out there and have this interaction and then *learn* from it.<sup>137</sup>

The course was based on learning outside the conventional classroom context. As noted in the syllabus, the inmates were able to “mix it up” by action-based learning including discussions with filmmakers, pick-up soccer, and a tournament with undergraduate students.

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<sup>135</sup> Nicholson and Hoye, *Sport and Social Capital*, 94.

<sup>136</sup> Renford Reese, interview with author, April 17, 2014.

<sup>137</sup> Nigel Boyle, interview with author, April 18, 2014.

The programs were each two months in duration but the preparation, research and evaluation extended well beyond this time period. Nonetheless, it is important to understand the span of my research. While the programs diverged based on the inmate population and other factors which will be outlined later in this chapter, both of the programs began with the same multi-faceted goal: to deliver educational programming through soccer while simultaneously developing an alternative sense of community. Research has shown that there needs to be an increase in programs in prisons that increase inmates knowledge of health, strengthen their self-efficacy, and activities that promote positive physical and mental health.<sup>138</sup> This fueled the creation of the program that embodies these important realizations that rehabilitation practices need to occur through physical activities and intellectual stimulation. I want to emphasize that these only represent that on the micro-level and should not be taken as a generalization for larger themes.

### ***Overview***

Our class was divided into three parts that I will label as: *educational development*, *physical play* and *shared introspection*. Prison based sport-programs tend to be classified under either recreation, health or education, and I aimed to bridge all three.<sup>139</sup> One of PEP's main philosophies is that a person can only rehabilitate or maximize their success by integrating the mind, body, and soul. As Dr. Reese points out in a later interview,

Your mind- you are what you read, how you engage, how you examine, how you deconstruct. Your body is your temple, you only have one. How you exercise, what you consume. And then, your spirit, just being a spiritual personal, just being a humble

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<sup>138</sup> Loeb, Susan, & Steffensmeier, Darrell, "Older Male Prisoners: Health Status, Self-Efficacy Beliefs, and Health-Promoting Behaviors." *Journal of Correctional Health Care*, 12(4), (2006), 269-278.

<sup>139</sup> Rosie Meek, *Sport in Prison* (New York: Routledge, 2014), 19.

person. I think all three of those have to be synchronized in order for a person to reach their optimal potential. Because what does it mean to be mentally fit if you don't have physical fitness? And what does it mean to be mentally and physically fit, if you don't have any spiritual fitness? You are going to have a void, something would be missing. As you can see the benefits of sports are central to PEP.<sup>140</sup>

With PEP's philosophy in mind, the course was centered on targeting these three elements. The beginning of the class was centered on education and theory-based learning. The session was conducted similar to a college-level course in a socratic-seminar format. The inmates engaged deeply with the readings, participated in discussions and reflected in writing prompts. The topics varied though soccer was the common thread. This portion of the class was centered on themes of globalization, economics and gender equality. Physical play entered the class on the fourth session and this section was centered on educational practice through physical activity. As the inmates now had a better academic connection to the game, actual play was introduced as a reinforcement mechanism, or *plus sports* mechanism, to translate theory into practice. The main goal of classes 4-6 was to develop a community and break down barriers. The actual play is believed to relieve personal and community anxiety, anger, and under-stimulation. This is also set up to create a culture of trust not only between the participants but also between the participants and facilitators, or persons with power.

Once a level of trust has been achieved through physical play, the remaining portion of the class is spent developing relationships and communicating. Part of this comes through shared introspection, the intentional discussing of intrapersonal and interpersonal relationships in an intentional space. Often times in the prison setting inmates are on stimulus "overload," and Hans Toch, mentioned in an earlier chapter, relates privacy to introspection, outlining that the complex

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<sup>140</sup> Renford Reese, interview with author, April 17, 2014.

inner life needs protection from outside disturbances.<sup>141</sup> This portion is highly reflective, aiming to have the participants evaluate their psychosocial well being and personal fulfillment.

### **The Uppers**

In October of 2013, we launched the first installment of soccer-based programming in the California Rehabilitation Center. The program was in the “uppers,” a small fenced-in area amidst the larger prison population. Unlike the lower yard, this small, densely populated area has no green recreational space. This area is the protective custody or sensitive-need yard, this population consists of people who have opted out of prison gangs, sex offenders, or law officers, people who are in this yard need a protective environment. In the uppers there are no race politics and as Dr. Reese states, “in many ways these people have been ostracized from their own prison community.”<sup>142</sup> The area consists of dorms, medical facilities, academic classrooms, and a small cement area for recreation.

The first time I arrived in the upper yard I saw men waiting in line to get processed to go to the academic buildings. Those that were not waiting to attend classes were idling on the cement yard or playing basketball or handball. The yard seemed eerily quiet to me, the men either running or walking around the perimeter with headphones in or talking quietly to one or two other people. The buildings are falling apart, they are pale and noticeably old. The general feel of the space is somewhat lifeless, where most of the movement is exerted by many black cats that live inside the buildings that were blocked off and no longer in use. “The Uppers” rest on top of a small hill looking over the lower yard. I walked into the classroom which was held in a small room, with one little window without any light - the thick, black bars blocked all the light.

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<sup>141</sup> Hans Toch, *Living in Prison* (New York: The Free Press, 1977), 27.

<sup>142</sup> Renford Reese, interview with author, April 17, 2014.

### *Social Cohesion*

Though the social capital theory is my foundation, considering social cohesion is also important. Social cohesion is the umbrella theory arguing that a cohesive society experiences low levels of social conflict and an abundance of strong social bonds (i.e. social capital). Vermeulen and Verweel cite Putnam stating that social capital is a measure of social cohesion, “communities or societies that produce more or less social capital show, as a consequence, more or less social cohesion.”<sup>143</sup> Through the three-step program, the classroom conveyed components of a socially cohesive society. A part of social cohesion is that a community works together for the benefit of all its members. This came through in the classroom because of an unfortunate language barrier; there were multiple Spanish-speaking inmates, and because the lectures and discussions were entirely in English, the inmates would sit in clusters throughout the classroom. These groups tended to be intergenerational, with the younger men helping out older inmates. During lectures, free-writes, and films the inmates were grouped together discussing the material and answering the prompts. It is important to reiterate here that, without the luxury of candid interviews, my findings are purely observational and gleaned from what must seem to be minor feats, but felt like huge progress at the time. The grouping of Spanish-speaking males did not materialize until the third lesson, and continued to grow in number and regularity as the class progressed. That all said, the fact that we framed the class around soccer made it more universally understandable as it was an accessible “language” to all. However, this impediment was overcome through the creation of bonds.

Outside of the classroom, in the game aspect of the program, components of social cohesion were realized as well. One of the games was in a closed space and the other was in the

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<sup>143</sup> Spaaij, "The Social Impact of Sport: Cross-Cultural Perspectives," 100.

center of the Upper Yard with dozens of spectators. Since this population is highly educated and not gang affiliated, the games created a community, even if it was only situational. At the simplest form, the whole group, including a Professor and Student, were sharing in a collective experience. Before the matches, we would all set up the goals, create the field, pass out jerseys and talk strategies, these minute tasks are bigger in scope than one might assume. We all had to work together in order to make the game happen. John, one of the inmates, had recently gotten his wisdom teeth removed, he was put in charge of keeping score on the whiteboard adjacent to the field. As one can imagine, many of the goals were not automatically counted without negotiation. Some of the shots were too high, some of the players were offsides, used their hands and so on. In order to carry out the match, we all had to be in agreement of the rules and work together to determine the points, field perimeters, fouls and other subjective rules. Opposite to the *educational development* section, *physical play* gives way to autonomy. In the classroom, the agenda was more structured, Professor Boyle and I had in class objectives and were focused on carrying out session similar to that of a college level course. Though it was participatory in nature, the agenda was set and planned out beforehand. In the game, collaboration was our only option, a man could not pass a ball without another man receiving it and continuing the passing sequence. Soccer is a team sport; it survives on trust, communication, and respect. The game itself gives way to the development of social cohesion and many of the activities carried out during *physical play* lend themselves to the formation of new friendships and group work.

Four months after the class concluded, we met with the original group to conduct a single session to evaluate the progress of the program and receive feedback (See Appendix F). Though some men did not attend, nine of the inmates who had attended all of the previous fall sessions were present. One-hundred percent of their responses read that they made new friends in the



class and have kept in frequent and close contact with them. This might seem expected given that these men are incarcerated and essentially living within the same small-fenced in area but talking more with the inmates, however, many of them live in different dorms, attend different classes, and work different shifts and they said that the majority of the time they all get together is during soccer tournaments or pick-up matches.

### *Minimization of masculine façade*

It is a common critique that prison spaces both create and reinforce notions of masculinity, most commonly associated with character traits such as aggression and violence.<sup>144</sup> Many prisoners refer to the hard masculine exterior as “frontin” and numerous spaces in the prison lend themselves to bolstering this hard exterior. For example, prison dress itself - baggy or sleeveless shirts, or more commonly no shirts at all - promotes the necessity to show arm muscles and brawn. The one-site recreational yard primarily consists of people working out and interacting and this is often their only time to congregate in large groups of people in a less structured manner. Due to the fact that these events happen sparingly, they become even more of a venue to show of bodily appearance or social prowess if only for a couple hours out of every day. Sports, in comparison, give way to a more positive display of competition, where men have a venue to exert their domination, control, and pent up energy.

I argue that the organized nature of our program in fact breaks down these facades of masculinity rather than reinforces them. In America, soccer is popularly upheld to be the more “feminine sport” compared to America’s most popular sports such as, football, hockey, basketball, and wrestling. Though this sentiment varies based on culture, soccer is still seen to

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<sup>144</sup> Meek, *Sport in Prison* 18.

express finesse, it is aesthetically pleasing, held together by a delicate string of mesmerizing passes. The fact that we were playing soccer, as opposed to something typically more macho or “showy,” immediately lowered the necessity to “front” to the typical degree.

Another fundamentally shifting factor was my presence. The men had never played soccer with a female before, and once I entered the field the game changed. Instead of the men blindly driving into the ball, attempting to kick it as hard and feverishly as possible, the game became a continual series of passes. Another factor was the diversity of skill - many of the men had never played the sport before. When we began to play, all “fronts” were diluted and the men were focused on the fundamentals of the game. Their mindsets were fixated on the offside rule, trapping the ball with the instep, making sure the planters foot was pointed in the direction of the receiver. Though these may seem simple, to a beginner in their mid-twenties these bodily movements can be awkward and unnatural. In theory these skills can be translated off the field, where the men could feel a sense of pride over a goal they had work relentlessly to master.

### ***Personal Development***

Keeping in mind the limited timeframe of the program, the personal development of the inmates is challenging to measure. Within the scope of the project, the inmates underwent mental, physical, and emotional development. In the *educational development* section of the program, the men were encouraged to develop their analytical skills, required to write two papers, complete three in class writing prompts and engage in weekly discussion and lecture-based classes. The educational component encouraged inmates to think analytically and for the majority of them the seminar-style class was their first introduction to advanced college level courses.

The class challenged many of their preconceived notions in regards to course themes. For example, the inmates completed a writing assignment about gender equality in sports, sexualization of women athletes, and media's portrayal of women in sports. The men engaged in a classroom discussion about these issues, then wrote about it, and they even played soccer with a woman, which was for many, working against cultural stigmas. While evaluating their growth and development is difficult, their writing samples detail a tremendous amount of maturity and lesson retention. Chris, one of the inmate participants concluded his paper stating,

Since Title 9, though tough, gender equality both on and off the field is slowly being brought forward. Objectification, I believe is a definite factor when women are viewed representing what they do or how they're used to draw men's attention to them. We are at the age now of a gender revolution, both on and off the field. Still in it's infancy however, we have much to learn and accept in a world that for most of time has been run by men. Go Hillary!

Soccer facilitated an introductory discussion on gender and feminism, topics that are not usually explored in classrooms, especially those within prisons. Soccer was a tool to discuss politics through a gender and feminist perspective.

Theory-based understanding through a soccer lens in conjunction with action-based learning creates a strong accessible curriculum. The inmates also watched two films, *Pelada* and *Gringos At The Gate*, and carried out discussions with their respective filmmakers. While both films were incredibly well received, *Gringos At The Gate* and the discussion with the writer/producer/director/creator Pablo Miralles raised important questions on individual, racial and cultural identity. The film is a chronology of history between America and Mexico, and through the soccer, it covers both USA Vs. Mexico 2010 World Cup Qualifiers and the 2011 Gold Cup final, while interviewing fans, players, and by-standers. While many of the inmates were Mexican-Americans, they were able to connect to this dichotomy and the struggle of self-

identification. Through a lively discussion, the inmates shared personal stories and their own connection to stories seen in the film.

In that same vein, the final section of the class, *shared introspection*, provides an intentional space for a personal dialogue. The inmates completed in class writing prompts and led discussions centered on rehabilitation and recovery. This section was vital in connecting these larger class themes and physical play to their own personal rehabilitation. After an anonymous survey, 100% of participants answered that the class content and activities aided in their rehabilitation process. Juan stated that the class was, “an escape for me from the loneliness and isolation of being locked up. It liberates me and makes me feel good.”

Due to budget cuts and the rise in the prison population, inmates are continually in flux. Each week, one of the inmates, John, would shake my hand, thank me for my dedication to the program, and every time tell me he would give his homework to classmate to hand in for him. The first several times he did this, I thanked him and left, after a few weeks I asked John why he gave me the same message each week when he had the best attendance without a single absence. John answered by telling me that CRC was transporting two buses of inmates a week, out of state, with no warning. Born and raised in Southern California, John had never lived elsewhere and the threat of being transported to Arizona haunts him daily. The CRC staff later told me that inmates enrolled in these programs were often the lowest priority in terms of being transported out of state. Thus, in a very tangible way, their enrollment in the program, despite John's convictions, actually ensured a sense of stability; if they took the class, they were more likely to stay at Norco. Stability is not to be discounted in terms of growth - one has a better chance of developing intellectually and emotionally if they have some firm ground to walk on.

### ***Interpersonal Development***

My belief is that any positive social connection or interaction will benefit someone's emotional wellbeing. While social cohesion focuses more on the interconnectedness of the larger class as a whole, interpersonal development is based more on smaller relationships and person-to-person connection. The game exists and continues because of a pass between two individuals. The class fostered both group work, but also one on one interactions. Before the soccer games began, men would pass amongst themselves. A participant reflected on the program stating, "It's helped me to forget my problems and has helped me to make new friends." The course created an opportunity for the inmates to talk and play in smaller groups with people they did not know. As Altman discussed the notion of privacy refers to a variety of interpersonal events, relationships among people, which can be person-to-person, person-to-group, group-to-person or group-to-group. The course aimed to create a variety of interpersonal events, which ranged in scope.

Alan Westin discusses in *Privacy and Freedom*, four states of privacy and one of them discusses this notion of "social units." As both Westin and Altman state, there are a variety of ways a person desires to separate from others; these can include solitude, intimacy anonymity, and reserve.<sup>145</sup> During the evaluation session, four months after the regular program, Chris said that this class would indeed assist in rehabilitation because "it is a way to interact with people and build healthy relations. I love it." Chris also discussed the importance of physical exercise to create a "healthy body and mind." Not only did the inmates interact with other inmates but they were able to connect with me and Professor Boyle. Thus, both bonding and bridging social capital was developed and impacted not only the participants but also the facilitators. Through observations and personal narratives, I have witnessed the potential for this program to create

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<sup>145</sup> Alan Westin, *Privacy and freedom* (New York: Atheneum, 1970).

change within the program sessions but most importantly introduce these habits and practices to last beyond just the duration of the session period.

### **The Lowers**

The second course was in February of 2014 and it took place in a small classroom with five forward facing benches. The room was hot and dark; there was a small piece of cardboard covering the window and a large metal fan blowing hot air throughout. There was a small television in the back of the room broadcasting a fuzzy daytime sitcom. I turned off the television and turned to look at the students. I saw nine men staring back at me. The class began with a simple questionnaire to get the men to think about the role sports have played in their lives. Two weeks later, we had laid the foundation, completed the initial lessons and decided to have our first soccer game.

As Professor Boyle and I began to divide the men into teams I heard my name coming from a participant to my left. "We won't play with them," he said. "It don't matter the gym or game, it's nothing personal. It just is," he followed. Even though the prison is a lower level facility it is still the product of a segregationist system, where each respective group, by in large, only interact within their racial affiliations. The Latino inmates refused to play with or against the Black inmates. The inmates were both open and candid about this seemingly straightforward rule. This moment immediately challenged all I had believed as a researcher, facilitator, activist and avid believer of sport-based programming.

I remember being surprised by the non-aggressiveness of this confrontation- this simply was the reality. For the duration of the course, we abided by their rules and divided our games based on race. While the Latino inmates were on the field, the Black inmates watched from the sidelines and vice versa. This created an odd dynamic because of the number breakdown; the

initial *physical play* session there were two full teams of Latinos and only four Black players. As the popularity of our course spread through the main yard, later sessions up to forty Latino inmates attended and still only four Black players. The logistics of dividing playing time was complicated and felt frankly awkward. While the Latino inmates would play full court games with seven or nine a side, the Black inmates would play only a few a side in addition to Professor Boyle and myself. While I struggled in the beginning with having to succumb to these rules, that seemed inherently charged with racism, I began to understand it similar to the inmates, it just was. As a group we worked through this with a general understanding and openness to talk through these dynamics. I will highlight some of the resolutions and discuss the positive developments in regards to the racial dynamics.

As Ralph notes these prison gangs adhere to their own rules rather than those of the institution: “if an inmate breaks a gang rule, the most common punishment is death. It is difficult for prison administrators to threaten inmates with official sanctions for breaking rules when inmates’ lives depend on following the gang code.”<sup>146</sup> Because of the scope of this thesis, I am unable to provide an in-depth analysis on race and racial conflicts behind bars. In regards to the focus of my research, this conflict taught me that sports do in fact have the ability to build alliances but with limitations. Space and context play a large role in determining the success of bridging racial groups.

Unlike the sessions in the uppers, all of the class sessions, with an exception of the first class, were held in the gym. The gym space is rarely used and since their sport’s programs have been suspended, the space lies away from the main yard, secluded. As Reese argues, “the space has to interact with people, the people have to interact with the space. The space itself is empty,

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<sup>146</sup> Paige H. Ralph, “From Self-Preservation to Organized Crime: The Evolution of Inmate Gangs” in *Correctional Contexts: Contemporary and Classical Readings*, Marquart, James W., and Jonathon Sorensen, eds.. (Los Angeles: Roxbury Publishing Company, 1997) 182-188.

it's sterile."<sup>147</sup> When Professor Boyle and I came into the prison environment, more specifically, the gym itself, this enclosed area transformed and became our classes; it was *ours*. Zach Parker, a non-custodial staff observed the majority of our sessions. Parker recalled, "By the time they got to the gym, they felt different, that is for sure. They don't feel the pressure of being in the dorms and they are out in the gym they were more open, receptive."<sup>148</sup> In efforts to carry out the course that Professor Boyle and I intended, there needed to be a collective space, both physically and symbolically. I believe that this space was obtained through consistently utilizing the gym but I also argue that soccer created a collective space in which we all were able to learn, story tell, and physically play.

### ***Social Cohesion***

Unlike the previous program in the upper yard, the program in the general population was extremely segregated. The class did bring about a cohesive nature to the classroom, but within two different groups. In regards to community, and racial ties, there is no lack of these relationships behind bars. Though minimally, I argue that the men interacted with members of other races more in our classroom than in any other spatial area of the prison. I know this through general observations, interviews with prison staff and based off the inmates saying it themselves. As Parker recalls, "You guys created this environment, a safe environment. I really think that is what it was. When everyone was in the gym and nobody was watching, nobody was there. That's why they were able to shake their hands. There is nowhere else they could do that, that can't happen out in the open. If anyone else were to see that there could be trouble back at

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<sup>147</sup> Renford Reese, interview with author, April 17, 2014.

<sup>148</sup> Zach Parker, interview with author, April 17, 2014.



the house.”<sup>149</sup> By creating this controlled and separate environment, the men were able to interact more personally with inmates from other racial backgrounds.

Recognizing the micro-level of these successes, one can understand the cohesion and change at its infancy. While these “prison politics” did not change over the duration of our program, we were able to address these issues in a non-violent, non-aggressive way. During the *educational development* section of the course, the men watched a video clip of a pick-up game between Palestinian and Israeli men. There were many parallels between that game in the Middle-East and the segregation that exists at CRC. The men asked questions about that scene and wanted to understand the conflict more in-depth. Without violence or anger, we were able to talk about racial segregation and conflict through the medium of sport.

I witnessed small interactions of reconciliation, for example, after the period ended for the day, Latino men approached the Black inmates and high-fived and patted the other on the back. Since the games were segregated, this meant that the Black inmates were watching the Latino inmates and vice versa. While the other group was on the field, those on the outskirts were cheering and attentively watching the game. There was a general feeling of support and encouragement though the field boundaries divided the groups the words and indications of respect blurred those boundaries and these small reciprocal actions can be the foundation for future social change. An inmate wrote in an anonymous survey, “the part I don’t like about this course? The segregation. I wish we could all play together.” The men were, in some capacity, able to express their “backstage” emotions in regards to the racial tensions.

The *physical play*, though highly segregated, still managed to create the shared experience. Dr. Reese argues, “The key is trust, the key is team spirit. And then you have to

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<sup>149</sup> Zach Parker, interview with author, April 17, 2014.

have something to talk about. You have to have the type of exhilarated- you know, it's win, lose or draw. One part of competition, of course, is winning but that's just one dimension of competition. The most beautiful part of competition is the shared experience, the reflection."<sup>150</sup>

While there were obvious limitations to playing in this context, there was undoubtedly a collective experience in the gym. The men were able to build a sense of trust and cohesion, through this controlled atmosphere.

### *Minimization of masculine façade*

Since all of the sessions were conducted in a closed-area, there were no outside spectators, or any inmates present who were not participating in the program. During the initial *educational development* portion of the class, the men were slouched in their chairs, falling asleep during lectures, and not engaging in the classroom material. In efforts to encourage the students to participate we decided to divide in smaller groups. Ernst discussed,

the smaller the group, the easier it is to bridge the gap. The bigger the group you have more people who have to put on the 'face.' The face being this mask that we all wear whether it is in real society or in the prison environment. But within the prison environment, with the race-based, it is, if you get accused of crossing the line too far then there are ramifications but when you can pull people into a smaller group it allows more free flow.<sup>151</sup>

The pressure of "frontin" began to slowly diminish and the students opened up and revealed more personal and honest information. These groups were still racially diverse but the smaller group encouraged participants to not be influenced by social constraints which are upheld more rigidly within larger social settings.

We decided to introduce *physical play* earlier in the sessions than in the uppers. Unlike in the uppers, the gym did not seem to discontinue these masculine facades, rather this space

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<sup>150</sup> Renford Reese, interview with author, April 17, 2014.

<sup>151</sup> Ernst Fenelon Jr., interview with author, April 15, 2014.

seemed to heighten them. The educational development portion reinforced the racial segregation and the lectures further heightened the opportunities to exhibit power and control over the class dynamic. As oppose to recreational sports on the yard, our *physical play* was not watched. This lent itself to the men “frontin” less and many of the inmates had not played since before incarceration, or ever before. The men were beginners and in many cases let down any inhibitions. While experience and skill varied greatly between the Black and Latino men, there were “first-timers” in both groups which facilitated a nurturing environment. While these were not interracial drills, both groups would work with the beginners and teach them the fundamentals in the game. For many this game represents great cultural significance, and this allowed individuals to be a newcomer to this domain takes great courage. Through informal conversations, I learned that for many the yard is an intimidating space, that often displayed masculinity, built physical demeanor, and exerted dominance. Talking to a Latino inmate, I learned that he is ashamed to not have been introduced to this “Mexican game,” and he fears that his unknowing would portray him as a gringo or too Americanized.

### ***Personal development***

I observed that the majority of the personal development occurred during the *physical play* sector of the class. After noticing the lack of enthusiasm and attention to the educational development portion of the class, we spent the majority of the later sections playing soccer. Here, I witnessed the importance of self-efficacy, which generally means one’s belief in achieving a task, goal, or challenge and believing in their own ability to carry it out. Over half of the responses to the survey question “what did you like about last class?” had some sort of reference to teamwork and personal victory in relation to the actual game of soccer. Some of these responses were as follows, “blocking the balls shot at me,” “I felt in shape and ready,” “I was

happy because I made a great pass that ended up scoring,” “I liked that I was able to block three goals for my team,” “I liked that I scored the only goal for my team,” “passing the ball and assisting my team to score.” These personal achievements are important and within the strict prison context, these personal wins that evoke important physical and mental responses are rare. It is important to also emphasize the importance of a personal win, rather than a collective one. Ernst shares, “ I think it is the win that allows the individual to regain their own humanity versus the group humanity, or be it the group identity. That ability to think about something they did and be happy about it, that’s very important in rebuilding self-identity and self-worth, in an environment there are very few things where you win or anything is celebrated for the individual.”<sup>152</sup>

After the initial day of play, I conducted a guided free-write and discussion based on the men’s experiences. This was the crucial exercise to connect the three sections of the class. Most of the men reported that this was the first time they engaged in “feeling-based” discussions behind bars, especially within the classroom context. On the final day of class, I collected the in-class writing exercise and on the back side of the sheet Luis had scribbled in cursive, “When we are in here our mind is away from the prison. It’s like we are free. Thank you.” Two weeks after the program concluded during an interview Parker told me, “They were asking if they could just go back to the gym just to play. They say ‘can we just go back there, we just want to play, we just want to be there.’”<sup>153</sup> The men developed over the course of the seven-week program, though there were a variety of outcomes, and some men were more open about sharing than were others, overall the gym became a safe environment to allow oneself to speak freely, write freely, and play freely, of course under certain restraints.

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<sup>152</sup> Ernst Fenelon Jr., interview with author, April 15, 2014.

<sup>153</sup> Zach Parker, interview with author, April 17, 2014.

### *Interpersonal development*

As mentioned above, the class was racially divided, which inhibited interpersonal ties across racial boundaries. In the beginning of the *educational development* section of the course, the inmates sat segregated by race. When observing the classroom dynamics, I noticed that every time one inmate spoke, an inmate from another race would not speak after them. Not only were the men physically divided along racial lines, but their words were not even allowed to touch. During a brief discussion before our second session of *physical play*, I requested a new form of discussion. I told the men to imagine a web, of any kind, and notice that the web connects from a starting point to an end point. I encouraged our group to engage in a discussion like a “web,” framing the *physical play* as a reward for completing this class assignment. With the idea that everyone would need to speak at least once before the class could conclude, we circled up and began developing our small group web. The men began with a guided free write and the discussion was centered on their answers. As mentioned above, the questions were “feeling-based” and the men were not only asked to engage with their own self but also the person who spoke beforehand. Just as a web cannot exist without connections, their discussion comments could not stand alone either. This exercise proved to be successful – Latino men spoke after Black men and because of the web format, they were obliged to really listen to what the prior individual had said and from it, transform, amend, or add something new. The inmates truly engaged the others’ comments and a deeply emotional discussion unfolded.

During one of the sessions, Professor Boyle and I organized a “street soccer tournament” in the gym at CRC. The students were from the five Claremont Colleges; there were six teams, including one student team, where students from England, India and all throughout the United States played. Before beginning the tournament, everyone was responsible for introducing

themselves to at least one person they did not know. While there were more inmates than students, there were clusters of inmates talking to one student. This created smaller discussions where the racial tension subsided and the inmates and student talked interchangeably. Before this session, Parker, talked with the inmates about the diversity of Pitzer students and asked the men to think about whether they would want to engage with them, he said that all the men agreed to be respectful of student's differences. Though the inmates remained racially segregated amongst themselves, the students and inmates mixed. This was not only beneficial for the inmates but also the undergraduates who participated.

During a focus group following the street soccer tournament the students recalled thinking it was going to be "scary" and when hearing the word prison an image of "bad people" came to mind, the two phrases seemed to be synonymous. One of the students, Ami, said she was nervous to play soccer with them recalling, "what if the men were really buff and aggressive and I really had a bad bad image. But this changed it." Riley, a Pitzer student, said that, "they were very friendly. I guess I didn't really think about that. When I was there and playing with them. I totally forgot that we were in a prison and that they were convicted of something. It seemed that when we got there, we were all just on the same level as them. There wasn't any hierarchy." Another student from Pitzer, Doug, discussed his involvement in soup kitchens and how vastly different the dynamics are. It's a sense of participating *with* them, rather than serving them.

All of the students, including me, agreed that the act of playing soccer seemed reciprocal: there was no sense of service or charity, they were there to play, to have fun, and as a result I believe we all benefited greatly from the tournament. Riley said, "starting out with this sense of neutrality is so important," and Doug followed by saying, "we aren't going into my make a change or difference, we are just going into have fun." The street soccer tournament pays tribute

to the power of the game, before the games began there were students, inmates, a professor, and a film maker, as the games progressed we were all just soccer players. The sense of neutrality as Riley pointed out could not be reached without the Ludic nature of soccer, the seriousness of the impact is masked by the playfulness of the game itself.

### ***The Uppers and Lowers: Comparisons, Limitations, and Successes***

While there were numerous conclusions to be made in regards to both the successes and challenges of the program, the most resounding outcome of this case study is the emphasis on play. It is difficult to record the emotional response, but the pure lightness that comes with playing a game is noteworthy. Though there were undoubtedly limitations and obstacles, the power of sports is one aspect of the program that is clear, even while much of my evidence may be anecdotal, and not “hard science.” There is little argument to be made against the pure fun of the matches and this alone seems to be reason enough to deem this program successful. In a context where most of the men are immobile and operating on fixed timelines, the emotional responses to participating in a match creates a break from the boredom. The actual game creates a microcosm, where one can experience many of the outside emotions in a concentrated manner.

Looking closer at a soccer match we can understand this argument more in depth. The whistle blows, automatically the player must be aware of himself in the larger picture, thinking through whether they are best positioned to help their team or if their actions will cause their squad to lose. Within those initial seconds, a player must understand their positionality in the game and demonstrate personal agency within a larger group. Throughout the game, team's focus on scoring points, losing points, winning tackles, losing tackles. It is a collective experience, a simulation of larger themes taught in the class.

The starkest comparison between the two seven-week courses were the integration of inmates in the uppers and their refusal to join together in the general population. Though this is expected because of racial gang ties, it does recognize sport-based programs limitations. Ernst reflects,

Sports is an integral part of life. The challenge, of course, that you guys ran into was how do you put a program in, its not like they will automatically mix, they cant. Because when you guys leave they have to live with the consequences. However, they were able to do it within the confines of that. I think that ability lifted the environment. I think another goal of PEP, and I think the soccer program did very effectively is that for that 90 minutes we elevate them out of prison, we elevate them to just that space of being a human being. I think, that was very successfully done. When I watched the games, when everyone was just playing full out and it just didn't seem, you know it seems like they could have been on any soccer field in the world.<sup>154</sup>

While there is a certain function of sports that is able to create social change and personal growth, it is also important to recognize that there are greater social powers that can override the potentials of sports. As Ernst detailed in the above quote, there are informal social rules existing in the prison and a short program is not going to dismantle these realities altogether. Ernst suggests from his quote, and what I argue is that the space created within our class disrupted the social structure and with the presence of external actors created a new social order, within certain confines. While the program provided social capital that was situational, based off informal conversations and surveys I believe that it provided a new perspective in which to look at not only educational lessons but social interactions.

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<sup>154</sup> Ernst Fenelon Jr., interview with author, April 15, 2014.



## CONCLUSION

Illustrated in the previous chapters, sport-based programming can be produce countless benefits within the prison setting to offset some of the persistent and daily difficulties of survival in such environments. In exploring the Prison Industrial Complex, there are a variety of disciplines, viewpoints, and subcategories through which to look at these issues. I argue that more research is necessary on the topic of prisons from a spatial perspective. Prisons are a dominant part of our communal landscape, a part that some try to consciously forget and ignore its pervasiveness. Other individuals, in a perhaps more dangerous way, do not hold the fact that millions are behind bars anywhere within their consciousness – it is simply not on their radar at all. For these reasons it is vital to look at these spaces through a critical and accessible lens. To concisely summarize, I am not only exploring the built environments of prisons but instead I am providing an alternative to create a new space, both physically and symbolically, that is includes these subjugated, racialized bodies and their lived-experiences. I argue that sport-based programming in prisons can provide an alternative arena, with its own set of rules, social structure and interactions. As Dr. Reese argues,

The space itself is bland. The space itself has no significance, no meaning. It is a white slate. Then you put inmates on it, by themselves, whatever their opinion is their opinion. But they aren't going to say 'I love this place, it's dynamic.' But now you have a totally separate group come in, and they are meeting them in this space. And now this space is turned into a sanctuary, and that is what I would call it, a learning sanctuary. And now this space is being transformed into something that is dynamic, something that is magical, something that is memorable, and something that is life changing for both the inmates and the volunteers.<sup>155</sup>

The above quote is the exact idea behind the implementation of the course. The space itself can be sterile, or even harmful to inhabitants. However, with the collaboration of this “totally

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<sup>155</sup> Renford Reese, interview with author, April 17, 2014.

separate group,” i.e. the individuals from the Prison Education Project, new possibilities arose in terms of how the built environment could function. It was a new environment in which, with the temporary lessening of socialized codes, rehabilitation could occur. Throughout the seven-week session the prison environment was transformed and new forms of capital and relationships were developed. While the built environment plays a crucial role in our physical and emotional well being, it is not everything; the people inhabiting the space have the power to revolutionize it as well.

Sport-based programming and prisons can be explored in numerous ways beyond the depth of this paper. While much of the evaluations and findings were included, not all the assessments myself and the team carried out could fit into this work. Though my case study was relatively short in duration, it does provide a critical lens to look at prison space and sport-based programming. Understanding that all of the inmates had different experiences and reactions to the course, my original argument remains that sports have an ineffable impact on individuals and communities at large. Unlike recreational sports on the yard, a structured academic course on soccer provided an alternative social order where prison politics were able to be relaxed. The sessions provided inmates with a different form of social capital, one that was intentionally created and separate from the mainstream social structure. The study of sports and prisons is incredibly sparse, this paper will add to the academic discourse and provide a unique perspective on the two. This paper contributes to broader discussions surrounding The Prison Industrial Complex and the unnecessary exponential growth of these spaces, providing suggestions as for how space, both physically and theoretically can be better utilized.

The idea that space can be experienced both subjectively and objectively must be better assessed in conjunction with health. I believe that there is not enough emphasis given to

structures where inhabitants are already subjugated and in need of atmospheric encouragement. There is much more research to be done; this paper creates a foundation to understand these theories. In prisons, especially lower level facilities, the environment can play a huge role in the rehabilitation process. Within these concrete spaces, dynamic, energetic atmospheres can be created - little else creates such a collective experience as sports do.

Undoubtedly, prisons and sports will collaborate in the future, through actual practice and also the academic documentation of its success. There will undoubtedly be a grand future of collaboration between prisons and sports. In an environment where the majority of the population is already avid sport enthusiasts, sports can be used as a medium to promote varying educational programming. Instead of continually building new prisons to house current and future offenders, there needs to be more of an emphasis on rehabilitation, how space is managed, and where sports can be a critical component in the development of future programming within these contexts.

## **APPENDIX A:**

The document below provides a brief chronology of soccer-related initiatives from my undergraduate education.

### **Freshman Year:**

#### Member of the Pomona-Pitzer Varsity Soccer Team

I was a starting member of the varsity soccer team.

#### Claremont International Studies Education Project (CISEP):

Professor Nigel Boyle selected me to participate in a two-year project sponsored by the Claremont International Studies Education Project (CISEP). CISEP is a program focused on teacher development at the high school, middle school, and K-6 levels throughout low performing schools in the greater Los Angeles area. The program began in the spring of 2011, where one other undergraduate and I and twenty-five teachers participated in a 15-week, 40-hour academic component of the institute. In the summer, ten teachers and the fellow-undergraduate and I participated in the 4-week study tour of Germany where I was responsible for providing guidance and analysis of elite-level women's soccer. I was also in charge of an independent project, which was centered on Homeless Soccer. While in Germany we attended the National Homeless Soccer Championship.

### **Sophomore Year:**

#### Teaching Assistant: Soccer As a Vehicle for Social Change

I served as a teaching assistant for a freshman seminar in the fall of 2011. This class was centered on assisting Professor Boyle in the classroom and conducting fieldwork with community-based organizations. One of my main tasks throughout was organizing Pitzer's Street Soccer tournament. This was a fundraiser that coincided with National Homeless Awareness Week and aimed to not only raise funding but also awareness on issues of "houselessness."

#### Los Angeles StreetSoccer USA

In the spring semester I collaborated with Johnny Figueroa to coach the first Los Angeles StreetSoccer team. The team ranged in ages from five to sixty and all the women were affected by domestic violence. This initiative took place in Boyle Heights through Jovenes Inc. and the greater organization StreetSoccer USA. During the summer of 2012 the team competed in the national tournament held in Times Square, NYC, the team finished second place.

#### Mathare Youth Sports Association (MYSA):

In the summer of 2012, I was fortunate enough to intern with one of the leading sport and development organizations worldwide. Mathare Youth Sports Association motto is "giving youth a sporting change on and off the field." The organization is bigger than just soccer; the most lofty goals are off-field. The teams receive points for community engagement such as collecting litter in the slums and participating in HIV/AIDS awareness sessions. The champions do not just win games, but

actively engage in various environmental and social efforts, which cumulatively add to decide who wins the league championship. Through the Environmental Analysis Mellon Grant I conducted research while interning in the environmental sector of the organization.

#### TakaBin Organization

During my time in Nairobi, Kenya, I designed a waste management program in the informal housing settlements in the Eastlands of Nairobi, Kenya. The first leg of the project completed in 2012, we planted 70 trees, erected 14 bins, and incorporated 117 schools and over 22,000 users. The project's mission is to educate the resident youth on their environment by installing permanent trash bins, teaching environment education in schools and carrying out educational soccer tournaments. I developed an environment-based curriculum, which was implemented in both primary and secondary schools in the Eastlands of Nairobi. Takabin has expanded and is currently on the second phase of the project.

#### Undergraduate Research Conference on the European Union

I presented a paper entitled, *Impact of the 2011 World Cup on Women's Soccer in Europe*. The research was primarily based on fieldwork carried out the previous summer, in conjunction with academic literature.

#### **Junior Year:**

##### Major declaration: Global-Local Community Development Through Soccer

I created a self-designed major, which was based on academic coursework and extensive community work. Some related coursework include: *Political Economy of Global Football; Prison Education; Soccer, Teaching & Social Change; Soccer, Society and Development; Global-Local Link Through Teaching; Socio-Cultural Anthropology; Power and Social Change; Environment, Health and Education; Sports in Literature and Culture; Nonprofit Management; Environmental Justice; Urban Ecology*

##### Community Engagement Soccer Coordinator

I was in charge of coordinating weekly soccer games with Day Laborers from Pomona, CA. and Rancho Cucamonga, CA. The soccer games were aimed to bring together Day Laborers and create a fun and supportive atmosphere. We also aimed to raise awareness about the Pomona Economic Opportunity Center, and involve students from all the 5 colleges.

#### **Senior Year:**

##### Prison Education Project

I interned for the Prison Education Project and co-facilitated a course in the California Rehabilitation Center in Norco, CA. The class was entitled, *The History and Politics of World Soccer*.

##### Futbol Es Vida Organizing Team

I was one of the student organizers for this tournament. This tournament hosted twelve community teams and raised money for the Inland Empire Immigrant Youth Coalition (IEIYC) DACA Scholarship Fund.

## APPENDIX B:

### **The History and Politics of World Soccer/Fútbol**

Fall 2013, Thursday 10-11:30 a.m.  
California Rehabilitation Center, Norco

Professor Nigel Boyle, Pitzer College, Claremont  
Teaching Assistant Lilli Barrett-O'Keefe, Pitzer College, Claremont

This course examines topics in the history and politics of world soccer. We will see how culture, politics, economics and history play themselves out upon the stage of stadium and field, especially in North America. And we will try to understand the game as others, in different times and places, have seen it: a game freighted with meaning and beauty.

We will first examine how soccer emerged to become the world's dominant sports culture, including the FIFA World Cup and professional club soccer in Europe and the Americas. We will then explore soccer's relationship with international conflict, national identity, race, gender, international conflict and globalization. And we will play some soccer.

You will be provided with reading material for the course. There will also be three assignments: (1) a short, 1-page reflection due October 31<sup>st</sup>; (2) a group presentation due November 14<sup>th</sup>, and (3) a final 2-page reflection paper due December 5<sup>th</sup>. On two days we will be watching important films about soccer, shown by the film-makers.

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#### ***Topics, Schedule and Required Reading***

##### October 17: **Introduction: Soccer/Fútbol and World History**

Szymanski and Zimbalist "How soccer spread around the world when baseball didn't"

##### October 24: **Development of the Modern Game (including a history of soccer tactics).**

Jonathon Wilson *Inverting the Pyramid: a history of football tactics* (excerpt)

Simon Kuper Pep's Golden Rules *Blizzard* 2103

*1-page reflection paper on "History and Politics of World Soccer" due October 31<sup>st</sup>*

##### October 31: **"Soccer Studies" and Soccer as a Vehicle for Social Change**

Lilli Barrett-O'Keefe "Women's World Cup, Homeless Soccer & Soccer in an African slum"

##### **November 7: The US-Mexico Soccer Rivalry.**

Pablo Miralles will show his award-winning film "*Gringos at the Gate*"

Tom Marshall "Chilangros y Charros: Professional fútbol and Mexican identity" *XI North American Soccer Quarterly*, 2013

*10-minute group presentations due for delivery November 14<sup>th</sup>*

**November 14<sup>th</sup> Soccer/Fútbol in North America**

Ryszard Kapuscinski, *The Soccer War* (excerpt).

**November 21<sup>st</sup> Soccer as the universal game**

Gwendolyn Oxenham will show her award-winning film "Pelada"

*Final Reflection Paper (2-page) due December 5<sup>th</sup>*

**December 5<sup>th</sup> Soccer in CRC and Brazil 2014**

## APPENDIX C:

### **History & Politics of World Soccer**

Spring 2014, Friday 1-2:30 pm

Lowers, California Rehabilitation Center, Norco

Professor Nigel Boyle, Pitzer College, Claremont

Teaching Assistant Lilli Barrett-O'Keefe, Pitzer College, Claremont

This course examines topics in the history and politics of world soccer, with a special focus on the 2014 World Cup in Brazil. We will see how culture, politics, economics and history play themselves out upon the stage of stadium and field, especially in North America. We will examine how soccer emerged to become the world's dominant sports culture, including the FIFA World Cup and professional club soccer in Europe and the Americas. We will then explore soccer's relationship with international conflict, national identity, race, gender, and globalization. And we will play some soccer.

There will also be two assignments: (1) a short, 1-page reflection due March 14<sup>th</sup>; (2) a final 2-page reflection paper due March 28<sup>th</sup>.

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#### ***Topics, Schedule and Reading***

February 21<sup>st</sup>: **Introductions, Soccer/Fútbol and "The Global Game"**

Szymanski & Zimbalist "How soccer spread around the world when baseball didn't"

February 28<sup>th</sup>: **Brazil and the 2014 World Cup (Guest Speaker David Goldblatt)**

March 7<sup>th</sup> **Soccer/Fútbol in North America (including US-Mexico Soccer Rivalry).**

Tom Marshall "Chilangros y Charros: Professional fútbol and Mexican identity" *XI North American Soccer Quarterly, 2013* (Viewing of Pablo Miralles "Gringos at the Gate").

March 14<sup>th</sup> **"Soccer Studies" and Soccer as a Vehicle for Social Change**

Lilli Barrett-O'Keefe "Women's World Cup, Homeless Soccer & Soccer in an African Slum".

Pickup soccer exercise.

*1-page reflection paper on "History and Politics of World Soccer" due November 7<sup>th</sup>*

March 21<sup>st</sup>: **Soccer as the Universal Game I**

Showing of Gwendolyn Oxenham's award-winning film "Pelada"

March 28<sup>th</sup>: **Soccer as the Universal Game II**



Filmmaker Gwendolyn Oxenham will talk about her film Pelada. A pick-up soccer mini-tournament will be held.

*Final Reflection Paper (2-page) due March 28<sup>th</sup>. Answer one of these questions:*

*What does the film "Pelada" tell us about soccer played around the world?*

*Pick 2 teams competing at the World Cup in Brazil. Is the world Cup important for the national identity of these two countries?*

**April 4<sup>th</sup> Soccer in CRC and the World Cup in Brazil 2014**

**APPENDIX D:**

**History and Politics of World Soccer, Student Survey**

First Name:

Surname:

Where were you born? Where did you grow up?

Where were your parents/grandparents from?

Relationship to soccer:

1. Have you **played** a lot of soccer? In school? With friends? For club teams?
2. Have you been a **coach** or a **referee**? If so, explain.
3. Have you **watched** a lot of soccer? How much? Live or on TV?

Do you play soccer here at CRC? If so, tell us a little about it.

Do you **support** any **club** teams? If so, list in order of favorites.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

Do you **support** any **national** teams? If so, list in order of favorites.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

What do you **not know** about soccer and wish to learn?

What do you hope to get out of the course?

**APPENDIX E:**

**Final Essay**

**History and Politics of Soccer**

**Please write a 2-page paper on one of the following topics. The essay will be due Thursday December 5<sup>th</sup>.**

1. Barcelona's motto is 'More than a club' (**Més que un club**). Pick a club or national soccer team and identify its wider social and political significance.
2. What does the film "Gringos at the Gate" tell us about Mexican American identity?
3. What does the film "Pelada" tell us about soccer played around the world?

**APPENDIX F:**

**Class March 14<sup>th</sup>, 2014**  
**Free Write & Discussion**

1. How did you *feel* before coming into last session?
2. How did you *feel* after playing?
3. What were two things you *liked* about last class?
  - 1.
  - 2.
4. What were two things you *didn't like*?
  - 1.
  - 2.
5. What was one thing you *noticed* last class?
6. What was it like to *watch* the other team play?
7. What do you *remember* most about playing?

**APPENDIX G:**

**Please Answer the questions below honestly.**

1. Reflecting back, what has most affected you from the soccer class?
2. Has soccer become more involved in your life at CRC?
3. What other important information do you wish to share with us regarding your opinion about the course?
4. In what ways are you going to apply what you have learned both in your life at CRC and upon parole?
5. Have you stayed in contact with students from the course?
6. In your opinion can soccer be used to assist rehabilitation? And if so, how?

**APPENDIX H:**

1. In what ways are you going to apply what you have learned from class both in your life at CRC and upon parole?
2. Soccer is a very physical sport, but there are also mental and emotional lessons learned from it. In your opinion, what are they?
3. Have you made new friends in this course?
4. Is there anything you feel this course needs to improve on?  
    What was successful?  
    What was not?
5. In your opinion can soccer be used to assist rehabilitation? If so, how?
6. What other important information do you wish to share with us regarding your opinions about the course?

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