



Beyond Borders: Skateboarding, Skateparks and Youth-focused Sport for Development (S4D) Initiatives

Exam essay for 'Management of Sport in Society'

18 December 2020

Troy Björkman (133902)

M.Sc. Business Administration and E-business,
Copenhagen Business School (CBS)

Characters (with spaces): 33,946

Number of normal pages: 15

Beyond Boarders: Skateboarding, Skateparks and Youth-focused Sport for Development (S4D) Initiatives

Troy Björkman

ABSTRACT

While typically still grassroots and DIY-influenced, skateboarding today enjoys broad enough mainstream appeal to have carved out a place for itself in the field of sport-for-development (S4D). But to what avail? The purpose of this study is to evaluate the value of skateboarding, and by natural extension skateparks, as tools for positive youth development (PYD) work in the context of S4D initiatives. To do so, literature reviews were conducted in the fields of adolescent development through sport, critical S4D theory as well as both the activity of skateboarding itself and the socio-spatial context of skateparks. While unique attributes of the lifestyle sport – especially its non-competitive nature and focus on autonomy and creativity – were identified to serve as potentially valuable ‘hooks’ for marginalised youth, the real contribution of this paper is that of identifying skateparks – and particularly activating youth agency and responsibility in creating and managing social value from them – as prized features of skateboarding-related S4D initiatives. Thus, S4D practitioners considering employing skateboarding (or other lifestyle sports) as an element of their programmatic offerings would do well in ensuring local input involvement and ownership from day one.

Keywords: skateboarding, skateparks, positive youth development, sport-for-development

1. Introduction

Skateboarding has come a long way from its seemingly anti-establishment, rebellious roots. Skateparks can today be found in virtually every major European and North American city.

Multinational corporations such as Nike and Adidas are now some of the largest players in the industry. And the sport is set to see its Olympic debut in Tokyo 2021. Yet one still often overlooked facet of skateboarding's increasing mainstream appeal is the tendency of it being employed as a vehicle for positive personal and communal development projects in the Global South as a part of sport-for-development (S4D) initiatives. Indeed, during the past decade or so, a string of non-governmental organisations, non-profit organisations, charities and social entrepreneurial ventures have sprung up in this space. More specifically, recent survey data documents a total of 124 initiatives in 55 countries and with a total of 18,000 participants specifically at the intersection of S4D and skateboarding (Good Push, 2020). While they inevitably vary in scope, such organisations typically build skateparks and employ skateboarding as a tool for positive youth development (PYD) programming in communities around the world. But can skateboarding, that subcultural, unstructured pastime traditionally shunned, truly be an effective tool for PYD in the context of S4D?

Skateboarding forms part of a family of leisure activities that are collectively referred to as action, extreme or lifestyle sports – the last of which is increasingly the term of choice. Their collective increasing rise to prominence over the past few decades has led a select few academics to start looking into the unique characteristics that such lifestyle sports, and especially skateboarding, provide. In this regard, the aim of the present paper is to summarise and critically evaluate the literature available specifically on skateboarding as an activity and skateparks as a socio-spatial context, on the one hand, while synthesizing their potential value for the PYD and S4D field, on the other. To do so, relevant literature on PYD and S4D are similarly canvassed. The overarching goal of this literature review is twofold: first, to provide a stand-alone academic resource on the current state of knowledge in regard to skateboarding's and skateparks' ability to contribute to PYD and S4D initiatives.

The essay will proceed as follows. The second section will provide an overview on the background, ideas and relevant debates in regard to adolescent development, focusing largely on how leisure time activities and sports intersect with positive youth development (PYD). The third section then builds upon these insights to understand the arguments behind S4D as a

field of study as well as transnational field of development work. Notably, critical S4D theory is evaluated in order to provide a basis on which to then critically assess skateboarding as well. The fourth section then takes a deep dive into skateboarding as an activity, looking in particular at how skateboarding stands out in comparison to ‘traditional’ sports employed in PYD and S4D. The fifth section identifies skateparks as a unique variable in this regard and explores the extent to which this socio-spatial venue might be a particular source of value in regard to personal and communal development variables. The sixth and final section provides a broader discussion of the findings, and concludes.

2. Sport and Positive Youth Development (PYD)

Adolescents (herein aged 11-21) spend roughly 40% of their lives having ‘leisure’ time, and sport is the most common activity in which youth engage during those periods (Larson and Verma 1999). Consequently, the extent to which different leisure-time sport activities impact adolescent development has been of notable interest for society, and thus scholars (Holt, 2016).

Academics broadly agree that leisure-time activities such as sports may contribute to the development of adolescents (Witt and Caldwell, 2005; McNeal, 1999; Eccles and Barber, 2001; Hirschi, 1969). As such, the question has rather been what kind of activities are the most effective in having positive impacts. In this regard, the structural dimension of leisure activities has traditionally been seen as a key point of reference. Osgood et al.’s *routine activity theory* (1996) argued that structured activities – such as organised sports – are better for adolescent development because of two interrelated reasons. First, because structured activities are typically provided routinely, thus offering less opportunities to engage in deviant behaviour because one is not doing ‘nothing’, like hanging out (Caldwell and Smith, 2006). Second, because structured activities typically provide social control from authority figures, which prevents adolescents from engaging in negative behaviour during the activity itself (Osgood et al., 1996). In essence, thus, this can be understood as a *filled time perspective* –

time filled with (authority overseen) prosocial activities cannot be filled with deviant activities (Caldwell and Smith, 2006). On a policy level, this has meant that occupying adolescents with activities has received considerable importance, and given the centrality of structured sports, this has received the most attention.

While most research on specific impact of structured sport participation specifically have been conducted in the US and Europe, is somewhat out of date, and thus not necessarily universally applicable, the results are certainly worthy of note. In comparison to non-participants, adolescents who took part in organised sports have been identified as achieving higher academic performance as well as staying more total years active in tertiary education (Barber et al. 2001; Holt 2016). Female participants have been found to report lower rates of early sexual intercourse, even when controlling for race, age, quality of family relations, etc. (Miller et al. 1998). And finally, across the board, those youth that participate in organised sports have been found to engage much less in use of cigarettes, marijuana, cocaine and ‘other drugs’ (Audrain-McGovern et al. 2006; Page et al. 1998). In the western context of organised sports at least, then, there seems to be a correlation between participation of sports and refrainment from anti-social behaviour. Although it is crucial to note that most of these early studies are indeed *correlational*, meaning causality cannot be directly demonstrated.

The conflation of ‘structured’ (or ‘organised’) activities with ‘filled time’ has meant that research (and consequent policymaking) has focused almost exclusively on traditional, organised sports, while the potential impact of more unstructured leisure activities (such as skateboarding) on adolescent development has received scant attention. Nevertheless, the scholarship on organised sport for PYD has identified some drawbacks of traditional sports that might illuminate the value of non-organised sport. Most centrally, perhaps, is that of the competitiveness of most traditional sports. Hansen et al. (2003) were the first to suggest that ‘competition may limit the development of collaborative skills and expose youth to negative experiences that challenge their character’. While more recently, in the context of Physical Education (PE) policy, Beaumont and Warburton (2019) similarly question whether

traditional structured sports, which tend to be underpinned by values and discourses of competition, comparison and winning, are truly the most effective for PYD purposes. Furthermore, while the duality of ‘structured’ vs ‘unstructured’ has meant that sports and hobbies lacking guidance by an adult has typically been grouped in the same category as watching TV or just “hanging out”, this misnomer is increasingly being identified. For example, Abbot (2007) notes that “[a]ctivities such as unstructured sports or hobbies, although not structured or guided by an adult, may possess characteristics similar to structured activities” which “may be guiding or learning from their peers”. Indeed, in the most recent review of the topic, Säfvenbom et al. (2018) concluded that lifestyle sports “should not be considered unorganized but self-organized” and “[t]hese contexts may support positive development, not in spite of, but *because of* the lack of strict rules, formal leaders or a priori performance goals.” (emphasis added).

In summary, it could be said that sport, as a whole, has certainly been shown to be associated with positive development outcomes amongst adolescents. And while unstructured, ‘self-organised’ sports such as skateboarding have traditionally not been associated with (nor indeed studied) in the context of positive youth developmental outcomes, nascent perspectives as well as increasing contemporary participation suggest that they might be well-positioned to provide added value in the field.

3. Sport for Development (S4D)

The sport-for-development (S4D) field comprises actors, organisations, policies and programmes which employ sport as a tool for social development, often in the context of youth in the Global South. (Schulenkorf, et al., 2016). More specifically, S4D has been defined as “the use of sport to exert a positive influence on public health, the socialisation of children, youths and adults, the social inclusion of the disadvantaged, the economic development of regions and states, and on fostering intercultural exchange and conflict resolution” (Lyras & Welty Peachey, 2011). As such, while heavily informed by the research

on sport and PYD canvassed above, S4D takes a societally broader outlook to consider how sports can be used as a tool for broader societal change, typically with a geographically narrower focus on the non-western, ‘developing’ world.

S4D initiatives and organisations are numbered in the thousands and so differ vastly. And as such, the professed methods by which proponents argue that sport enact positive social change vary considerably. Yet in the context of S4D initiatives aimed at PYD in underprivileged communities, which is the focus of this paper, one of the most common baseline arguments is that which was already identified and proven above: that routinely engagements for children and young people decrease incidents of antisocial and delinquent behaviour. In other words, sport is provided to young populations as a way to counteract children and adolescents from getting involved in crime, drugs or other antisocial behaviour, and rather focus their time and energy on something positive. Typical additional arguments within this field include the psychosocial benefits of healthy, playful exercise, improving self-esteem and confidence, as well as contributing to the development of ‘life-skills’ for beneficiaries (Coalter, 2005; Tacon, 2007; Jeanes and Magee, 2013).

In addition to such baseline arguments, S4D initiatives typically tie a host of other activities and offerings to beneficiaries, such employment opportunities or other educational, social, therapeutic programmes. In fact, in the face of such variance globally, one useful categorization of S4D organisations is precisely in regard to their complementing offerings, namely Coalter’s (2007) conceptual framework of *sport plus* vs. *plus sport* organisations. Essentially, this refers to the idea that *sport plus* S4D organisations focus first and foremost on the provision and growth of sport – through organisations, programmes and development pathways, while *plus sport* organisations, on the other hand, focus primarily on achieving non-sport related social or developmental goals, yet use sport as a ‘hook’ to recruit beneficiaries, or as a tool to teach certain social values, such as gender equality (Chen, 2018).

Yet while S4D is today an established part of the international development field, critical perspectives exist, especially in regard to organisations that rely on the innate power of sport.

Coakley (2011), for example, questions the ‘evangelistic promise’ of sport as a tool to elicit social change, and calls for more specific research on the precise causal pathways by which any positive outcomes are elicited. In particular, Coakley criticizes the idea that sport in of itself is the positively contributing factor and underlines that any positive outcome is contingent on a vast number of implementational variables. Reviewing the evidence, he further suggests it might actually be the provision of 1) youth organizing capacity; and 2) youth empowerment that are important, rather than provision of sport itself. And reviewing research on sport participation and aggression by Kreager (2007) and Trulson (1986), he further notes that adolescents partaking in sports tend to be more rather than less aggressive, *unless* coaches are trained to teach an explicit philosophy of nonviolence, respect for self and others, and a sense of responsibility to self and others. S4D initiatives, he concludes, should focus more on enhancing agency and social responsibility *through* sport, rather than providing sport *per se* (Coakley, 2011).

Building on such critiques, Hartmann and Kwauk’s (2011) provide a valuable revised framework for S4D: an *interventionist* approach where “sport is intended to contribute to more fundamental change and transformation”, by connecting the sports provision with a much larger array of social change-oriented initiatives and programmes. The sport itself, they argue, should be better seen as a ‘hook’ to get youth involved in broader, contextually specific and more consequential programmes that enable youth to ‘act upon their world’, i.e., be provided agency to enact change (Freire, 1970/2008). “Within this framework, education, mentorship, skills training, and intervention ... become central, rather than the actual sport program itself, in the development of youth and communities.” (Hartmann and Kwauk, 2011).

In sum, it thus seems that combined research in PYD and S4D suggests that sport can certainly have a positive impact on youth in underprivileged communities. However, the causal pathways by which that occurs are somewhat elusive. Simply keeping adolescents busy might be a central cause, as evidence by western studies. And while one should hold a healthy degree of scepticism in regard the more ‘evangelistic’ promises of sport, its correlations with beneficial psychosocial impacts are irrefutable. However, at least in the context of S4D, the

most consequential dimension across which initiatives could elicit change is not, after all, in regard to the sport itself. But rather, whether the offerings are conducive to fostering youth empowerment, organization and responsibility, as well as the way in which the surrounding non-sport programming is thoughtfully provided. So, how might skateboarding and skateparks fit into such considerations?

4. The Act of Skateboarding

While skateboarding has traditionally been seen as a fringe- or subcultural activity, its increasing move into the mainstream has meant that it has increasingly fallen under the examination of scholars. Much of the research has focused on how its participants interact with public space (O'Connor, 2020; Borden, 2005; Woolley and Johns, 2001) as well as how skateboarding culture differs from traditional sports in assigning value and authenticity (Beaumont and Warburton, 2019; Thorpe, 2016; O'Connor, 2015, Beal and Weidman, 2003). Concomitantly, while not always specifically to skateboarding, there has been an increasing interest in the social benefits of lifestyle sports more generally, including skateboarding (Säfvenbom, 2018; Gilchrist and Wheaton, 2017; Abulhawa, 2017), although more research specifically on the sport under question is needed here. Let's provide an expedient canvassing of each of these in turn, seeking simultaneously to tease out the most important insights in regard to its value and implementation in the realm of effective second generational S4D.

As mentioned, skateboarding as an activity or sport has typically been seen unfavourably and often equated to a public nuisance. This view is intimately tied to the fact that, over the past three decades or so, the defining hallmark of skateboarding has been that of 'street skateboarding', which includes repurposing public space for their use. Borden (2005), one of the first to academically conceptualize skateboarders and their use of urban space, noted how, from a neoliberal capitalist perspective, skateboarders could be seen much as the homeless: non-contributory freeloaders that use (and even deteriorate) public space and architecture. Skateboarding's traditional association with rap and street art further cemented the public

perception of the culture as a rebellious, rule-breaking, male dominated activity largely pursued by nonconforming and delinquent youth (Taylor and Khan, 2011; Chiu, 2009; Davis, 2004), while the perceived physical dangers associated with such an ‘extreme’ sport did little to underline any potential benefits with the activity.

Within the past decade, however, writers have come to revisit some of the traditionally held views of skateboarding, both as an activity and culture. In particular, some have given renewed attention to the ways in which skateboarding (and indeed many other lifestyle sports) hosts vastly different value structures than traditional, organised sports. First and foremost, skateboarding is inherently non-competitive. While it is true that at the elite level competitions exist (e.g., the Olympics), these are in fact outliers of the norm. The vast majority of all skateboarding has nothing to do with competing or competitions. Rather, the activity of skateboarding revolves around personal mastery of tricks in a social environment (Beaumont and Warburton, 2019; Thorpe, 2016). In other words, one does not skate against any other person or team, one skates against oneself. From an S4D perspective, Thorpe (2016) notes that this value configuration offers interesting opportunities for children and youth to gain a sense of achievement and accomplishment based on their own skill development, rather than from competing against, or beating another team or player. Furthermore, skateboarding’s inherent reliance on personal perseverance of trying again and again before succeeding “may be attractive as a kind of mantra that has relevance to anyone who is frustrated or angered by their circumstances” (Abulhawa, 2017).

Second, while traditional sports are typically overseen by an umpire and specific goals are set (for e.g., to ‘score’), skateboarding as an activity and social environment is self-regulating, and the culture’s value framework celebrates creativity, play and self-expression over utilitarian, numerical goals (Beal and Weidman, 2003, Thorpe, 2016). Hung (2018) put it this way: “the nature of skateboarding supports freedom, individualism and expression in how it is performed since there is no “right” way to partake in the activity, unlike traditional sports which are structured through rules and regulations”. In this regards, Thorpe (2016) suggests sports such as skateboarding “may offer unique opportunities for skill development,

communication and respect between participants”, because the culture professes autonomy and creativity as the source of value, where informal peer-to-peer skill-acquisition is central (Wood et al., 2014). Skateboarders share a common tool – the skateboard – but the way in which they choose to navigate the world and assign value with that tool is up to themselves to decide. Coupled with the critical S4D scholarship reviewed above, this autonomy and creativity thus may be an effective configuration for youth to gain the sense of agency and empowerment lacking in traditional S4D initiatives.

Third, skateboarding, in contrast to most organised sports, is not enacted in groups bound by gender and age. As no teams or groups exist, skateparks or skate ‘spots’ used for skateboarding are simultaneously populated by girls, boys, women and men of varying ages and ability levels, which is argued to provide opportunities for valuable peer-to-peer socialization (Thorpe, 2016). And this, coupled with the cultural ‘newness’ of the sport as a tool for S4D initiatives, has allowed skateboarding to be configured as an educational tool of inclusivity and sound gender relations. In Afghanistan, for example, girls and women are legally barred from engaging in traditional sports. However, because skateboarding had never been seen in Afghanistan prior to 2007, the award-winning S4D organisation Skateistan had the opportunity to cast the sport as an activity for both boys and girls in the country, allowing it to be effectively used as a tool to teach children about inclusivity and gender equality (Thorpe and Rinehart, 2013)

Fourth, Jones (2011) has highlighted skateboarders’ tendency for ‘semiotic mediation’ as another quite unique feature of the activity and culture. What he means by this is skateboarders’ view of performance on a skateboard “not as a momentary attempt but as part of a larger narrative of self-identity” (Jones, 2011). Put plainly, this refers to skateboarding often becoming an important aspect of participants’ lives, for example by the tendency of skateboarders dressing a certain way, creating videos of them and their friends skateboarding, as well as starting their own skate or clothing companies. This identity-encapsulating tendency of skateboarding means that engagement in the sport inevitably increases and, as

such, that if skateboarding is effectively and positively leveraged as part of an S4D initiative, it can become an important and thus consequential variable in beneficiaries' development. So, to summarize, skateboarding seems well poised to serve as an effective tool for S4D initiatives due to at least four dimensions. Its inherent non-competitiveness gives youth the opportunity to improve themselves not based on any prefabricated concept of "winning" but rather based on intrinsic motivation to self-improve, which might strengthen its pull as a 'hook'. Similarly, its focus on self-governance and creativity grants participants the autonomy and agency identified as a key weakness of typical S4D programming. Third, its inherent inclusivity across age and gender, coupled with its 'newness' in S4D contexts, allows it to be effectively employed as tool for teaching inclusivity across gender demographic markers. And fourth and finally, skateboarding's tendency to become an important aspect of participants' self-identity gives it much leverage, if implemented effectively and thoughtfully, in enacting changes for positive personal development.

5. Socio-Spatial Context of Skateboarding: from the Streets to Skateparks

So far, we have all but avoided the spatial context of skateboarding. Yet it is important to note that both in its organic manifestations as well as part of S4D initiatives, skateboarding increasingly takes place in (or is relegated to) specific locations outside of public squares and streets – that is, skateparks. While 'street skateboarding' certainly still exists and is a common site in Europe the Americas and elsewhere, skateparks warrant particular attention in regard to S4D contexts, as almost all such initiatives incorporate the construction of skateparks as a necessary first step.

Skateparks, like skateboarding, have traditionally faced much critique. Typically, such critiques have had their roots in the dual use of skateparks: on the one hand, skateparks are specifically designed for engaging in the specific activity of skateboarding (as well as other lifestyle sports). On the other hand, however, these facilities have often come to serve as some of the only urban public spaces meant specifically for adolescents to spend time in, and that

simultaneously free of charge to visit. Consequently, they often become venues where both skateboarding and non-skateboarding young people “hang out” (Wood et al., 2014; Taylor and Khan, 2011) which, as identified above, is often frowned upon as an unproductive pursuit that encourages antisocial behaviour (Woolley, 2009; Bradley, 2008).

Despite this, nascent research on the value of skateparks in adolescent development and socialization paints quite another picture. Indeed, while it is true that some antisocial behaviour can be identified at skateparks (especially during night-time), the benefits seem to far outweigh these. In perhaps the most robust exploration of the social impacts of skateparks (perhaps even skateparks in generally), Hung’s (2018) ethnographic study of skateparks in Canada identifies an impressive list of benefits both for adolescents and the community overall. Let us expediently go through the most pressing of these, while considering how they might relate to the context of PYD and S4D initiatives specifically.

First, skateparks provide both financial and physical accessibility (Hung, 2018). In contrast to many sports-focused facilities, skateparks are typically public and freely accessible (at least those built as part of S4D initiatives). In addition, given that the act of skateboarding does not require lessons, referees or teams to engage in, it offers a low-cost and temporally accessible activity for children of all ages and genders to engage in, as long as they have access to a skateboard. Second, because skateparks are often some of the only venues for urban youth to congregate freely, they often come to serve a double function informal youth centres of sorts, which can have significant positive effects for adolescents (Hung, 2018; Taylor and Khan, 2011; Bradley, 2008). In one rare exploration on the social effects of building a skatepark for the youth in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, Abulhawa (2017) noted how the venue came to be “regarded as a haven from the pressures of family and work”. Third, Hung finds that in contrast to common perceptions, those using and visiting skateparks report pro-social behaviours and opportunities for social learning as central aspects of these venues. Indeed, precisely because skateboarding (and skateparks) lacks traditional authoritative governance structures, these venues come to promote intrinsically motivated mentoring and the type of self-governance and organisation identified by Säfvenbom et al. (2018).

It should be noted here that the above insights reflect ethnographic studies based on structured interviews and, to a lesser extent, participant surveys, of only two countries. And as such, the findings might not be universally applicable. Nevertheless, given our previous exploration of lack of activity as one of the main causes of antisocial and delinquent behaviour amongst adolescents, the importance of developing youth responsibility and agency in PYD, as well as taking into account the unique values that skateboarding as a sport promote, it becomes clear that the provision of a skatepark – especially as supported by thoughtful programming and organisational oversight, can provide considerable positive benefits to communities lacking in youth-centred recreational space.

Hung's (2018) ethnographic work set out not only to evaluate the societally perceived value of skateparks, but also to provide recommendations on how to go about the provision of skateparks in the most successful way possible. Given that S4D initiatives incorporating skateboarding typically rely on such infrastructural projects, her insights are useful to note herein as well. In this regard, the most important identified determinant of project success identified by was that of involvement of young people and the community in developing the skatepark itself (Hung, 2018). Where skateparks had been well received by the community, she notes, the youth had been consulted in regard to design process, local leaders had been recruited as supporters, as had the broader community been invited for meetings in order for the public to voice concerns or questions about the projects.

Thus, any organisation considering incorporating skateboarding (and thus a skatepark) as an aspect of their S4D initiatives would do well in deeply involving local youth in the design process as well as giving opportunities for the local community to voice questions or concerns. Not only does such an approach ensure that all voices are heard. It also provides a sense of local ownership and responsibility to the venue, as it is something that the beneficiaries themselves have then taken part in creating. Indeed, some skateboarding S4D projects have taken this a step further even. Concrete Jungle Foundation, one of the most active skateboarding NGOs, not only consults with local youth beneficiaries in regard to the

design of the skatepark, they also provide paid local apprenticeships to those very same locals in construction during the actual build in order to instil still a greater sense of local ownership and responsibility for the venue (Concrete Jungle Foundation, 2020). And this, as one might recall, is precisely what Coakley (2011) suggests S4D initiatives should strive towards: supporting youth organisation, capacity and empowerment first, and sport participation second.

6. Discussion and conclusion: Skateboarding for Development?

Why has skateboarding-based S4D initiatives become so common? One likely yet so-far unmentioned reason could be that skateboarding communities have a close affinity to D.I.Y. culture as well as a propensity for transnational support networks, and this makes them well-poised for enacting S4D initiatives themselves (Abulhawa, 2017). Skateboarders tend to build their own environments (skateparks) to skate in, and because of Jones' 'semiotic mediation' (i.e. skateboarding becoming an important aspect of self-identity), skatepark builders (which almost exclusively are skateboarders) are very likely to offer up their time and energy to support the construction of skateparks for less fortunate communities. This is especially true of northern European and Canadian skateboarder-skatepark builders, who cannot work (build outdoor concrete skateparks) during the winter months due to the cold climate. To the present author's knowledge, at least all of the first skateparks in Palestine, India, Myanmar (Burma), Nepal, Angola, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Rwanda, Jamaica, and Curacao were built completely voluntarily (free of charge) by such individuals, as part of social S4D initiatives.

And what do we know about the efficacy of skateboarding as a tool for S4D? Well, proponents and scholars alike have certainly identified some interesting, unique characteristics of skateboarding that might make it particularly well suited to reach (or 'hook') marginalised or underprivileged youth, especially in regard to its inherent non-competitiveness, its focus on autonomy and creativity as well as its 'newness'. On the other hand, we should certainly remain mindful of the overarching critique aimed at the S4D

community regarding viewing sport alone as the mechanism by which we can enact social change. Indeed, when looking at Hung's (2018) research on the social impact of skateparks, it seems the socio-spatial context they provide – that is, a youth centre of sorts – might be a stronger determinant of positive social and communal impact than the sport which the physical venue itself allows to take place. And furthermore, that the extent to which we include local beneficiaries and provide them with the capacity to have a say in the design, management and development of such a space, might be the most important determinant of all. In this regard, the examples set by some skateboarding NGOs in involving local youth is certainly to be lauded.

Thus, in conclusion, while this research suggests that skateboarding in of itself certainly provides an interesting starting point (or 'hook') for more dynamic, second generational S4D initiatives, what is even more important is the other initiatives taking place on the side of the sport itself. Are beneficiaries provided the opportunity to partake in design processes, be these infrastructural or otherwise? Is the broader local community consulted in what kind of programming is provided? Does the organisation seek to provide beneficiaries with the tools, perspectives and opportunities to address more structurally ingrained issues, or are programmes simply rehashing old narratives? These should be the guiding questions for any S4D practitioner, involved in skateboarding or otherwise.

Bibliography

- Abbot, B. (2007). Not Just Idle Time: Adolescents' Developmental Experiences Provided by Structured and Unstructured Leisure Activities. *Australian Journal of Educational and Developmental Psychology*, 24, 59–81.
- Abulhawa, D. (2017). Smoothing space in Palestine: Building a skatepark and a socio-political forum with the SkatePal charity. *Journal of Urban Cultural Studies*, 4:3, 417–427. https://doi.org/10.1386/jucs.4.3.417_1.
- Audrain-McGovern, J., Rodriguez, D., Wileyto, P., Schmitz, K. H., and Shields, P. G. (2006) 'Effect of team sport participation on genetic predisposition to adolescent smoking progression', *Archives of General Psychiatry*, 63: 433–41
- Barber, B. L., Eccles, J. S., and Stone, M. R. (2001) 'Whatever happened to the Jock, the Brain, and the Princess? Young adult pathways linked to adolescent activity involvement and social identity', *Journal of Adolescent Research*, 16: 429–55.
- Beal, B., & Weidman, L. (2003). Authenticity in the skateboarding world.
- Beaumont, L. C., Warburton, V. E. (2019). Lifestyle sports, pedagogy and physical education. In *Debates in Physical Education*, edited by Capel, S. and Blair, R.
- Borden, I. (2005). *Skateboarding, space and the city: Architecture and the body*. Oxford: Berg.
- Bradley, G., & Stinson, K. (2008). *Skaters' Paradise? A Study of Gold Coast City Skate Parks and Their Users*. Gold Coast: Gold Coast City Council.
- Caldwell LL, Smith EA. Leisure as a context for youth development and delinquency prevention. *The Australian and New Zealand Journal of Criminology*. 2006; 39(3):398–418
- Chiu, C. (2009) Contestation and conformity: street and park skateboarding in New York City public space, *Space and Culture*, 12, pp. 25–42.
- Coalter, F. (2005). Sport, Social Inclusion and Crime Reduction. In G. Faulkner and A. Taylor (eds), *Exercises Health and Mental Health*. London: Routledge.
- Coalter, F. (2007). Sports Clubs, Social Capital and Social Regeneration: 'ill-defined interventions with hard to follow outcomes'? *Sport in society*, 10(4), 537–559.
- Coakley, J. (2011). Youth Sports: What Counts as "Positive Development?". *Journal of Sports and Social Issues*, 35(3), 306–324.

- Concrete Jungle Foundation. (2020). "A Space and Time: Local Planting Seeds apprentice Kayla Wheeler on building Kingston's first skatepark". Accessed 6 December 2020 at <https://concretejunglefoundation.org/a-space-and-time-with-kayla-wheeler.html>.
- Chen, S. (2018). UN Background Paper for the 2018 Expert Group Meetings, on Strengthening the Global Framework for Leveraging Sport for Development and Peace. Accessed 12 December 2020 at <https://www.un.org/development/desa/dspd/2018-expert-group-meetings-and-panel-discussions/sport-development-peace.html>.
- Davis, J. (2004) *Skateboarding is Not a Crime: Board Culture, Past, Present and Future*, 2nd edn. (London: Carlton Books).
- Duda, J. L. (2005) *Motivation in Sport: The relevance of competence*
- Freire, P. (2008). *Pedagogy of the oppressed* (30th anniversary ed.). New York, NY: Continuum. Original work published 1970
- Good Push. (23. January 2020). 2019 Survey on Social Skateboarding Projects Worldwide. Skateistan x Pushing Boarders. Accessed 12 December 2020 at <https://www.goodpush.org/blog/2019-survey-results-are>.
- Hansen, D. M., Larson, R. W., and Dworkin, J. B. (2003) 'What adolescents learn in organized youth activities: a survey of self-reported developmental experiences', *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, 13: 25–55.
- Hartmann, D., & Kwauk, C. (2011). Sport and Development: An Overview, Critique, and Reconstruction. *Journal of Sport and Social Issues*, 35(3), 284–305. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0193723511416986>
- Harwood, C. G., Spray, C. M. and Keegan, R. J. (2008). Achievement goal theories in sport T. Horn (Ed.), *Advances in sport psychology* (3rd ed.), Human Kinetics, Champaign, IL pp. 157-18.
- Hirschi, T. (1969). *Causes of Delinquency*, University of California Press, Berkeley
- Holt, N.L. (Ed.). (2016). *Positive Youth Development Through Sport: second edition* (2nd ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315709499>.
- Hung, S. (2018). *Exploring the Role of Skateparks as Places for Young People: a case study of skateparks in Prince George, B.C.* Published Master Thesis, The University of Guelph. Accessed 14 December 2020 at

https://atrium.lib.uoguelph.ca/xmlui/bitstream/handle/10214/15851/Hung_Sanya_201809_MLA.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y.

Jeanes, R. and Magee, J. (2013) Promoting Gender Empowerment through Sport? Exploring the Experiences of Zambian Female Footballers. In *Global Sport-for-Development : Critical Perspectives*. Ed. by Schulenkorf, N. and Adair, D. Palgrave Macmillan. <https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137289636>

Jones, R. H. (2011). Sport and re/creation: what skateboarders can teach us about learning. *Sport, Education and Society*, 16:5, 593-611, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13573322.2011.601139>.

Kreager, D. A. (2007). Unnecessary roughness? School sports, peer networks, and male adolescent violence. *American Sociological Review*, 72, 705-724.

Larson, R. W., and Verma, S. (1999) How children and adolescents spend time across the world: Work, play, and developmental opportunities. *Psychological Bulletin*, 125, 701- 736.

Lerner, R. M., Lerner, J. V., Almerigi, J. B., Theokas, C., Phelps, E., Naudeau, S., et al. (2005) 'Positive youth development, participation in community youth development programs, and community contributions of fifth-grade adolescents: findings from the first wave of the 4-H study of Positive Youth Development', *Journal of Early Adolescence*, 25: 17-71.

Lyras, A., & Welty Peachey, J. (2011). Integrating sport-for-development theory and praxis. *Sport Management Review*, 4(4), 311-326. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.smr.2011.05.006>.

McNeal, Ralph B. (1999). Participation in High School Extracurricular Activities: Investigating School Effects. *Social Science Quarterly* 80:2, 291-309.

Miller, K. E., Sabo, D. F., Farrell, M. P., Barnes, G. M., and Melnick, M. J. (1998) 'Athletic participation and sexual behavior in adolescents: the different worlds of boys and girls', *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, 39: 108-23.

Taylor, M. F. and Khan, U. (2011) Skate-Park Builds, Teenaphobia and the Adolescent Need for Hang-Out Spaces: The Social Utility and Functionality of Urban Skate Parks, *Journal of Urban Design*, 16:4, 489-510, 10.1080/13574809.2011.586142

O'Connor, P. (2020). *Skateboarding and Religion*. Palgrave Macmillan. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-24857-4>.

- O'Connor, P. (2015). Skateboard Philanthropy: Inclusion and Prefigurative Politics. In *Skateboarding: Subcultures, Sites and Shifts*. Ed. by Lombard, K.-J. Routledge. London. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315737577>.
- Osgood, W.D., Wilson, J.K., O Malley, P.M., Bachman, J.G., & Johnston, L.D. (1996). Routine activities and individual deviant behavior. *Sociological Review*, 61, 635–656.
- Page, R. M., Hammermeister, J., Scanlon, A., and Gilbert, L. (1998) 'Is school sports participation a protective factor against adolescent health risk behaviors?', *Journal of Health Education*, 29: 186–92.
- Schulenkorf, N., Sherry, E. and Rowe, K. (2016). Sport for development: An integrated literature review. *Journal of Sport Management*, 30 (1), 22-39
- Säfvenbom, R., Wheaton, B. and Agans J. P. (2018) 'How can You Enjoy Sports if You are Under Control by Others?' Self-Organized Lifestyle Sports and Youth Development." *Sport in Society*, 21:12, 1990-2009. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17430437.2018.1472242>.
- Tacon, R. (2007). Football and Social Inclusion: Evaluating Social Policy. *Managing Leisure*, 12(1), 1–23.
- Taylor, M., & Khan, U. (2011). Skate-Park Builds, Teenaphobia and the Adolescent Need for Hang-Out Spaces: The Social Utility and Functionality of Urban Skate Parks. *Journal of Urban Design*, 16, 489-510.
- Thorpe. H. and Rinehart, R. (2013) Action Sport NGOs in a Neo-Liberal Context: The Cases of Skateistan and Surf Aid International. *Journal of Sport and Social Issues*, 37:2. 115-41. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0193723512455923>
- Thorpe, H. (2016). Action sports for youth development: critical insights for the SDP community, *International Journal of Sport Policy and Politics*, 8:1, 91-116, <https://doi.org/10.1080/19406940.2014.925952>.
- Trulson, M. E. (1986). Martial arts training: A novel "cure" for juvenile delinquency. *Human Relations*, 39, 1131-1140.
- Witt, P. A. and Caldwell, L. L. (2005). 10 principles of youth development. In P. A. Witt & L. L. Caldwell (Eds.), *Recreation and Youth Development* (pp. 3-23). State College, PA: Venture Publishing.
- Wood, L. J., Martin, E. K. and Carter, M. E. (2014). Dispelling Stereotypes... Skate Parks as a Setting for Pro-Social Behavior among Young People. *Current Urban Studies* 2:1, 62-73. <https://doi.org/10.4236/cus.2014.21007>.

Woolley, H. (2009). Every Child Matters in Public Open Spaces. Securing Respect: Behavioural Expectations and Anti-Social Behaviour in the UK (pp. 97-118). A. Millie. Bristol: The Policy Press

Woolley, H. and Johns, R. (2001) Skateboarding: The City as a Playground. *Journal of Urban Design*, 6:2, 211-230.