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# Masculinity, Sexuality, and Soccer: An Exploration of Three Grassroots Sport-for-Social-Change Organizations in South Africa

Sarah Theresa Mcghee

*University of South Florida, stmcghee@mail.usf.edu*

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Masculinity, Sexuality, and Soccer:  
An Exploration of Three Grassroots Sport-for-Social-Change Organizations  
in South Africa

By

Sarah Theresa McGhee

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the Doctor of Philosophy degree  
Department of Communication  
College of Arts and Sciences  
University of South Florida

Major Professor: Kenneth N. Cissna, Ph.D.  
Eric Eisenberg, Ph.D.  
Elizabeth Bell, Ph.D.  
Fred Steier, Ph.D.  
Nancy Romero-Daza, Ph.D.

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## **ABSTRACT**

Programs that utilize soccer as a tool for social change are steadily emerging throughout townships and rural areas in South Africa, the most economically disadvantaged areas of the country. In South Africa, grassroots sport-for-social-change organizations are compensating for failed government policies and programs that seek to help at-risk youth. As a result, program staff are often members of the community who are not versed in academic critiques of the use of sport in development initiatives. Additionally, much of the existing literature on sport-for-social-change champions the advancement of specific projects without asking critical research questions, which should include the appropriateness of the modality within a given context. In this case, the complexities of using soccer (e.g., its practices, historical significance, and gendered meanings) have not been thoroughly investigated. Soccer is not a “genderless” tool for social change. Participation in violent sports such as soccer has been used to bolster claims of a naturalized dominance of men over women. Although participation by girls and young women in soccer programs (professional and recreational) is increasing in urban townships and rural areas, soccer pitches remain largely “masculinized spaces.”

In this study, I use qualitative research methods to show how gendered discourses organize sport-for-social-change programs. Using Ashcraft and Mumby’s theory of feminist communicology and Connell and Messerschmidt’s reformulated theory of hegemonic masculinity, I examine three sport-for-social-change organizations in South

Africa through an applied lens with a feminist standpoint. Semi-structured interviews with twelve key informants were conducted over a three-month period between May and August of 2009. All three organizations studied are grassroots organizations that work within a particular area of South Africa. They each target male children and youth between the ages of 6 and 19 from economically disadvantaged households and use soccer as a modality for social change, yet each organization operates within a different cultural context primarily based on participants' racial, regional, and ethnic identities. My research found that masculine discourses were constructed, maintained, and contested in sport-for-social-change organizations through: (a) (Not) Engaging in (Social) Fatherhood, (b) Challenging the Temptation to Lead a Gangster Life and Have a "Gangster" Attitude, and (c) Challenging Patriarchy, Physical Assault, and Cultural "Traditions." Discourses also created paradoxes that worked against the goal of contesting local hegemonic masculinities, although these paradoxes were not typically identified by organizational members. Although I found similarities in the influences of local discourses on organizations such as the lingering effects of The Group Areas Act on urban migration that influenced men's roles within their families; the desire to create positive male role models that rejected characteristics associated with exemplars of hegemonic masculinity identified in each case study; and concerns about stopping the pattern of domestic violence prevalent in some communities, an issue that is also related to spread of HIV, I also found differences. Differences were based primarily on racial, regional and ethnic signifiers and affected the goals of each organization as well as the design of programs aimed at achieving these goals.

This study expands the literature on gender issues in sport-for-social-change programs, particularly the designation of public spaces such as soccer pitches as masculinized spaces where women take on the role of visitor rather than welcomed participants. The history of soccer in South Africa proves that changing the gender dynamics on the soccer pitch can lead to significant changes in people's attitudes. Although women in South Africa now also hold important seats in government, the “politics of the pitch” continues to reflect discriminatory practices based on gender. This study shows how Connell and Messerschmidt’s (2005) reformulated theory of hegemonic masculinity can be used as a lens to examine the “gendering” (Ashcraft & Mumby, 2004) of organizations through discourse, and some of the repercussions of gendered organizing.

Additionally, although this study identified exemplars of hegemonic masculinity that endorsed violent, sexist practices that worked to subordinate women and privilege men, the theory of hegemonic masculinity leaves open the possibility of identifying exemplars of masculinity that also endorse feminist ideals. For example, this study found that discourses surrounding soccer challenged the violent “Body as Weapon” mentality often endorsed by players during football matches. Participants also resisted deeply entrenched cultural beliefs about gender norms by endorsing an ethic of care. Therefore, future case studies of sport-for-social-change organizations may wish to focus on identifying discourses that reject patriarchal beliefs rather than endorse them.



## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Once viewed as simply a by-product of development initiatives rather than as a viable modality in itself, sport, especially soccer, is being used in South Africa to address health behavior problems (particularly HIV/AIDS prevention), improve access to education, promote economic development, and enhance social cohesion. Stakeholders include community-based and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs), multi-national corporations (MNCs), and international sports leagues and federations such as the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) as well as various divisions of the United Nations (UN) (Akindes & Kirwin, 2009). Sport in general is often presented as a “low-cost, high-impact” (Beutler, 2008, p. 361) modality for development initiatives that require a seemingly apolitical tool to deliver their message (Levermore, 2008). However, much of the existing literature on sport-for-social-change<sup>1</sup> champions the advancement of specific projects without asking critical research questions, which should include the appropriateness of the modality within a given context (Engelhardt, 2010; Levermore & Beacom, 2009).

Soccer is usually considered a “culturally appropriate” development modality (Clark et al., 2006, p. 82) in South Africa simply because soccer is a popular sport with an ability to attract a large number of people, particularly youth (Coalter, 2009). Studies often ignore the “historical and cultural baggage” associated with this type of

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<sup>1</sup> Sport-for-social-change is the term used to describe programs in this study that utilize sport as a modality for social change initiatives. See Levermore and Beacom (2009) for a list of other terms used to describe programs that utilize sport to help achieve social change.

development modality and its implications (Saavedra, 2009, p. 131). In South Africa, soccer consists of culturally embedded “complex systems of ideas” and practices (Hill, 2010, p. 14). These extend beyond the tool to the practitioners of the sport as well.

The first documented soccer game in South Africa was played between British soldiers and employees of the colonial administration during August of 1862 in the Cape Peninsula. Football quickly spread throughout the Western Cape and into the Natal colony. In the Natal colony, the sport was used by European missionaries to lure Zulu men into attending mission schools, a successful practice that became popular in missions throughout South Africa. During the colonial period it is unlikely that anyone would have predicted that such a seemingly harmless leisure activity for soldiers and missionary pupils would turn into a symbol of defiance against racist government policies and, thus, aid in the democratization of a nation.

This chapter begins by illustrating soccer’s evolution in South Africa by focusing on some key events in the history of the sport. A detailed history of soccer in South Africa and its cultural, political, and economic significance is beyond the scope of this study (see Alegi, 2004, 2010), therefore this chapter provides a brief account of the sport beginning in the early 1900s. Then I give an overview of the study and describe each chapter.

### **Early Days**

Once South Africa officially became the Union of South Africa in 1910, and thus, part of the British Commonwealth, taxes applied to rural homesteads sent many black African men living in rural areas to seek employment that paid wages. The gold mines of Witwaterstand, the diamond mines of the Kimberly, and the port cities of Cape Town and

Durban, became popular destinations for migrant laborers. Soccer helped ease this transition by becoming a tool that established social networks among men. Soccer's popularity in these newly formed communities was aided by the fact that it was both inexpensive and relatively easy to learn to play. Similar to early British settlers who used soccer as a way to form bonds with other immigrants to the Cape peninsula (Carton, 2000), soccer was a leisure activity for men attempting to establish new lives with unfamiliar people in unfamiliar locations. However, soon the governments' racist policies would help transform a seemingly non-threatening sport into a powerful political tool. As the white South African government began to place tighter restrictions on the lives' of non-Europeans, soccer's uses changed among non-whites. Alegi (2004) observed that during the early twentieth century soccer was "transformed into a sphere of action where expressions of African modernity could be forged, tested, and negotiated" (p. 20). One of the most significant examples of this was the formation of non-white sports clubs.

In 1892, English-speaking military officers and civilians formed the South African Football Association (FASA). FASA officially excluded anyone who was not of European decent. Following that, in 1916 black Africans established the Durban and District African Football Association, which, curiously, represented a challenge to colonial rule. White South Africa's attempts to control the leisure space of non-whites by implementing segregation policies ultimately backfired, and consequently, worked to incite political resistance efforts.

### **The Segregation Era**

Between 1926 and 1940 a succession of government mandated Acts were passed restricting the movement and overall autonomy of non-whites. During this period black

Africans of several ethnicities who had been separated by social class distinctions (e.g. mission educated elites, migrant and non-migrant workers) started to socialize more due to their affiliation with local soccer clubs. Racial discrimination and economic factors such as inflation and declining wages brought members of South Africa's black African social classes together because these circumstances meant that all groups were living in, or dangerously close to, poverty.

During the segregation period "football functioned as a vehicle for asserting changing urban black masculine identities" (Alegi, 2004, p. 35). Black African men who migrated to cities from rural areas were having their conventional notions of gender and generational dynamics challenged in the new industrial landscape. The experience of participating in football clubs helped affirm their self-worth within their communities and contributed to the rise of a "dominant working class athletic masculinity" (p. 35). Occasionally, public displays of this form of hegemonic masculinity resulted in violent challenges to calls made by referees; the officials symbolically represented yet another form of authority black African men were expected obey without objection. Therefore, football grounds increasingly became sites of physical conflict and all out riots, some that ended in fatalities, a situation that mirrored the growing urban un-rest in many increasingly crowded and poverty stricken communities.

### **The Apartheid Era**

As soccer's popularity among non-whites was growing, the government's desire to take control of the sport also increased. The formal implementation of apartheid <sup>2</sup>in 1948 sought to diminish the rights of all non-white South Africans. As the years progressed, non-whites found ways to use soccer as a political tool against racist

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<sup>2</sup> South Africa's state sanctioned system of racial segregation.

oppression. Because the leagues organized themselves and games could be played on almost any surface with little equipment, soccer proved difficult for government officials to police. Thus, participating in soccer became a form of rebellion against apartheid policies.

Throughout the apartheid era, South Africa experienced a series of sports boycotts by international institutions including FIFA and the International Olympic Committee due to their racist political policies. Sports boycotts occurred in tandem with economic sanctions that crippled the country's economy. Finally, after years of political turmoil, in 1994 South Africa held democratic elections that signified the official end of the apartheid era, however, apartheid left a damaging legacy.

### **The Post-Apartheid Era**

In the post-apartheid era, soccer would be used as a tool for political reconciliation, instead of political rebellion. Nelson Mandela's presidential inauguration even included a soccer match between the South African national team and Zambia. As iconic local teams such as the Orlando Pirates and Kaizer Chiefs continued to grow in popularity, the men's national team languished due to a lack of government funds. South Africa put in an unsuccessful bid for the 2002 World Cup, claiming that hosting the most popular sporting event in the world would help unite the country and decrease decades of racial tensions. Although they lost the 2002 bid, the governments' desire to host the event meant that more funds were allocated for player development at local and national levels.

On May 15, 2004, South Africa was awarded the honor of hosting the 2010 FIFA World Cup, the first World Cup held on the African continent. The build-up to the event caused a great deal of discussion regarding the costs and benefits of hosting such a large

sporting event in a country rife with economic and social problems, including the lingering effects of apartheid era policies (e.g., the migrant worker system and its negative effect on families, etc.) and the HIV/AIDS pandemic. In the introduction to a special issue of the journal *Soccer & Society*, Alegi and Bolsmann (2010) observed that the 2010 World Cup was:

loaded with political, economic and symbolic significance for a democratic and globalizing South Africa. The events of 2010 also present us with opportunities to inform and change how academics and laymen and women think about, relate to, interpret, understand and discuss South African football. (p. 1)

Academic investigations into the significance of soccer in South Africa can provide valuable insight into “social, cultural, political and historical processes” that extend outside of the realm of the sporting arena itself (Vidacs, 2006, p. 331)

### **Overview of the Study and Rationale**

In this study, I use qualitative research methods to show how gendered discourses manifested at micro-levels among individuals or groups—including seemingly “mundane” encounters—and middle-levels through “institutional documents” and artifacts (Ashcraft & Mumby, 2004, p. 127) interact with broader societal discourses (macro-level) to organize sport-for-social-change programs. This study answers the call by Buzzanell, Meisenbach, Remke, Sterk, and Turner (2009) for more applied communication research that examines the dialectical relationship among “gender, discourse, and organizational contexts” (p. 188).

Using Ashcraft and Mumby’s (2004) theory of feminist communicology and Connell and Messerschmidt’s (2005) reformulated theory of hegemonic masculinity, I

examine three sport-for-social-change organizations in South Africa through an applied lens with a feminist standpoint. All three organizations studied here are grassroots organizations that work within a particular area of South Africa. They each target male children and youth between the ages of 6 and 19 from economically disadvantaged households and use soccer as a modality for social change, yet each organization operates within a different cultural context primarily based on participants' racial and ethnic identities. We Are Not Statistics (WANS) and Otherlands Football Academy (OFA) are both located in the densely populated, urban area of the Cape Flats in Western Cape Province; however, WANS participants self-identify as Xhosa-speaking, black Africans, and OFA participants self-identify as Afrikaans-speaking coloureds (a South African term for people of mixed-racial heritage coined during the apartheid era). The Natal AIDS Project (NAP) is located throughout rural areas of KwaZulu-Natal Province whose participants self-identify as Zulu-speaking, black Africans. The cultural context of each sport-for-social-change program creates "frequently competing" (Mumby & Ashcraft, 2006, p. 77) discourses that result in certain ideas and values being privileged over others.

More scholarly attention needs to be paid to the persons involved in sport-for-social-change programs, as well as the modality sport-for-social-change organizations use, and the specific context in which organizations are operating (Coalter, 2009). In South Africa, this includes acknowledging the influence of such cultural factors as colonialism, apartheid, and the proliferation of HIV/AIDS, particularly among residents of under-resourced communities such as urban townships and rural areas, as this is where the majority of sport-for-social-change programs are located.

In South Africa, grassroots sport-for-social-change organizations are compensating for failed government policies and programs targeting at-risk youth. Practitioners are often members of the community who are not versed in academic critiques of the use of sport in development initiatives, such as the potential for the perpetuation of a damaging sporting ethos that privileges individual achievement over physical and psychological well-being (Heywood & Dworkin, 2003; Kidd, 2011).

Sport is not a “genderless” tool for social change (Saavedra, 2009). Participation in sport, particularly “combat sports” such as soccer, has been used to bolster claims of a naturalized dominance of men over women (Messner, 2007). Participation by girls and young women in soccer programs (professional and recreational) is increasing, but, for many South Africans, any female presence on soccer pitches is considered inappropriate (Pelak, 2005, 2006, 2010). In urban townships and rural areas, soccer pitches remain “masculinized spaces” (Rubin, 2009).

Sport-for-social-change organizations are using soccer’s popularity and cultural appropriateness among boys and young men as a recruitment tool. Although programs address some aspect of social change rather than being purely recreational endeavors, the use of soccer as a development modality still influences the “gendering” of discourses and their effect on organizational design. If these programs and this “sporting paradox” are not studied, the organizations are in danger of reproducing the forms of hegemonic masculinity they seek to counter (Dyck, 2011; Saavedra, 2009).

### **Chapter Descriptions**

In Chapter 2 of this study, the literature review, I highlight some of the key issues related to sport-for-social-change programs in South Africa. These include the influence



of the HIV/AIDS virus on program design and implementation. I discuss the paradox created when soccer is used as a modality for social change. This chapter also examines contemporary critiques of sport-for-social-change programs; paying particular attention to programs located on the African continent. I also provide a rationale for research questions that explore how discourses of masculinity are constructed, maintained, and contested in the three sport-for-social-change programs investigated in this study and what discourses contribute to the presence of paradox within each organization.

In Chapter 3, the Methods section, I elaborate on my experience collecting and analyzing data for this study. My ethnographic journey includes a description of my feasibility study, how I formulated my prospectus, gained Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval, recruited research subjects, and collected and analyzed data. Within this chapter I address the complexities involved in conducting a particular type of feminist fieldwork—edgework (Newmar, 2011).

Chapter 4 begins the first of three case studies. In Chapter 4 I analyze the grassroots sport-for-social-change organization We Are Not Statistics (WANS). I describe how WANS's location, the Cape Flats, effects the various goals of the organization. The chapter concentrates on the discourses associated with WANS's soccer program, The Bethlehem Football Club (BFC). Based on participant observation and semi-structured interviews with two key informants—the director of coaching, Moses Anda, and his son and fellow coach, Zoma Anda—I identified two exemplars of hegemonic masculinity: (a) absentee fathers and (b) gangsters.

Chapter 5 examines Otherlands Football Academy (OFA). Although, OFA is also located in the Cape Flats, it caters to coloured South Africans—versus Xhosa speaking

black Africans that comprise BFC. This fact influenced the goals of the organization as well as the discourses surrounding masculinity and the presence of paradox within the organization. Interviews with two key informants, Freddie Carelse and Gassant Cassiem—both coaches for OFA—and information gathered through participant observation informed the exemplars of hegemonic masculinity identified in the chapter: (a) gangsters and (b) undisciplined men.

Chapter 6 focuses on the last sport-for-social-change organization examined in this study, The Natal AIDS Project (NAP). NAP works in locations throughout KwaZulu-Natal Province, a predominantly Zulu area of South Africa. Zulu culture, particularly interpretations of “traditional” Zulu culture influenced the three exemplars of hegemonic masculinity identified in this chapter: (a) violent men, (b) men as economic provider, and (c) cheating men.

Chapter 7 concludes the study by synthesizing the results of each of the three case studies. This chapter also examines how gendered discourses contributed to paradox within each sport-for-social-change organization. Additionally, I address the theoretical and practical implications of this study as well as elaborating on the study limitations and possibilities for future research.

## **CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Sport-for-Social-Change in South Africa**

Programs that utilize soccer as a tool for social change are steadily emerging throughout townships and rural areas in South Africa, the most economically disadvantaged areas of the country. The programs range from large organizations functioning in multiple locations in conjunction with international partners, such as Kicking AIDS Out! and Play Soccer, to much smaller, community-initiated projects, such as the ones being investigated in this study. Often, these programs are attempts to compensate for failed government policies and initiatives (Coalter, 2009; Levermore, 2008a, 2008b). In South Africa, most programs address some aspect of HIV/AIDS education and prevention. Their design and implementation represent shifts in the evolution of the understanding of the social and cultural practices related to how the virus is spread, including the influence of gender.

#### **HIV/AIDS in South Africa**

South Africa has the largest population of people living with HIV in the world (5.6 million) (UNAIDS, 2011). The rate of recorded HIV infection in South Africa peaked in the mid-1990s because more people were being tested and seeking treatment (thus making it easier to collect data on sero-positive persons). The introduction of affordable anti-retroviral drugs (ARVs) that reduce mother-to-child transmission of the virus and changes in sexual behavior also decreased the spread of HIV (Katz, 2006).

Most sero-positive persons in South Africa are in heterosexual relationships and over half of sero-positive youth and young adults (15 to 24 years old) are women (UNAIDS, 2011). Fortunately, evidence from three national population-based HIV surveys undertaken in 2002, 2005, and 2008 by the South African based Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) indicate that the rate of infection is decreasing (Rehle et al., 2010). The United Nations program on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) reported in 2009 that the infection rate in South Africa among adults had stabilized. The prevalence rate for youth and young adults (age 15-24) had declined since 2005.

Although the decrease in prevalence rates is positive news, the large number of people currently living with the virus continues to exacerbate other social problems associated with poor living conditions that the majority of HIV-positive persons in South Africa encounter: inadequate housing, limited access to clean water, and poor nutrition and sanitation, coupled with often limited access to affordable health care facilities (Hunter, 2007). As a result, programs that focus on HIV education as well as on issues related to social and economic development such as poverty reduction, increased access to education, and gender equality have grown substantially in the last decade (Levermore, 2008).

### **The Influence of Gender**

The HIV/AIDS crisis in South Africa has been described as “the transcription of social relations onto physical bodies” (Campbell, Nair, & Maimane, 2006, p. 132). This depiction of the epidemic calls attention to the broader gender dynamics that have come to be associated with the spread of the virus. Dworkin (2005) argued that the majority of research literature on gender and HIV/AIDS evidenced two main assumptions. First,

heterosexual women are conceptualized as oppressed and vulnerable whereas heterosexual men are viewed as powerful and invulnerable. Second, a sex and gender system is constituted by biological women who have one gender role known as femininity and biological men who have one gender role known as masculinity. Although these two assumptions are not essentialist claims in the sense that they are meant to represent characteristics shared universally by all men and women at all times (Grosz, 1994), they do define characteristics of gendered discourse surrounding HIV in South Africa. Within this conversation, men are depicted as largely to blame for the spread of the AIDS virus. As a result, in the 1990s, HIV education and prevention programs shifted their approach from focusing on young women (the population most at risk for contracting HIV) to focusing on the relational dynamics between men and women. Gendered approaches also concentrate on the construction of masculinity and ways in which sexist, violent masculinities that endorse patriarchal practices can be reformulated in a post-apartheid landscape (Ouzgane & Morrell, 2005). Several of these methods are explored in following section.

Eaton, Flisher, and Aaro's (2003) meta-analysis of research from 1990 to 2000 regarding the factors influencing the spread of HIV among South African youth revealed that interpersonal factors such as "coercive, male-dominated sexual relationships" that often include violence against a female partner were the most prominent elements affecting transmission of the virus (p. 159). The cultural discourse of masculine sexual rights and female sexual subservism was linked with low socio-economic status and ethnic identity. Black African youth from economically disadvantaged areas were likely to engage in and support "physical abuse and sexual coercion within a relationship" (p.

162). MacPhail and Campbell (2001) criticized earlier studies of adolescent sexuality in relationship to HIV in South Africa for being too narrowly focused on how youth reproduce “stereotypical norms of gender and sexuality” without elaborating on the processes some youth use to counter negative stereotypes (p. 1616). However, Eaton et al. (2003) did point out that the majority of studies identified a small minority of male and female youth who did not endorse sexually unsafe practices, violence, or sexism. Although described as minor, their presence is significant to the overall study of gender and HIV/AIDS.

Scholarly articles from 2000 to 2010 covered similar themes. Intimate partner violence, the social construction of gender roles, and gender-based violence were identified as contributing heavily to the spread of HIV/AIDS among economically disadvantaged, primarily Xhosa, black African youth residing in the Western Cape (Jewkes, Levin, & Penn-Kekana, 2003; Morojele, Brook, Kachieng, 2006; Reddy & Dunne, 2007; Selikow, Zulu, & Cedras, 2002; Strebel et al., 2006; Wood, Lambert, & Jewkes, 2007); coloured youths in the Cape Flats area (Shefer et al., 2008; Walsh & Mitchell, 2006) and; Zulu, black African youth in KwaZulu-Natal, which is the South African province with the highest percentage of HIV-positive persons (Bhana, Zimmerman, & Cupp, 2008; Harrison, 2008; Harrison, O’Sullivan, Hoffman, Dolezal, & Morrell, 2006; Leclerc-Madlala, 1997, 2001, 2002; O’Sullivan, Harrison, Morrell, Monroe-Wise, & Kubeka, 2006; Pattman, 2005, 2006; Pattman & Bhana, 2006). These studies suggest that in South Africa, Xhosa youth, coloured youth from low-income communities in Western Cape Province, and Zulu youth from low-income areas in KwaZulu-Natal province are at significant risk for contracting and spreading the AIDS

virus. Results from the most recent South African National HIV Prevalence, HIV Incidence, Behavior and Communication survey (2008) confirm that Xhosa and Zulu black Africans, and coloureds have the most prevalence of HIV and deserve further study.

### **Contesting Dominant Masculinities and the Paradox of Sport**

Although most studies of the influence of gender in sports published during 2000-2010 focused on the construction of dominant masculine identities that endorsed unsafe sexual practices, some studies examined the ways in which those masculinities were contested. For example, Walker (2005) investigated the different techniques the NGO Men for Change employed in order to construct alternative masculinities that rejected violence and embraced gender equality. Thorpe (2002) discussed various strategies teachers used to encourage male students to engage in a “counter-nurturing alternative discourse” that challenged dominant discourses of masculinity that endorsed gender violence and risky sexual behavior (p. 68). Montgomery, Hosegood, Busza, and Timaeus’s (2006) study of rural households in KwaZulu-Natal argued that contrary to the popular “deficit model” of male involvement in family life, which was articulated by women involved in the study, men were actually found to be “positively involved with their households” in numerous ways including caring for relatives who were suffering from AIDS (p. 2411). Similarly, Sathiparsad (2010) revealed the ways in which male students were actively taking the lead in creating “alternative, counter-hegemonic identities for themselves” that endorsed mutuality and caring in their relationships, rather than violence (p. 351). These studies suggest that when sport-for-social-change programs

address HIV/AIDS they are moving beyond merely disseminating biomedical knowledge regarding the transmission of the virus and entering into gender politics.

When soccer is used as the primary modality for communication in sport-for-social-change programs, this issue becomes even more complex due to soccer's association with ascribed masculine traits such as violence against others (Morrell, 2001). Sport has also been used to support patriarchal claims that men are naturally superior to women (Connell, 1987; Messner, 2007). These ascribed masculine characteristics have been linked to the spread of HIV in South Africa, therefore, creating mixed-messages within programs.

Although the paradox of sport has been investigated in Western culture (see Kaufman & Wolff, 2010, for a recent analysis of arguments), comparatively little research has emerged regarding sport and paradox among people living on the Africa continent. Saavedra (2009) addressed this knowledge gap in her analysis of the complex relationship between sport and gender in Africa. Saavedra drew a parallel between the goals of Europeans, who colonized Africa in the name of spreading Western civilization, and the practices of contemporary development programs that seek to bring economic and humanitarian aid to Africa. Thus, when sport-for-social-change programs are not “grounded in a clear appreciation of local dynamics,” their impact can be the exact opposite of the goals they originally sought to achieve (p. 125). Saavedra argued that when development organizations use sport to challenge gender norms they should not assume that sport, in any given context, is a genderless tool. She noted that seeking to challenge dominant gender norms can be paradoxical given that sporting arenas in Africa, particularly soccer pitches (fields), are often a “bastion of male privilege and power”



where “a particular kind of male dominance over women (and some men)” is encouraged (p. 124). In essence, the practices displayed through involvement in sport may actually function to reproduce the circumstances that ascribe a vulnerable status to women and girls and patriarchal position to men and boys.

The sporting paradox also appeared in Dyck’s (2011) analysis of the role of soccer in the rehabilitation of child and youth soldiers residing in United Nations sponsored interim care centers in Sierra Leone. Soccer was originally introduced into the camp as a way for ex-combatants to use their free time effectively in-between other academic and rehabilitation activities. Before the introduction of sport, youth, particularly male youth, often spent breaks fighting with one another or secluded from other camp members. Although interviews with camp members, administrators, and caregivers revealed that the introduction of sport into the camps did help quell instances of depression, violent behaviors towards others, and anxiety among camp members, other types of impact were noted.

Dyck (2011) found that male youth began playing soccer matches during breaks while female youth “assisted with cooking preparations,” thus reinforcing gendered labor practices (p. 402). Dyck observed:

Male youths, especially older ones, were seen as the primary beneficiaries of sport; female combatants, in contrast, were perceived by males as spectators, and thus requiring secondary access to leisure and play. In particular, women were

allowed to play sports only after completing their chores and cooking responsibilities. (p. 408)

Further, during soccer matches, “wartime tactics” such as the use of slogans and nicknames that had been used to identify allegiances during the civil war proliferated (p. 403). Thus, the use of sport failed to attend to problems in gender relations that, if not addressed, seem likely to extend into post-war relationships. In this way, although well intended, sport can actually work to reinforce and perpetuate patriarchal views and behavior, particularly among young, adult males.

Although criticisms by Saavedra (2009) and Dyck (2011) regarding the gendered practices of organizations were geared toward organizations that rely primarily on donor money and structural design from Western institutions, their concerns regarding paradox and the construction of masculinities can be applied to community initiated (grassroots) organizations.

To this point, I have outlined some of the major concerns regarding sport-for-social-change programs on the African continent, discussed dominant themes in the gendered discourse regarding HIV/AIDS in South Africa, and tied these two elements together through their relationship to constructions of masculinity. The following sections expand upon these topics by broadening the discussion to the place of sport-for-social-change within academic disciplines. I begin by positioning sport for social change within the communication sub-discipline of development communication due its prominence in development initiatives.

## **Academic Approaches to Studying Sport for Social Change**

### **Development Communication**

Development communication is the application of multi-disciplinary theories to social change initiatives, typically in the Global South or with under-resourced populations in the Global North (Inagaki, 2007). Studies in the development communication field have covered a wide breadth of subjects including health awareness and prevention campaigns (Hanan, 2009; Hutchinson et al., 2006; Lillie et al., 2009; Noar et al., 2009; Sood & Nambiar, 2006), the application of communication theory to specific development initiatives (Bingham et al., 2011; Dutta, 2007; Jacobson & Storey, 2004; Papa et al., 1995), and the role of gender in social change projects (Adeleye et al., 2011; Esu-Williams, 2010; Melkote et al., 2000; Muturi, 2005). Scholars have investigated the impact of using various communication methods such as social marketing (Scheier & Grenard, 2000), entertainment-education (Mohammed, 2001; Singhal et al., 2003; Vaughan et al., 2000), participatory communication (Morris, 2003; Greiner & Singhal, 2009), peer-education (Boulay & Valente, 2005; Goldstein et al., 2005), and media advocacy (Freedman et al., 2009) in addition to specific modalities such as telephones (Mosavel, 2005; Ullah & Hultberg, 2009), newspaper articles (Dong et al., 2008; Nishtar, 2004), satellite technology (Rathore, 2009), and radio programs (Farr et al., 2005; Storey et al., 1999). Still, despite the increasing popularity of the use of sport as a development modality, little attention has been given to the subject in the development communication literature.

The small amount of literature that has been published by those within the communication discipline focuses on the influence of using sports celebrities in public

health campaigns (Brown & Chavan de Matviuk, 2010; Faulkner et al., 2011). The complexities of using sport (e.g., its practices, its historical significance, and gendered meanings) have not been thoroughly investigated by those within the communication discipline. Most scholarly criticism concerning the use of sport in development initiatives is found in the development studies literature.

### **Development Studies**

Roger Levermore (2008a, 2008b) was one of the first social scientist to call attention to the sport-in-development phenomena. In a 2008b article in the journal *Progress in Development Studies*, Levermore observed that “recognition of the role of sport as a potential engine for development” was largely missing from the social sciences literature, including development studies. At the time, the most relevant scholarly literature concerning the relationship between sport and international development came out of the field of sports studies; however, these articles also lacked an in-depth analysis of the impact of using sports in development initiatives.

In 2009, Levermore and Beacom edited *Sport and International Development*, the first text to address the scholarly literature gap. In the opening chapter, they argued in favor of sport being implemented as a viable development modality, particularly where other development initiatives had difficulty engaging community members. However, they cautioned that the use of sport in the development process is not always a “positive” endeavor and actually may be “detrimental” to certain development objectives in the area where it is most heavily applied; countries considered low-income by the World Bank, otherwise referred to as the Third-World or the Global South (p. 9).

In the preface to *Sport and International Development*, Lorna Read, the Assistant Vice President for Strategy and Planning for the international NGO Right to Play, and Jerry Bingham, Research and Policy Manager for UK Sport, stated that the purpose of the book was to place sport-in-development on the “map in the development literature” and within broader debates concerning international development (p. xiii). Debates revolved around groups and individuals being involved in or excluded from program design and evaluations. This is most often a subject of concern in programs funded by larger multinational corporations or international NGOs where the key decisions regarding program design and implementation are made with little or no involvement by the people who implement the programs. Levermore and Beacom (2009) also found that even though several sport-in-development organizations were created with the specific purpose of addressing the needs of marginalized groups within a given community (e.g. youth or women), members of these marginalized groups were not always involved in the process of planning and agenda setting for program activities or the evaluation of programs. This often resulted in tension between organization members and community members.

Tension is also present between academics who study sport-in-development initiatives and policy makers who advocate for and fund specific sport-in-development programs and initiatives. According to Read and Bingham (2009), academics are concerned with understanding phenomena through some type of theoretical lens, whereas policy makers are more concerned with what practices are working to fulfill a specific development objective that can be reproduced in multiple environments. Read and Bingham argued that academics who work in an “applied way” could bridge the gap

between different sectors of the development field and different disciplines within academia (p. xviii).

Following the publication of *Sport and International Development* in 2009, several articles appeared in social science journals that addressed the concerns raised in the text. For example, Nicholls, Giles, and Sethna (2010) found that the knowledge of grassroots practitioners was often subjugated in favor of donor agencies. Similarly, Coalter (2010) argued that evaluations should privilege the needs of the local communities being impacted by sport-in-development programs over the objectives of international donor organizations. Finally, Kaufman and Wolff (2010) argued that although sports could be an effective tool for social change, participation in sport does not always result in enhancing an athlete's "moral or ethical reasoning" and may actually "diminish" such traits (p. 5).

A special issue of *Third World Quarterly* (2011) dedicated to "Mainstreaming Sport into International Development Studies," examined current debates within the sport-in-development literature such as (a) the marginalization of certain groups based on geographic location, gender, race, or class; (b) the strengthening of hegemonic structures of aid implementation based on "top-down" systems influenced by partnerships between powerful donor agencies (e.g., multi-national corporations and international sporting agencies such as FIFA and the International Olympic Committee) and community-initiated organizations; and (c) the endorsement of a macho, competitive sporting ethos that encourages dangerous, physical play and perpetuates the notion of the "natural" dominance of men (Kidd, 2011).

Darnell and Black (2011)—the editors of the special issue—detailed the struggle for sport-in-development initiatives to challenge popular development models by using sport as an alternative development modality. They argued that the implementation of an alternative approach is complicated by the need to “identify and enact specific policies that employ sport effectively to meet particular development goals within the constraints of the current funding environment and broader political economy” (p. 373). Nevertheless, the authors encouraged practitioners to take advantage of what they described as the “unique opportunity” sport presents to “practice development differently” (p. 372). Practicing development differently should include acknowledging and incorporating already established academic critiques of sport, particularly the relationship between sport and masculinity.

### **Critiques of Sport in Development**

Critiques of sport often center on what Heywood and Dworkin (2003) described as “potentially damaging core assumptions”—assumptions that have been used to bolster claims of a naturalized dominance of men over women and privilege an “individualistic, competitive, male-oriented ethos” that is damaging to the physical and psychological health of athletes (p. 7). Therefore, it would seem obvious that the study of men and sports should be at the forefront of scholarly critiques of sport. However, until 1990 when Michael L. Messner and Don Sabo edited the landmark *Sport, Men, and the Gender Order: Critical Feminist Perspectives* (1990), literature that addressed gender issues in the study of men and sports was scarce. This work examined the male sporting experience from scholarly perspectives based in feminist theory, previous women’s studies of sport, and men’s studies. Reflecting on Messner and Sabo’s analysis ten years

later, McKay, Messner, and Sabo (2000) noted that the 1990 text portrayed sport as a “conservative institution that tends to reproduce existing unequal relations of power between women and men as well as existing unequal class, racial/ethnic, and sexual relations of power among men” (p. 2). Although McKay et al. argued that sport continued to be an arena in which men could exercise a “collective power and privilege” over women, the experiences of men who participate in sport are far from uniform. Further, they suggested that differences in gender identity often manifested themselves in challenges to “hegemonic” forms of masculinity, such as coaches encouraging emotional intimacy among male athletes rather than competitive, male sporting ethos (p. 8).

Central to McKay et al.’s (2000) analysis is R. W. Connell’s (1987) theory of gender order. Connell’s theory of gender order is part of his theory of hegemonic masculinity (2000, 2005). Hegemonic masculinity figures prominently into work in sports studies, particularly those that address the paradoxical nature of sports (Messner, 1990, 2007; Messner & Sabo, 1990). The next section explains the evolution of Connell’s theory of hegemonic masculinity, including its critiques.

### **Connell’s Theory of Hegemonic Masculinity**

Connell’s theory of hegemonic masculinity, influenced by Gramsci’s designation of class relations, has been used in a variety of research studies in multiple disciplines (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). Connell used the term hegemonic masculinity to describe the presence of multiple masculinities and the hierarchies used to distinguish them within educational and political settings and argued that within any given context, multiple masculinities are at play with one another (Connell, 1982, 1983; Connell et al., 1982). The description of hegemonic masculinity presented in Connell’s (1987) book



*Gender and Power* became used to describe masculinities that subordinated women through socially endorsed practices within a patriarchal gender system. The concept also allowed for the presence of other subordinated masculinities. Hegemonic masculinity was not necessarily the most common form of masculinity present within a given context, but it:

embodied the currently most honored way of being a man, it required all other men to position themselves in relation to it, and it ideologically legitimated the global subordination of women to men. Men who received the benefits of patriarchy without enacting a strong version of masculine dominance could be regarded as showing a complicit masculinity. It was in relation to this group, and to compliance among heterosexual women, that the concept of hegemony was most powerful. Hegemony did not mean violence, although it could be supported by force; it meant ascendancy achieved through culture, institutions, and persuasion (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005, p. 832).

Hegemonic masculinity also acknowledges that gender relations are historically constructed, and therefore, subject to shifting dynamics. They are developed within specific contexts that allow for the expressed struggle between older and newer forms of dominant masculinities. The theory leaves open the possibility for alternative forms of masculinity to advance and become hegemonic, including ones that embrace feminists ideals by rejecting patriarchal practices.

Gender theories often encounter scholarly criticism, and hegemonic masculinity is no exception. After reviewing responses to the theory, Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) condensed the critiques into five themes and responded to them.

The first theme addresses the underlying concept of masculinity. Hegemonic masculinity has come under attack for allegedly supporting essentialist claims that men, by their physical definition (sex-gender dichotomy), are superior to women—that is, that hegemonic masculinity means the natural dominance of men. Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) reject this dichotomous definition of masculinity. Masculinity is not something men are born with, it is the result of socially constructed practices that occur in gender relations. Therefore, they argued that masculinity should be studied within this “relational approach” while also acknowledging the context in which gender relations are occurring (p. 837). Further, they suggest that masculinities research has thrived during the past two decades precisely because the “underlying concept employed is not reified or essentialist” (p. 836). This allows for contributions from multiple academic disciplines and theoretical standpoints.

Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) define masculinity as a “configuration of practice” (p. 843). Although masculinity is socially constructed, gendered practices are often described as naturally occurring characteristics shared by members of the male sex. Gender norms result in cultural expectations about the appropriateness of certain behaviors. These expectations about behavior can result not only in certain practices being labeled masculine but also in particular areas being designated as masculine spaces. This was the case in Saavedra’s (2009) example of the gendering of soccer pitches in Africa.

The second critique questions the ambiguity and overlap in representations of hegemonic masculinity. Who is actually represented, and who gets to define what characteristics constitute the dominant masculine group? Connell and Messerschmidt

(2005) state that ambiguous definitions should be embraced, not criticized, because they acknowledge the complex system of gender relations within any give context (regional, organizational, cultural, familiar, etc.). I believe that allowing for ambiguity and overlap also acknowledges the subjectivity of the researcher. Identifying hegemonic masculinities is dependent upon the researcher's particular understanding of the context of his or her research site. In all studies, it is the researcher who ultimately decides how to interpret the data on masculinities that then become identified as hegemonic. Obviously, this leaves open the possibility that researchers may interpret data from the same location differently, thus engendering ambiguity and overlap in representations of hegemonic masculinity.

The third critique examines the problem of reification—the belief that hegemonic masculinity produces systems of gender power through the assertion of “violence, aggression, and self-centeredness” of males onto females. Scholars have accused hegemonic masculinity of isolating patriarchal practices within a purely relational context without thoroughly examining other significant influences. Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) argue that hegemonic masculinity is actually a reaction to systems of gendered power created through multiple influences. They acknowledge that, in some instances, hegemonic masculinity does refer to men engaging in practices that directly subordinate women, such as the use of physical violence. But they also assert that studies should examine the “institutionalization of gender inequalities, the role of cultural constructions, and the interplay of gender dynamics with race, class, and region” that work to construct various configurations of hegemonic masculinity (p. 839). These also illuminate tensions and resistance to exemplars of hegemonic masculinity within a given context. For the

purpose of my study, I utilize hegemonic masculinity as the lens through which men's relationships to others (men and women) and to their environment is contextualized and examined.

The fourth critique addresses the relationship of hegemonic masculinity to the masculine subject. Hegemonic masculinity has been accused of "oversimplifying" the masculine subject (p. 843). Though hegemonic masculinity is often used as a theoretical tool to discuss and categorize masculine subjects for the purpose of scholarly research, this should not be mistaken for attempting to simplify the masculine subject. Connell and Messerschmidt's (2005) definition of masculinity does not represent a certain "type" of man, but rather a technique men use to position themselves among other men and women through "discursive practices" (p. 841). In this respect, men have used discursive techniques in order to align themselves with (Archer, 2011) or distance themselves from (Lea & Auburn, 2001) particular hegemonic masculinities.

The fifth critique concerns the pattern of gender relations. Critics have accused hegemonic masculinity of representing gender relations as a series of "self-contained, self-reproducing" systems that ignore the fact that the "dominance of men and the subordination of women" represent a historical process (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005, p. 844). Maintaining hegemonic masculinities that endorse patriarchy takes considerable effort because there are often challenges to this type of gender order. It requires the "policing of men" and the "exclusion or discrediting of women" (p. 844). This can occur through practices such as disparities in wage labor, the use of violence, sexual discrimination, and the distribution of domestic work.

Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) used their replies to each theme to construct a “reformulation” of hegemonic masculinity (p. 845), including (a) acknowledging the “agency” of subordinated groups as much as the “power” of dominant groups, in addition to contextual gender and social dynamics simultaneously at play (p. 848); (b) examining the relationships between local, regional, and global sites of masculine construction that work to influence hegemonic masculinity; (c) incorporating more theories related to the embodied experience of dominant constructions of masculinity; and (d) addressing the dialectical tensions of masculinities. As a result, those who study hegemonic masculinity need to recognize that its definitions may include the possibility of “democratizing gender relations” and “abolishing power differentials” rather than solely reproducing gender hierarchy (p. 853). Therefore, the concept of hegemonic masculinity is no longer a “catchall” phrase used to describe masculinities that support patriarchy; it is a “means of grasping” men’s and boys’ practical relationship to exemplars of masculinity within gendered, social contexts (p. 841).

The gendered, social context should include considering the “institutionalization of gender inequalities, the role of cultural constructions, and the interplay of gender dynamics with race, class, and region” (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005, p. 839). Each of these themes has been addressed in research that focuses on constructing and contesting exemplars of hegemonic masculinity in South Africa. For example, Bhana (2005) and Pattman (2002, 2005) observed that institutions such as schools and recreational facilities were integral in the construction of masculinities among male youth. Research on factors influencing the spread of HIV among youth found that black Africans, and coloured youth from economically disadvantaged communities were most

likely to endorse violent, sexist forms of hegemonic masculinity (Eaton et al., 2003; Shefer et al., 2008). Other researchers explored the ways in which cultural constructions of gender norms influenced the relational dynamics among men and women, thus influencing exemplars of hegemonic masculinity (Campbell, Nair, & Maimane, 2006; Leclerc-Madlala, 2002; Lindegger & Quayle, 2009; Morrell, 2001; Selikow, 2004). In this regard, Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) noted that although exemplars may be influenced by “cultural ideals” they should not be interpreted as representing a “cultural norm” (p. 842). Exemplars emerge from gendered discourse at local and regional sites of masculine construction.

### **Regional and Local Hegemonic Masculinity**

My study concentrates on the relationship between local and regional sites of masculine construction that influence exemplars of hegemonic masculinity. Local hegemonic masculinities are constructed from interpersonal relationships among organizational and community members. Academic discussions of local hegemonic masculinities are typically found in ethnographies and narratives. Regional hegemonic masculinities are constructed at the broader cultural level. Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) assert that regional hegemonic masculinity:

shapes a society-wide sense of masculine reality and, therefore, operates in the cultural domain as on-hand material to be actualized, altered, or challenged through practice in a range of different local circumstances. A regional hegemonic masculinity, then, provides a cultural frame-work that may be materialized in daily practice and interaction. (p. 849)

Thus, regional exemplars of hegemonic masculinity influence—but do not dictate—the construction of gender relations and exemplars of hegemonic masculinity at the local level.

The next section describes two regional hegemonic masculinities in South Africa. These are discussed in order to give a historical context to exemplars of local hegemonic masculinities identified in later chapters. They show how apartheid was, and continues to be, integral to the construction of masculinities in South Africa. For approximately 50 years, Xhosa, Zulu, and coloured South Africans functioned under a state sanctioned system of racial oppression. In order to understand how exemplars of hegemonic masculinity are constructed it is imperative to have some understanding of the interlocking “forms of oppression” such as racism and class inequality that helped enact other oppressive discourses related to masculinity (Kleinman, 2007, p. 88).

### **Struggle Masculinity and Post-Struggle Masculinity in South Africa**

Morrell (2001), a South African masculinity scholar, used Connell’s theory of hegemonic masculinity to investigate the construction of masculinities in the transition from an apartheid society that Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) described as a social system of “segregated and competing patriarchies” (p. 835) to a post-apartheid South Africa. Although Morrell (1998, 2001, 2005) used the term “African masculinities” in many of his writings, he argued against essentialist terms relating to the construction, maintenance, and contesting of masculinities in the southern Africa region:

The divided history of South Africa has left the region with a highly complex mix of gender regimes and identities. Race, class, geographical location and many

other factors are constitutive of gender identities and affect the gender regimes which exist in the institutions and milieux [sic] of the country. (1998, p. 630)

Thus, masculinities emerged from multiple, and sometimes competing, exemplars of regional and local hegemonic masculinity (Morrell, 2001).

Although apartheid officially ended in 1994 with the installation of a democratically elected government, its social and economic legacy still influences the construction of masculine identities. Next, I discuss two exemplars of regional hegemonic masculinity that emerged from discourses surrounding apartheid: struggle masculinity and post-struggle masculinity. I then expand upon the complexities surrounding the presence of both of these masculinities in post-apartheid South Africa.

Struggle masculinity refers to the regional hegemonic masculinity extolled during the years of political, physical, and economic struggle to end apartheid. Committing to fighting in the political struggle against apartheid in the 1970s and 80s meant that there was little time for formal education. For many non-white South Africans, the end of the apartheid era may have brought political freedom, but not economic prosperity. Black Africans residing in townships such as the Cape Flats were left with little job training except for professions that involved the use of weapons. Therefore, men utilized the skills they learned during the revolutionary years and became gangsters, mercenaries, or police officers. This included coloured men who found they were living in a new South Africa that no longer endorsed a coloured labor preference policy (Adhikari, 2005). According to Morrell (2001), this state policy of racial hierarchy placed coloureds in “artisanal or protected enclaves of the labor market,” while black Africans (the majority of which are Xhosa and Zulu) were left with the most physically dangerous and “menial”



jobs (p. 17). After apartheid, coloured men residing in low-income areas such as the Cape Flats, also turned to gangs or other violent ways of making a living. Although the end of apartheid meant there was no longer state sanctioned racial oppression, it did not necessarily end the socio-economic struggles of non-whites, therefore, many men still identify with struggle-masculinity.

The political transition from a country divided and under siege to a formal democratic government was accompanied by changes in the gender order that influenced a new exemplar of masculinity, post-struggle masculinity. Post-struggle masculinity endorses gender equality and women's rights. It evolved out of a growing feminist consciousness and is influenced by the South African Constitution and Bill of Rights. Officially adopted in 1996, the South African Constitution and Bill of Rights includes four sets of values that acknowledge and attempt to change the power issues that were an integral part of European colonialism and the apartheid system: sexism, racism, state sanctioned discrimination, and human rights abuse.

Following the end of apartheid and the emergence of post-struggle masculinity, men who displayed the characteristics of struggle-masculinity had great difficulty realigning themselves with the values ascribed to post-struggle masculinity: non-violence and gender equity. As a result, many ex-freedom fighters were left without a place in the post-apartheid South African gender order. This resulted in tensions between men who embraced characteristics associated with struggle-masculinity—violence, aggression—

and those who rejected these socially constructed gender norms. In regards to this tension, Xaba (2001) observed:

When the gender norms of a society change, boys who modeled themselves in terms of an earlier, “struggle” version of masculinity may grow up to become unhappy men. Those who cannot change together with the society or who do not possess the skills to make it in the new social environment find themselves strangers in their own country. If the new values are totally opposed to the former expressions of masculinity and manliness, boys find themselves, later in life, ostracized and, sometimes, outside the law. What was normal and acceptable behavior suddenly becomes inappropriate and, often, criminal. What made some people heroes within their communities in the old order may be the exact reason for their ostracism and punishment in the new order. (p. 114)

Boys who lived through apartheid and developed into men following its demise negotiated the ideals associated with both exemplars. These men act as male role models to the post-struggle generation. Some have rejected the values and characteristics associated with struggle-masculinity; however, the “patchwork of patriarchies” discussed by Bozzoli (as cited in Morrell, 1998) still exists in many communities. In spite of this, change is occurring in the porous spaces between the patriarchal entrenchments and continues to influence “new models of masculinity” that result in “new ways of ‘being men’” (Morrell, 2005, p. 273). Therefore, “being a man” in certain local contexts may encompass distancing oneself from exemplars of hegemonic masculinity (Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005, p. 840). This is the premise behind the three sport-for-social-change organizations in this study. However, the practices organizations employ to

contest exemplars of hegemonic masculinity; the tools they use, in this case soccer; and the people involved may seem to endorse the same masculinities the organization desired to contest, thus creating paradox within organizations. The following section examines paradox and gendered discourses in organizations from an applied communication perspective.

### **Paradox, Gender, Discourse, and Organizations**

In a special issue of the *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, Trethewey and Ashcraft (2004) declared that paradox is actually a “normal condition” of organizational life (p. 81). For that reason, the challenge for applied communication researchers investigating paradox is not to determine the ways in which it can be eliminated, but to understand how members identify and negotiate paradox within their organization. Trethewey and Ashcraft (2004) asserted that research should include an analysis of the ways in which paradoxes are gendered. Gendered discourses often intersect with other discourses producing tensions as organizational members “negotiate gendered identities and practices” (p. 83).

### **Gendered Discourse in Organizations**

In the *Handbook of Applied Communication Research*, Buzzanell, Meisenbach, Remke, Sterk, and Turner (2009) declared that studies focusing on gender and organizing should address the “cyclical and structural relations among gender, discourse, and organizational contexts” rather than concentrating on predicting outcomes of gendered organizing (p. 188). Applied studies of gendered practices that focus on outcomes often do not consider context (Ashcraft & Mumby, 2004; Buzzanell et al., 2009). Buzzanell et al. argued that “organizational context” should not be limited to “microlevel individual

discourses;” studies should include discourses at the middle and macrolevel (p. 188). A wealth of literature rather, explores the social construction of men (Collinson & Hearn, 1994; Gibson & Papa, 2000) and women (Buzzanell, 2000; Trethewey, 1997) in organizations. However, much of it seeks to deconstruct one dominant practice of gendered organizing and replace it with the other. In contrast, Ashcraft and Mumby’s (2004) theory of feminist communicology addresses micro, middle, and macro discourses and stresses the co-construction of both masculinities and femininities through communication organizing.

### **Ashcraft and Mumby’s Theory of a Feminist Communicology of Organization**

Ashcraft and Mumby (2004) assert that not only are organizations sites of gender construction but gender “literally organizes” institutional processes through multiple, overlapping discourses (p. 285). Discursive practices represent the hegemonic views of groups or persons that come from inside the organization itself or from a broader political sphere of influence (Mills, 2002). This includes taking into consideration how historicalizing organizational practices can explain present day discursive practices (Foucault, 1979).

Central to the theory of feminist communicology of organization is the idea that discourse encompasses both symbolic interaction and material conditions of organizing that are manifested through daily practices and interactions. Eicher-Catt and Catt (2010) asserted:

Communicology designates a holistic approach to communication, encompassing information theory and the diverse fragments of the field. It accomplishes this

approach by calling attention to the fact that communication is first of all and inevitably a lived experience of the human body. (p. 17)

Discourse is an embodied experience, not a disembodied conjunction of social constructionist thought. This approach to discourse helps identify what and whose interests are being served through gendered organizational practices. People "produce (gendered) realities that become sedimented and naturalized over time, reflecting the ability of the powerful to shape such realities in terms of their own interests and values" (Ashcraft and Mumby, 2004, p. 123). Thus, these become the gendered materiality of organizational structures. Because discourse is an embodied experience, people within organizations position them, or are positioned by others, within the organizational structure. Therefore, discourse not only helps people make sense of their environment, but actually "enacts" conditions (p. 124). In other words, discourse is practice and practice is discourse.

Feminist communicology illuminates feminisms' tolerance for multiple discursive perspectives, ambiguity, and paradox in the study of gender, communication, and organizing. This tolerance is accomplished through emphasizing the "frequently competing" discourses that occur across micro, middle-level, and macro frames of organizations (Mumby & Ashcraft, 2006, p. 77). Micro-level frames focus on the discourse among individuals in an organization that construct gendered identities. Middle-level organizational discourse occurs through material produced by the organization (e.g., published texts, Websites) that "engender and are gendered by organizations and organizing" (Buzzanell, et al., 2009, p. 188). Macro-level frames branch out into societal discourses that engender organizations. The combination of

these frames result in dialectical discourses of (a) communication and gendered subjectivity—people both respond to and create multiple gendered discourses, (b) power and resistance—everyday communication practices produce paradoxical and ambiguous definitions of and challenges to power structures in organizations, (c) symbolic/discursive and material conditions of organizing—gendered communication constructs material conditions, and (d) gender relations—masculine and feminine identities are co-constructed through the “dialectics of gender relations” (p. 181).

The theory of feminist communicology is similar to the theory of hegemonic masculinity in several ways. Ashcraft and Mumby’s (2004) theory of feminist communicology and Connell and Messerschmidt’s (2005) reformulated theory of hegemonic masculinity both stress that gendered identities are constructed, maintained, and contested through multiple discourses. Discourses occur at microlevel (local sites) and macrolevels (regional sites) of communication. Gendered discourses need to be understood through a contextual framework that acknowledges the presence of other, sometimes “competing” discourses of race, ethnicity, class, culture, and sexuality. The presence of various discourses creates dialectical tensions that must be negotiated by organizational members.

### **Conclusion**

Sport-for-social-change programs that utilize soccer are increasingly popular development initiatives throughout South Africa. Programs are directed primarily at children and youth (15-24) and most—either directly or indirectly—address some aspect of HIV/AIDS education. The AIDS epidemic in South Africa put the spotlight on gender relations. As a result, in the late 1990s, development programs began to shift away from

concentrating on the dissemination of purely bio-medical knowledge, to addressing relational dynamics that influence the spread of the HIV virus. Research in South Africa over the last 20 years revealed a discourse of male sexual rights and female sexual subservism, which has been attributed to culturally based gender norms among Xhosas, Zulus, and coloureds residing in economically disadvantaged areas of South Africa (Shefer et al., 2008). However, research also discussed the ways in which these gender norms had been successfully contested.

Contesting gender norms begins with identifying those perceived as dominant, and therefore, influential among certain demographics. This is where the use of soccer to challenge sexist gender norms becomes paradoxical. In general, male participation in sport has been used to support claims of a naturalized dominance of men over women and to endorse an “individualistic, competitive, male-oriented ethos” (Heywood & Dworkin, 2003, p. 7). Sports association with these particularly “divisive” and “dysfunctional” masculinities can actually work to perpetuate patriarchal gender norms rather than challenging them (Levermore & Beacom, 2009, p. 39). This was demonstrated in Saavedra (2009) and Dyck’s (2011) research on sport-for-social-change programs in Africa. Therefore, sport-for-social-change programs should consider the broader social, economic, and political environments in which they operate as well as the local context, including not only the practices involved but also the people implementing them as well as the participants. To understand the complex relationships between discourses of masculinity, sport, and gendered organizational practices in three grass-roots sport-for-social change organizations, I posed the following research questions:

RQ1: How are gendered discourses of masculinity constructed, maintained, and contested in sport-for-social-change organizations?

RQ2: What gendered discourses contribute to paradox within sport-for-social-change organizations?



### CHAPTER 3: METHODS

In the classic methodological text *Tales of Field*, Van Maanen (1988) observed that the process of conducting ethnography requires researchers to have, at a minimum, some comprehension of the “language, concepts, categories, practices, rules, beliefs” of research subjects (p. 13). Along these same lines, Saavedra (2009) asserted that a researcher conducting an ethnography of a sport-for-social-change program—specifically one that addressed gender issues—needs to have knowledge of the “local language(s), culture, history, and geography” of the organization being studied (p. 129-130). With sports-related research, simply having a “love” of the sport is not sufficient knowledge with which to head into the field, “sport-specific knowledge is crucial” (p. 130), and this goes beyond the basics or rules, tactics, and the like and into areas such as “training, coaching and mentoring” (p. 130). Saavedra also declared that “As sport is paired with other developmental goals, specific knowledge in those areas (health, environment, conflict resolution, *etceteras* is also required” as well as the “people skills” necessary to maintain rapport with research subjects (p. 130). Before I conducted the research for my study, I made a point of following Van Maanen (1988) and Saavedra’s (2009) advice. I was already a soccer fan and had some practical experience in development work, but I also read numerous scholarly and lay texts concerning sport-for-social-change programs that utilize soccer, specifically those within the African continent, and familiarized myself with South African history and culture, including its struggles with the HIV/AIDS

pandemic. I also decided that it was imperative to visit South Africa before I committed to a dissertation topic.

In the following paragraphs, I first describe my initial trip to South Africa in 2008 to gather information for the purpose of determining the possibility of conducting an ethnographic study there. Next, I explain the events that led to my second visit to South Africa to conduct research for my dissertation in 2009. Then, I justify my use of ethnographic research methods, giving special attention to ethnographic applied communication research. Following that section, I discuss the process of actually conducting research and how my position as a female feminist ethnographer influenced the choices I made while performing fieldwork. Then, I describe how I identified key informants and give details about my interview protocol. Finally, I explain how I analyzed the data, including a discussion of the importance of reflexivity.

### **The Feasibility Study: June 27 to August 13, 2008**

In the summer of 2008, I spent seven weeks in South Africa conducting a feasibility study for my dissertation. I wanted to gain a better understanding of the various ethnic and racial groups that help define South Africa's cultural identity as The Rainbow Nation<sup>3</sup>. The South African government recognizes eleven languages, nine of which are considered "African."<sup>4</sup> Originally, I intended to focus largely on learning more about Zulu culture because several scholarly articles linked contemporary concepts of Zulu masculinity with the spread of HIV (Leclerc-Madlala, 2002, 2003; O'Sullivan, Harrison, Morrell, Monroe-Wise, & Kubeka, 2006; Pattman, 2005, 2006; Pattman &

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<sup>3</sup> A nickname that represents post-apartheid South Africa.

<sup>4</sup> The Afrikaans language originated from Dutch settlers in Cape Town. British settlers brought the English language to Cape Town (Mitchley, 2005).

Bhana, 2006). Although Zulus can be found throughout South Africa's nine provinces, the majority of Zulus reside in KwaZulu-Natal. Because, at the time, the majority of HIV/AIDS positive persons resided in the rural areas of KwaZulu-Natal (HIV and AIDS Strategy for the Province of KwaZulu-Natal, 2006-2010), I arranged to volunteer for four weeks with Mngani (*friend* in Zulu), a charity located in Shamba,<sup>5</sup> a small town about an hour away from the large cosmopolitan city of Durban. The charity was sponsored by a popular, family-owned hotel, The Charles Hotel and Backpacker Lodge, located in the center of Shamba. Volunteers could stay at the Backpacker Lodge for a reduced fee in exchange for volunteering. Mngani also provided transportation to and from the volunteer sites located in the Zulu village approximately 15 minutes by car from the hotel.

I chose Mngani because it was one of the few non-profit organizations located in KwaZulu-Natal that did not expect participants to pay for the privilege of volunteering.<sup>6</sup> The advertisement on their Web site merely asked that people commit to volunteering at least three weeks on one of three projects Mngani sponsored. In early June, I sent the first of several e-mail messages to the Director of Mngani, Tobias Flynn—who also owned the Charles Hotel and Backpackers—regarding my potential visit and volunteer agenda, along with my curriculum vitae. In 2008 Mngani was not the well-organized, money-making venture it is today, therefore, Mr. Flynn typically responded to my requests for more details about my volunteer assignment, living quarters, etc. with a quick “We’ll just work things out when you get here.” Having read only positive reviews

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<sup>5</sup> Pseudonym.

<sup>6</sup> In 2009 Mngani began charging a fee to volunteer; this fee includes lodging, meals, travel to and from volunteer sites, and a discount on cultural excursions.

about Mngani on Web sites and in various travel manuals, I decided to take Mr. Flynn at his word and hope for the best. However, just in case my circumstances changed, I also made arrangements to spend at least a week in Cape Town checking out possible alternative research sites before committing to booking a flight to Durban.

I arrived in Cape Town on June 28 after an exhaustive 20-hour flight. As is my usual custom in a country that I am not familiar with, I treated myself to three days at an actual hotel in the center of town—rather than a budget-friendly backpacker hostel<sup>7</sup>—in order to get acquainted with the city. I didn't know anyone in Cape Town so I wanted to stay a few days in an environment where I could be confident that the staff spoke English, I could change American money to South African Rand, I would have access to a functioning and efficient Internet connection, I could keep my passport in a locked safe, and, most importantly, I would be able to recover from jet-lag in a quiet, private room rather than a noisy dorm with multiple travelers. My budget was tight so I could only afford this “luxury” accommodation for a few days before I committed to staying at a backpacker hostel in the City Bowl section of town nearby. During my initial one week stay in Cape Town, I explored numerous locations in the city including an area on the outskirts of town known as the Cape Flats.<sup>8</sup> I also visited cultural attractions that examined the social and economic motivation for, and the effects of, South Africa's apartheid era, such as the world famous District Six Museum.<sup>9</sup> Through these experiences

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<sup>7</sup> What are generally referred to as Youth Hostels are referred to as Backpackers in South Africa; conversely, in South Africa Hostels refer to low-cost, dorm-style housing for single men, often, immigrants from other countries in Africa.

<sup>8</sup> The area known as the Cape Flats was developed to accommodate black Africans and coloureds forcibly removed from Cape Town during the apartheid era.

<sup>9</sup> The District Six museum recounts the construction and demolition of the area known as District Six in Cape Town. The government evicted all non-white persons (most residents were coloureds) during

I became familiar with some of the history surrounding the presence of Xhosas and coloureds in the Cape Flats. Exposure to these different racial populations and their relationship to the Cape Flats would prove integral to my research study later on.

Although my stay in Cape Town had inspired me to investigate the possibility of researching Xhosa and coloured sport-for-social-change organizations, I decided to continue my original plan and book a flight to Durban. I e-mailed Mr. Flynn and informed him of my impending arrival in Shamba on July 9<sup>th</sup>.<sup>10</sup> Due to the number of e-mails exchanged between Mr. Flynn and myself, I was quite surprised that when I arrived at the Charles Hotel and introduced myself to Craig Dunn, the manager of the Backpacker Lodge, Craig<sup>11</sup> responded, “Well, it would have been nice for Tobias to tell me about this.” Craig, a white South African in his late 20s, grew up near Shamba and spoke Zulu, English, and Afrikaans fluently. Craig coordinated the transportation to and from volunteer sites and excursions to points of interests in the area surrounding Shamba, often acting as a guide and interpreter. In spite of the lack of communication between Mr. Flynn and Craig concerning my stay, on my first day in Shamba, the three of us were able to plan out a tentative volunteer schedule for the coming weeks.

During the five weeks I spent in KwaZulu-Natal, I volunteered with two different projects, both co-sponsored by a Scandinavian-based NGO that also worked extensively with Zulu children and families residing in the rural areas surrounding Shamba. A

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apartheid and bulldozed the area. Due to land disputes the district still remains largely undeveloped. Several foreign dignitaries have visited the museum and it is on the itinerary of most cultural tours of Cape Town.

<sup>10</sup> From Durban, I took a van run by a company that specializes in travel for backpackers.

<sup>11</sup> Craig requested that all visitors to the Charles Hotel and Backpackers Lodge refer to him by his first name.

typical day for me entailed getting a ride with Craig to the Zulu village where I helped serve lunch to orphans at a *crèche*.<sup>12</sup> Children and youth (ages 13-17) attending a public secondary school adjacent to the *crèche* also received food after the younger children were served. Due to dire financial constraints, for many children, this was the only nutritional meal they would eat all day.<sup>13</sup> This was a great concern as several of the children were also HIV-positive, having contracted the virus from their mothers in the womb. Mingani also coordinated an after-school program for youth development. I helped students participating in this program write a play they planned to perform revolving around the theme of improving interpersonal relationships.<sup>14</sup> Additionally, I tutored a group of students preparing to write their matriculation exams.<sup>15</sup> Through my volunteer experiences, I gained some knowledge of the day-to-day life of Zulus living in the rural communities surrounding Shamba. My understanding of Zulu culture was enhanced by my participation in rituals such as a Healing Ceremony conducted by a female Sangoma<sup>16</sup> and a traditional Zulu wedding. I also obtained permission to observe

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<sup>12</sup> A *crèche* is a type of day-care center for children under the age of six.

<sup>13</sup> Most Zulu families in rural KwaZulu-Natal have difficulty obtaining fresh vegetables, and their diet consists primarily of mielie-meal—a type of porridge made from coarse flour. Volunteers from the Scandinavian NGO were working with local grocery stores to obtain donations of vegetables for the feeding program. When I returned to this site in 2009, the *crèche* had a flourishing vegetable garden.

<sup>14</sup> The participants chose the theme of play themselves.

<sup>15</sup> Students cannot graduate from secondary school without passing these written exams, a majority of which are in English.

<sup>16</sup> In Zulu culture a *Sangoma* is a practitioner of traditional medicine; they believe they were chosen by their ancestors to intervene into people's lives. At the healing ceremony I attended, people asked the Sangomas for guidance on everything from curing illnesses to passing driving exams.

a Life Skills<sup>17</sup> class at the local high-school. This was particularly interesting because the students were discussing their perspectives on HIV prevention.

I became friends with several staff members of the Charles Hotel and volunteers working for the Scandinavian NGO. We would gather regularly in the evenings at the Charles Hotel restaurant and bar to discuss everything from South African politics to the upcoming World Cup. These interactions increased my understanding of contemporary Zulu culture and of the racial and ethnic tensions still present 14 years after the end of apartheid. Although it was extremely difficult to say *Hambani kahle* (goodbye in Zulu) to my friends, on August 9<sup>th</sup> Craig drove me to the Durban airport where I caught a flight back to Cape Town.

In Cape Town, I spent three days collecting additional information regarding potential research sites. During this period, I met one of the founders of the Cape Flats-based sport-for-social-change organization, We Are Not Statistics (WANS). I became intrigued with this grassroots organization and decided to try to include them in my dissertation research. I departed South Africa on August 13<sup>th</sup> and prepared for the Fall 2008 semester at USF. I was scheduled to take my doctoral qualifying exams during November and then to write my dissertation prospectus.

### **Analyzing the Results/Formulating a Prospectus: August 2008 through May 2009**

Based on the results of my first trip to South Africa, I wanted to study two non-profit sport-for-social-change organizations that work primarily with male youth and utilize soccer as a tool for social change, including We Are Not Statistics (WANS)—a grassroots organization that works primarily with Xhosa youth in the Cape Flats—and another organization that has programs throughout Africa, including KwaZulu-Natal

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<sup>17</sup> Life Skills classes address physical and emotional health issues for youth.

Province. Following my advancement to doctoral candidacy in December of 2008, I decided to concentrate only on grassroots organizations—ones that are typically initiated and staffed by members of the communities in which they work—and to limit myself to ones that operated within a specific area of South Africa. I made this decision based on the gap in scholarly literature regarding grassroots NGOs. Criticisms of sport-for-social-change organizations have typically focused on the tension between Western donors and local practitioners (see Levermore & Beacom, 2009); I wanted to examine the organizational structure of grassroots NGOs who may receive some financial support from Western donors but who are not beholden to Western donors, and, therefore, are able to design programs with relative autonomy. We Are Not Statistics fit this criterion, but I needed at least one more organization to be included in my study. Due to my past experiences in KwaZulu-Natal Province, I decided to focus my search on NGOs that worked with male Zulu youth.

I began a search of organizations using online search engines and academic data bases. Through this process, I found The Natal AIDS Project (NAP), located in KwaZulu-Natal, and I contacted the organization via e-mail. I corresponded with the Directors by e-mail, but neither organization would agree to participate in my study until they had met me in person, although both organizations stated that their cooperation was highly likely. This issue was explained in detail in my application to the University of South Florida Institutional Review Board (IRB), and I was informed that my case would be discussed at an upcoming meeting on May 19th.



## **Returning to South Africa: May 17 to August 14, 2009**

### **Recruiting Participants and Getting IRB Approval**

On May 17, 2009, I arrived in Cape Town and stayed at the same backpacker hostel in the City Bowl section of town where I spent a few days in 2008. On May 21<sup>st</sup>, I received a letter via e-mail from the University of South Florida IRB stating that my “Application for Initial Review” was pending. I would need to submit “letters of support from the organizations” via fax as addenda while in South Africa. Luckily, I was able to make personal contact with the Directors of We Are Not Statistics and another Cape Flats based grassroots organization, Otherlands Football Academy. Otherlands Football Academy is sponsored partly by the backpacker hostel where I stayed while in Cape Town and works primarily with coloured youth in the Cape Flats. I decided to include this organization in my study because they worked in the Cape Flats region, but with a different racial population than We Are Not Statistics. While in Cape Town, I continued to e-mail the Director of the Natal AIDS project. My dissertation project officially commenced on June 5, 2009, following the commitment of the organization We Are Not Statistics. I subsequently received commitments from Otherlands Football Academy and the Natal AIDS Project.<sup>18</sup>

### **Conducting Ethnography**

I treated each organization as its own case study. According to Hartley (2004), utilizing case studies allows researchers to “provide an analysis of the context and processes” which elucidate theoretical issues being studied within an organization (p. 323). However, Hartley contends that case studies are a type of “research strategy”

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<sup>18</sup> The details of these exchanges are described in the case studies presented in chapters 4, 5, and 6 of this study.

for investigating phenomena rather than being a distinct research method (p. 323). I employed multiple qualitative data collection methods that fall under the umbrella term of ethnography. I use the phrase umbrella term because, as Brewer (2004) observed, “Ethnography is a style of research rather than a single method and uses a variety of techniques to collect data” (p. 312). For this study, I collected data using both unstructured and semi-structured interviewing techniques, including one focus group (Fontana & Prokos, 2007). I also enacted the roles of participant observer and observer-as-participant (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002), and I analyzed artifacts such as Web sites and organizational literature. I collected data in order to answer research questions that address through a communication lens practical social issues that are current in international development. This type of research is referred to as applied communication research (Cissna, Eadie, & Hickson, 2009).

### **Ethnographic Applied Communication Research**

Ellingson (2009) conducted a meta-analysis of 41 articles and book chapters concerning applied communication ethnography published between 1990 and 2005. She found that ethnographically oriented applied communication research sought to achieve four main goals: (a) understanding and description—interpreting the practices of a culture in order to produce a thick, rich, description of their practices, rituals, etc.; (b) ideological/political objectives—using a critical eye to call attention to processes of “unfairness or injustice within a particular lived domain” (Madison, 2005, p. 5); (c) providing practical solutions to problems identified through the research process; and (d) theoretical concerns—producing an enhanced understanding of current theories or generating new theories. Ellingson noted that when theories were utilized in applied

ethnographic communication research, the goal was usually to “ground the research questions posed rather than to generate hypotheses to test” (p. 134). In this study, I employ Ashcroft and Mumby’s (2004) theory of feminist communicology and Connell and Messerschmidt’s (2005) reformulated theory of hegemonic masculinity to frame my research questions.

## **Fieldwork**

### **Edgework**

A large part of my study involved feminist edgework. There is no definition of what the edge in edgework actually constitutes. It is a purposefully subjective abstract concept inspired by the unconventional journalist Hunter S. Thompson: “THE EDGE, there is no honest way to explain it because the only people who really know where it is are the ones who have gone over” (p. 262). Female ethnographers “working the edge” (Newmar, 2011, p. 685) from a feminist perspective have to be concerned with not only their physical safety, but their interpersonal relationships as well.

**Physical Risks.** Most of my fieldwork took place in the Cape Flats region of South Africa. Although primarily a residential area, the Flats—as it is referred to by locals—has a long history of civil unrest (mass demonstrations, etc.) and a reputation for gang violence due to the proliferation of drug trafficking following the end of apartheid. Car-jacking is also a concern for residents of the Flats and for visitors who pass through the area on the way to the airport. Although several staff members of the Backpackers Lodge expressed great concern for my safety, I felt it was important for me to stay full-time in the Cape Flats to conduct a portion of my fieldwork with WANS and OFA. Therefore, I stayed 12 days in an upscale guest house in the Cape Flats. I also employed

the services of a driver/bodyguard (a friend of one of my key informants) to transport me to various research sites. Even with these precautions, I was constantly reminded that in the Flats, anything can happen. One of these reminders was a memorial to Amy Biehl, the American Fulbright Scholar who was stoned to death by an angry mob on August 25, 1993. The memorial—a cross—is located in front a petrol station in Gugulethu where my driver and I stopped regularly to fill up my rental-car. It is reported that Biehl was trying to run to the petrol station for safety when the mob killed her.

Just as there are no guarantees concerning physical safety while performing feminist edgework, there are also no absolutes about security when researchers interact with their research subjects. These extend beyond issues of harassment (Brewer, 2004) and into ethical considerations. These issues are discussed in the following sections.

**Relational Risks.** When Stacey (1988) famously asked the question “Can there be a feminist ethnography?,” she brought attention to ethical dilemmas that occur when feminist researchers attempt to “assault the hierarchical, exploitative relations of conventional research” by using methods aimed at fostering “reciprocity, and inter-subjectivity between the researcher and her ‘subjects’” (p. 22). Stacey concluded that attempting to achieve the goal of egalitarianism was actually a ruse to hide “more dangerous forms of exploitation” that appear not only in the process of data collection, but in the representation of research subjects in text (p. 22). Kirsch (2005) also warned that researchers conducting feminist fieldwork had to accept inevitable risks such as “the potential for relationships to end abruptly and for participants to feel that they have been misunderstood or betrayed, especially in moments when participants’ and researchers’ priorities diverge, as many times they will” (p. 2163).

Doing edgework involves voluntarily taking risk(s) and performing skills that keep the researcher at the boundary between attempts at egalitarianism and blatant exploitation in relationships, and, at its most extreme, depending on the particular research site, life and death. Both of these can be a tricky proposition, for as Conquergood (1991) observed “Borders bleed, as much as they contain” (p. 184). Consequently, crossing over the edge is always a possibility.

### **Observing Research Subjects**

Conducting field research is similar to constructing a story. There is a beginning, middle, and ultimately, an end. As a participant observer and observer-as-participant, I was also a character in my story. I interacted with other characters (otherwise referred to as key-informants, research subjects, and interviewees), and they in turn responded to my presence. I enacted various roles including: researcher, white woman, foreigner, friend, teacher, volunteer, and American. Warren and Karner (2005) observed that a researcher’s “embodied presentation of self” encompassed “things you [the researcher] cannot change and things you can, things you do change, and things you do not” (p. 58). Because ethnography is “an embodied practice” (Conquergood, 1991), during my data collection process I had to navigate all of the complications my raced, classed, aged, gendered, and nationalized body brought with it to my research sites. In the following sections, I expand on some of the ethical issues female ethnographers encounter when conducting fieldwork, particularly when they are conducting ethnography from a feminist perspective, and explain how I traversed these issues during my fieldwork experience.

## **Entering In and Staying In**

When ethnographers discuss their data collection process, a great deal of effort is put into gaining access to the fieldwork site (bypassing gatekeepers, gaining IRB approval, obtaining the necessary visas, etc.) and successfully navigating the often complex matrix of interpersonal relationships, customs, and rituals in order to collect a sufficient amount of data to complete a study. Again, factors such as gender, race, ethnicity, and nationality cannot be ignored. When the ethnographer is female and the research subjects are largely male, these issues can become even more complex, particularly in hyper-masculinized environments such as sporting arenas (Kleinman, 2007).

In South African townships, soccer fields are generally considered to be masculinized spaces (Pelak, 2010; Saavedra, 2009). Woodward (2008) argued that in sporting locations predominately occupied by men, the body and gender of a female ethnographer must be addressed because it adds to the ethnographer's already established identity as an "outsider" (p. 554). Although, in her experience conducting research at boxing gyms Woodward described how her female gender often constrained certain aspects of her research experience (women were often seen as distracting men from their training and, therefore, often not a welcome presence), she also acknowledged that, ironically, at times, it gave her increased access to data that might have been unattainable if she were "positioned" as a male researcher within the same space because male research subjects felt comfortable revealing intimate aspects of their lives because she was not seen as threatening their masculinity (p. 549).

The gender strategies employed to gain entry and ensure continued acceptance at a research site can be applied to non-sporting arenas as well. For example, Mazzei and O'Brien (2009) asserted that a female ethnographer should be able to use her gender in order to "work within the socially constructed meanings that define all her physical and social characteristics deemed relevant by her particular field setting," thus becoming an active agent in the research experience, rather than letting others, such as key informants, dictate the researcher's identity. Mazzei and O'Brien's field-worker identity strategy encompassed adapting temporary "field-defined gender roles" in order to "activate behaviors and responses among informants" that allow women to acquire data and maintain a rapport with informants (p. 373). From a feminist standpoint, making the decision to "temporarily take on behaviors consistent with a gender role(s) operating in the field" (p. 373) can cause internal conflict, particularly when researchers choose to display behavior that contradicts what they believe to be unfair gender practices occurring among their participants or by others at their field location(s). This theoretical and personal struggle extends to male researchers as well as illustrated in Schacht's (1997) study of male rugby players.

Schacht (1997) discussed feeling that he was "betraying" (p. 345) his theoretical standpoint as a feminist by "undertaking feminist fieldwork" (p. 341) in an environment that encouraged his participation in misogynist acts. He concluded that the only way for him to successfully function as a feminist ethnographer—gain entry, maintain rapport, have access to valuable fieldwork data—was temporarily to become a self-described soulless human being or "sylph" (p. 345). He explained that when he was taking on the role of a sylph he "did not advocate or even defend" his feminist beliefs, because, to do

so would result, at the minimum, in being treated in a way that highly constricted his fieldwork. Schacht reported that, most likely, had he not adopted the field-defined gender role of sylph, his research subjects would have permanently terminated their relationship, thus simultaneously terminating his fieldwork (p. 346). Adams (1999) also encountered a feminist field-worker identity crisis while conducting research on cultural rituals in Uzbekistan. Under a great deal of pressure to confirm to gendered cultural norms that she found oppressive, Adams's decision was not to become a "sylph" but to adopt the identity of "mascot researcher," a researcher who allows him or herself to be used as public relations tool by research subjects and gatekeepers (p. 333). Like Schacht, Adams chose to adopt this temporary identity in order to "deal with problems of access, rapport, and reciprocity" (p. 340).

During my fieldwork in South Africa, I, too, on occasion, encountered a feminist field-worker identity crisis. As a single, white,<sup>19</sup> 35-year-old American woman, conducting research in the Cape Flats and rural KwaZulu-Natal, I was definitely an outsider. I was able to conduct research there only because I was granted passage into areas and the insights of my research subjects. However, getting in does not automatically mean that you get to stay in; you are always a guest. When conducting my research, at times I took on the role of the "sylph" (Schacht, 1997) when I observed my research subjects behaving in ways that went against my feminist beliefs. I also played the role of the "mascot researcher" (Adams, 1999) and let myself be paraded around as a status symbol that embellished the reputations of some of my key informants. On several occasions, I took Mazzei and O'Brien's (2009) advice and behaved in a way that did not

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<sup>19</sup> I am actually mixed-race, but I pass for white in South Africa. This gave me access to areas and people that may not have accepted me if I self-identified as mixed-race, or in South African terms, coloured.



challenge the established gender norms for women in an area, even when I found them sexist and oppressive. I often struggled with these decisions, but they were indeed “voluntary risks” I took to avoid going over the edge. Conversely, I was told on several occasions by research subjects and lay people that my presence as a single woman conducting research on her own in a foreign country represented a symbol of feminism. I was, however, always the guest, the outsider, the exotic other.

Similar to Woodward (2008), I found that these identities often gave me access to information and people that would have been denied had I entered with a different gendered positionality. However, my embodied self also restricted my autonomy in research sites. For example, in two of the case studies, my status as an outsider greatly increased my chances of being a potential target for crime. This meant that I needed to be accompanied by someone from the Cape Flats at all times, a factor that severely constrained my observation schedule. Although I was able to hire a male driver, he worked another job and was not always available when I required his services. Ellingson (2009) observed that when conducting applied ethnographic communication research, “no consensus exists as to the necessary or ideal quantity, or the degree of detail in which field notes can or should be described” (p. xxx). My goal, however, was to observe as many hours of each organization’s soccer practices and games as possible, and I was sometimes frustrated at my lack of autonomy.

Due to the difficulties I encountered traveling around the Cape Flats, I was able to observe approximately 10 hours of soccer practice and official matches for the organization We Are Not Statistics (WANS). I also encountered transportation difficulties attempting to observe practices and games for the second Cape Town based

organization, Otherlands Football Academy (OFA). Fortunately, due to their participation in two day-long soccer tournaments, I was able to collect approximately 20 hours of observations. Additionally, because of my dual role as a volunteer in OFA's tutoring sessions, I was able to collect an additional 8 hours of observational data while functioning as an observer-as-participant.

The third organization, The Natal AIDS Project (NAP), was also located in an economically disadvantaged area, but the members of this organization did not express as much concern regarding my safety as I moved about the Umgungundlovu District. Their main reason for stressing my need for a chaperone revolved around the difficulty in finding specific locations in the rural areas where meetings and practices were occurring. Due to scheduling difficulties, I was able to observe only one soccer practice of a team from this organization and a meeting with townspeople facilitated by NAP members. Most of my data collection for NAP involved unstructured interviewing and one focus group. I conducted unstructured interviewing with members of all three organizations, and I describe those interviews in the following section.

### **Interviewing Key Informants**

**Unstructured Interviewing.** Unstructured interviewing is a qualitative method that researchers use in order to “understand the complex behavior of members of society without imposing any priori categorization” that might impose pre-determined boundaries (Fontana & Prokos, 2007, p. 40). The interviews I conducted with key informants were indeed emergent processes influenced by multiple variables such as (a) prior field observations, (b) my relationship with each respondent, (c) each respondent's level of English proficiency, and (d) each respondent's professional identity within his or

her organization. I interviewed twelve respondents and conducted one focus group with five people; however, not all of the respondents are included in the case studies. I describe the criteria for inclusion in each of the case studies in more detail in chapters 4, 5, and 6.

**Identifying key informants.** The qualitative research conducted to date on sport-for-social-change programs that utilize soccer has focused on the experiences of participants, largely ignoring the influence of program staff such as coaches (Clark, Friedrich, Ndlovu, & Neilands, 2006; Delva, Michielsens, Meulders, & Groeninck, 2010; Fokwang, 2009; Saavedra, 2009). Therefore, I chose to conduct formal interviews with program staff and identified them as key informants. The sample size was limited due to the number of program staff available in each organization (e.g., WANS had only three coaches), the staff members' availability to be interviewed, and the staff members' proficiency in English<sup>20</sup>. The responses of each of these interviewees are included in the case studies. At times, I also had opportunities to interview other people connected with the organizations in some capacity but who were not integral to the design and implementation of organizational goals and practices. For example, I interviewed a player for the Bethlehem Football Club regarding his experiences on the team and his impressions of life in Gugulethu. The responses of these interviewees helped to contextualize the answers of key informants. Additionally, throughout the data collection process, I had several informal conversations with interviewees. I compiled these observations into field-notes that I analyzed periodically looking for common themes related to my research questions. These field observations were used to generate topics

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<sup>20</sup> I did not have the funds necessary to hire a translator.

for discussion during interviews. After each interview, I made notes concerning common themes that were emerging. These notations also influenced future interview questions.

**Interview protocol.** Formal interviews were tape or digitally recorded and lasted 30 to 60 minutes. Key informants were asked about: (a) their current position within the organization and how they came to be involved with the organization, (b) how they interpreted the goals of the organization, (c) what environmental factors were interfering with participants completing those goals, (d) did they believe soccer was an effective tool for meeting the goals of the organization, and if so, why, and (e) their opinions regarding the presence—or in the case of NAP, total absence—of girls and young women on the soccer teams. For non-key informants, interviews revolved around similar themes regarding the function of sport-for-social-change organizations in South Africa and the environmental effects, including cultural and historical factors that influence these organizations. Interviews were then transcribed and analyzed, a process described in the following section.

### **Analysis of Data**

Upon arriving back in the United States, all field notes and interviews were transcribed. I transcribed my hand-written field notes into Microsoft Word documents. For the sixteen digitally and tape-recorded interviews, I hired a professional transcriber of South African descent who was able to understand the intonations in the various South African dialects. Once the interviews were transcribed, I checked them for accuracy against the original recordings and made any necessary corrections.

I used the crystallization method to analyze all of the research data I collected (Ellingson, 2008; Richardson, 2000). Field notes and interview transcripts were

combined with my interpretation of organizational artifacts such as Web sites and materials that were displayed in offices. Crystallization is similar to the triangular method of data analysis in that researchers “gather multiple types of data,” such as field-notes, interviews, text, etc. and utilize “numerous theoretical frameworks,” but, unlike the triangulation method, the objective is not provide researchers with a “singular truth” (Tracy, 2010, p. 844). According to Tracy, when qualitative researchers employ the crystallization method, their goal is “open up a more complex, in-depth, but still thoroughly partial, understanding” of the data (p. 844). I concentrated on the practices and various discourses that worked to gender each organization (Ashcroft & Mumby, 2004) and create paradox (Trethewey & Ashcraft, 2004). My analyses of these practices and discourses are interwoven with accounts of cultural discourses and practices that ground descriptions of local hegemonic masculinities (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005) that I identified in each case study.

### **Reflexivity**

During data analysis I also used reflexivity (Steier, 1991) to help frame the results and show “biases, goals, and foibles” in effort to explicate how these factors influenced my overall research experience (Tracy, 2010). Goodall (2000) observed that “To be ‘reflexive’ means to turn back on our self the lens through which we are interpreting the world” (p. 137). Therefore, my dissertation reflects my thoughts and feelings about the various research sites, subjects, and cultural traditions I encountered during my fieldwork. One way I make myself “visible in my text” is through the use of narratives (Denzin, 1999, p. 511) that I constructed from field notes, personal journals, approximately 200 photographs, and memories. They serve to position my findings

within a cultural context and answer Ellingson's (2009) call for applied communication researchers to address the inevitable "messiness, imperfections, and mistakes" that occur while conducting ethnographies (p. 146). Through narrative, I describe "roadblocks encountered, opportunities seized or missed, ethical dilemmas faced, and mistakes made" (p. 147). They are a combination of Van Maanen's (1998) confessional and impressionistic tales.

## **CHAPTER 4: WE ARE NOT STATISTICS**

On the Cape Flats—an expansive, low lying area 20 kilometers from Cape Town—the only thing that stops the wind blowing sand across the landscape are manmade structures of various versions of the original matchbook houses, tightly congested informal dwellings made up of scraps of sheet metal, and rows and rows of government flats. Tucked among these structures are shopping centers, small restaurants, dilapidated schools, and the open stretches of land often used as soccer fields. This chapter examines interviews with two coaches for the Cape Flats based organization, Bethlehem Football Club (BFC). BFC is sponsored by the non-governmental organization We Are Not Statistics (WANS). WANS is a grassroots organization for youth driven by the needs of Gugulethu, one of the oldest black townships in the Cape Flats. WANS asserts that intergenerational poverty and HIV/AIDS are the two greatest obstacles facing the development of youth in Gugulethu.

Through narrative exploration of the lived experiences of youth in the Cape Flats, Walsh and Mitchell (2006) declared that masculinities were constituted “within the histories” of the participants particular communities (p. 60). Therefore, this chapter begins with a brief account of how the migrant worker system and apartheid era policies affected Xhosa speaking, black African families residing in the Cape Flats. This is followed by a description of Gugulethu, as the context within which the two interviews were conducted. Then, I address key themes related to soccer as an educational modality

and the development, maintenance, and contention of male role models, including local hegemonic masculinities.

### **The Dismantling of Family Life in the Cape Flats**

By the early 1900s the Xhosa agrarian culture largely dissolved due to a series of events such as widespread cattle disease, the increasing price of government taxes on rural homesteads, and the push east of Boer farmers (Worden, 2000). During this period, Xhosa and Zulu men, who had originally resisted the migrant labor system because it separated them from their families for long periods of time, sought wage labor in Cape Town out of financial necessity. The absence of women and families from men involved in the migrant worker system actively worked to keep black settlements in the cities as temporary, masculine boarding spaces rather than stable domestic homes (Western & Coles, 1996).

Following the election of the pro-apartheid government in 1948, a series of legislative acts were passed that essentially removed the citizenship of all non-whites residing in South Africa. In 1951, the Bantu Authorities Act amended the Native Affairs Act of 1920 and granted the government the right to deport black Africans of any ethnicity from areas that were not officially designated as a Native Reserve (also referred to as Homelands). In 1954, Bantu (black African) women in the Western Cape became the first women in South Africa to have to abide by pass laws enacted by the Urban Areas Act. This meant that women could not legally reside in the townships unless they could provide evidence that they had worked in the area legally for ten years, were married to a man working legally under the Urban Area Act, or were the minor, unmarried daughter of a man working legally. Additionally, because it was so difficult for a woman to acquire a



legal residence under her own name, such things as divorce, the loss of a job by a spouse (thus putting the family in illegal status), or the death of a spouse often meant eviction from her home and expulsion from the city. Families were frequently split up through these events as some members preferred to move back to their designated Homeland and live legally while other members rented residences or build shacks illegally in the townships. Census data revealed that until the post-apartheid years, the percentage of black African women residing in the Cape Flats remained very small compared to the percentage of black men (Horner & Wilson, 2008<sup>21</sup>). However, some families did attempt to stay together in government sponsored townships like Gugulethu.

### **Gugulethu**

Many township residents were forcibly moved to Gugulethu in 1962 in an effort to clear areas in the Cape Flats that the government referred to as slums. Amendments to the Natives (Urban Areas) Act five years earlier in 1957 dramatically restricted the access black Africans of all ethnicities had to urban centers, which in turn restricted housing options. As a result of the amendments, more Africans were seeking official housing in Langa township, thus causing an overflow of illegal shacks in the areas. To help alleviate overcrowding, Nyanga township was established 1957, followed by Gugulethu. Gugulethu township (originally named Nyanga West) was the last official township constructed by the government during the apartheid era that provided homes mainly for Xhosa residents.

For many new residents of Gugulethu, the move farther out on the Cape Flats meant a move to a particularly barren landscape, one devoid of both foliage and relationships built with neighbors from previous communities. In her memoir, Sindiwe

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<sup>21</sup> No specific ethnicities were provided in this data.

Magona (1994), a South Africa human rights activist, described her first impressions of Gugulethu as a young woman in 1962 after being forcibly removed with her family from a neighborhood close to the center of Cape Town. Gugulethu, she wrote, was a “windswept, treeless miles-from-anywhere township,” whose creation furthered the “destruction of African family life, communal life, and all those factors that go toward the knitting of the very fabric of a people” (p. 85).

The government housing in Gugulethu was just as barren as the landscape on which it was constructed. These “existenzminimum” or subsistence housing designs were created by the government’s National Building Research Institute. Nicknamed “matchbox” houses by many of the residents, the standard NE (Non-European) Council houses were built from concrete and brick, encompassing a mere 40 square meters of space that contained four rooms (two bedrooms, a kitchen, and a communal area) and a free standing toilet in the backyard. The design and low quality of construction stayed the same throughout the early 1970s.

Over the years, residents made improvements such as expanding the general mainframe, installing indoor plumbing and electricity, and constructing backyard shacks to sub-let for extra income or to provide space for additional family members. Lee (2006) noted that until 1985, when the state formally acknowledged the concept of African freehold tenure—the right of non-whites to formally purchase homes on land once owned by the state—residents made improvements at great financial risk to themselves. Therefore, many of the renovations were made over a long period of time because tenants were hesitant to invest in upgrading a home that they may be forced to vacate without warning.

In many ways, Gugulethu is still countering a sense of impermanence attained during the apartheid years. Approximately 350,000 people currently reside in Gugulethu. The average monthly income is 1126 Rand, or roughly \$110 a month (Busgeeth & Rivett, 2004<sup>22</sup>). High rates of unemployment and crime, a poor public education system, low adult literacy, and the second highest percentage of HIV-positive persons in the Western Cape negatively affect the economy. More often, youth aspire to attain a higher-education and job placement so that they can move away from Gugulethu rather than to reinvest in Gugulethu.

The next section discusses We Are Not Statistics (WANS), an organization that provides select youth in Gugulethu with access to higher-education and encourages them to use their skills to develop communities throughout the Cape Flats. WANS also addresses social concerns in Gugulethu such as single parent households, the negative influence of gangs, and the spread of HIV.

### **We Are Not Statistics**

We Are Not Statistics (WANS) is a grassroots organization. Its agenda is driven by the needs of the Gugulethu community, and its staff consists largely of volunteers. WANS began when Ruairi McGrath, the current director, visited the Cape Flats in the mid-2000s. He observed the practices and games of Bethlehem Football Club (BFC) and was inspired by the team's athletic talent and determination to play on an extremely unkempt field with sub-standard sporting equipment. Over the course of his stay in Gugulethu, Ruairi developed a friendship with BFC's head coach, Moses Anda, and became close to many players on the team. Moses asked Ruairi if he could help coordinate some kind of effort to get the players on BFC proper soccer gear and financial

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<sup>22</sup> These were the most updated statistics I could locate.

assistance necessary to attend college. Ruairi, who was initially overwhelmed by the proposal, established WANS the following year.

I learned about WANS toward the end of my first trip to South Africa in the summer of 2008. I was there to conduct a feasibility study for my dissertation, and was relaxing in a popular backpacker's lounge in Cape Town when I struck up a conversation with the young man sitting next to me, Billy Bingham. Billy would be leaving South Africa soon in order to begin graduate school. He told me about the organization he had been working with for the past few months, WANS, and he provided me with the contact information for Ruairi McGrath and Moses Anda and encouraged me to contact them.

After researching WANS and establishing that the organization would indeed fit into the design of my dissertation, I contacted Ruairi and Moses via e-mail and asked for permission to conduct ethnographic research on their organization. Before departing for South Africa in the summer of 2009, I exchanged several emails with Ruairi (who was residing in the United States at the time). He stated that he had no objection to my pursuing ethnographic research with WANS but that it would ultimately be up to Moses. My initial meeting with Moses occurred shortly after I arrived in Cape Town in late May of 2009. Moses and I discussed the research questions for my dissertation and how I was intending to approach my study (specifically, observations and interviews). I also expressed concern about traveling around Gugulethu, as I did not want to rent a car from an agency for my stay in the area. Moses stated that he would most likely be able to arrange a car and driver for me at a reasonable price, which he eventually did. I began my dissertation research less than a week after our first meeting in June 2009.

Through individual interviews and data gathered from secondary sources such as Websites, I learned that WANS sponsored two programs for youth in Gugulethu: BFC and Pakamisa Wonk'umtinja (PW). BFC and PW are distinguished by their activities and mission statements as well as by the gender of their participants. BFC's mission is to use soccer as a tool to promote HIV/AIDS awareness among youth in Gugulethu, teach leadership skills, promote character development, and provide players with scholarships to local universities or trade schools. Further, the coaches of the teams are trained to be mentors and community leaders. Pakamisa Wonk'umtinja (Lift Up All The Young Girls) is a Xhosa dance troop consisting of young women between the ages of 14 and 22. Their mission is to use traditional African dance, singing, and poetry to inspire girls to avoid teen pregnancy, drug abuse, and HIV/AIDS. WANS provides supplies such as new instruments and costumes for the participants as well as sends them on a tour throughout South Africa, and its goal is to have every dancer attend college. Although both programs are ultimately aimed at bettering the lives of Xhosa youth in Gugulethu by providing them with skills and education, their stated objectives speak to the gendered dynamics of the organization and the historical positioning of issues related to gender and sexuality in the Cape Flats. These issues are addressed in the following sections.

### **Bethlehem Football Club**

At the time I conducted my research, BFC consisted of two teams made up primarily of boys and young men between the ages of 7 and 19. Teams were divided by age. The U-13 team was comprised of players aged 13 and younger. The U-19 team, also referred to as the senior team, consisted of players between the age of 14 and 19. The club participated in tournaments throughout the Cape Flats and the Western Cape

region. Future plans for BFC included expanding the number of teams (including starting a team for girls), having a greater social and economic impact on the Gugulethu community, and getting more players into college on full scholarship. BFC also wanted to be able to compensate coaches monetarily for their participation.

Moses Anda oversees the entire BFC program, including the training and development of coaches, and works closely with the administration of WANS on program design. Willy Shona coaches the BFC Senior team (U-19) and Zoma Anda, Moses's 18-year-old son, coaches the U-13 team. I interviewed Moses and Zoma because of their position within BFC and their proficiency in English. Unfortunately, I was not able to interview Willy Shona due to time constraints and his limited knowledge of English.

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*I arrive at the BFC practice field just as the sun is beginning to set. There is nothing like an African sunset. On this day, it appeared as a soft, yellow glow illuminating the tops of tin roofs and then burned a blazing mix of red and orange as it slowly dipped below the horizon hovering in the sky until the blackness of night slowly crept in. During the winter in Gugulethu, one can usually walk around comfortably in a T-shirt and pants during the day if the sun is out (and it's not pouring rain), but the nights are quite chilly. I am prepared for the weather, dressed in my coat and jeans with gloves in my pocket just in case. The BFC Senior team practices from five to six in the afternoon, Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. On the weekends they often travel to matches with other clubs in and around Cape Town.*

*The practice field sits approximately 200 meters from Bethlehem Church, but the church does not own the field. The Gugulethu City Council manages the property. Various members of BFC inform me that there is currently a struggle going on regarding upkeep between teams who use the field and the City Council. From its poor condition, I can understand why; I am also told that this is one of the better fields in Gugulethu.*

*The field is sectioned off into two regulation soccer fields surrounded by a few meters of grassy open space. The lines on the field are so faded they're barely visible, numerous patches of grass are missing, broken glass and trash litter the field, but there is grass. The presence of grass is a big plus when most soccer fields in townships are nothing more than desolate open spaces of dirt not all of which even have makeshift goals at either end.*

*The players arrive at various intervals. Many change into their soccer uniforms on the sideline next to me. The smell of sweat and the townships leaks off their clothes. There is no apparent feeling of embarrassment on their part as they hastily remove shirts and pants to put on T-shirts, shorts, long socks, and cleats. Changing on the sidelines has been a part of their lives for many years. The players are in a hurry not because they don't want bystanders like myself to see them in their underwear, but because they don't want to be late for practice.*

*Training for the BFC Senior team always begins with a series of warm-ups directed by their coach, Willy, a tall, portly man in his early 50s, who yells out instructions and encouragement in Xhosa. In my experience as an ethnographer of soccer, I have become familiar with these warm-up exercises. They are meant to develop the players' physical strength and agility as well as their reliance on each other. Players*

*use their bodies as tools to help a fellow teammate stretch out a particular limb, or kick the ball back in short dribbling exercises.*

*Following warm-ups, the team is split into two groups for a practice game. I notice a few players make a point of picking up broken glass from the field before the games begin. I am not the only person observing. The field is surrounded on three sides by various versions of the original “matchbox” houses constructed during the 1960s and tiny shops. Groups of people sit on their stoops conversing with one another and commenting on the practice. Children often run up and down the streets and onto the outer edges of the field.*

*As the practice gets underway, I notice a group of grade school age children hovering on the sidelines watching the senior teams’ game. As I’m starting to feel the chill of the evening creeping in, I zip up my coat in response; the children continue running around in shorts and T-shirts. Many are wearing only flip-flops or no shoes at all, a big concern to me as I keep noticing more and more pieces of broken glass (often the remnants of beer bottles) on the field.*

*As the practice continues, I find my attention is diverted to the small children on the sidelines and the pick-up game they are playing, having borrowed one of the team’s soccer balls. Their game appears to have no boundaries as they run around passing the ball to one another. What catches my attention the most is the presence of two young girls in the game. They fight for possession of the ball with just as much vigor and determination as their male counterparts. During a break in the game, one of girls approaches me and asks why I am there. Trying to put my words in the simplest terms possible, I explain that I am doing research for a school project. I ask if she likes playing*



*soccer with boys. She responds that yes she does because it is fun, but “boys don’t pass the ball” to girls. Her friend agrees enthusiastically. In response, I ask if they ever pass to the boys. They giggle, choosing not to answer me directly, and then run away saying they will see me again.*

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Moses Anda is a bit of a celebrity in Gugulethu and throughout the townships of the Cape Flats. In his mid-30s and a native of the Cape Flats, Moses’s soccer career spanned 10 years with four different professional football clubs. Upon retirement, Moses earned a bachelor’s degree in sports management and he now works in sport development for the city of Cape Town as well as managing BFC. His son, Zoma Anda, is a talented player in his own right. Zoma chose not to be a part of the BFC Senior team because of his commitment to another team he had been with for four years. His team plays at a more competitive level than the BFC team, so he hoped that his participation would elevate his exposure and possibly allow him to play for a professional club someday. Zoma was also devoted to his studies and expressed an interest in becoming a cardiologist. In 2008, Zoma was recruited by his father to coach the U-13 team. This decision was part of BFC’s desire to expand its youth soccer program. Zoma had previous coaching experience, and his commitment to another coaching position had ended so he was available. During interviews, both Moses and Zoma reiterated the fact that although soccer was an important aspect of BFC, the organization was committed to achieving multiple goals that extended beyond winning soccer matches.

## **The Multiple Goals of BFC**

WANS emphasizes that the two most prevalent problems facing the social development of youth in Gugulethu are intergenerational poverty and HIV/AIDS. Targeting these issues and emphasizing the development of positive relationships among players, coaches, and community members distinguishes WANS from many other football clubs in the area that focus solely on developing soccer skills. Moses stated that his decision to start the club was an attempt to interest young men in Gugulethu in education and in planning for their futures. He explained that because he excelled in football from an early age no one encouraged him to attend to his studies and plan for a life around anything but a professional athletic career. As a result, Moses decided to start BFC so that young men would not, in his words, “get addicted” to football, and would therefore, be able to achieve academic success in addition to developing their interest in sport. He stated, “My actual vision was to help them with their studies and to sponsor them by paying their college and tuition fees. It is not only about football because there is life after football.” Zoma also reiterated that BFC’s goals addressed more than athletic development: “It is not only about soccer – it *is* about soccer and it *is* about education and it is also about taking children out of the streets.”

With the average life expectancy of a South African male being approximately 50 years of age (United States Central Intelligence Agency report, 2012), I can understand how it might be an uphill battle for Moses and Zoma to get players interested in investing in their futures. In the Cape Flats region, young people encounter daily risks to their health and safety due to high crime rates and poor health facilities. These conditions are

exacerbated by poverty along with the risk of HIV infection (Lindegaard, 2009; Walsh & Mitchell, 2006).

To combat the negative aspects of life in Gugulethu, BFC focuses on mentoring and developing role models. Older players are expected to act as role models for younger players; coaches are meant to be role models for players and community leaders.

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*I arrive late to the practice field because my driver, Xolani, works a second job, and unfortunately, on this day, our schedules collide. Warm-ups are already in progress. It is much colder than the first day I observed practice and the air smells like a sewer. There's talk of an approaching rain storm, and I can feel it in the air. This seems to quicken the pace of players who are trying to get in as much practice time as possible. The team is also under pressure to complete their practice on schedule because another team is waiting to use the field at six pm. Some members of the other team are already congregating at the far end of the field performing practice drills while others circle BFC's side of the field like hungry sharks waiting to attack.*

*At the far edge of the field, four young men in street clothes stand watching the games, laughing, and occasionally insulting one another. I momentarily think they might be gangsters taunting the soccer players. However, I am told they are actually players from a rival team.*

*After warm-ups, a few of the BFC team members perform the ritual of attempting to collect the daily rubbish from the field (plastic bags, broken bottles, and other bits of glass) before the team splits into two for a practice match. The coach tells me that in white areas, they don't have the same kind of issues with field maintenance and usage.*

*Once again, a group of children are imitating the older players. At one point, the ball strays into the unofficial no-mans land between the BFC team and the visitors. A young child chases after the ball and kicks it back to an older player. Possibly impressed by the young boys' skill, the older player passes the ball back to the child who returns it with great enthusiasm. I make the following notation in my field notes: This is how you learn. This is how you get better. This is how passion is created. (June 10, 2009)*

*At the conclusion of BFCs practice, their coach instructs team members to form a tight huddle. The players put their arms on each other's shoulders and have a moment of silent prayer.*

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### **Role Models**

Moses stated that he suffered from a lack of role models when he was growing up in the Cape Flats and coming through various youth and professional soccer programs in South Africa. "Much of what young boys learn about masculinity and sport comes from their interactions with each other and with their coaches" (Spickard Prettyman, 2006, p. 76). Moses attributed this lack of focus on mentoring and role models to life in South Africa during the apartheid era and its influence on families:

Life now has changed. We are in a democratic country and a lot of things have changed. The culture is changing every day. The children of today, they are not children like us. For us, it was difficult to identify role models because of the previous system where you find that parents don't have enough time with their children—the whole family structure was not that strong. And sometimes we find that children are separated from their fathers, and they would not view them really

as role models. Their role models are really people at a distance from you, like other professional soccer players that you admire. We even sometimes have role models like Martin Luther King, although here in South Africa we had no, like, connection with our role models because they were at a distance from us. But now today, since we have identified that problem, I am trying my best to coach the ones that I can reach. Then, if they are keen to try, they can also become role models to other children as well.

In spite of his comments, Moses was not able to clearly articulate how he was influencing BFC players. He did say, however, that the mere fact that he was present in players' lives was influencing them in some capacity. He asserted, "It's difficult to say 'I am a role model' but I think everybody's a role model. I don't know how they [the players] see me, as a good role model or a bad role model. But I think everybody can be a role model."

A role model is defined as "an individual whose behavior in a particular role provides a pattern or model upon which another bases behavior in performing the same role" (Smith & Hattery, 2006, p. 218). Additionally, role models can be a reference point for "norms and values" and function as "standards of comparison" for behavior (p. 218). Moses distinguished between different types of role models by categorizing them into the dualities of "good" and "bad," but did not provide a definition of what specific characteristics are associated with "good" and "bad" role models. Rather than directly asking Moses for a definition of what he would classify as a good or bad role model in the broad sense, I asked why the players would see him, personally, as a good role model. In his response, Moses chose not to identify specific personal characteristics, but spoke in

the third person as if I actually *had* asked the question “How would you describe a good role model?” He explained:

You have to show up yourself. And people will identify if you are a good role model or you are a bad role model. As I’ve mentioned, everybody’s a role model—it depends how good or bad you are, how effective you are and because you appreciate a good thing. So it’s just to identify what’s a good thing to you and then for that good thing to be realized by others.

Noting that in BFC, coaches are trained to be role models, I asked Moses what characteristics a coach who is a good role model would exhibit:

Obviously, it’s his involvement. He must make sure that he means what he is doing and he must show love and praise. But, he must show love to himself as well. By doing so he will be able to love others, love the kids that he is dealing with, love the projects, and love coaching. Everything will be based in love because that’s what is working.

Moses’s emphasis on love and praise is in alignment with BFC’s commitment to building relationships between coaches and players, not simply using coaches as the conduit through which purely technical soccer skills are transferred.

With such an emphasis being put on constructing coaches as positive role models, I asked Moses where he thought the majority of players got their influences regarding behavior:

I think their environment plays its role and their family background as well. For instance, I’ve got a boy that’s in the team and I have never seen his father; and I’ve got a boy whose father told me that he is not his son. So those kinds of

things will influence behavior. However, as families, communities, churches, schools, it is our duty to transfer our experience and education. And to be honest with you, even a drunkard would not like his son or daughter to become a drunkard.

Although coaches and fellow players are attempting to influence one another positively regarding masculinity construction, many are simultaneously influenced by people in their lives presenting contrasting versions of masculinity. The two most prominent local hegemonic exemplars of masculinity were (a) absentee fathers and (b) gangsters.

Absentee fathers are discussed first.

### **Absentee Fathers**

In 1993, one year prior to the official end of apartheid, the Project for the Statistics on Living Standards and Development reported that more than two-thirds of children in South Africa lived with one or both parents away from home for the majority of a year (Wilson, 2006). As stated previously in this chapter, the Cape Flats was originally designed as an area to warehouse black African workers, and for many years, was not a particularly family friendly environment. Emphasis was put on separating families, not bringing them closer together. Many men stayed in all male dormitories while working long hours in factories or in menial jobs in Cape Town. Women often took jobs as domestic workers and resided primarily in their employers' home, which kept them in town most of the week. Therefore, the care of children was often left to extended family members or neighbors (Magona, 1994; Posel, Fairburn, & Lund, 2006).

One of the most devastating effects of the apartheid system was the dismantling of primarily Xhosa and Zulu families through forced removals due to The Group Areas

Act, Pass Laws, and the influence of migrant labor (Clowes, 2006). Although the gender ratio of Gugulethu is now almost even, many women are choosing to live as single parents (Hunter, 2004, 2007). Added to this dynamic is the devastating effect of AIDS that created thousands of orphans; in South Africa, someone who has lost one or both parents to the virus is called an “AIDS orphan.” Women account for over half of the deaths caused by AIDS, a large percentage of whom are of child-bearing age. The phenomenon surrounding the ever increasing number of AIDS orphans draws attention to not only to the death of mothers but also to the absence of fathers.

Posel and Devey (2006) conducted a meta-study regarding the demographics of fathers in South Africa using survey data from 1993-2002. The authors concluded that black African children (they did not distinguish between Bantu ethnicities) were more likely than coloured or white children to be living in a home where fathers were reported as absent or deceased. Black African children also had the greatest reported increase in fatherless homes between 1993 and 2002. Posel and Devey determined that black African children were more likely not to reside in the same household as their fathers than to reside with them.

The majority of BFC players attending college on a scholarship from WANS come from female-headed, single-parent homes. They want to pursue a college degree in order to have the means to support their families financially, which often includes caring for younger siblings and extended family members. Some fathers were voluntarily not in their sons’ lives while others had died to ill health (AIDS, cancer, etc) or been killed performing dangerous work in the mines or by street violence. The desire of many players to obtain a college degree in order to support their families speaks very much to



the social dynamics of Xhosa families residing in the townships. By providing for their families, many players are attempting to fill the roles of their absent fathers. In his examination of how “good” and “bad” fathers were identified in black South African households, Morrell (2006) observed “Poverty is the most important factor undermining the role of fatherhood and the involvement of fathers” (p. 20). In a qualitative study of black mine workers in South Africa Rabe (2006) drew a similar conclusion. Although there was no single definition of what encompassed a good father, all respondents mentioned being able to financially provide for one’s children as the “minimum” a father should do (Rabe, 2006, p. 261). However, with increasingly high levels of unemployment in the townships, many men are not able to provide financially for their families.

Statistics regarding the death or absence of fathers do not accurately reflect the influence of other significant male role models such as “social fathers”. The term social fatherhood, also called “collective fatherhood” by Mkhize (2006), describes the numerous ways a child can be connected to an adult male; this can be a biological/legal tie as well as an emotional tie. Due to the fact that many children in South Africa live with extended families, social fathers often care for children when no biological father is present. However, Posel and Devey (2006) asserted that they had “no way of measuring this using available household survey data” (p. 45). Moses, the coaches, and the players of BFC all perform elements of social fatherhood. Indeed, Moses often referred to the BFC players as “my boys.” During our interview he stated, “They [the players] are my family. They are part of my family. If you are a member of this club, you are at home.”

When I asked Moses what happened to players once they retired from BFC, he stated, “Even if they leave the club, they’ve still got a home.”

Although I saw the benefits of Moses’s presence in the lives of his players and the structure based on “love and praise” that he was trying to instill, I felt there were certain tensions in his understanding of a “good” father and his criticism of fathers who were not actively present in their children’s lives. Much of this came from information I received about his role as a father to his own children. During our first meeting, I asked Moses about his immediate family. He stated that he was living with his girlfriend and they had a one-year-old daughter. He did not mention any other children. However, during one of my observations of a practice (when Moses was not present), the driver I hired for my stay in the Cape Flats introduced me to Zoma. Zoma in turn introduced me to his younger sister, Pali, who was playing on the U-13 team. Zoma and Pali had different mothers and neither was currently living with Moses.

At a dinner party that same night, I was speaking to Moses privately when I mentioned that I met his son and daughter. At this point, he revealed to me that he actually had 14 children in total. Zoma and his twin brother were his oldest. Moses explained that he was still a teenager himself when he became a father for the first time and many of his children were spread throughout South Africa. He told me that he cared about all of them a great deal and tried his best to support them financially and emotionally. When I attempted to press Moses for more information regarding how he could criticize other fathers for not being present in their children’s lives while he was enacting this role himself, he stopped me mid-sentence and with an inquisitive look asked “Are you interviewing me, Sarah?”

At this point, I was presented with what Ellis (1995, 2007) described as the emotional and ethical quagmire of relational ethics in ethnographic field research. In addition to procedural ethics (Institutional Review Board mandated) and ethics in practice, Ellis (2007) asserted the need to include relational ethics in ethnography when practitioners are exhibiting the dual identities of both researcher and friend. According to Ellis (2007):

Relational ethics requires researchers to act from our hearts and minds, to acknowledge our interpersonal bonds to others, and initiate and maintain conversations. As part of relational ethics, we seek to deal with the reality and practice of changing relationships with our research participants over time. (p. 4)

At the time of our conversation, Moses had become more to me than simply a key informant. I considered him a friend and was grateful to him not only for providing me with access to the research site but also for assisting me in being able to move about the Gugulethu community. As a foreigner and a white woman, I was a true outsider to the community. It was considered unsafe for me to venture anywhere in the Cape Flats without a male escort. Moses had arranged for Xolani to drive me to practices during the day, and he personally accompanied me to various local Gugulethu social spots at night. Moses stated that he wanted me to get a sense of what he referred to as the “real” Gugulethu, a place he had called home for many years and had a character that was significantly different than the one presented on the Cape Town evening news. I was introduced to his mother and numerous members of his extended family, always as “my friend, Sarah” not “Sarah, the researcher from America.”

When I asked Moses about his children, I got the sense that his question about my intention was an effort to “save face” (Goffman, 1967). Therefore, I decided not to ask Moses about his family again until we sat down for a formal interview. I surmised that this would be a more appropriate time to discuss his role as a father because he spoke so frequently about the importance of fatherhood during the interview. However, when I asked if he would encourage his own children to make different decisions in their lives than he had, he only spoke about the players of BFC and did not address the issue of his role as a father to his 14 children. For example, in relation to the values he was trying to instill in the players of BFC, Moses stated:

We guide them or help them, teach them, we do whatever but at the end of the day, when they come to make choices, they have to be able to pick up the right choices in their lives, with our advice and the education that we have taught them and other things.

One explanation for this could be that Moses simply does not desire to talk about the issue and again may have used evasion as a face saving technique, or he really does think of himself as a surrogate father to the players on the team.

Moses also made negative evaluative statements about the fathers of players who were not present in their sons’ lives and declared that it was not “difficult” to know what the right thing is do. In this regard he stated, “Our children, they need to be taught what is good and what is bad. You have to be a responsible parent. You don’t have any excuse now.” In spite of this, he did not seem to make a connection between his choice to create one of the main environmental factors that he sees as impeding the social and economic development of the BFC players, absent fathers. From his statements, I

inferred that, although by his own declaration he is not sure whether the players see him as a “good” or “bad” role model, he does not see himself or the choices he has made as being an irresponsible father.

Moses employed the concept of contextual rationality during his interview. Contextual rationality takes into account the malleability of the environment of organizational members. Organizational members use contextual rationality to “create and maintain institutions and traditions that express some conception of right and good behavior and a good life with others” (Weick, 1993, p. 634). It is used as a sensemaking tool to guide organizational practices. Moses’s involvement sends a mixed-message regarding absentee fathers. Moses considers himself to be a type of surrogate father to the players of BFC. However, he seemed to shy away from discussing his role in the lives of children he has biologically fathered. This leads me to believe that although Moses makes statements such as parents do not have any excuse not to be “responsible,” he may be conflicted in his role as a parent. For example, in his statements regarding his childhood, he recalled that it was “difficult” to identify role models because the apartheid system kept children “separated from their fathers,” a condition that negatively impacted their perception of them as role models. Additional negative evaluative statements condemning father’s such as “I’ve got a boy that’s in the team and I have never seen his father” imply that being a good father involves being physically present in your children’s life. By his own admission, Moses is not able to be physically present in the lives of his 14 children on a consistent basis.

Parrot and Duggan (1999) warn that coaches’ “may often unintentionally model behaviors with health consequences” (p. 109). It is possible that Moses is sending the

message that it's acceptable to engage in activities that put one at risk for HIV such as engaging in sexual activity without a condom. However, Moses believed that players who were "groomed to know what is right and what is wrong" through their participation in BFC, and would therefore, make good choices in their own lives.

\* \* \* \*

*Arriving at the BFC practice field, I find myself noticing a group of young children practicing intently on the sidelines of the BFC Senior team. Unlike the casual pick-up game style of other children, this group is running through a series of stretching exercises without any direct adult supervision. My driver, Xolani, decides to stay for practice and points out an older boy about 18 standing on the sidelines. Although he is dressed in baggy soccer shorts and cleats, he is not participating in the senior team's practice. "I think that's Zoma," Xolani states, "Moses's son." Xolani approaches Zoma and they exchange hellos in Xhosa before Xolani introduces me and explains my project. Zoma, who is quite fluent in English, tells me that he coaches the U-13 team but plays on another club team. He states that the children I am observing are part of his team and that they've stayed late to practice some more on their own because they love it so much. I comment that they seem to be modeling the behavior of the U-19 Senior team. Zoma explains that all of the children look up to the boys on the Senior team as role models. Therefore, even if they see them off the soccer field doing things like drinking, "hanging out on the corner with girls," or other behavior generally associated with the behavior of gangsters in the townships, the younger children will want to emulate that behavior.*

*Zoma calls some of the children over so I can meet them. He translates some simple questions into Xhosa. I ask one of the boys what he would be doing if he could not*

*play soccer. He proudly shouts back in English “I will never give up my dream [of becoming a soccer player].” The answer almost seems rehearsed. I ask what activities he would be doing right now if there was no soccer team. Zoma states, “He said he would be sitting at home doing nothing or watching TV.” Several other children have a similar response. I ask one boy what makes a good soccer player. He responds, “A good soccer player is not selfish.” Zoma explains to me that a selfish soccer player does not pass the ball to other players and is therefore also labeled as not being a team player, and concentrating only on his own success. I ask the boy if there are any selfish players on the team. He points to another boy and states “He’s a ball hog.” Eventually, I realize that one child is actually a girl. Zoma states that she is his younger sister, although she has a different mother. I ask her how she feels about being the only girl on the team. She responds “I like playing with boys.”*

*I notice another young boy about nine years old standing by himself away from the other children and the older players. Despite the cold weather, he is dressed in only a sleeveless shirt, ankle length pants, and black school shoes with no socks. He looks out longingly at the players and the other children from the distant sideline. He claps his hands in joyous response to certain plays made on the field but never makes a move to join any of the other children. No one but me seems to even notice that he is there. When I point the boy out to Zoma, he states that he has never seen the boy before. Eventually, I ask Zoma to find out why the boy is there. The boy tells Zoma that he likes soccer but does not want to play on a team.*

\* \* \* \*

## **Gangsters**

In alignment with BFC's efforts to address not only the technical development of their players, but also their personal characteristics, Moses made several comments regarding how players treat their opponents during games and how they treat each other during practice. He explained:

You start to see this thing in the football player: how are they attending to the results of the game when they win, or when they draw or lose? You look at your team's performance on the field, not only when they are playing but in the training sessions—you look at the discipline, the attendance, how are they turning up to the training sessions. It will show up easily in the cautions that you're going to get, the yellow cards and the red cards, and so on. And to be honest with you, since we started BFC, we don't even have a single red card in our team. And, we're proud of that, because these boys have been groomed to know what is right and what is wrong. And now we are in the stage where they can make critical decisions in their lives.

Moses's comments seemed to equate the ability to make good critical decisions on the soccer field with the ability to make important life decisions. His emphasis on the lack of red cards was of particular importance. A red card is given in soccer when a harsh foul has occurred. A player can receive one straight away, sending the player off the field for the remainder of the game, or can accumulate two yellow warning cards which then equals a red. Red cards are given most often for a violent act committed against an opponent and for aggressive behavior towards a referee.



In Gugulethu, violent behavior is associated with the activity of gang members. Young men in the Cape Flats often turn to gangsterism as a response to poverty, poor schooling, racism, overcrowded housing, violence, and bleak future prospects (Walsh & Mitchell, 2006). Gang activity is not a new phenomenon in the urban spaces where non-white South Africans have been living and working: townships, squatter camps, worker's hostels, and mining compounds.

Gang history is recorded as far back as the early twentieth century. By the late 1930s and 1940s, the "*tsotsi*" identity emerged among a growing number of urbanized youth. Glaser (1992) asserted:

As Black, working-class youths, tsotsis were structurally subordinate in terms of race, class and generation. But as males, tsotsis were structurally dominant.

Gender was the one sphere in which they found themselves "naturally" in the ascendant. Hence the need to assert their masculinity and sexual difference.

They defended their one area of privilege vigorously. (p. 62)

Gangs began to merge with political activists after the 1976 anti-apartheid uprisings. But they later separated into dangerous, non-overtly political street gangs again in the 1980s and 1990s that were known for violent sexual assaults against women such acts as "jackrolling" (gang rape) in the townships.

The introduction of democracy to South Africa in the 1990s ended its isolationist economy but also increased its international drug trade across borders. Street gangs became linked to large, sophisticated networks of drug trafficking throughout the country. The networks are centered in areas such as the Cape Flats region. Jensen (2010)

asserted, “Most young men in the townships must consider whether to join [a gang] or stay out, and all young men are affected by gangs” (p. 81). Zoma acknowledged that he has also faced this choice and, as a result, lost childhood friends who chose the gangster life. He stated:

Zoma: I don't want to get involved with gangsters. I am free. I go to each and every area in Gugulethu. So there are people that, even here my ex-friends, they are fighting with other boys. You know Mzole's place [popular restaurant/hang-out spot in Gugulethu]? The boys that live in that area, first they are best friends, now they are worst enemies.

Interviewer: Because of the gangs?

Zoma: Ja [yes], because of the gangs.

The binary oppositional role model categorizations for youth in Gugulethu presented in Zoma's interview, athlete versus gangster, are similar to the categories Smith and Hattery (2006) used to describe popular role models for African American youth, that of “thug versus athlete” (p. 221). Smith and Hattery (2006) caution that these restricted categories may cause people to overlook the negative behavior of athletes precisely because they are so invested in presenting them as positive role models.

Zoma reiterated that the players on the U-13 team model their behavior after players on the U-19 team. He made a note of pointing out that BFC strongly discourages fighting on the field, something that can also lead to a team member receiving a red card. He stated, “If the children see the older players fighting on the field, they'll think that fighting is cool. But fighting is never cool.” Therefore, I asked how he attempted to

instill the values of BFC in the players' actions on the field, especially in regards to fighting:

Most of the time, I speak with them; I encourage them. Sometimes I even go with them to their parents and discuss it with them. Some children are too short-tempered and then I tell the parents that it's not good that their child is aggressive. The parents, they sometimes tell me that they also got the problem with the children at home too. So it's like even, if someone [another player on the team or an opponent] swears at them, they like wanna get revenge, which is also un-cool too. I always solve my problems word-to-word. I speak with them personally.

While on the issue of physical aggression I decided to ask Zoma for clarification of the word "tough." I heard Zoma and other soccer players use it on different occasions as a term of endearment when favorably describing a player. So I asked Zoma what is a "Tough soccer player?" He explained:

Zoma: It's like, when he [the soccer player] has the ball it means like, he's a strong player. It's like, when he plays soccer, he's playing soccer with his heart; like he's trying, he is doing his best.

Interviewer: So it doesn't mean that you are encouraging violent play?

Zoma: It depends on the person's anger, ja, then there are people that, that just like be playing rough, sometimes they even say they are tough but, ja, they just plays rough.

Scholarly investigations of black township life also revealed that the term toughness can be used positively when applied to sport, or negatively when applied to descriptions of criminal behavior (Morrell, 2001).

BFC's decision to discourage the use of excessive force during games and use coaches as role models that declare love and praise for players challenge what Messner (2007) described as the "body as weapon" metaphor in sports. Use of the body as a weapon in sports, particularly competitive "combat sports," is a learned behavior motivated by a reward system (p. 93). Messner asserted that male athletes use excessive physical force or violent tactics that often result in injury for an opponent (and sometimes themselves) as a way to gain respect among other players, their coaches, and as a way to anchor their "masculine identity" (p. 96). Dominance by men in sport is used as a tool to construct a naturalized dominance over women even though the athletic male body is the product of social practice, not nature.

The "body as weapon" metaphor can be used to describe violence against women perpetrated by South African men. In several studies, men legitimated their use of physical violence by perceiving it as their natural right as male South Africans, a right that is being challenged by such things as a growing feminist consciousness among women and by declining economic resource control for men (Bhana, 2006; Lambert & Jewkes, 2007; Lindegaard, 2009; Pattman, 2005; Walker, 2005). Additionally, Wood, Lambert, and Jewkes's (2007) study of sexual practices by Xhosa speaking black African youth residing in townships revealed that even when a sex act was not perceived by participants as violent, it was still often linked with violence by the use of masculine vernacular codes:

Words for sex and violent action were one and the same [these coexisted with more egalitarian discourses about sex such as "playing" and "lying with"].

*Ukubetha negepipe* [to hit with a pipe-"pipe" meaning gun or penis depending on

the context], “panel beat,” and *ukushaya* [to beat], for instance, were all expressions for sex. (p. 294)

Acts of sexual violence have contributed to the spread of HIV and the gendering of the epidemic in South Africa. When I spoke with Zoma about BFC’s relationship to HIV/AIDS education I commented that although HIV/AIDS is not addressed directly at every team practice by coaches and players, it is being addressed through the institution of accountability, discipline, and respect for other players. He agreed and declared that BFC was, “not just about soccer.”

Scholarly work has been largely dominated by the assertion that men in South Africa are not interested in taking responsibility for the role they play in perpetuating violence or in suppressing women. In reaction to this, some argued that constructing South African men as fundamentally oppressive, violent, and suppressive to women ultimately limits our understanding of other constructions of masculinity that co-exist within same cultural context (Pattman, 2002; Thorpe, 2002). The BFC players and their coaches are actively contesting the versions of masculinity that work to construct the players’ male, athletic bodies as weapons of physical violence against women and other men. Although, the team’s practices and games take place within the broader masculine space of the Cape Flats, an area defined by a high rate of violent crime primarily perpetuated by men, a new version of masculinity is being developed.

\* \* \* \*

*During the U-13 practice, I notice the little boy on the sidelines who had been silently observing the previous practice. He is dressed in the same outfit as the first day; sleeveless shirt, belted brown pants that seem at least one size too large for him except*

*they only come down to his ankles, and the hard, black shoes South African school children wear, again with no socks. He sits off to the side and watches longingly while the children on the U-13 squad (14 boys and one girl, Zoma's sister) kick the ball around in an attempt to enhance their passing skills. I decide to approach Zoma and ask if any child can join the team. He responds that "Yes" any child who wants to join the team can. I remind Zoma that he is the same child we noticed during the previous practice session. I tell Zoma that I had been thinking about the boy a lot and felt that he really did want to play, but was just shy and not sure how to get involved. Zoma nods in agreement.*

*At the conclusion of the practice, Zoma calls the players over for a meeting. I motion for the boy to join them, and he obeys my request. Zoma and the boy exchange some words in Xhosa and then Zoma puts his arm around the boy and introduces him to the rest of the players. The boy takes a seat on the grass next to the other children. He is now part of the team.*

\* \* \* \*

Although young men may not be directly linked with a particular gang, gang ethos can still strongly influence their masculine identity. Gang members are often admired for their street fighting skill, criminal bravado, and the nature of their relationships with women that often include some kind of physical and sexual abuse (Glaser, 2000). Additionally, Walsh and Mitchell (2006) contend that for some urban youth, gangs "may be the only spaces in which young men who are otherwise oppressed by the dominant society on various fronts feel they have the ability to make important decisions that are respected and valued" (p. 62). The presence of BFC in Gugulethu

opens up an alternative space for the development of masculinity that challenges the endorsement of “gang ethos.”

### **Conclusion**

The legacy of apartheid left many social and economic scars throughout townships in the Cape Flats. By starting the Bethlehem Football Club (BFC), the grassroots organization We Are Not Statistics (WANS) is addressing problems faced by male youth living in one of the most famous black townships, Gugulethu. Soccer provides a large part of the organizational structure of BFC. It is utilized in BFC as a teaching tool to prepare players for beyond football. Therefore, although players are encouraged to enhance their athletic skills in BFC, this takes a backseat to developing a player’s character and nurturing their desire for academic success. An integral part of achieving these goals is the development of role models. Coaches are expected to be role models for players and community leaders. Players on the BFC senior team are expected to act as positive role models for each other and younger players on the U-13 team. Interviews with two coaches for BFC, Moses Anda and his son Zoma Anda, revealed that the organization was actively working to counter two negative role models present in Gugulethu, absentee fathers and gangsters.

Absentee fathers referred to men who were, by choice, physically and emotionally absent from their children’s lives. Many players wanted to pursue a college education in order to help care for their mothers and younger siblings. They did not want to emulate the behavior of men who shrugged their responsibilities as fathers and household providers. BFC instills the message that even if a man is not able to provide financially

for his children due to economic instability, it is still important to remain involved in their children's lives.

Because most of the players come from female-headed single parent households, the coaches of BFC act as social fathers providing support to players in place of their biological fathers. Moses emphasized that the coaches and players involved in BFC created a "family" and he considered himself a surrogate father to players. However, this created a paradox when he admitted that, due to his coaching commitments, he was not able to be as involved in the lives' of his 14 biological children as much as he would like. Although Moses displayed uncertainty regarding whether players viewed him as "good" or "bad" role model, Moses never identified himself as a bad role model or a bad father. Other statements such as "I've got a boy whose father told me that he is not his son" revealed it was the degree of involvement that signified the difference between good and bad fathers. On the spectrum of good and bad, outright denial of paternity is placed at the opposite spectrum of a desire to be involved, even when this desire is not able to be fulfilled. Moses employed the same line of reasoning when asked about the presence of women in BFC. Although young women were not allowed to be a part of the senior team, Moses identified that issue as a problem and was attempting to correct it. However, he stated he was not able to fulfill his desire to have a women's team because he could not afford to hire a female coach, thus implying that young women needed to be mentored by older women.

BFC players are expected to act as positive role models during soccer matches in addition to their off-the-field behavior. In combat sports like soccer, the body is often turned into a weapon to inflict violence on other players (and can result of injuries to the



self). This is a learned behavior used to gain the respect of the coach and fellow players. It is also used to anchor masculinity. In BFC players are expected to earn respect and anchor their masculinity through the renunciation of violence. Throughout the Cape Flats, gang members, whose lives revolve around the perpetuation of violence, act as competing male role models. Young men in townships like Gugulethu often turn to gangs to provide economic and emotional support. BFC provides an alternative space for young men who are seeking out a supportive surrogate family. It also provides alternative male role models that contest the values and behaviors associated with local hegemonic masculinities such as absentee fathers and gang members.

## **CHAPTER 5: OTHERLANDS FOOTBALL ACADEMY**

Otherlands Football Academy (OFA) works with youth between the ages of 5 and 18 in the South African township of Heideveld. Despite its proximity to the affluent Cape Town city center, Heideveld, a historically coloured community, has a reputation as one of the most dangerous townships in the Cape Flats largely due to the gangs that engage in violent battles over the trafficking of drugs. The area is also plagued by high teen-pregnancy rates that contribute to truancy and below average rates of high-school matriculation. Unemployment is also high. Residents frequently turn to some form of substance abuse to help cope with their financial and personal struggles, which leads to more violence. Many families are fragmented due to a lack of financial and social stability.

In South African townships such as Heideveld, youth without a strong family support system often join gangs in order to be a part of a surrogate family (Leggett, 2004). When gang members become the mentors of children, a child's dreams for the future are directed at moving up the hierarchy of the gang, rather than positively developing their character and concentrating on continuing their education (Jensen, 2008; Kinnes, 2000). OFA offers an alternative to gang life for youth residing in Heideveld. In this chapter, I examine the practices OFA is using in order to direct youth in Heideveld away from gangs. I also discuss the techniques OFA coaches and volunteers employ to aid youth in developing discipline and respect for themselves, others, and their community.

This chapter begins by describing the origins and current activities of OFA. Next, I give a brief history of coloured identity in the Cape Flats region. I do this because interviews with two OFA coaches, Freddie Carelse and Gassant Cassiem, revealed that, in addition to steering youth away from gangs, OFA was also putting a great deal of effort into trying to get participants to take pride in their coloured heritage. Although I agree with Bestman's (2008) observation that attempting to analyze the "political and cultural consciousness of Cape Town's coloured population" is a feat that has "bedeviled many researchers, intellectuals and activists," my description of complexities surrounding coloured identity is necessary in order to ground further discussion of discourses contributing to local exemplars of hegemonic masculinity (p. 168).

### **The Development of Otherlands Football Academy**

OFA was started in 2001 by Freddie Carelse, a native of Heideveld. Like many young men in his community, Freddie succumbed to the temptations of gang life at an early age. Because he suffered from low self-esteem, Freddie joined a gang looking for self-validation and social acceptance. Initiated as a look-out for drug runners at age 11, by age 15 Freddie was heavily involved in gang activity and quickly moving up the gang hierarchy. Now in his mid-thirties, Freddie is the managing director of OFA. Many of the OFA coaches are also former gang members. One coach had recently finished serving 10 years in prison for attempted murder. I chose to interview Freddie Carelse and Gassant Cassiem, a 25 year-old assistant coach at OFA, due to their significance within the program, willingness to be interviewed, and fluency in English. At the time of my field research (May through August, 2009), Gassant was coaching six OFA teams in addition to conducting tutoring sessions and assisting in other programs associated with

the renovation of Mayfield Primary School, the location where the majority of OFA programs are based. Freddie assisted coaching several teams and performed various administrative duties such as writing grants to receive funding and organizing OFAs participation in local soccer tournaments.

OFA began as an after-school soccer program designed to divert boys and young men from joining gangs. Since its implementation in 2001, OFA has added Life Skills education (physical and mental health promotion), after-school academic tutoring sessions, urban-gardening, and a rope-skipping program for female participants, and it also provides meals to students attending Mayfield Primary School and contributes to its renovation. When I conducted my field research, OFA was trying to get working bathrooms installed for the school. At the time, the school had over 400 students and only one functioning toilet.

The soccer program is OFA's most prominent activity. Approximately 250 boys and 1 girl participate. At the time of my ethnographic field research, OFA was interested in starting a soccer team for girls and young women as no official soccer program existed solely for them. Instead of being encouraged to play soccer, girls were given the opportunity to participate in the OFA-sponsored rope-skipping program. However, this program was directed by another institution partnering with OFA and did not involve the same emphasis on mentoring that existed in the soccer program. All participants in both the rope skipping and the soccer program must attend after-school tutoring sessions supervised by OFA coaches and volunteers.

All of the OFA programs are grounded in the belief that participants need to develop a sense of pride in their coloured identity. The following section addresses the

issue of coloured identity in the Cape Flats and Cape Town region. Applied communication scholars Nicotera, Clinkscales, Dorsey, and Niles (2009) defined identity as the intersection of ethnicity and race. The authors observed that “Each person’s self-identity in terms of race stems from and informs his or her cultural, social, political, ethnic, and racial identities” (p. 219). Therefore, this chapter pays particular attention to negative representations of coloureds in South African discourse regarding race and ethnicity.

### **Coloured Identity**

The South African population of coloureds is described by Farred (2000) as a “quasiethnic identity” made up of “racially indistinct” persons who are bound together by their ethnic identification and cultural practices (p. 6). Although persons were officially assigned the coloured identity based on their racial classification under the 1950 Population Registration Act, the term is now used to designate several ethnicities, some of which share a lineage with Cape Town’s indigenous inhabitants, the San and Khoikhoi people. Malay slaves brought from Indonesia, Malaysia, Madagascar, and Mozambique during colonialism also came to be identified as coloured as did slaves from India and the offspring of European settlers and Bantu speaking people (black Africans).

Following the end of apartheid, various movements emerged with the goal of essentially reinventing coloured identity. Most of these movements have sought to encourage pride in coloured people’s connections to their indigenous and slave pasts, a reaction to the popular notion that coloured people originated from Bantu, Khoikhoi, and San women being raped by early European settlers in the Cape Peninsula (Adhikari, 2005). That belief links the coloured community to notions of illegitimacy. For

example, a common insult of coloured people in South Africa is to refer them as “bastard children.” Endorsing the rape lineage paradigm, Farred (2000) argued that coloured identity was an embodied representation of violence, where the colonizer is the oppressor of colonized, indigenous South Africans. Therefore, the coloured body results from a “power discrepancy that allowed the colonizers to fulfill their sexual desires as easily as they were able to assume control of the colonized’s economy of bureaucracy” (p. 3). Not all coloured people endorse the rape lineage paradigm, nor are they all descendants of slave or indigenous persons. Nevertheless, the association to miscegenation and illegitimacy is something many find difficult to completely ignore (Adhikari, 2005; Jensen, 2010).

Coloured people are put in the often confusing dilemma of deciding which identity they want to represent. For example, Julin Sonn (in James, Caligure, & Cullinan, 1996, p. 62), a South African psychologist of Xhosa, Dutch, and Khoikhoi decent, described the negative reaction he received from his family upon announcing his desire to embrace his indigenous heritage. Family members responded to Sonn’s decision with statements such as “*Jy kan miskien ‘n Boesman wees maar ek is beslis nie een nie*” (You can be a Bushman, but I am definitely not one) (p. 65). Sonn noted that his family’s statements were influenced by the representation of Khoikhoi and San people in South African history books as “lazy, dirty thieves” (p. 65). Sonn, like many coloureds, defined the process of embracing his coloured identity as a compromise: “I accept my European heritage and realize that I can draw on both my European and African ancestry. But I do not accept that part of the European heritage which represents the exploitation and dehumanization of other people” (p. 65).

Farred (2000) described the physical appearance of coloured people as a “hybrid body” (p. 3). In essence, the body of a coloured person is both historically and physically linked to both white and black South Africans. Physical traits, especially degrees of skin color and hair texture, are the basis of many racial slurs associated with coloured identity. Popular racial slurs such as *Boesman* for (Bushman or San) and *Hotnot* for (Hottentot or Khoikhoi) are meant to call attention to the physical differences between coloureds and white or black Africans. Those who use these racial slurs are claiming that coloureds who exhibit certain physical characteristics should consider them representations of “physical ugliness, repulsive social practices, and mental and physical inferiority” (Adhikari, 2005, p. 28). However, racial slurs are also applied to coloureds by those within the coloured community itself (Rasool, 1996). Applications of racial slurs to coloureds by coloureds further support claims such as those made by James (1996) that “there is no single, anthropological homogeneous, coloured community” (p. 43).

Another major contributor to a perceived lack of pride in the coloured community is the lack of cultural signifiers. Because of the vast differences in ethnic makeup, the coloured community of Cape Town has little to cling to as a self-identifying group except their association with Cape Town (Farred, 2000; Western & Coles, 1996). Following the passing of The Population Registration Act of 1950, black Africans were assigned to live in rural Homelands called Bantustans, on the justification that they had originated from those locations. Because coloureds originated in the Cape Peninsula, they had no external Homeland; however, this did not mean that coloureds escaped the cultural dismantling of apartheid. Just as many of their ancestors were pushed off their homes by whites during the colonization of the Cape Peninsula, the Group Areas Act of 1950

forcibly removed thousands of coloureds from District Six to the desolate, outlying area of the Cape Flats.

Freddie and Gassant mentioned District Six as a key marker of coloured identity several times during the course of my research. Western (1996) asserted that the National Party government's true goal in destroying District Six was not simply to supply whites with a prime piece of real-estate but to remove one of the only symbols of coloured pride and identity. Therefore, the following section investigates the significance of District Six, particularly its development as a symbol of coloured unity and self-esteem and the emotional and physical results of its demolition by the government during apartheid. It also addresses the emergence of gangs in District Six and their re-emergence in the coloured townships of the Cape Flats.

### **District Six**

Even after its physical destruction, District Six remains a cultural and political symbol of coloured identity. Encompassing approximately one and one-half square kilometers, District Six sits in the shadow of Table Mountain in the city center. In 1966, the National Party designated District Six a white area. By the late 1970s all of its coloured residents had been evicted. Thousands were relocated to government housing blocks assigned to coloureds throughout sections of the Cape Flats. The government declared that the housing in District Six was substandard and bulldozed the majority of homes and businesses in the area during one of many efforts defined as slum clearance.

District Six was a place where some coloureds could trace their heritage multiple generations and was also associated with the emancipation of slaves. Although white and black South Africans are able to identify many cultural spaces that symbolize their ethnic



identity, without District Six, coloureds were not left with much. Western (1996) observed, “Apart from the Islamic religion of the Cape Malays, Coloured people possess very few indubitably Coloured cultural attributes that they do not share with South African whites” (p. 151). Thus, the empty lots that once held the homes of coloureds residing in District Six came to symbolize the racial discrimination of the government. Therefore, even though coloureds may have been designated as the preferred minority during the apartheid era by such things as the Coloured Labour Preference Act, shared an ethnic lineage with European colonists, and spoke the language of the ruling race, Afrikaans, while under apartheid they were still reduced to second-class citizens.

\* \* \* \*

*The OFA soccer practice field is surrounded by the dormitory-like government housing units that dominate the landscape of Heideveld. As I approach the field, hurrying to try to keep up with Freddie, a blast of wind whips around the corner and brings a mixture of dirt and sand directly into my eyes. The experience reminds me that, although the current scenery appears desolate because of the decaying architecture (collateral damage from years of poverty in the townships), at one point the whole of the Cape Flats was nothing but a vast sandy plain. The area is approximately the size of two regulation soccer fields. At first glance, the field appears to be well kept, but on closer examination I spot missing chunks of grass that reveal deep holes. Aluminum goals (minus the nets) are placed at various locations around the field. There does not appear to be any rhyme or reason to their position. A decaying concrete wall surrounds the field. Gang names and symbols are spray painted across almost every inch of the concrete surface. Broken bottles, plastic bags, candy wrappers, and other forms of trash*

*line the outer perimeter of the field. Freddie pauses for a moment and points to a trash pile angrily proclaiming, “This is how much most people care about this community. They don’t even bother to pick up their trash.”*

*As I watch the various groups of boys run around the field, I find myself thinking that if they can keep their eyes solely on the ball and each other, they might be able to block out the desolate scene around them and pretend they are somewhere else. But, Freddie explains to me later, that kind of reasoning is one of many problems he is currently trying to correct. He wants the youth in OFA to be proud of where they come from. He does not want them to block out the gangs, drugs, and poverty that surround them. He wants OFA to be part of a system that changes these things. The change, he declares, must start with the youth.*

\* \* \* \*

### **Gangs in the Cape Flats**

Gangs in the Cape Flats originated in District Six. Most gangs in District Six were involved in back-room gambling or the trafficking of illicit drugs such as marijuana. The presence of gangs is often downplayed in ethnographic accounts of life in District Six (Ebrahim, 2007; Farred, 2000), thus adding to the construction of the area as a place of pride for coloured South Africans. The implementation of the Group Areas Act in 1950 resulted in the forced removal of coloured residents residing in District Six. Therefore, this process also meant that gang members were forced to relocate to the Cape Flats. The upheaval caused a temporary suspension of gang activity during the late 1960s and 1970s. When gangs regrouped in the 1980s, they took over various territories in

coloured townships. Steinber (2006) described the forced removals as the catalyst for the creation of gang territories and gang identities:

The new neighborhoods of the Cape Flats were to become deeply insular. Each block came to constitute a territory its defenders who were possessive of insiders, aggressive to outsiders. The ghettos of the Flats were divided into hundreds of microturfs, each given life by a micro-identity. It extended to who did business with whom, how one earned a living, and perhaps most important of all, the politics of street gangs, which drew entire communities into their views.

(Steinber, as cited in Walsh & Mitchell, 2006, pp. 59-60).

Kinnes (2000) observed that gangs in the Cape Flats have evolved beyond being characterized as groups of disenfranchised youth that “hang around the streets of local communities” in order to defend their territory from rival gangs (p. 2). Due to the influx of illegal guns into South Africa during the political struggles of the 1980s and 1990s and the influence of international drug cartels, gangs are now “organized criminal empires” (p. 2).

During apartheid, gang members were targeted by the government in the same way political activists were treated. Special units were set up to infiltrate their ranks, and members were detained and tortured in state custody and often “disappeared” (i.e., were covertly killed without an official explanation). When the democratically elected African National Congress (ANC) came to power in 1994, they assumed that if they dismantled oppressive police actions, crime in the townships would be reduced. However, by the mid-1990s, the government saw the coloured townships as a main impediment to social

and economic development due to gang violence and the resulting emergence of anti-gang vigilante groups.

Gangs have continued to be a source of social influence and violence in the townships of the Cape Flats throughout the twenty-first century. Although the end of apartheid in 1994 did stop state-sanctioned racial discrimination, it has not brought economic prosperity to most residents residing in coloured townships such as Heideveld. The lack of economic opportunities makes the possible financial benefits of gang life all the more attractive. Additionally, due to the high incarceration rate for coloured males in the Cape Flats, youth join gangs so that they will be protected by fellow gang members also serving time in jail in the event that they are sent to prison (Daniels & Adams, 2010; Jensen, 2008; Kinnes, 2000).

Due to the presence of gangs in Heideveld—and the violence that accompanies their activities—exemplars of hegemonic masculinity also stressed violence and a general lack of control over one's desires. Based on interviews with OFA coaches Freddie Carelse and Gassant Cassiem and ethnographic field data gathered over approximately 40 hours of observations, I identified two exemplars of local hegemonic masculinity present in discourses of masculinity: (a) gangsters and (b) undisciplined men. Because OFA was specifically started as an alternative to gangsterism, the gangster exemplar is explored first.

### **Gangsters**

Negative connotations attached to coloured identity still continue to permeate the self-concepts of many coloured youth residing in the Cape Flats; therefore, getting involved in gangs can be a way to earn respect and influence among one's peers (Jensen,

2008). Unfortunately, this glory is often literally short-lived. Many gang members end up getting killed or seriously injured and often hooked on drugs. Gassant described gang life and the drug abuse that often accompanies it as a “cycle” that’s difficult to escape. With poverty so rampant and job prospects scarce, Gassant concluded that many youth in Heideveld perceive the economic advantages of gang life as an “easy way out” of the recurring cycle of poverty. When I asked Freddie why he chose soccer as the medium to get boys away from the gangs and alter the cycle of poverty for families living in Heideveld he responded “Soccer is a language that everyone understands.” Farred (2000) elucidated the significance of soccer to coloured’s residing in the Cape Flats:

One consequence of the Group Areas Act was that it inadvertently facilitated (some might even suggest initiated) the process of community (re)construction for the coloured working class through the cultural appropriation of metropolitan football clubs. Forcibly relocated from urban (and suburban) areas they had occupied for generations to the outlying Cape Flats, the new residents of the coloured townships formed football clubs. (p. 107)

Gasant indicated that the goals of OFA extended beyond providing participants with athletic skills to using soccer as a modality to deter youth from making negative decisions in their lives:

Drugs, gangsterism, poverty, you know, things like that are a big problem here [in Heideveld]. So it’s not only about the soccer, it’s about keeping the kids off the streets, trying to prevent them from turning to drugs, turning to gangsters, that sort of thing.

Nevertheless, for some, gangs and township soccer are intertwined.

Jacobs's (2010) account of life in the coloured townships during the 1980s vividly described the influence of local Sunday soccer matches. His father was vehemently against his attending any matches on account that the "devil might get you there" (p. 95). Jacobs explained the cultural significance of his father's warning: "My father associated football with gangsterism. In this, he was partly right" (p. 95). Different gangs would come to various areas to play in football tournaments, and things often got rowdy on the field and on the sidelines with fights breaking out among rival teams and spectators (Jensen, 2008). Although Crabbe (2009) found that sport-in-development is popular for some youth precisely because it does portray a "bad boy" image and argued that associating soccer with gangsterism was "particularly useful in trying to entice those engaged in potentially anti-social and criminal activities" (p. 260), Freddie derided this type of township soccer.

Freddie characterized the use of reckless, violent tactics against opponents as playing soccer with a "gangster attitude." However, he found that dispelling the gangster attitude from some players difficult when they looked up to professional players who endorsed that style of play. For example, Freddie considered the on-the-field behavior of players such as Cristiano Ronaldo, a player highly criticized for his tendency to draw red cards for violent infractions against other players, similar to those of gangsters in the sense that they lack respect for others. He proclaimed:

Look at Ronaldo [Portuguese player for Spanish professional soccer team Real Madrid], I'll take him for example—80 million pounds a year—but he's got a bad attitude. He's no role model for children. But yet, now you get kids that got

challenges the same like Ronaldo, now they wanna also be bad, with a bad attitude. So he influences them badly.

Drawing on his own experiences of needing social support and acceptance from a group, Freddie started OFA to give disaffected youth in Heideveld an alternative to joining gangs. Due to the largely stagnant economy and the growing drug trade in the Cape Flats, gangsters are perceived by many as men with power and influence, an identity youth covet and aspire to achieve. The “gangster attitude” has even found its way onto the soccer pitch with some youth attempting to emulate the violent, reckless style of play they see in certain professionals. Through its practices on and off the pitch, OFA coaches and volunteers are attempting to dispel the notion that becoming a gangster is the only way to achieve personal success and acceptance from others. They also address the issues many participants experience with low self-esteem due to their identities as coloured South Africans.

\* \* \* \*

*Mayfield Primary School is nestled behind rows of aging government flats. Its roof is painted the color of rust. The muted red contrasts sharply with the fading green paint on the outer walls. Barbed wire surrounds the grounds, and rows of burglar bars cover the windows. Several of the windows are broken. Wood planks take their place blocking any natural light from entering the rooms. Like many public schools in the Cape Flats, the classrooms of Mayfield Primary face out onto a bare concrete courtyard. A large mural with the school’s crest and images of animals native to the South African bush adorns one of the outer walls. I assume it’s meant to interject some color into the dullness of the surroundings.*

*I'm visiting the school with June Smith, a volunteer with OFA. We are about to lead an English-language tutoring session for OFA participants. A native of Tanzania, June works full-time at a backpacker hostel in Cape Town that provides financial assistance to OFA. As part of her duties, she teaches English language and composition skills to OFA players. She also coordinates the volunteer program for OFA at the backpacker hostel. For a small donation, guests of the hostel are transported to the Cape Flats and volunteer their time tutoring players, and then often play soccer or assist in the jump-rope program before returning to the hostel.*

*To gain entrance into the classroom used for the tutoring sessions, June unlocks a rusting metal door securing an extremely weathered wood door. Inside the small concrete classroom the walls are decorated with colorful geometric shapes and animals, but they do not brighten the room as much as an increase in natural light would have. The burglar bars and the metal door make me feel like I'm in a cage.*

*The members of the OFA U-7 (7 years old and younger) team enter the room and search for a seat that is not broken in some way. The last ones to arrive complain that there are no good seats left and choose to sit on the edge of a table. June and I read to the children from storybooks written in English, pausing periodically to ask the young boys questions regarding characters in the story, and then hand out worksheets. Although South Africa has 11 official languages, learning English is an essential tool to pass Matriculation (secondary school exit exams) and university entry exams. The boys are supposed to be able to read, write, speak, and understand English as well as*



*Afrikaans, the language the majority of coloured South Africans speak in their home. In the coloured townships, most students fail to achieve this goal.*

\* \* \* \*

### **Undisciplined Men**

Several of the negative stereotypes associated with coloureds are couched in the belief that coloureds, particularly coloured men, are easily prone to crime, alcoholics, unreliable workers, and generally lazy (Jensen, 2010; Western, 1996). As far back as the Victorian era, coloured residents of Cape Town have been identified as one of the main perpetrators of urban crime. The term “*skollie*” is used in contemporary discourse to encompass these negative stereotypes of coloured men (Jensen, 2008). A *skollie* is a type of scavenger who wreaks havoc on the urban population, including other coloureds.

According to Jensen’s (2008) ethnographic account of Heideveld, *skollie* is still a widely used term, and residents position themselves in relationship to one another based on whether they embrace or avoid the term, and the characteristics associated with it, as part of their identity. Jensen observed that Heideveld “consisted of multiple, mutually contesting spaces, in which boundaries in various ways facilitated the exclusion of the uncivil, the violent and the immoral” (p. 68). Jensen’s research also revealed that, due to the fact that these “boundaries” were socially constructed, they often overlapped. He observed that although residents might perceive themselves as “moral, civilized, and peaceful”—the anti-*skollie*—they could also simultaneously represent the “immoral, the uncouth and the violent” to others (p. 68). These separations were most prominent between coloured residents who considered themselves middle-class compared with those who resided in low-income, government supported council housing. Jensen traces

this phenomenon back to earlier government-sponsored studies of race and ethnicity in Cape Town that helped lay the groundwork for apartheid policies.

During the late 1930s, the South African government conducted several studies of the coloured population (Jensen, 2008). Based on this research, the government classified coloureds into three categories: (a) the respectable middle class, (b) struggling women, and (c) delinquent men (Jensen, 2010). Jensen (2010) found that policies implemented during the apartheid era such as the Coloured Labor Preference Act were aimed at employing the “respectable” middle class and helping women to cope with their “delinquent men” (p. 80). They also associated coloured men with the less-respectable lower-class. This shows that even the pre-apartheid South African government used class constructions to “create, enforce, and maintain” their hegemonic political structure (Nicotera et al., 2009).

In post-apartheid Heideveld, the state-sanctioned stereotype of “delinquent men” has evolved into popular discourse concerning undisciplined men. Freddie and Gassant both stressed the need for discipline within OFA. Evoking the same characteristics associated with the skollie, Freddie described an undisciplined person as someone who lacks “ethics and moral behavior.” Discipline also meant abiding by the OFA rules and diligently following the coaches’ instructions for soccer and life outside of soccer. However, Freddie conceded that having such a strong emphasis on discipline may also result in some players quitting the program because they do not want to adhere to such high standards. Gassant had a similar experience:

We had a few kids that come, and they think it’s going to be all rosy, just play football. But now they see there’s a whole discipline thing going on here. A few

have decided to stay away from the field. But I can guarantee you, they will come back. And when they come back they have to abide by what we do, not what they want to do.

Freddie felt the strictness of the program was justified and necessary for the players' physical and emotional development. He found that many OFA participants come from homes where self-discipline is not considered an essential characteristic. He stated that this was evident by the high rate of alcohol and drug abuse, and the lack of emphasis on education, in many homes. Freddie argued that this contributed to participants' low self-esteem because it fits into the negative stereotypes of coloureds. Additionally, Freddie stated that although some of the players would resent the coaches now for their strictness, they would appreciate their actions as they grew older.

Although some participants have quit OFA because they refused to conform to its rules for behavior, players that do stay have a chance to become coaches and peer-mentors. Freddie said that these young men were particularly good role models for the younger players because they came from backgrounds similar to the players, and, therefore, could relate to the difficulties encountered in players' lives on and off the soccer field. He also correlated the training and development young men in the OFA program receive as coaches with their development as future community leaders. Additionally, Freddie believed that the experience of coaching would enhance their roles in their own families in the future. He explained:

We've got about 6 under-17 coaches coming through, which is very good. It's good, and it's also, I would say, a success in itself. You know, we didn't plan it—it happened. And by that I mean, maybe we imparted something in their life that

they were missing? You know, they become positive. I don't know, it's—we're growing day by day—more leaders are coming through our program. I don't know where it's going to take us, but if we can play a part in their lives, and they can become better husbands, better fathers, why not do it?

Gassant agreed that the peer-mentoring program was a vital part of the OFA structure because, according to him, “90%” of the participants' parents “don't care” about their well-being. Therefore, coaches are functioning as surrogate parents, a role that many older OFA coaches had filled for them by gang members.

\* \* \* \*

*On game days, Freddie's small home in Heideveld is the central meeting point for players. I arrive there after a detour to a field where I thought the U-9 (9 year-olds and younger) football match I wanted to observe was going to be played. As my driver Xolani and I pull up to the house, I can see children scattered about the street practicing their soccer dribbling skills and notice the Kombi (a small minivan) pulling away from the house. Freddie stops the vehicle, and I pile in. Besides the Freddie who is driving and their 15-year-old coach, I count 19 U-9 players and compare that with the sign in the back of the kombi that describes its capacity as 13 passengers. In previous conversations, Freddie mentioned that transportation was a huge issue for his organization. Without Freddie coordinating the dropping off and picking up of players, most of them would not have the opportunity to participate.*

*As we ride along, the players excitedly chat with one another in Afrikaans. Seated next to me in the front seat is 8-year-old Philip. He is listening to the boys' conversations and then proceeds to make a distinct sucking sound with his front teeth that*

*communicates some type of disgust. “Ah, auntie [term used to acknowledge a woman], these boys got no respect.” “Respect for what,” I ask. “For ladies,” he responds. I ask Philip to tell me what the boys are saying, but he just rolls his eyes and shakes his head “No.”*

*Ten minutes later we arrive at one of Heideveld’s municipal soccer fields. The driver encourages us to hurry up as we pile out of the Kombi because he has to drive back to Freddie’s and retrieve another team going to a different field. The sky is overcast adding to the chill of the winter morning. Several of the players don’t have winter clothing, something I’ve seen before, but am still bothered by. I notice that many players are also happily munching on a junk food breakfast of chips and cookies. I add this observation to an ever growing list of contrasts between Saturday morning soccer games I’ve observed in suburban America and those I’m observing in the South African townships.*

*I finally get an opportunity to properly introduce myself to the team’s coach as he begins to corral the players into a changing room behind the refreshment stand. The coach gives me a shy hello and then disappears into the changing room along with the players. As I stand drinking hot coffee from the refreshment stand, trying to warm up, I can hear the players shouting as they change into their uniforms. I ask the man selling coffee what the players are saying. He responds “They’re saying they are the best.” Then all is silent except for the sound of the coaches’ voice. Moments later the team runs out of the changing room toward the center of the field. I fall in line with the coach and ask what he told his players. He states, “To have fun.”*

*As the team joins other participants warming up, I look around and notice only two other females: a young player on one of the other teams participating in the football tournament, and the official refereeing the match.*

*The coach runs the team through a series of warm-up exercises, and 45 minutes later the game begins. The team huddles together on the field in a circle and gives a collective loud shout before the referee blows the whistle signifying the start of the match. Only 11 players are allowed on the field at one time, so 8 players stay on the sidelines. While players are waiting for their turn to be substituted into the match, they huddle under discarded coats for warmth. Several players also engage in rough horseplay and chide one another about sitting out of the game. Throughout the match, the coach paces up and down the side of the field shouting instructions and encouragement.*

*During half-time, I approach the female official and ask about her experience refereeing matches in the Cape Flats. She explains that at first she received a lot of negative responses from the players and the coaches, but once she proved herself to them, they respected her authority on the field. When the second half of the game begins, I approach one of the OFA players sitting on the sideline and ask what he thinks about having a woman referee the match. He responds, "It should be a man." "Why," I ask. "It just should," he replies.*

\* \* \* \*

Knowing Heideveld's reputation for high-levels of domestic violence, I asked Freddie what OFA did to address violence—one result of a lack of self-discipline and respect for others—in interpersonal relationships. Freddie stated that he felt the young men in his program knew how to "treat the ladies," but conceded that any romantic

relationship may lead to sexual activity that may result in teen pregnancy or AIDS (Mathews, 2007; Strebel et al., 2006). Although Freddie stated that, due to religious reasons, he personally was against any sexual activity outside of marriage, he still felt it was important to talk with the young men in OFA about responsible sexual practices. However, one result of his vocal position on the subject was the tendency for players to hide their relationships from him:

Nowadays everything goes quick. At the age of 12-13, they do their thing [engaging in sexual activity]. They don't talk to me about having girlfriends. If I start asking, they'll say "What's wrong with you, Freddie?" They don't like me intruding. Like the other day, I asked the one boy, "You having sex already? Do you use a condom? You use the withdrawal method?" and he was, like, sighing and he was, like, "No, what are you talking about?" So they won't talk to me about that. But I give them lectures. I'm very open with them and I go straight to the point. I don't have time to talk about birds and the bees because they know the bloody birds and the bees.

Freddie also acknowledged that sexual responsibility was the task of both boys and girls. The implementation of the rope skipping program was a response to this desire to include girls, But their true participation in OFA is limited because of their gender.

When I inquired further about why there was not a separate soccer program for girls, Freddie declared that girls needed to do "girls sports with girls" and "not with boys." Although, OFA does have a one girl participating in the U-13 league, Freddie stated that he did not think her presence on the team was appropriate. When pressed

further about the issue of girls participating in the soccer program, Freddie mentioned several other reasons for restricting female participation:

I would say I don't like it because of, you know, because of, obviously they come of age 13-14-15 and you don't want to end up with kids having sex and becoming pregnant in your program. And also, girls talk girls' stuff. You know, I can't go mentor a 15-year-old girl. And here the girls ask me, "Freddie, now what do you think about sex?" In my weakest moment, I can fall for her [Freddie is using the word "I" as a metaphor for male coaches] and then what? Understand? That's why I, I would say girls need to do girls' stuff.

Freddie's reservations about girls and boys mixing together, even for the purpose of extra-curricular athletic activities, is a common theme in South African literature on youth development (Campbell, Nair, & Maimane, 2006; Pattman, 2005, 2006).

Because high teen pregnancy rates are a concern of Freddie and his coaches, I was not surprised that he expressed fear about the consequences that having a player become pregnant might have on the program. Additionally, several articles have addressed the problem of older men, such as teachers, having sexual relationships with teenage girls in South Africa (Jewkes & Abrahams, 2002; Kaufman, 2002; Luke, 2003; Pattman, 2005). Accusations of inappropriate behavior, even if found to be false, would have an extremely negative result on the OFA organization.

Freddie did not mention that girls were also at risk for becoming involved in gang activity. Although research suggests that there are far fewer female gang members than male, (Marks, 2002; Vetten, 2000), girls living in townships like Heideveld are still considered at risk for becoming involved in gang life. Freddie's justification for why



girls should be involved in OFA centered on attempting to keep them from turning to drugs, prostitution, and becoming pregnant, all activities that would greatly inhibit their chances of getting an advanced education.

\* \* \* \*

*June and I arrive at Mayfield Primary School just after classes let out for the day. As we make our way towards the classroom used for tutoring sessions, I see several teachers still seated at their desks intensely grading papers. Many teachers have up to 50 students in each class. On the ride up from Cape Town, June briefed me on the protocol for the day. We will be working with approximately ten to fifteen young girls between the ages of 8 and 10. June also warns me to expect some discipline problems with the girls. She has only been working with this group for a few sessions and many are still not obeying her rules for proper classroom behavior. June states that no matter how disorderly the girls become she always tries to remain calm. Many of the girls are from homes where they receive verbal and sometimes physical abuse as punishment. Therefore, even though June is attempting to lead by example and show the girls an alternative way to behave, she is often ignored because the girls know June will not become abusive with them. However, June also has the power to make a girl sit out of jump-rope practice for the day.*

*True to her warning, June and I have great difficulty keeping control of the room for the duration of the tutoring session. Although a few girls diligently complete the worksheets we have assigned, most ignore their work, choosing to joke around with one another. I find myself wondering whether some of the girls may be acting out due to their embarrassment at not having enough academic skills to complete the tasks. Although the*

*tutoring sessions are meant to help alleviate the education gap, many of the students are still well behind where they should be for their age and are embarrassed to call attention to their situation by asking for help. Young boys (none of whom are participants in OFA) constantly disturb us by knocking on the windows and door of the classroom to try and get the girls' attention. June explains that this occurs during every tutoring session with the girls. Unfortunately, there is no way to discipline the boys who trying to distract the girls, so June and I try our best to ignore them and continue with the session. June mentions that before and after tutoring sessions she has witnessed several instances of the boys "pressuring" the girls to pay attention to them. This often involved verbally or physically harassing them.*

*Midway through the tutoring session, the Principal of the school enters the classroom to speak with June. The boys banging on the windows and doors scatter upon his arrival. However, his presence seems to only increase the commotion among the girls who are already acting out. The Principal observes this behavior and comments to June and I that the girls have no "values." Later that night I ask June what she thought the Principal meant by "values." June states that a common stereotype related to the coloured population is that they lack a solid work ethic. She states, "Everyone wants to be the boss, but no one wants to work to get there."*

\* \* \* \*

In Freddie's objections to girls' participation in soccer, he never overtly mentioned that he thought young women had less physical ability than men to play the

game. He was actively trying to build a separate women's team but had run into financial barriers:

We're trying to bring in girl's coaches now. Because you know, as a lady, there's a lot of issues you deal with, you know. Earlier this year, we had about 60 girls that wanted to come here and play soccer with us, and I, I had to tell them I can't. You know, I was honest with them. I said to them, "Look here. We've got boys, girls—one thing lead to the other. Ag! [laughs] Then, and then the program don't look good." So rather save it, save yourself [OFA] and try and get more coaches in. And that's what we want to do. Ag, I don't know—with the world is currently going with finances—if we are going to have enough coaches, but we'll see.

\* \* \* \*

*June and I arrive at Freddie's home by 9 am. The sky is overcast and threatening rain. We are met by several players who are standing around in the driveway and street adjacent to Freddie's home. Some are hastily changing into their soccer uniforms in the carport. Today is Youth Day, a public holiday that commemorates the 1976 student uprisings in Soweto. OFA is participating in a Youth Day football tournament, and the players meet here to travel to the game field. Freddie's home, where he lives with his wife, Viv, and their 8-year-old son, Jacks, is small—one-story, two bedrooms—with no room for the players to gather indoors. I notice a young girl I hadn't seen before, about 12 years old, standing among the boys—I wonder whether she's a sister of one, and whether she'd like to be playing football today. I find out later that her name is Marla and she plays on the U-13 team. June and I greet Freddie and his wife outside as we*

*wait for the driver to arrive with the Kombi (mini-bus) to take us and the players to the field. Freddie comments that the matches have already begun. He hopes the weather holds out long enough for OFA to play.*

*At the field, we enter a world of loosely organized chaos. Kombis, cars, pick-up trucks, and even a moving van arrive and deposit what appears to be an endless string of players into the milieu. June and I are led to the far right field where the U-7 game is already underway. Gassant and his younger brother, Noor, who also volunteers as an OFA coach, are standing on the sideline yelling out instructions to the team. As we arrive with players from the U-9 and U-13 team, they also begin shouting out instructions to the players. Accompanying us on the sidelines are children from the U-7 team who are not currently participating in the game. Dressed in nothing but their uniforms, they shiver from the cold morning air. June and I wrap them in temporarily abandoned clothing left in piles on the sideline.*

*When our attention turns back towards the game, June and I both comment on how strict Gassant and Noor are with the young players. Following a critical comment by Gassant, June makes a disapproving face and states, "But they're just little." A large part of our perception is due to the fact that the physical size of the players seems reduced while they are in their uniforms. Many appear to be swallowed up by the attire. OFA only had enough funds to purchase one size for the whole team; therefore, the uniform is at least one size too big for some of the children.*

*June's statement regarding Gassant's emphasis on discipline during matches contradicts to a conversation she and I had earlier in the week regarding the boys' behavior during tutoring sessions. During our tutoring sessions, June and I often*

*struggle to instill discipline and a good work ethic in the boys, while they often only want to play and have fun. Whenever Gassant walks into the classroom, the boys immediately straighten up their behavior and listen to his direction. They have the same response whenever Freddie appears in the classroom. June commented that the boys only seemed motivated to behave during soccer practice, matches, and in the presence of male coaches.*

*Later, during the Youth Day games, I observe Gassant and Noor coaching a U-9 game. During the game, I speak with Dina, who is Gassant's partner and the mother of their 7-year-old son, Peter, about the parental support given to players. She states that she always tries her best to come out and support the OFA teams, but she has noticed that many parents are absent. Dina's mother, Betty, is also present. Betty appears to be one of the few grandparents at the match. In an attempt to learn more about their family dynamic, I ask about Noor's marital status. Dina laughs and declares, "He's not married, but he's going to be a daddy soon, he was naughty you know. He got his girlfriend pregnant." Noor is 20 and unemployed. I want to ask if the players know of his impending fatherhood, but decide against it in case it may not be culturally appropriate. Later that day, I hear Betty criticize Dina's choice to have a baby without marrying Gassant. Betty explains that she married Dina's father when she discovered she was pregnant, not because she was in love, but because it was, "the right thing to do." Dina rolls her eyes and declares, "My mother has a lot of opinions." I ask Betty if she was happy in her marriage to Dina's father. She sighs and states, "Well, he's dead now, so it doesn't matter."*

\* \* \* \*

Gassant expressed concerns that were similar to Freddie's regarding the negative public perception of girls and young women playing on OFA soccer teams with boys. Gassant also associated soccer with masculinity, declaring, "Soccer and males always click, especially in this country. I think that's why the boys associate themselves with soccer probably than with any other sport." However, he added that his experience coaching Marla, the only female player on an OFA soccer team, changed his mind regarding the physical ability of girls to play soccer:

When I first started [at OFA] and saw that there is a girl there, I thought I had to give her [Marla] special treatment because obviously you are softer on a girl than on a boy. But her character, that girl's character that we are speaking about, she's got a very strong personality and she doesn't want to be treated special because she's a female. So we, we handle her as [one of] the boys. But we also let her, respect her because she's female. Especially when they get dressed—we let her go and get dressed first, things like that. But, she is growing up. Now, people are like saying soccer is now for the boys, not the girls. So that's why we've started the rope skipping.

\* \* \* \*

*While wandering around the various games taking place at the Youth Day Soccer Tournament, I come across the OFA U-13 team. I notice that Marla has a black armband around her upper right arm—this signifies that she has been given the honor of being the Captain of the team. The Captain is considered the leader of the team and is expected to set an example for the rest of the team members. At half-time the OFA team has a meeting with their coach on the far end of the field. By this time, it is mid-day, the*

*clouds have cleared, and the sun is shining brightly. It is much warmer now compared to the briskness of the morning. The U-13 team walks sluggishly toward their coach, sweat dripping down their faces. The coach brings bottles of water for the players, but orders them not to drink it before he has a chance to talk with them about their performance during the first half of the match. The coach is visibly frustrated with his players and verbally berates the two strikers (lead goal scorers) on the team. He loudly proclaims that they are, “Not doing nothing” to try and win the match and therefore don’t deserve water. At the conclusion of the meeting, several of the other team members take long sips of water before returning to the match. The two male strikers turn and walk sullenly to the center of the field without taking a drink. Marla watches her teammate’s behavior, pauses for a moment in front of the water containers, but, then turns and follows her male companions down the field without taking even one sip.*

\* \* \* \*

OFA coaches Freddie, Gassant, and Noor stressed both discipline and dedication in the classroom as well as on the field as part of their overall objectives for the players; June and I were identifying the tutoring sessions as important work, and soccer as a fun, leisure activity. During an interview with Gassant, I mentioned some of my experiences assisting June with the tutoring sessions and the frustrations we faced working with the OFA players. Gassant explained that he instilled discipline in his players by building a strong relationship with them:

When there are new faces, they tend to take advantage [of them]. But, I’ve got this barrier with the team, where, I take the laughing and the jokes and all that, but when I am serious with them, they tend to listen, and then I think I’ve got them

into, into that frame of mind. And they know when I'm upset or when they're working on my nerves or things like that, and then they know when to tramp over the line and when not to. And so when you've got someone else, who is soft, then they're attacking. But I see June is getting the hang of things now.

On the soccer pitch and in the classroom, OFA coaches and volunteers are attempting to alter the negative stereotypes associated with coloureds, particularly coloured male youth who reside in lower-class townships like Heideveld, by stressing self-discipline.

Although at times it appeared that some participants displayed self-discipline only during sporting events—choosing to behave in an undisciplined manner during academic tutoring sessions—OFA was attempting to rectify this problem.

### **Conclusion**

When Freddie Carelse started Otherlands Football Academy in 2001, he wanted to provide male youth in Heideveld with an alternative to joining gangs. Based on his own experience as a gang member, Freddie believed that in order for OFA to be a viable alternative to gang life, his organization must also address issues related to low self-esteem and self-discipline. Therefore, OFA not only provides participants with after-school programs, but also addresses, and works to overcome, negative stereotypes related to coloured identity. Two of these negative stereotypes found their way into local discourses of hegemonic masculinity: (a) gangsters and (b) undisciplined men. Gangs have been a consistent presence in Heideveld for the last 30 years. In an area that is struggling financially, male gang members appear as wealthy persons of influence to many youth. Even though several OFA participants have lost family members and friends to gang violence, membership in a gang is still considered an acceptable choice



for youth who feel they have few alternatives to meet their financial and emotional needs. OFA coaches are contesting this exemplar of hegemonic masculinity by encouraging participants to invest in their educations and by presenting alternative male role models. Many OFA coaches are ex-gang members; therefore, by actively rejecting gang life, they represent an alternative masculinity. This includes discouraging OFA soccer team members from playing with a “gangster attitude.” The exemplar of undisciplined men is associated with negative stereotypes of coloured men, such as the *skollie*. Members of OFA are contesting negative stereotypes by encouraging self-discipline in athletics, academics, and participants’ personal lives. An integral part of OFA’s pedagogy of discipline is their desire to dispel the inferiority complex posseted in many coloured youth who reside in the townships. Therefore, according to OFA’s discourse of masculinity, a disciplined man is someone who takes pride in his identity as a coloured South African. This means rejecting negative characteristics associated with coloured identity in exchange for creating positive role models. Girls and young women are largely excluded from these conversations.

Although girls and young women have a physical presence in OFA, the male coaches did not feel comfortable actively mentoring female participants. Additionally, even though the one female player on the soccer team, Marla, demonstrated more than adequate physical skills and emotional self-discipline, her presence was not entirely welcome on the team because she represents sexual temptation not only for her fellow male players but even for the OFA coaches. Due to the absence of female coaches, girls and young women do not receive the same mentoring as their male companions. The absence of girls and young women thus frames important discussions, such as those

regarding sexual activity, around the needs of male participants, even though OFA has acknowledged that both male and female participants must equally take responsibility for their sexual health.

## CHAPTER 6: THE NATAL AIDS PROJECT

The Natal AIDS Project (NAP) comprises various outreach programs throughout the rural areas of the Umgungundlovu district of KwaZulu-Natal Province (KZN). Although the vast coastline, lush hills, cultural attractions, and plentiful game reserves make KZN a popular tourist attraction, the rural areas of the Umgungundlovu district receive few visitors. The trendy backpacker guide, *Lonely Planet* (2006), described the district, otherwise known as the Midlands, as “mainly farming country” that would hold “little interest” to most people (p. 357). However, the Midlands’ secluded location does not make it immune to the social and economic problems facing KZN. Most of the rural areas of the Umgungundlovu district lack such basic services as running water and electricity. Local schools are under-resourced, a condition that contributes to high rates of unemployment and adult illiteracy. The few health clinics and hospitals available have a difficult time meeting demand for their services, particularly with regard to HIV treatment (Welz et al., 2007).

In this chapter, I describe how NAP is addressing problems facing the residents of the Umgungundlovu district, particularly the propagation of masculine gender norms that condone physical and sexual assault, de-value domestic work, and contribute to the spread of HIV. The results of interviews conducted with NAP senior managers, coordinators, facilitators, and volunteers conducted over two months in 2009 revealed multiple discourses related to definitions of Zulu culture, patriarchy, caregiving, and the

role of women within NAP. Each of these discourses is interwoven with local hegemonic masculinity.

KwaZulu-Natal Province (KZN), home to approximately 9.1 million people (Mitchley, 2005), primarily black African, Zulu speakers, has the highest number of people living with HIV and AIDS in South Africa (HIV and AIDS Strategy for the Province of KwaZulu-Natal, 2006-2010) and also experiences high numbers of sexual assaults (Jewkes, Sikweyiya, Morrell, & Dunkle, 2009; Sathiparsad, 2010). These twin epidemics—HIV/AIDS and violence against women (Campbell, 2003)—were the catalyst for two initiatives of the Natal AIDS Project (NAP), *Cothoza Mduduzi* (Walk Carefully, Bring Hope) and *Bhekifa* (Look after the Treasure). Both projects include young men (15 - 24 yrs.) from established soccer teams in the rural areas of the Umgungundlovu district of KZN. Each team participates in multiple community outreach projects directed at changing the expectations of what it means to be a Zulu man in contemporary KZN.

No female managers, coordinators, facilitators, or volunteers are directly involved in either the *Cothoza Mduduzi* or *Bhekifa* projects. However, the Director of NAP, Annabele Downing, is a white woman of South African origin. I emailed Ms. Downing my research proposal during my first week in South Africa in 2009. I was subsequently invited to visit NAP's main office in KZN. After meeting with Ms. Downing and other senior staff members related to the *Cothoza Mduduzi* and *Bhekifa* projects, I was granted permission to conduct ethnographic research on the two projects.

NAP coordinates multiple projects throughout the Umgungundlovu district. I chose to concentrate on the *Cothoza Mduduzi* and *Bhekifa* projects because they

specifically involve male soccer players and direct their practices at challenging dominant masculine discourses in KZN. I interviewed senior managers individually in the NAP offices and conducted interviews with facilitators, coordinators, and *Bhekifa* volunteers on site in the communities in which they worked. Interviews were semi-structured and based on information obtained from NAP's Web site, ethnographic observations of projects, and previous interviews with NAP key informants. Interviews adhered to the protocol approved by the Institutional Review Board at the University of South Florida. Interviewee responses are used to contextualize how regional gender norms are affecting the goals of NAP, particularly the organization's desire to contest patriarchal practices throughout the rural communities of the Umgungundlovu District.

In 1998, three years into its existence, NAP made the decision to change from working primarily with women to including men and working directly with them. NAP identified patriarchal attitudes as a major obstacle to the prevention of the twin epidemics. Several studies conducted in South Africa have pointed to the relationship between endorsement of a hegemonic masculinity that values patriarchal beliefs that men have a natural right to be dominant over women physically—such as demanding sex and engaging in physical violence if women disobey them—and the spread of HIV (Abrahams et al., 2009; Norman et al., 2010; Posel, 2005; Varga, 1997). Umnini Mathebula, a senior coordinator for the *Cothoza Mdudzi* and *Bhekifa* projects, described patriarchal attitudes in rural KZN as belief systems in which men perceive themselves as having more “power” than women and therefore as having the right to “dominate” them. Patriarchal attitudes were exhibited when the majority of female participants in NAP's original HIV/AIDS education program reported having great difficulty implementing

prevention strategies due to their partners' unwillingness to participate. For example, according to Umnini, women experienced, or were threatened with, violence when they suggested preventive measures such as utilizing condoms during sexual activity. Umnini explained how this influenced NAP's decision to change its focus:

Many men believe that a man has got a right to do whatever he wants to do with a woman. So what happened is that NAP initially started working with women, but, then because of this dynamic, their partners would not allow them to use condoms and implement other knowledge they received from being part of NAP's program. So, nothing was making an impact because eventually men will overpower them and tell them that if they go for a check-up and go back and tell their husbands and partners that they have got HIV and AIDS, then they will just abuse them and shout at them and tell them, "You brought this disease to my house and you are the culprit," and so forth and so on, in terms of abusing them. Eventually NAP found out that it's like not really being influential to target women. Instead, NAP decided that they need to work with men, particularly soccer players, because the soccer players are popular in their communities and they are predominantly men as well, which means they would be able to promote the message of HIV awareness and HIV prevention within the communities. So that's really why NAP decided to work with men. It's because the impact will be more working with men rather than with women because, why work with women when women won't be able to make decisions at the end of the day.

In essence, NAP identified men as both the "origin" of and the "solution" to the AIDS epidemic in KZN, and therefore, adapted their projects accordingly (Brown, Sorrell, &

Raffaelli, 2005, p. 586). In 1998, NAP began the *Cothoza Mduduzi* (Walk Carefully, Bring Hope) project, which involves male soccer players between 15 and 24 years old. The objective of the program is to get soccer players to influence social change in their communities by advocating for women's rights, providing HIV-prevention seminars and basic sex education for youth and adults, and increasing the players' interpersonal communication skills, all through NAP training programs. Soccer teams participate on a voluntary basis. Each team organizes various projects, partially funded by NAP, to assist their community in coping with the effects of the AIDS epidemic. Soccer players receive mentoring from NAP staff to assist them in identifying the factors that put them and their partners at risk for HIV.

Building on the success of the *Cothoza Mduduzi* project, NAP started the *Bhekifa* (Look After the Treasure) project to expand its outreach work with male soccer players in rural KwaZulu-Natal (KZN). The *Bhekifa* project addresses the local belief that men are not capable of caring for children by having soccer players from already established teams act as mentors for vulnerable children. The project includes providing the children with guidance and emotional support as well as caring for their physical needs by performing such acts as accompanying them to doctors' visits. Each player is trained to identify and report physical and sexual abuse as well as attend to the needs of children who are HIV-positive. During the course of my research, I had greater access to members of the *Bhekifa* project than *Cothoza Mduduzi*, therefore, the results reflect a bias towards data representing the *Bhekifa* project. All of the interviewees stated that contemporary concepts of traditional Zulu culture were the biggest obstacles to meeting

the goals of the *Cothoza Mduduzi* and *Bhekifa* projects. In the Umgungundlovu district of KZN, patriarchal discourses are interconnected with so-called traditional Zulu culture.

### **Development of Gender Norms**

What is often described as “traditional” Zulu practices and gender norms are actually the result of blending Zulu courting rituals, conservative Christian beliefs regarding sexuality, and notions of patriarchal entitlement—particularly attitudes towards sexuality and violence—developed as economic and political circumstances evolved in KZN (Carton, 2000; Harrison, 2008; Hunter, 2004, 2005, 2006; Morrell, 2006; O’Sullivan et al., 2006). This section briefly discusses the evolution of contemporary sexual and gender norms in Zulu culture beginning with the colonial period. It is followed by an analysis of the interviews conducted with NAP senior managers, coordinators, facilitators, and volunteers and a discussion of local hegemonic masculinities that were identified during interviews.

### **Fertility and Sexuality**

During the colonial and pre-colonial period, a distinct difference was made between fertility and sexuality. Zulu parents and guardians during South Africa’s colonial period were aware that they could not “outlaw sexual curiosity” among young, unmarried men and women (Carton, 2000, p. 70). Therefore, certain forms of non-penetrative sex acts such as *ukusoma* (thigh-sex) were allowed as a legitimate source of sexual pleasure (Morrell, 2006), although these acts often privileged male rather than female sexual pleasure.

Fertility, on the other hand, was regulated through social control. For example, *ilobolo* payments are made to the father of the bride by the groom’s family in exchange



for the rights to a woman's fertility. Therefore, a woman who did not produce children could be replaced and have her *ilobolo* returned to her family. If a man impregnated a woman out of wedlock or by force, the woman's family had the right to demand *inhlawulo*, financial damages. This was usually one cow or its financial equivalent, a practice still endorsed today (Carton, 2000; Hunter, 2006).

It was customary for men to secure cattle for *ilobolo* from their father's kraal; however, economic circumstances in the early 1900s, such as increases in homestead taxes, made the securing of *ilobolo* difficult. Cattle were sold to pay taxes, and, due to declining economic circumstances, often could not be replaced. This left most homesteads without an adequate source of cash income. As a result, men who wanted to secure *ilobolo* often chose to leave rural homesteads to work long periods in positions that paid wages. With a large percentage of men migrating to cities or diamond mines in the Transvaal for wage labor, women's contributions to domestic work on homesteads greatly increased (Carton, 2000).

### **The Influence of the Christian Missionaries**

For many young Zulu girls living on homesteads in the early 1900s, the only refuges from a life of domestic drudgery were the Christian missions spread throughout what was then referred to as Natal Province. Carton (2000) observed that in this period, "For women with limited futures and for other restless youths, the Christian missions seemed to offer sanctuary" (p. 72). Women who were educated in the missions often found work in larger cities, but leaving their homesteads meant they would face severe negative reprisals from their families and community members. Women who entered mission life often gave up the right to have any *isibongo* (lineage or clan name) and were

labeled as outcasts and heathens (Lesejane, 2006). Conversely, the repercussions were not the same for men. In fact, the advanced formal education men gained from mission schools, including comprehension of the English language, elevated their prestige within their communities.

Christian missionaries endorsed a strict Victorian code of conduct that influenced the sexual practices of the people of KZN. As a result, Christian beliefs regarding sexuality became “interwoven” with traditional Zulu beliefs and practices (Hunter, 2004, p. 132). To the missionaries, any sexual act outside of marriage was forbidden. Preachers encouraged men to renounce polygamy and embrace monogamous, Christian marriages. The female body was viewed as a sacred temple for the worship of a male-gendered Christian God, rather than as a vessel of sexual pleasure and fertility. The influence of the missions in the KZN province meant that practices such as *ukusoma* were no longer endorsed. It also became taboo to discuss sexuality openly.

### **The Influence of Zulu Courting Rituals in Contemporary Relationships**

Contemporary studies of the construction and maintenance of sexual partnerships in rural KZN have referenced traditional Zulu courting rituals, emphasizing male privilege. For example, in two studies of male and female youth (ages 15-24) residing in rural KZN, interviewees constructed their sexual relationships as either *ukuqoma* (committed) or *ukujola* (casual) (Harrison, 2008; Harrison, Cleland, & Frohlich, 2008). The term *ukuqoma* comes from the Zulu practice of *qoma* (court for the purpose of marriage). Female participants placed particular emphasis on presenting their relationships as *ukuqoma* for fear of being labeled an *isifebe* (loose women). *Ukuqoma* relationships were viewed as taking place within a long-term commitment, were

conducted openly with the approval of a woman's family, and were not likely to enhance pressure to hide sexual activity. However, women in these relationships often were not likely to utilize condoms because they were in committed relationships and wanted to prove their devotion to their partners.

*Ukujola* relationships were quite different. *Ukujola* comes from the word “*jol*,” meaning to have fun (Harrison, 2008). *Ukujola* relationships are considered casual, non-committed relationships that people engage in for the purpose of having a good time and are, therefore, not to be taken as seriously as *ukuqoma* relationships. Harrison et al.(2008) found that casual, concurrent sexual partnerships—referred to as *amakwapheni* (roll on)—often occurred over several years. Male sexual activity, unlike female sexual activity, was constructed as a “normal part of male development” and could, therefore, take place openly with multiple partners outside of a committed relationship (Harrison et al., 2008, p. 183). Additionally, young men reported that they felt pressure from older males to engage in *ukujola* and *amakwapheni* relationships.

The construction of gendered sexualities represented in these studies speaks to the influence of patriarchy within rural areas of KZN. Young women reported feeling pressure to appear as though they were living a chaste life, even when they were not actually living that way, lest they face negative reprisals from men. Conversely, young men felt entitled to engage in sexual relationships and expected their female partners to engage in sexual activity with them, even if that meant putting themselves and their female partners at risk for HIV.

Although the rate of HIV transmission in KZN has stabilized since its peak in the 1990s, the spread of the virus led to the deaths of approximately 850,000 men, women,

and children in the province (AVERT, 2010; Project Gateway, 2010). Because women are biologically more susceptible to contracting the virus, they account for more than half of all deaths from AIDS (AVERT, 2010). Women are also considered the main caregivers in households and shoulder the majority of the physical and emotional labor required to care for family members and children. Therefore, the large number of AIDS-related deaths created a caregiving void that needed to be filled. NAP responded to the need for caregivers by creating the *Bhekifa* project.

### **The Bhekifa Project**

A 2008 report by the UNAIDS/WHO Working Group on Global HIV/AIDS and STIs<sup>23</sup> estimated that in 2007 approximately 1.4 million children in South Africa lost one or both parents to AIDS. The province of KZN had the highest number of AIDS orphans in South Africa (Project Gateway, 2010). The majority of orphans reside full-time with a guardian (often a grandmother) but, frequently, guardians care for multiple children and are engaged in some type of wage labor to support the household (Richter & Desmond, 2008), reducing the time they can spend with the children under their care.

The majority of children orphaned by the AIDS epidemic live in female-headed households. The phenomenon of female-headed households in KZN resulted from several factors, including a significant decline in marriage rates, the denial of paternity by fathers, and the migrant labor system (Denis & Ntsimane, 2006; Hunter, 2002). Mqawe Shabangu, a senior manager for *Bhekifa*, explained why the project was needed in KZN:

Because of HIV/AIDS within our communities, many, many women began to die.

Men were around, but doing nothing about it in terms of like overseeing the

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<sup>23</sup> These are the most recent statistics that I could locate.

upbringing of children and also caring about [HIV-positive children]children that are gonna die.

The *Bhekifa* project challenges the gendered belief that men are not capable of caring for children by encouraging male participation in childrearing. *Bhekifa* volunteers provide children with guidance and emotional support, as well as caring for their physical needs by performing acts such as accompanying them to doctor's visits. *Bhekifa* volunteers are trained to identify and report physical and sexual abuse as well as attend to the needs of children who are HIV positive. The soccer players receive continual training and support from NAP coordinators.

Mqawe noted that because soccer was the most popular sport in the region, and many young men admired soccer players, both on professional teams and in their communities, recruiting soccer players to work with vulnerable children would—they hoped—inspire other men to take up the same responsibilities. NAP recruited teams in various rural communities in the Umgungundlovu District and then commenced with formal training. Mqawe explained the evolution of the training process:

Our first initiative was to train them to become peer educators [regarding HIV/AIDS education, child advocacy, and women's rights], but that was not enough—just because, like, this was general knowledge without the practicality. There was no way to demonstrate your knowledge. Then, our approach was to ask the soccer players to practice whatever skills that they had in order to reflect

or to show how to empower men, how best that they can do it—you know, the practicality.

Mentors are assigned two or three children. Their care-giving duties range from helping the children with their homework to encouraging them to do household chores and mind their guardians. Additionally, they often engage in what one soccer player described as making the child “feel happy” when they were with them. Players received training from NAP every four months.

Mqawe also stated that a large part of the training for *Bhekifa* mentors involved addressing the “negative input from the community members.” Yet, he found this aspect of training to be particularly difficult because NAP did not want to be perceived as working against the community. He encouraged the soccer players involved in the *Bhekifa* project to emphasize that there are “good things and bad things” associated with Zulu culture. Mqawe asserted that it was possible for mentors to “respect” both their cultural background as Zulus and the values associated with NAP and *Bhekifa*.

When I conducted a focus group with five participants in the *Bhekifa* project to determine how they perceived their positions as mentors, participants emphasized that their role was to learn how to be “good” parents to children. They wanted to deconstruct the gendered notion that men are not capable of caring for children by volunteering their time with orphans in their community. They believed that their experience with NAP would make them better parents in the future and dispel stereotypes related to the role of men in Zulu households.

Originally, NAP mentors were required to visit the children assigned to them twice a month, but several players told me they chose to increase visits to twice a week

because they felt a strong need to become even more involved in the children's lives. Mentors also felt they were the main male role model for the children they mentored. I learned that for many this meant encouraging children to understand that caregiving was the responsibility of both men and women. This goal was best expressed by John, a *Bhekifa* mentor, who stated, "It's not only women that can guide a child. It's about everyone caring for a child, whether that is a male or a female, you know, that's what it's all about." But, for many people, accepting young men as caregivers would entail challenging gender roles for men in rural KZN.

I identified three local hegemonic masculinities in the responses of interviewees: (a) violent men, (b) men as economic provider (only), and (c) cheating men. All three represent exemplars of masculinity in rural KZN, and are therefore, tied to alleged traditional Zulu culture. *Bhekifa* mentors are challenging these exemplars by engaging in practices that create a new discourse of masculinity for Zulu men. In the sections that follow, I explain each of these masculinities and provide examples of how they were manifested in micro and macro discourses.

### **Violent Men**

Earlier in this chapter, I identified the problem of violence against women in KZN (Jewkes, Sikweyiya, Morrell, & Dunkle, 2009; Sathiparsad, 2010). Although this is definitely a challenge to countering patriarchy, *Bhekifa* mentors stated that one of the most prevalent difficulties facing them was the frequency of child rape in rural KZN. *Bhekifa* child mentors are trained to look for the signs of physical and sexual abuse. They work in conjunction with child advocacy groups in the area to assist children who are the victims of abuse and educate community members. According to Scelo Nkosi, a

field coordinator and former mentor, the soccer players who join the *Bhekifa* project act as surrogate “Uncles” to the children they mentor. This description is a term of endearment in South Africa and represents the role model position young men have taken up in the absence of paternal fathers (Morrell, 2006). Unfortunately, the term takes on a negative connotation when infused with the fact that children in KZN are most often sexually assaulted by immediate family members or relatives (Collings, Bugwandeen, & Wiles, 2008; Naidoo, 2000). Several participants spoke about the need to change the perception of men as violent predators who sexually assault children, particularly young girls, to men who provide care for children. The desire to contest the “violent men” representation of masculinity was best expressed by Peter, a *Bhekifa* mentor, who stated, “We are not here to rape our relatives. We are just here to raise our relatives.”

\* \* \* \*

*Mid-morning, Scelo and I arrive at the crèche [pre-school/kindergarten] that is going to be used for a meeting with the guardians. Scelo states that NAP schedules meetings about once a month to provide a chance to discuss issues related to the Bhekifa program. Slowly, small groups of middle-aged women, some with young children in tow, arrive at the two-room building. They have walked from their homes in the nearby village down the red dirt road up toward the crèche.*

*Inside, participants sit in a circle in short, plastic chairs meant for children. Eventually we run out of chairs and several people are forced to sit on the concrete floor. I sit on the floor in a corner as Scelo and two other facilitators conduct the meeting. The meeting is conducted in Zulu. Scelo tries his best to translate for me, but is often interrupted by a question by one of the guardians. The Bhekifa mentors are absent from*



*the meeting so the guardians can feel free to discuss any concerns about the particular mentor assigned to their child. These concerns would then be relayed to the mentor by one of the Bhekifa facilitators.*

\* \* \* \*

Later, during my on-on-one interview with Scelo, he stated that this was an emergency meeting called by NAP to discuss the increase in the report of child rapes in the community. NAP wanted guardians to know that there are services available to report sexual and physical abuse if they suspect their child or any child they know is being abused. Scelo informed me that openly discussing child abuse is still taboo, but it's important to encourage community members to not "keep quiet" about the problem. He also mentioned that NAP was trying to get more male guardians involved in the regular meetings. He hoped that the presence of *Bhekifa* mentors in the lives of children would encourage the active participation of male guardians, family members, and teachers.

Several of the mentors stated that when the *Bhekifa* project was first implemented, guardians were hesitant to leave their children alone with a mentor they did not know; however, mentors were eventually able to earn the trust of the guardians. Scelo reported that many guardians favored the assistance their children received from soccer players to that of government social workers. When I asked why, he explained, "Soccer players can give more time to their children. They give more time to visit them and monitor them, and help them with other things." Like several sport-for-social-change initiatives, the *Bhekifa* project is attempting to compensate for inadequate municipal facilities. Social services for families, particularly vulnerable children, are extremely overburdened.

For many children, spending time with older males is a rarity even if they are not orphans. Rural areas of KZN are experiencing the effects of the migrant labor system coupled with changing social dynamics such as a decline in marriage rates, which are significant contributors to the development of Men as Economic Providers (only) exemplar.

### **Men as Economic Providers (Only)**

The construction of men as economic providers who have extremely limited interaction with their families evolved out of the growing migrant worker system that began during colonialism (Hunter, 2004, 2005, 2007; Lesejane, 2006; Morrell, 2001, 2006; Ramphele & Richter, 2006). Mqawe explained how this affected gender roles in families: “In the rural areas—there was this ideology that a better place for women is in the kitchen, and for us, as men, we were taught to be like providers—like, we only bring resources within the household.” A decline in agricultural production brought on by the colonial seizure of land, high taxes on homesteads, and the demand for workers in the gold and diamond mines, pulled men into positions of wage labor far from their families for extended periods of time. Apartheid and its effect on land distribution in KZN further perpetuated the migrant worker system. This had a profound influence on gender roles and relationships within families. Women were often the sole providers of care for children for extended periods.

At the time I conducted my research, no female soccer players were involved in the *Bhekifa* program because there were no women’s soccer teams in the area. Women facilitated some of the Life Skills programs (primarily teaching basic health education)

sponsored by NAP. Dingana explained the reasons behind recruiting women to be Life Skills facilitators and the gender separation within the programs:

It's because some Life Skills are basically for girls; like the changes on the body while you are growing up. But we don't mean that the boys mustn't know that, it's just the way we do our event. Usually we've got girls that facilitate the ones for girls.

Dingana noted that although the children are separated by gender for some of the Life Skills programs, male soccer players in the *Bhekifa* program mentor girls as well as boys in an attempt to include girls in NAP's program. Though mentors care for both boys and girls, they discussed spending a great deal of time and energy teaching boys how to perform responsibilities commonly associated with the domestic roles of women and girls within the home.

In South Africa, as in most of the world, gender remains the primary indicator of household work allocation (Erickson, 2005). Mentors are attempting to de-gender household work as part of their effort to counter patriarchal practices. Dingana Keleni, a senior facilitator for *Bhekifa*, explained:

In our culture, most boys, when they are growing up, they used to not like to do chores at home; they like to play. So, we are advising them of the importance of respect and helping at home. And we also teach them about chores that they believe are for girls only, that they also must do it, like washing dishes.

Dingana commented that even the Zulu practice of herding cows (an important source of income in rural households) could be performed by girls. However, he noted that girls did have special safety issues to consider that boys may not. He asserted, "Girls can look

after cows, only if it's not far away. But it doesn't mean that this chore is only for boys or that chore is only for girls, so we are trying to build a kind of understanding.”

Central to the practice of de-gendering domestic work is getting men, particularly fathers, to become more involved in the lives of their children. Several of the *Bhekifa* mentors were raised with fathers who were not present in their lives because the fathers were migrant workers, denied paternity, or had died. Scelo described how his relationship with his own father contributed to his perception of male caregiving prior to his involvement with *Bhekifa*. Although Scelo did not live with his children full-time, he stated that his experience with *Bhekifa* has taught him the importance of truly being emotionally and physically present in his children's lives:

With my first child, I wasn't in the project at that time, and I didn't have anyone who could advise me about that [being a father]. My father had passed away, and also, even before his death, he didn't play with me, so I was just doing what I want at that time. But I've learnt from NAP—I know how to raise my child now. I must not be distant to him or her—to both of them, because they need me. Sometimes I'm just looking [at] them when I am visiting them—they are very happy to see me around them, playing with them, sharing some joke with them.

Scelo's declaration of how he changed his relationship with his children is an example of NAP's success.

Caregiving duties for *Bhekifa* mentors also included accompanying children on visits to the physician. These responsibilities become particularly important when the children are HIV-positive. Scelo noted that the experience of helping to care for an HIV-positive child was proving to be highly influential in the education of the mentors

themselves. When I asked how the HIV-positive children in the project were learning to deal with their disease, Scelo responded, “We’re learning how to deal with it with them.” He also stated that guardians now preferred the assistance of mentors rather than home-based care providers because mentors did not reveal their child’s HIV status to others within the community. Several of the mentors affirmed Scelo’s observation that guardians were often hesitant about taking children to get tested at local clinics for HIV because they feared the negative “gossip” that often accompanied such a visit. Although HIV-infected persons living in rural communities in KZN are less stigmatized now than a decade ago, prejudice still exist. In spite of this, the players agreed that getting children to know their HIV status and therefore, receive the proper treatment if needed, was going to continue to be a main priority for project members, even if that meant that the mentors were also stigmatized for interacting with HIV-positive persons.

### **Challenging the Stigma of Male Caregiving**

At one time or another, all of the mentors received negative comments from other men in their communities about their involvement in the *Bhekifa* project, thus adding to the stigma of male caregiving. During a focus group conducted with 5 mentors’, participants described their need to separate themselves from those men and boys not involved in NAP. They are also trying to separate themselves from men who, during interviews, they previously described as “bad men,” or men who sexually and physically abuse children and women.

Peter: They are calling us names. They [the other boys] are stupid; they are only looking after themselves.

Group: Ja [Yes]

Paul: They don't want to be involved with their families, because their families have never done that, so why would they want to support some family issues you know?

Mitchell: Sometimes they say, "Oh, you can't change anything, why are you always going with the children, because you can't change anything."

Paul: Especially, young boys who want to impress the older men. They call us names; they try to discourage us from going to the children. But because we know what is happening to our community, we go and still do our best.

Peter: Sometimes guys, they will maybe call us at the same time I must leave and go and visit my child. When I go, they say "You are going to a child who is not yours. What are you doing to her?" Sometimes when I go through that, you know, that discourages me, but because I know what I'm doing and I know that this project is going to set my future to be good, I go and I don't listen to them.

Despite the negative comments, no one from the program has dropped out due to harassment from people outside of NAP, although players did resign because they needed more time to study for their Matric exams (final high-school exit exams) or because they either moved away or gained full-time employment.

A study conducted in rural KZN by Montgomery et al. (2006) revealed another kind of stigma associated with men who perform caregiving duties. The authors found that men's involvement in domestic activities such as caring for children and family members suffering from the effects of HIV/AIDS was often not acknowledged. They argued that because providing an "economic contribution" was overwhelmingly held up as the most important form of male involvement in the household, men who contributed

to domestic chores such as caregiving, often referred to as “women’s work,” were perceived as “deviant” (p. 2415). Montgomery et al. concluded:

From our data, there is no sign that women’s employment is seen to detract from their mothering. However, because fathering is so closely aligned with providing, when men get involved with other aspects of fatherhood, they are regarded as men who mother, rather than men who father. This can have damaging consequences for such men’s identities and their ability to undertake tasks that do not conform to the norm. (p. 2416)

Patriarchal beliefs contribute to the perception of domestic work as having less economic and social value than wage labor. When providing economic resources is presented as the “minimum” (Rabe, 2006, p. 261) a father should be able to accomplish, it moves caregiving to a lower rung. This is not to suggest that bringing financial resources into the household is not a necessity; of course it is. But, men who are not able to bring resources into the family may also feel hesitant about actively participating in domestic work because it further undermines their masculinity. In essence, caregiving becomes less than the minimum a man should be able to do; therefore, a male caregiver is often perceived as less than a man.

### **Implementing an Ethics of Care**

The members of NAP’s *Bhekifa* project are endorsing what feminist scholars describe as an “ethics of care” (Tong, 2009, p. 163). Their moral compass is guided by the need to emphasize and build relationships with others through the practice of ethical caring. In doing so, they are contesting masculine discourses within their communities

that label caregiving as the sole responsibility of women and, therefore, discount its importance.

Carol Gilligan (1977, 1982) and Nel Noddings (1984) are considered the founders of the ethics of care concept. Both claimed that women and men utilize different moral languages in their relationships with others. The ethics of care approach to morality resulted from observations that women often engaged in relationships where they functioned as caregivers without the expectation of equal reciprocity: caring for children, aging parents, ailing relatives, or friends. Men, on the other hand, engaged in an ethics of justice approach to morality because their relationships were grounded in a desire for equal reciprocity; in the absence of equality, the relationship would be seen as unjust and might be terminated. The dominance of care as an ethical orientation is positioned as the opposite of the “patriarchal preference for individual rights and justice” (Puka, 1990, p. 58). However, recent critiques questioned the idea of men and women occupying separate spheres of gender and demonstrated how men also apply an ethics of care (Tong, 2009).

The ethics of care approach to morality is criticized for bolstering arguments supporting patriarchal claims that women are natural caregivers, whereas male caregivers must be trained to emulate practices that come naturally to women. These are similar to the observations made by participants in the study by Montgomery et al. (2006) who described fathers as men who emulate caregiving practices that come naturally to mothers. Other care-focused feminists criticized definitions of ethics of care that do not acknowledge that care giving is indeed demanding work.



Through the *Bhekifa* project, NAP is attempting to enact an alternative Zulu masculinity. *Bhekifa* mentors reject contemporary concepts of traditional Zulu values that endorse patriarchy, and replace them with an ethic of care. By specifically challenging contemporary gendered work practices within the home, mentors are addressing what Hunter (2005) described as the “gendered struggles in everyday life” that affect the development of masculinities in rural KZN.

### **Cheating Men**

Cheating Men is the third local hegemonic masculinity that I identified. The practice of cheating (sustaining concurrent sexual partnerships with or without the knowledge of the other partner) is known to be a main cause of the spread of HIV in KZN (Barnighausen et al., 2008; Hunter, 2007; Peacock, Budaza, & Greig, 2008). Scelo stated that during secondary school, while he was a volunteer for *Bhekifa*, he engaged in the practice of cheating. He continued cheating even when his girlfriend became pregnant with their first child. Scelo recalled, “When my partner fell pregnant, I still continued to have some other girlfriends on the side. So, only when I got more knowledge [from NAP] did I start changing and behaving in a good way.” Scelo explained that some men rationalized the practice of cheating by connecting it to Zulu polygamist practices. He stated, “Some elders, they encourage us to have more than one girlfriend—it’s their culture—some of our grandfathers and fathers were polygamist.”

Thuso Mabuza and Patrick Mhaule, current facilitators for *Bhekifa*—and one-time soccer players in the project—agreed that cheating was a big problem and was endorsed by younger men as well. Thuso and Patrick described the practice as a competitive activity. Thuso stated, “It’s like, if another guy has five girlfriends and I’ve got three,

like aish! [laughs] I have to find a way how to beat him and to get more girlfriends until I've got like seven or something.” Patrick stated that he stopped cheating when he was diagnosed with HIV in 2006. Patrick used his HIV- positive status as an example for other soccer players in the *Bhekifa* project. He explained:

I disclose my private life to them. I tell them I was cheating, and I also tell them why I did that, why I believed in that lifestyle at that time. You know, it was like a game, and also, I was giving in to peer pressure.

Patrick also noted that from the perception of men who endorse cheating, if he has “only one girlfriend” that means that he is “not a man.” Hunter (2004) asserted that this was not only an endorsement of tradition—much like the connections to polygamy discussed by Scelo—but also a reaction to changing economic circumstances.

### **The Isoka Connection**

Men in contemporary KZN are experiencing the “simultaneous collapse of agrarian and wage livelihoods” (Hunter, 2004, p. 124). For the majority of men in the Umgungundlovu District, the economic decline has meant that they are not able to accumulate enough financial resources to complete traditional manhood markers such as securing *ilobolo* for marriage and establishing their own *umuzi* (homestead). As a result, being able to maintain concurrent partnerships with women [what I refer to as informal polygamy] is now seen as a major signifier of successful masculinity. In the KZN region, men who are able to achieve this goal are often referred to as *isoka* (Hunter, 2004). Although the definition of an *isoka* is grounded in the Zulu tradition of polygamy, modern definitions evolved out of a reaction to decades of unemployment that decreased a man’s ability to start his own homestead and kraal. Thus, *isoka* masculinity is

increasingly associated with cheating (Hunter, 2005; Leclerc-Madlala 2002; Varga & Mellon, 2000).

### **The Development of Isoka Masculinity**

Before apartheid, *isoka* meant a young man who was formally courting a wife for the purpose of setting up his own homestead (Hunter, 2004). This practice demanded that a man had the economic ability to amass cattle, land, and multiple wives for the purpose of fathering numerous male heirs to expand his lineage (Hunter, 2004, 2005; Morrell, 2001). Unmarried women could also court more than one partner, but the ultimate goal was still marriage. Rural men were expected to marry at least one of their courting partners. Failing to marry could result in a man being labeled an *isoka lamanyala*, a man who exploits women for his own sexual purposes (Hunter, 2004).

The negative economic and social repercussions of apartheid changed the meaning of *isoka* masculinity. *Isoka* is now often appropriated to describe a man who engages in the practice of cheating. It is considered the opposite of an *isishimane*, a man who has no lovers. *Isoka* masculinity is also used to legitimize the so-called traditional rights of men to have more than one sexual partner.

In reference to cheating, Hunter (2005) argued that Zulu men were practicing informal polygamy because they did not have the financial means to properly establish a homestead and pay *ilobolo* for multiple wives and the children they would produce. Therefore, the practice of cheating creates the illusion of successfully completing part of the “traditional” rights of manhood.

Although the influence of HIV has changed the dynamics of *isoka* masculinity, Hunter (2004) claimed that “an alternative masculinity has yet to take place” (p. 125).

However, evidence from Sathiparsad's (2010) study of male secondary students in KZN found that boys who constructed alternative masculinities were positively influenced by males who displayed behavior that "transgressed gender boundaries" (p. 352). These included acts such as participating equally in housework and talking through relational problems with their partners rather than turning to violence. In NAP, transgressing gender boundaries involves endorsing a value system described as positive masculinity.

### **Positive Masculinity**

I found no official definition of positive masculinity provided by NAP; however, several interviewees spoke about its importance to the design and implementation of their projects. For example, Umnini defined positive masculinity as men being able to endorse:

principles of care which normally most traditional men used to say is associated with women, in terms of African culture. Caring for the sick, knowing that you have to make sure you live a clean life within your community and not being abusive, and of course, caring for yourself in terms of HIV and AIDS, and adopting safe sex practices.

NAP senior managers, coordinators, and facilitators stated that soccer players were chosen to implement projects that endorsed positive masculinity because of their youth and their popularity within the communities where NAP worked.

Presumably, the soccer players' relative youth suggests a greater likelihood of being open to changing their beliefs and behaviors, and their popularity would increase their ability to change the beliefs and behaviors of others. The HIV, AIDS, and STI Strategic Plan for South Africa for 2007-2011 (2007) found that youth and young adults

15 to 24 years old engage in the most risky sexual behavior and therefore are the most vulnerable to infection (p. 97). However, positive sexual behavior change is more likely to occur among this age group than among older people (Joint United Nations Program on HIV/AIDS/UNAIDS, 2010). Umnini explained, “We focus mainly on youth because if you can focus on the youth—they have a life span to go and they will influence others.” However, Umnini believed that there was a possibility that older men could be influenced “indirectly” by the actions of the soccer players. He explained:

In the communities where we work there are people who don’t believe in the concept of positive masculinity, for sure. They come from the old school, you know—old-minded school of thought whereby people believe in traditions and it’s hard to change them. But, you can change them indirectly, you know, by having our soccer players do work in the communities like facilitating discussions on issues like rape and things like that. I know eventually they will be infected by those types of initiatives and bit by bit, they will start to understand.

Interviewees noted that older men were not the only people who had a difficult time endorsing the goals of positive masculinity; occasionally, soccer players told me they had encountered trouble in their relationships as well.

During the interviews, I found out that NAP conducted several surveys among soccer players in the *Cothoza Mdudzi* and *Bhekifa* projects to evaluate the effectiveness of the programs. As a result of their experience with NAP, soccer players reported changing behavior that put their partners and themselves at risk for HIV. Scelo expanded on the results:

We just found out there were some soccer players who were beating girls if they would disagree about something—and some of them were having many girlfriends. So, some of them told us, “I am changed now. I have one girlfriend. I go and test [for HIV].”

Umnini believed that these young men often made the best mentors because they were living examples that change was possible. He explained:

When they have changed, then they can be able to impact more people, because when they adopt what you are saying, then they become more influential than the people who have lived the right way. Take, for example, the life of a prisoner. That person has been in jail and killing people and when that person converts, he becomes more influential and he talks from experience it makes him more influential in the communities. So, we just need to work hard at it and take it as a challenge rather than a threat or an insurmountable mountain or something like that.

### **Paradox**

The responses of interviewees demonstrate how soccer was used as both a tool for male inclusion and female exclusion. Male soccer players were included in the *Cothoza Mduduzi* and *Bhekifa* projects because they were thought able to influence other men to reject actions associated with patriarchal gender order. However, by excluding women, men’s voices are automatically privileged, thus creating a type of patriarchal organizing scheme within both projects. When women were included, they played supporting roles such as helping facilitate Life Skills programs. The delegation of women to supporting roles reinforces the gendered discourse that men are better suited to positions of power

within organizations. This situation presents a paradox within NAP due to the fact that a woman, Annabele Downing, holds the highest position within the organization.

However, the men who participate as managers, coordinators, facilitators, and mentors have distanced themselves from traditional Zulu men and admit that they are willing to be “influenced” by women. This is a contrast to the behavior of traditional Zulu men Umnini described in his explanation of why NAP decided to enact projects directed at men.

During my interview with Umnini, which was conducted at the NAP main office, I found evidence of another kind of paradox. I noticed two posters taped to a box of condoms in the corner of the room. The first poster showed Ntoni Rampolokeng, a black African model in her 20s, sitting with her legs open while wearing a bright pink bikini. On the bottom of the poster someone had written the words “I love Chiefs,” a homage to the popular South African football club, Kaiser Chiefs. The second poster showed the model Cwaita Mtose in a similar pose wearing a black see-through top and red panties. I wondered whether Umnini was aware of the mixed-messages associated with placing sexually explicit photos on top of a condom box, while also espousing support for a soccer team. When I asked Umnini to explain the purpose of the posters he stated:

When I came they [the posters] were here already. I shouted at these guys [the NAP workers who put up the posters] and asked them why are these pictures

here? And they said it's just a fact—it's just the reality—that this is what is happening outside.

Although Umnini recalled that he initially was surprised and upset at the presence of the photos and wanted them removed, he was eventually won over by the declaration that the images represented the “reality” of what NAP was facing.

Based on Umnini's response, the “reality” of the NAP workers and volunteers appeared to be one in which they faced a great challenge attempting to instill the values of positive masculinity into the lives of community members. Temptation exists to engage in multiple sexual relations with women, utilize violence, and mistreat or ignore children in the community all in the name of patriarchy and cultural tradition.

What Umnini did not acknowledge or, perhaps, even realize, was the other message being represented by the posters and their presentation as “temptations”: the message that women are sex objects for the pleasure of men. In these representations, they are objects that may contain HIV and other STIs and thus, in a sense, they are “dangerous women,” or *isifebe*—loose women who contain sexual desire and have experience with men. The placement of the words “I love Chiefs” under the image of a woman spreading her legs connects the image of sexual temptation with the sport of soccer. Here again, women are not represented as autonomous agent deserving of respect (i.e., the values espoused by positive masculinity), but instead, function as a reminder that women are not football players, they are reduced to groupies on the sidelines who play only a supporting role (Dyck, 2011).



## Conclusion

When the Natal AIDS Project (NAP) decided to switch from working with women to working primarily with men in 1998, their objective was to change what it means to be a Zulu man in the Umgungundlovu district of KwaZulu-Natal. Through the creation of the *Cothoza Mduduzi* and *Bhekifa* projects, NAP senior managers, coordinators, facilitators, and volunteers challenge what they describe as traditional Zulu culture. Descriptions of traditional Zulu culture are a mixture of Zulu courting rituals, conservative Christian beliefs regarding sexuality, and notions of patriarchal entitlement. Characteristics associated with contemporary concepts of traditional Zulu culture are used to support the local hegemonic masculinities identified in this chapter: (a) violent men, (b) men as economic providers (only), and (c) cheating men. Throughout interviews, members of the *Bhekifa* project discursively position themselves against exemplars of local hegemonic masculinity.

At the heart of the *Bhekifa* project is the endorsement of positive masculinity: a care-focused philosophy that stands in stark contrast to the characteristics associated with traditional Zulu masculinity. Positive masculinity involves caring for those in need of physical and emotional support, speaking out against sexual abuse, and taking preventative measures against contracting HIV. In KZN this particular masculine ethos is grounded in principles of care typically associated with the behavior of Zulu women. As a result, when *Bhekifa* mentors reject characteristics associated with traditional Zulu culture, they are transgressing socially and materially constructed “gender boundaries” (Sathiparsad, 2010, p. 352).

## CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION

Sport is embedded in broad policies and practices that contribute to social change. Unfortunately, the development community, including some communication scholars (Kincaid & Figueroa, 2009), are not adequately paying attention to the relevance of cultural factors in their quest to design a model for social change that can be mass produced and implemented in multiple environments. This includes “intersecting systems of inequality” such as discourses of race, class, gender, and ethnicity created within a historical context (Pelak, 2006, p. 372). Ignoring the influence of discourses can produce the very circumstances sport-for-social-change programs are trying to improve upon, such as the propagation of sexist gender norms (Coalter, 2010; Levermore & Beacom, 2009; Saavedra, 2003, 2009). This study is based on the premise that more research needs to be conducted by social scientists on sport-for-social-change organizations that take into account the importance of contextual factors such as intersecting and sometimes competing systems of inequality. This should be done in addition to addressing the effect of economic and political shifts in the areas where organizations are working and the influence practitioners have on “gendering” the organization through privileging particular discourses (Ashcraft & Mumby, 2004; Mumby & Ashcraft, 2006).

This chapter begins by analyzing how masculine discourses were constructed, maintained and contested in the three sport-for-social-change organizations researched in

this study; We Are Not Statistics (WANS), Otherlands Football Academy (OFA), and The Natal AIDS Project (NAP). Then, I examine discourses that contributed to paradox within each organization, including the use of soccer as a development modality. Next, I discuss the limitations of the study. Finally, I provide a discussion of the theoretical and practical implications of the study.

### **Constructing, Maintaining, and Contesting Masculine Discourses in Sport-for-Social-Change Organizations**

When gender is addressed in sport-for-social-change literature, it tends to focus on girls and women and their involvement in large-scale organizations such as the Mathare Youth Sports Association in Kenya<sup>24</sup> (Brady, 2005; Coalter, 2009; Delva et al., 2010; Kidd, 2008; Saavedra, 2003). My study expands the academic discussion by investigating the relationships among masculinity, sport, and gendered organizational practices in small grassroots sport-for-social-change organizations. My research suggests that masculinities are constructed, maintained, and contested in sport-for-social-change organizations by the endorsement of sometimes competing discourses of race, class, ethnicity, and gender that contribute to constructions of regional and local exemplars of hegemonic masculinity. Significant social, economic, and political shifts in South Africa such as colonialism, the apartheid era, and the HIV/AIDS pandemic all contributed to discourses of masculinity identified in case studies. Each organization was established in order to contest various exemplars of hegemonic masculinity present in local discourses.

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<sup>24</sup> The Mathare Youth Sports Association—located in an economically disadvantaged area of Nairobi, Kenya—is one of the largest youth-focused sport-for-social-change organizations in Africa.

In the next sections, I describe how masculinities are constructed, maintained, and contested in the three sport-for-social-change organizations: We Are Not Statistics (WANS), Otherlands Football Academy (OFA), and The Natal AIDS Project (NAP). The organizations in this study represent small, grassroots organizations that have autonomy designing and implementing practices—at least in part—because they do not rely solely on Western donors. Therefore, the objectives of their programs are not dictated by external agencies. However, the organizations and their goals are all influenced by local discourses of hegemonic masculinity.

### **(Not) Engaging in (Social) Fatherhood**

Although apartheid, South Africa's state-supported system of racial segregation, officially ended in 1994 with the installation of the democratically elected African National Congress, the lingering effects of its policies still influence contemporary constructions of masculinities. Members of the Natal AIDS Project (NAP) and We Are Not Statistics (WANS) stated that the migrant worker system was a significant factor in the construction of masculinities, especially a man's role within the family. The migrant worker system began during the early 1900s and continues to be a part of contemporary life including contemporary constructions of masculinity. As Hunter (2006) observed:

It is clear that migrant labor meant that whatever intimacy and emotional support fathers had provided became increasingly impossible. When a man could return only at Christmas, the social role of fatherhood became increasingly attached to a man's position as "provider." (p. 102)

Members of the The Natal AIDS Project (NAP) contested the belief that a man's role within the family is limited to providing economic resources—an exemplar of hegemonic

masculinity I identified as Men as Economic Providers (Only)—by focusing their efforts on deconstructing gender norms related to domestic work. In addition to changing the perception that Zulu men should not be responsible for physically demanding duties such as cooking, washing dishes, and laundry, Bhekifa members also encouraged boys and men to engage in the emotionally demanding practice of caregiving. Male youth who took on mentoring roles for children in the rural communities of the Umgungundlovu district of KwaZulu-Natal were actively challenging popular conceptions of masculinity by engaging in behaviors signified as “traditionally” female. The actions of the Bhekifa project echo a changing discourse regarding the role of fathers in South Africa, an issue that was also explored in the two Cape Flats-based organizations studied: Otherlands Football Academy (OFA) and We Are Not Statistics (WANS).

WANS is located in Gugulethu—a township in the Cape Flats largely populated by Xhosa-speaking black Africans. Gugulethu was originally built to provide cheap, and often sub-standard, housing for male migrant workers. Although statistics indicate that the gender ratio in the Cape Flats is currently almost even, my key informants often mentioned that the absence of fathers from families continued to be a problem. In this regard, the Absentee Father exemplar of hegemonic masculinity represented men who were, by choice, physically and/ or emotionally absent from their children’s lives. Moses Anda, the Director of Coaching for the football club sponsored by WANS, Bethlehem Football Club (BFC), was adamant that now—in post-apartheid South Africa—there was “no excuse” for men not be a part of their children’s lives. He recalled that during the apartheid era fathers were often absent from the home because they were working in the mines, were in prison due to political actions, or had been killed in the violent struggle

for democracy. Moses believed that the exemplar of the Absentee Father was being maintained by men who were too lazy to take responsibility for the physical and emotional care of their children. BFC was designed to be a surrogate family for male players, whom Moses affectionately referred to as “my boys.” The conception of BFC as a family was demonstrated in the expectation that coaches and older players would act as “social fathers” (Posel & Devey, 2006), thus replacing Absentee Fathers.

Similar to members of the Bhekifa project and BFC, Freddie Carelse, the Director of Otherlands Football Academy, based in the predominately coloured township of Heideveld, stated that the training young men received as coaches while participating in the OFA soccer program would make them “better husbands” and “better fathers” in the future. Although the coloured population of the Cape Flats was not as negatively affected by the migrant labor system as black Africans due to the coloured labor preference policy, the family structure still suffered under apartheid policies and pre-apartheid stereotypes endorsed by the government. As far back as the Victorian era, negative stereotypes of coloured men, such as the *skollie* (a coloured man who drinks heavily and is not able to maintain steady employment), contributed to conceptions of “delinquent men” (Jensen, 2008, 2010) and still permeate discourses surrounding masculinity in coloured townships. This contributed to the Undisciplined Men exemplar of hegemonic masculinity identified in the OFA case study. Gassant Cassiem, a coach for OFA, alleged that the Undisciplined Men exemplar was maintained through the widespread abuse of drugs and alcohol in the community. He also believed that the majority of participants in OFA came from homes where parents or guardians modeled behavior that was detrimental to healthy physical and psychological development. Gassant stated

that the parents of OFA participants used the program as a type of day-care center and was upset that there was not more parental support at local soccer matches. Therefore, similar to the WANS's coaches, OFA coaches chose to frame their organization as existing mainly for the purpose of filling roles parents were ignoring. The organizations then function as a type of supplemental-family, with coaches and older players taking on a reformulated fatherhood role by providing emotional guidance and physical safety.

When youth who reside in the townships are not able to satisfy their own emotional and physical needs, they often turn to gangs for social acceptance. The next section discusses the influential presence of gangsters in the Cape Flats and their effect on hegemonic masculinities identified in two case studies.

### **Challenging the Temptation to Lead a Gangster Life and Have a “Gangster”**

#### **Attitude**

The slang term for South African gangster, *tsotsi*, has been a part of the regional discourse since the 1930s. Although during the apartheid era (1948-1994), some gangs did merge with political groups in order to try to overthrow the Nationalist government, most contemporary gangs engage in the violent business of drug trafficking and gun running. They also have a reputation for physically abusing women that includes the systematic use of gang-rape to affirm their masculinity and dominance in certain areas of the townships (Glaser, 1992, Kynoch, 1999; Walsh & Mitchell, 2006). Coaches for OFA and WANS agreed with Jensen's (2010) claim that in the townships most male youth “must consider [whether] to join or stay out” of the gangs and that, either way, “all young men are affected” by them (p. 81). Therefore, it is not surprising that the Gangster exemplar of hegemonic masculinity emerged in the OFA and WANS case studies.

Coaches had to work to keep male youth in their communities away from the temptation of joining a gang in addition to keeping current participants from, as Freddie described, playing soccer with a “gangster attitude.” Playing soccer with a gangster attitude entails emulating the actions of gang members who conduct themselves in an undisciplined manner. This type of rough play causes harm to opponents beyond what typically occurs in heavy contact sports such as soccer (Messner, 2007).

Moses—the director of coaching for WANS—had a similar attitude towards the behavior of players on the field. He stated that a player’s attitude could be measured by the number of yellow Cards or cautions (warnings given out to players by referees) they received during matches. Moses boasted that the U-19 team had yet to receive any red Cards (warnings given out for violent behavior) during matches. He interpreted this as a triumph against the influence of gangs on his players—that is, a lack of violence on the field means that the players do not engage in violent behavior off the field. Zoma, Moses’s son, and a coach for WANS, also did not tolerate violent play on his team. He asserted that the younger children he coached on the U-13 team were highly influenced by older players. Therefore, if younger players observe members of the U-19 team engaging in behaviors he associated with gangsterism, such as “hanging out on the corner drinking” or “fighting” on the soccer field, then the younger players also will want to model this behavior. Instead, Zoma encouraged his players to play “tough” not “rough,” meaning playing fairly and working hard on the field rather than engaging in violent, reckless play influenced by anger toward an opponent. Zoma also observed that the skills being taught on the soccer field such as sensitivity towards others could be translated into positive messages regarding sexual behavior. This is significant because regional and



local discourses have contributed to the HIV/AIDS epidemic in South Africa as being perpetuated by men who use coercive and often violent behavior when engaging in sexual relations with women.

One of the critiques of using sport—particularly a violent sport such as soccer—to develop character is that it may develop the wrong kind of character. Criticism of sport-for-social-change programs typically focus on negative masculine traits some players exhibit when participating in sports. These include players sacrificing their safety or the safety of opponents and therefore, equating their own “value as a human being” with their athletic performance (Heywood & Dworkin, 2003, p. 6). Cautionary criticisms of the use of sport in social change programs are relevant given the violent environment players from areas such as the Cape Flats are growing up in. However, this study found that for WANS and OFA—both located in the Cape Flats—soccer was successfully being used a tool to teach respect for others, on and off the pitch. What I refer to as the “Pedagogy of the Pitch” has its impetus in the desire for organizations to stop the spread of the HIV/AIDS.

In the late 1990s, the HIV/AIDS epidemic became to be seen as a problem mainly perpetuated by men who engaged in un-safe sexual practices. Due to this realization, the grassroots sport-for-social-change organizations in this study realized that their HIV/AIDS education programs needed to move from what Reddy and Dunne (1997) described as prevention strategies that endorse “rationalist approaches” to sexuality and that concentrate on disseminating medical information, and instead concentrate on relationships. Relationships are the key: Seeing people as human subjects worthy of compassion rather than as objects of aggression.

This pedagogy of the pitch is grounded in the theory that how participants interacted with fellow teammates and opposing players during soccer matches is a direct reflection of their relationships with people off the field. Through playing soccer participants are expected to develop their character and act as positive role models for other players. During soccer matches—and practices—players were warned against receiving technical fouls for violent play. This point has particular relevance because it goes against the "Body as Weapon" mentality commonly used to anchor masculinity via participation in combat sports such as soccer (Messner, 2007). This study found that encouraging male youth to discipline their bodies through participation in soccer programs can also work in tandem with a pedagogy that endorses disciplining male youth in relationships with others, including girls and women.

In the next section, I describe additional ways in which practitioners and participants in sport-for-social-change organizations are attempting to stop the spread of HIV.

### **Challenging Patriarchy, Physical Assault, and Cultural “Traditions”**

The gendering of the HIV/AIDS epidemic as a male problem influenced two exemplars of hegemonic masculinity identified in The Natal AIDS Project (NAP): Violent Men and Cheating Men. Patriarchal attitudes concerning the perception that men have a natural right to engage in un-safe sexual practices have been linked to the spread of HIV, particularly in rural KwaZulu-Natal where these attitudes are also associated with the proliferation of domestic violence. Thus, AIDS and domestic violence are commonly referred to as “twin epidemics” (Campbell, 2003). Additionally, Bhekifa mentors also investigated reports of child rape in the rural areas of the Umgungundlovu

district. Because Bhekifa mentors are encouraging the participation of men in caregiving duties by mentoring young children, including girls, their actions have been met with suspicion. To counter the Violent Men exemplar of hegemonic masculinity, Bhekifa mentors were organizing meetings to encourage the parents and guardians of children to report sexual abuse, still considered a taboo topic in many rural areas. Bhekifa mentors also work in conjunction with local organizations that provide counseling to abused children. However, several of the mentors expressed frustration that more young men in their communities were not interested in engaging in this type of community activism.

Much of the discourse surrounding the criticism mentors received came from men who did not believe that Bhekifa mentors were engaging in activities appropriate for “traditional Zulu men.” The desire to hold onto so-called “Zulu traditions” was a major challenge for the members of NAP who were attempting to instill values they associated with the concept of Positive Masculinity. According to one facilitator for NAP, Positive Masculinity entailed endorsing “principles of care” that most traditional Zulu men would equate with feminine behavior, not masculinity. It also encourages monogamy and getting tested regularly for HIV. The concept of monogamy was particularly disturbing for Zulu men in the community who endorsed polygamy as an important part of Zulu culture. Local discourses surrounding aspects of “traditional Zulu culture” contributed to the Cheating Men exemplar of hegemonic masculinity identified in the NAP case study.

The Cheating Men exemplar is connected to discourses surrounding masculine Zulu archetypes such as the *isoka* (a term used to describe a man who sustains several sexual relationships simultaneously) as well as contemporary discourses of HIV/AIDS. Bhekifa mentors were often challenged by self-described “traditional Zulu men” who

encouraged male youth to engage in informal polygamy (having multiple sex partners without marriage) as a way to prove their manhood. In essence, being an *isoka* meant that you were now a Zulu man, not a child. Scholars such as Hunter (2004, 2005) point out that as wage labor and agricultural production decline in rural KwaZulu-Natal, men are turning to cheating as a way to anchor their masculine identity.

### **Similarities and Differences**

Each organization was designed to contest different exemplars of hegemonic masculinity produced through local discourses influenced by the desire of men to anchor their masculine identity in something tangible that gave them power over women (and some men) or a privileged status in the community. Again, although exemplars of hegemonic masculinity may be affected by “cultural ideals” they are not necessarily representing a “cultural norm” (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005, p. 842). Not all men benefit equally from the perpetuation of exemplars of hegemonic masculinity; indeed, some don't benefit at all. In spite of this, key informants stated that it was still difficult to get male youth to endorse alternative ways of "being men" (Morrell, 2005, p. 273) due to the influence of hegemonic masculinities identified and described in each case study. This is particularly difficult in a post-apartheid society that (at least officially via the Constitution and Bill of Rights) rejects men's privileged status. Before the end of apartheid, privilege did not exist for non-white men outside of their dominant status over women because of the racist and paternalistic policies created and enforced by the Nationalist government. These policies were put into place to ensure that, in the eyes of the government, non-white men would remain essentially boys with limited political and economic power.

Decades of socioeconomic and political struggle due to colonialism, the lingering effects of the apartheid era, and the recent HIV/AIDS pandemic, combined with the "institutionalization of gender inequalities, the role of cultural constructions, and the interplay of gender dynamics with race, class, and region" (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005, p. 839) contributed to exemplars of hegemonic masculinity that endorse patriarchy, violent behavior, and sexist gender norms. The Men as Economic Provider (Only) and Absentee Father exemplars gave men power over women because there was no expectation for men to engage in the emotionally demanding tasks of caregiving or domestic work, thus making men autonomous agents who are not tied to the home or emotionally invested in the welfare of family members. In some cases, it also meant that men had more leisure time to engage in sports such as soccer. Further, the Absentee Father exemplar encouraged men to ignore their own children without much recourse. The Undisciplined Men exemplar exonerated men from the expectation that they needed to exercise self-control for the betterment of themselves, their families, and their communities. Evoking similar characteristics as the *skollie* (the ultimate poster-boy for the undisciplined coloured man originally coined during the early 1900s), men are able to engage in dangerous and unhealthy behavior without being held to the same standard of accountability as women who engage in similar practices. In both Gangster exemplars, men elevate their status in the community and move up the gang hierarchy by physically harming others through gang violence. Gangsters are known for abusing women by performing ritualized acts such as gang-rape, excluding women from positions of power within gangs, and exerting power over men through excluding some boys and men from becoming part of a gang while also threatening those who do not want to join. Boys and

men who refuse the pressure to join gangs often face dire consequences (Lindegaard, 2009). In the Violent Men exemplar present in rural areas of KwaZulu-Natal, men exercise their perceived natural right as Zulu men to physically and sexually abuse women. Interviews with key informants also revealed that children were being sexually and physically abused, but, similar to the violence against women, this was not being adequately addressed due to cultural taboos related to reporting such crimes. The Cheating Men exemplar represented men who desired to achieve *isoka* status by engaging in risky sexual behavior with several women simultaneously, and thus, in the eyes of some self-proclaimed "traditional Zulu men," establishing their identity as a man.

Although I found similarities in the influences of local discourses on organizations such as the lingering effects of The Group Areas Act on urban migration that influenced a man's role within the family; the desire to create positive male role models that rejected characteristics associated with exemplars of hegemonic masculinity identified in each case study; concerns about stopping the pattern of domestic violence prevalent in some communities, an issue that is also related to spread of HIV; I also found differences. These differences affected the goals of each organization and the resulting design of programs aimed at achieving these goals. To elucidate these differences, I focus on regional affiliation and ethnic identity.

We Are Not Statistics (WANS) and Otherlands Football Academy (OFA) are both located in the densely-populated, economically-disadvantaged area of Western Cape Province known as the Cape Flats; WANS participants self-identify as Xhosa-speaking black Africans while OFA participants self-identify as Afrikaans-speaking coloureds. Although coaches interviewed from these organizations used soccer as a tool for social

change and designed their programs to be surrogate-families for participants, with coaches and older players acting as male role models to help fill the void many paternal fathers left behind, there were also differences among the organizations. The concentration of community outreach programs and the response to the HIV/AIDS pandemic were the most prominent differences. However, before I begin to describe the differences in these sport-for-social-change organizations, it is important to revisit two significant events in South African history; the Population Registration Act and The Group Areas Act. The effects of these Acts add to the regional and ethnic distinctions between both organizations.

The Group Areas Act of 1950 had a significant impact on the population distribution of the Western Cape Province. Because of the Group Areas Act, black Africans of all ethnicities were assigned to live in rural areas referred to as Homelands or Bantustans, on the justification that they had originated from those locations; coloureds originated in the Cape Peninsula, and, therefore, had no external Homeland. Following the passing of The Population Registration Act of 1950, "coloured" referred to everyone who did not fall into either the white or black racial classification system<sup>25</sup>. The National Party made sure that white South Africans received the majority of state resources for education, public works, and choice housing locations; coloureds received less than whites, but more than black Africans. This did not, however, mean that coloureds escaped the effects of apartheid. Just as many of their San and Khoikhoi ancestors were evicted from their homesteads by European colonists, between 1950 and 1970, The

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<sup>25</sup> An exception was made for Indians who had immigrated to South Africa after the emancipation of slavery.

Group Areas Act forcibly removed thousands of coloureds from neighborhoods like District 6 in the center of Cape Town to the desolate, outlying area of the Cape Flats. The National government also allowed some black Africans to leave the Bantustans and immigrate to the Cape Flats to fill menial positions working for whites in Cape Town. Although both Xhosas and coloureds were forcibly relocated to the Cape Flats, because of the Group Areas Act, they occupied separate neighborhoods due to apartheid policies regarding racial classification. However, even after the end of apartheid, Xhosas and coloureds tend to reside in separate areas of the Flats based on their racial classification.

The next section examines the differences ethnic heritage and their effect on each sport-for-social-change organizations.

Even though coloureds were able to exercise more rights than black South Africans, during apartheid, they still suffered under apartheid policies and continue to encounter discrimination. The coaches for OFA stated that, after 1994, when the Nationalist government was defeated by the African National Congress (the majority of whose members were Xhosas), many coloureds felt cast aside by the new political system. This belief still creates tension between these communities. For example, Freddie was fond of saying "First [during apartheid] we were not white enough, now [post-apartheid] we are not black enough." Notions of illegitimacy are tied to coloured identity due to their association with miscegenation; sometimes these revealed themselves in racial slurs such as coloureds being referred to as "bastard children" (Adhikari, 2005; Farred, 2000). Therefore, much of the OFA program revolved around increasing the self-esteem of participants. OFA coaches tried to get participants to take pride in their identity as coloured South Africans instead of using their ethnic



classification and economic circumstances as an excuse to have low expectations for their lives. Attempting to instill self-esteem in players is made even more difficult due to a lack of positive role models.

Coloureds have fewer public role models than Xhosas (politicians, authors, sports heroes). This is partly due to the population ratio of coloureds to Xhosas. However, unfortunately, even though coloureds make up a small percentage of the South African population, in the Western Cape they have the highest percentage of incarcerated men (Clark, 2012; Gow, Grant, Colvin, 2012). Most men are incarcerated for gang related activities. In economically disadvantaged communities such as Heideveld—where OFA is located—joining a gang represents one of the few attainable avenues to improving one’s social and economic status. Therefore, gang members represent role models for youth looking to achieve wealth and social influence. As a result, OFA was heavily focused on designing and implementing programs that would offer viable alternatives to gang life.

Both WANS and OFA have external programs beyond participants involvement in soccer, however, in WANS, participants in the Bethlehem Football Club were only required to partake in community outreach programs if they accepted college scholarships sponsored by the organization. Alternatively, all OFA members were expected to participate regularly in after-school tutoring sessions and help refurbish Mayfield Primary School (the location of most OFA activities). OFA did not allocate funding for college or trade-school scholarships; their hope was for participants to succeed in school (aided by tutoring programs) and earn academic scholarships through some alternative organization.

Another area where WANS and OFA differed was their focus on HIV/AIDS. In WANS, HIV/AIDS was put at the forefront of their agenda. Xhosas have the highest percentage of HIV-positive persons residing in the Cape Flats. Participants in the Bethlehem Football Club were expected to attend seminars on HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment sponsored by WANS. Alternatively, although OFA coaches like Freddie also made a point of discussing responsible sexual conduct with male participants, he was more focused on preventing pregnancy than HIV. This may have been partly due to the fact that the coloured population of the Cape Flats has a much lower infection rate than the Xhosa population, and therefore, unlike WANS, does not view HIV as an imminent threat. In this regard, Freddie's main concern regarding sexual education was the negative attention a pregnancy would bring to OFA, thus causing the organization to lose participants and funding, which might ultimately threaten its existence.

The spread of HIV was also a concern in the Umgungundlovu district of KwaZulu-Natal where The Natal AIDS project is located. Similar to WANS, NAP members attributed the spread of the virus primarily to men who did not engage in safe-sex practices—some of whom were coercive and engaged in sexual violence against women. Conversely, unlike WANS, much of the discourse associated with hegemonic masculinity was intertwined with discourses surrounding Zulu culture. Studies that address HIV/AIDS in South Africa tend not to distinguish between the multiple ethnicities that fall under the racial classification of black African. Those that do refer specifically to a black African ethnicity are predominately focused on Zulus, due to the fact that the majority of HIV-positive persons are Zulus who reside in KwaZulu-Natal Province (Leclerc-Madlala, 1997, 2001, 2002). Studies that do not distinguish between

different ethnicities and rely solely on racial classification ignore what my research shows to be one of the most significant influences in the construction, maintenance, and rejection of certain exemplars of hegemonic masculinity.

In conclusion, my study found that local hegemonic masculinities were constructed from discourses grounded in the desire for men to uphold a privileged status denied them primarily by the influence of laws implemented by South Africa's Nationalist government, but stretching as far back as 19<sup>th</sup> century British colonialism. Men attempt to maintain their privileged status through measures such as the endorsement of patriarchal cultural traditions, the gendered division of work in the domestic sphere, hierarchies created in sports clubs that exclude women, and participation in gangs. Sport-for-social-change organizations encouraged male participants to contest local exemplars of hegemonic masculinity through various methods such as engaging in social fatherhood, thus acting as positive male role models, encouraging participants not to join gangs by offering alternatives such as academic assistance, after-school tutoring and scholarships, and challenging sexist gender norms grounded in patriarchal, cultural "traditions." Regional location and ethnicity combined with historical structures of inequality due to colonialism, apartheid, and the HIV/AIDS pandemic contributed to differences among the discourses present in each organization. This meant that although each organization privileged certain discourses over others, these did not manifest themselves in the same way.

These discourses also created paradoxes that worked against the goal of contesting local hegemonic masculinities. The next section examines discourses that contribute to paradox in each sport-for-social-change organization examined in this

study. It problematizes the use of soccer as a modality for social change and shows how some discourses worked against the goal of reducing HIV in certain populations.

### **Discourses that Contribute to Paradox in Sport-for-Social-Change Organizations**

Paradox is a “normal condition” of organizational life (Tretheway & Ashcraft, 2004, p. 84). Therefore, the question applied communication researchers need to investigate is not how participants change what already exists as part of the organizational milieu; but how—if at all—do participants identify paradoxical situations and negotiate these circumstances within their organizations. One of the largest contributors to paradox in sport-for-social-change organizations was the use of soccer as a modality for social change, however, few studies have taken into account the “historical and cultural baggage” associated with this type of modality, particularly within the African continent (Saavedra, 2009, p.131).

In South Africa soccer is a “masculine flagship sport” that functions as an “ideological and material cornerstone for the maintenance of men’s dominance (physically, economically, and socially) over women” (Pelak, 2010, p. 64). Soccer is considered a “culturally appropriate” (Clark et al., 2006, p. 82) development modality because of its ability to attract a large number of youth (Coalter, 2009). Proponents are essentially ignoring cautionary claims about the appropriateness of certain sport-for-social-change initiatives. Among those who have critiqued the ‘mythical’ healing power of sport are Heywood and Dworkin (2003) who asserted that sports, such as soccer, carry with them negative “core assumptions”—assumptions that have been used to bolster allegations of a naturalized dominance of men over women and privilege a hyper-masculine, elitist “ethos” that is dangerous to the physical and mental health of athletes

(p. 7). To challenge these assumptions, masculinity scholars such as Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) observed that the male sporting body is not a natural occurrence; it is the product of a “configuration of practice” and should be understood within those socially constructed boundaries (p. 843). Unfortunately, examples from current sport-for-social-change programs that use soccer as a development modality reveal that sexist stereotypes are actually being produced instead of rejected.

The paradox of sport was demonstrated through Dyck’s (2011) observation of practices that occurred as part of a United Nations sponsored rehabilitation program for child and youth soldiers in Sierra Leone. Although the introduction of soccer into the curriculum did decrease instances of interpersonal violence among participants during breaks from educational activities, other unintended consequences arose. For example, older male ex-combatants took over the organization of games among other male youth—often evoking the wartime slogans used during battle to signify allegiances to one group or another—while, female ex-combatants were situated as spectators, who spent the majority of their free time observing matches rather than participating in them. Dyke observed that women were granted the privilege of “secondary” access to soccer fields only after they completed domestic chores such as cooking, duties that were delegated based on their gender (p. 408).

As the Sierra Leone example demonstrates, soccer does present an opportunity to include community members, such as ex-combatants and other disenfranchised youth who are reluctant to join more conventional development initiatives (Darnell & Black, 2011; Levermore & Beacom, 2009). But, sport may also prove “detrimental” to particular development objectives in the regions where it is most popular, the Global

South, thus creating a sporting paradox (Levermore & Beacom, 2009, p. 9). In the following sections I describe how the use of soccer in each sport-for-social-change organization analyzed in this study contributed to paradox. This is followed by a separate section that addresses additional gendered discourses that contributed to organizational paradox.

**“It’s not about soccer”: But it is...**

**The Natal AIDS Project.** In NAP, key informants stated that women were excluded from the Bhekifa projects due to the lack of soccer programs for girls and women in the communities where they operated. This exclusion reinforces cultural gender norms regarding the appropriateness of women playing sports. This presents a paradox due to the fact that one of the goals of the Bhekifa project is to challenge cultural gender norms. Domestic work and the ability to partake in sports programs such as soccer are tightly coupled. When sport-for-social-change programs that utilize soccer are discussed in academic literature, gender is often reported to be a significant exclusionary factor due to domestic expectations placed on girls and women that limit their ability to participate in programs (Hargreaves, 2000). Although the Bhekifa project is challenging so-called traditional Zulu gender norms by encouraging men to take on a more active role in domestic life—thus challenging the notion that a man's role in the family is limited to providing only financial resources—by using soccer players to achieve this goal, they are simultaneously reinforcing sexist gender norms regarding sport, specifically the involvement of girls and women in soccer programs.

I acknowledge the importance of the work Bhekifa mentors are doing to challenge culturally constructed beliefs regarding caregiving, domestic work, and HIV/AIDS, often

while being ridiculed by members of the community who accuse them of not behaving like real Zulu men. Nevertheless, Trethewey and Ashcraft (2004) stress that it is important to understand how members identify and negotiate paradox within their organization, not simply declare ways that paradox could be decreased. In this particular case, Bhekifa mentors did not identify a paradox between their efforts to de-gender domestic work practices (something necessary to allow girls and women the opportunity to participate in sports) while re-enforcing sexist gender norms regarding girls and women's involvement in soccer programs. When I pointed out the paradox to members of NAP they explained that, even though they were committed to changing "traditional" Zulu beliefs regarding gender norms, they were also working under culturally constructed constraints that had been in place for decades, and, therefore, were difficult to change. Starting soccer programs for girls and women would have required additional resources that NAP was not prepared to invest. Bhekifa mentors were chosen from already established soccer programs, NAP did not contribute to the development of these programs. However, it is plausible that members of the Bhekifa program may not have identified this issue as a problem because no women were directly involved in the Bhekifa program. Although the Director of NAP is a woman, she is not involved in the day-to-day fieldwork of Bhekifa members. As a result, male voices within the program are privileged. When I interviewed members of the Bhekifa project, I was told that there were no plans to start a soccer program for women and girls as a way to challenge gender norms. It appeared as though the members just accepted that soccer was a sport at least primarily for boys and men, thus reinforcing that sexual stereotype.

**Otherlands Football Academy.** The Director of OFA, Freddie Carelse, declared that, even though the sport of soccer at one time had ties to gangster activity (Jacobs, 2010), OFA and organizations like it represent a viable alternative to gang life in the Cape Flats. According to Freddie, “Soccer is a language that everyone understands.” Therefore, OFA coaches found it to an appropriate tool to instill discipline in player’s lives; this extends beyond the physical conditioning players receive during practices and matches to lectures players attend regarding the importance of responsible sexual practices. However, OFA’s emphasis on discipline has proved difficult to achieve not only for players, but some coaches as well. This was demonstrated by a story I heard about a young assistant coach, Noor, who was about to become a father. Noor was not married to his girlfriend, and the pregnancy was unplanned. Noor’s behavior was described by Dina, the long-time partner of another coach Gassant, as “being naughty.” Although the actual circumstances surrounding the pregnancy were not revealed to me (there may have been a birth control failure, etc.), Dina’s description of Noor’s behavior as “naughty” shows that his actions are perceived as negative. This is likely due to the fact that it contradicts several comments made by Freddie regarding his emphasis on the importance of utilizing condoms consistently in order to avoid HIV and unplanned pregnancies. Freddie justified the marginalization of girls and young women in OFA by stressing that their presence increased the likelihood of a player getting pregnant and the inevitable scandal that would follow, thus costing OFA valuable credibility and resources.

Freddie and Gassant both expressed a general discomfort with the presence of girls and young women anywhere but on the sidelines during soccer matches. Although



Freddie believed they had the physical capacity to play soccer—a fact that was demonstrated by Marla, the only female player on the team, being designated as the captain—he did not think it was appropriate for young women to play soccer alongside boys. His statement “girls should play girls’ sports” was a justification for the relegation of girls and young women to the alternative rope skipping program. Although in South Africa rope skipping is considered a competitive, athletic sport, it does not receive the same amount of professional respect as soccer. The discourse surrounding soccer in OFA presented it as a physically demanding, competitive “sport” for boys, while rope skipping is a fun “game” for girls. Young women like Marla are transgressing cultural and physical boundaries, which creates complications for coaches. For example, Gassant did not interpret Marla’s presence on the team as merely a young women fulfilling her desire to play soccer. Instead, he suggested that Marla’s participation was driven by the need to fulfill her desire to actually be a boy by playing the most popular sport in South Africa for boys, soccer. Additionally, in coloured townships like Heidveld, Marla also represented a threat to the safe-sex message OFA was trying to instill in its players.

OFA coaches and members of the community expressed concern that girls and boys mixing together after the onset of puberty, even for the purpose of extracurricular sporting activities, may lead to sexual activity. OFA’s answer to the problem of accommodating girls and young women who wanted to play soccer was to try to hire female coaches for an all-female team. However, even though Freddie reported that they had several inquiries from girls and young women who wanted to play, they were having difficulty acquiring the funds and personnel to make this possible. As a result, not only are female participants relegated to the sidelines for soccer matches, they also are not

receiving the one-on-one mentoring that accompanies being a part of the OFA soccer program. Once again, we see an example where financial and physical resources are given priority to men over women, thus reinforcing culturally endorsed gender discrimination.

**We Are Not Statistics.** For Moses Anda, the Director of WANS, the sport of soccer has been a gift as well as a curse. Because he exhibited an outstanding talent for the game at a young age, he now regrets that he was not prepared for anything but a professional soccer career. After his professional career ended, Moses started WANS to create a football club that would not only train participants to be soccer players but prepare young men for “life after football.” His son, Zoma, described BFC’s multiple goals: “It is about soccer and it is about education and it is also about taking children out of the streets.” Moses and Zoma both alleged that soccer, and more specifically how players interacted with one another and their opponents, was a reflection of the overall character of players. Not only are players admonished for reckless play that may result in technical fouls, they are also encouraged to be supportive of each other’s participation in the game rather than overtly critical and to share possession of the ball so that everyone gets an opportunity to play. Again, the practitioners of WANS are rejecting conceptions of hegemonic masculinity such as those observed by Kleinman (2007) that “Men are largely expected to do the kind of emotional labor that intimates others or brings them down” (p. 66). For Moses and Zoma, if WANS was just “about soccer,” issues such as accountability, discipline, and respect for fellow players and opponents would not be such an integral part of the program. Again, similar to NAP and OFA, the participants Moses and Zoma are referring to consist primarily of boys and young men. Girls and

young women are restricted from progressing in the OFA soccer program past the age of 13. At the time I conducted my ethnographic field research, only one girl was participating in the soccer program, Zoma's younger sister, Pali, who played on the team Zoma coached. Zoma reported that there were no problems with discrimination based on her gender, but Pali was only seven, and, therefore, still considered a young child, not a young woman.

### **HIV/AIDS and the Presence of Paradox**

Even though Moses was adamant that all of the members of WANS—coaches and players—had to adhere to strict guidelines for professional behavior on and off the field in order to be a part of the football club, his own life choices contradicted much of his discourse regarding HIV/AIDS education. In South Africa, the proliferation of the AIDS pandemic has been linked to the practice of “cheating” or what I referred to in earlier chapters as “informal polygamy”—the practice of sustaining several sexual partners simultaneously, often without utilizing condoms. Although Moses was reluctant to discuss this part of his private life, having 14 children by multiple women does not align with the message of sexual responsibility propagated by WANS. Moses also enacted one of the exemplars of hegemonic masculinity discussed in the WANS case study, that of the Absentee Father. However, when I asked about this, he employed what Weick (1993) refers to as contextual rationality to explain his behavior. Organizational members use contextual rationality to create and maintain institutions and traditions that express some conception of appropriate and just behavior in their interactions with others. Although throughout the course of my ethnographic field research Moses made several negative comments that declared fathers to be both the cause and the cure for many of the social

problems facing male youth in the Cape Flats, he did not identify himself as an Absentee Father. He excluded himself from this category because he openly expressed the desire to be in the lives of both his biological children and the players of Bethlehem Football Club (BFC). Even though Moses admitted that he was not able financially or emotionally to support all of his biological children as much as he would like, he felt that his efforts to aid BFC players absolved him from being labeled as an Absentee Father.

Having only male participants in the Bhekifa and Cothoza Mduzuzi projects contributed to an example of organizational paradox that I found in the NAP main office: two sexually suggestive posters of women placed on top of boxes of condoms with the words “I love Chiefs” written across one of the posters (an homage to the popular South African soccer team Kaiser Chiefs). These items were in the room that is used for training seminars about HIV prevention and awareness. A manager stated that although he thought the posters’ location was somewhat inappropriate, he did not feel compelled to remove them. The manager’s justification—that the images of women in sexual poses represented the “reality” NAP mentors were facing—represents a definite paradox. Their presence reinforces, yet simultaneously contradicts, what NAP believed when it changed its focus from working primarily with women to working with men. According to one senior manager, “Why work with women when women won’t be able to make decisions at the end of the day?”; women are not autonomous agents. The presence of the posters depicts women not as autonomous agents deserving of respect, but as vessels of sexual temptation that are capable of literally killing a man through sexual intercourse (AIDS), hence, the strategic placement of the posters on top of boxes of condoms. This example shows how girls and young women are still held responsible for the behavior of boys and

men, even when they are simultaneously being constructed as not having any influence over them.

This study shows the complexity involved in soccer as a development modality. Soccer is not a genderless tool. The sport is deeply embedded in a complex matrix of cultural belief systems about gender norms that affect discourses evoked in sport-for-social-change programs. The results of this study highlight the tensions that occur when organizations enact practices that contest popular belief systems. Sometimes, the practitioners of programs in this study unwittingly endorsed and maintained certain exemplars of hegemonic masculinity. However, as my results illustrate, when investigating these organizations, it is important to take the context of each organization into consideration to understand the external conditions that contribute to their behavior.

### **Discussion**

Despite the optimism garnered after South Africa ended apartheid and became a democratic country in 1994, it still suffers under great socio-economic strain. Black Africans (primarily Xhosa) and coloureds living in the Cape Flats area of the Western Cape Province and Zulus residing in the rural areas of KwaZulu-Natal Province are considered the most disadvantaged populations. Not only are they coping with structural problems such as inadequate housing, a shortage of health clinics, and sub-standard public education but also gang-violence, domestic violence, and substance abuse permeate these communities. The sport-for-social-change organizations in this research study were started in order to fill the gap left by inadequate government assistance programs for at-risk male youth. Male youth were specifically targeted because of several factors including but not limited to the high incarceration rate for men in urban

areas, low high-school matriculation rates, the gendering of the HIV/AIDS pandemic as a problem perpetuated by men, and escalating reports of violence against women, including sexual assault. Scholars attribute these behaviors to the desire for some men to anchor their masculinity in behaviors that endorse patriarchal gender norms due to waning economic opportunities in cities and a decline in agricultural production in rural areas, which results in many men not being able to establish households of their own. This is coupled with a growing feminist consciousness that challenges cultural beliefs and practices grounded in patriarchal values. Based on three months of ethnographic research, I identified seven exemplars<sup>26</sup> of hegemonic masculinity present in local discourses of masculinity. Sport-for-social-change programs positioned themselves in opposition to these exemplars of hegemonic masculinity. Yet, this study found evidence that the behavior of organizational practitioners sometimes worked to reinforce these exemplars of hegemonic masculinity, although the practitioners did not identify this paradox. Additionally, key informants did not identify that soccer itself functioned paradoxically in that it represents sexist gender norms that run counter to their organizational goals.

### **Study Limitations**

In the Methods chapter, I discussed the multiple limitations I faced during field research due to my gender, nationality, and race. I was also limited by the time I had to conduct research and my financial resources. Although this study examines three sport-for-social-change organizations that represent differences in racial, ethnic, and regional classification, this study still represents a relatively small sample of such organizations. Future studies that conduct research on multiple organizations representing the same

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<sup>26</sup> The Gangster exemplar of hegemonic masculinity was identified in two separate case studies.

demographic may well produce different results. Also, responses to questions may have been affected due to the close relationship between several of the key informants interviewed in this study—such as the father and son relationship between Moses Anda and his son, Zoma. By this I mean that respondents may have not been as entirely forthcoming about certain subjects because they did not want to paint the organization in an unfavorable light. Additionally, this study specifically focused on the practitioners of sport-for-social-change programs. I made this choice because of the gap in the literature regarding the perspectives of practitioners. Future studies may wish to include interviews with participants, however, researchers should keep in mind the difficulties involved with gaining approval from Institutional Review Boards when requesting to conduct research on minors.

### **Theoretical Implications**

This study shows how Connell and Messerschmidt's (2005) reformulated theory of hegemonic masculinity can be used as a lens to examine the "gendering" (Ashcraft & Mumby, 2004) of organizations through discourse, and some of the repercussions of gendered organizing. The theory stresses that hegemonic masculinity should not be thought of as an umbrella term used only to describe men who endorse patriarchal ideals and values. Hegemonic masculinities represent exemplars of masculinities that take the gendered social context into consideration, which means acknowledging that masculinities are created through micro and macro level discourses that are both historically situated and constantly in flux. This study identified exemplars of hegemonic masculinity that endorsed violent, sexist practices that worked to subordinate women and privilege men in order to help answer specific research questions. Connell and

Messerschmidt's theory (2005) leaves open the possibility of identifying exemplars of hegemonic masculinity that endorse feminist ideals. For example, this study found that discourses surrounding soccer challenged the violent "Body as Weapon" (Messner, 2007) mentality often endorsed by players during football matches. Participants also resisted deeply entrenched cultural beliefs about gender norms by endorsing an ethic of care (Gilligan, 1977, 1982; Noddings, 1984; Tong, 2009). Future case studies of sport-for-social-change organizations may wish to focus on identifying discourses that reject patriarchy.

### **Practical Implications**

**Researchers.** Communication scholars Nicote, Clinkscales, Dorsey, and Niles (2009) observed that in most applied communication literature "racial categories are imposed, implicitly essentialized as identity, and explicitly treated as a primary identifying factor leading to presumed similarities within the differences between groups" (p. 208). This study shows the danger of imposing tacit knowledge concerning racial group characteristics (Shotwell, 2011) by highlighting the need for researchers (academic or laymen) to investigate and identify differences and similarities with regard to not only racial, but ethnic, and regional identity in order to discern their influence on local discourses.

Additionally, this study expands the literature on gender issues in sport-for-social-change programs, particularly the designation of public spaces such as soccer pitches as masculinized spaces where women take on the role of visitor rather than welcomed participant (Brady, 2005; Engh, 2011; Pelak, 2006, 2010). In the case studies presented here, practitioners justified their choice of not fully integrating women into the soccer



programs on external constraints such as a lack of financial resources and pressure from community members not to violate the cultural taboo of young men and women mixing together. Brady (2005) argued that in order for soccer fields to become de-masculinized spaces safe for everyone, these external constraints such as gender norms relating to the perceived appropriateness of girls and women playing soccer must first be abolished. The history of soccer in South Africa proves that changing the gender dynamics on the soccer pitch can lead to significant changes in people's attitudes. I make this claim based on evidence that combining soccer and political activism was an integral part of changing the political and racial dynamics in South Africa.

When the Nationalist government was elected in 1948 and officially began what is now referred to as the apartheid era (1948-1994), they were feeling threatened by the popularity of soccer among black Africans. Because the leagues organized themselves and games could be played on almost any surface with little equipment, soccer proved difficult for white government officials to police. Thus, participating in soccer became a form of rebellion against apartheid policies. During the extremely turbulent times from the late 1970s through the 1980s, soccer matches also served a more overt political function. Nauright (1997) observed:

The popularity of soccer in the townships provided a unique opportunity for political leaders to address mass audiences without the necessity of trying to obtain a police permit, which for many anti-apartheid groups was not likely to be granted anyway. (p. 121)

Several key members of the anti-apartheid political group, The African National Congress (ANC), also held high-level administrative positions for local soccer clubs. As

the anti-apartheid movement grew in popularity, soccer matches continued to provide relatively safe spaces for the spread of democracy as political activists would hide in the audience and speak to audiences via loudspeakers. These same speakers, including Nelson Mandela, would become key members of the first democratically elected government in 1994. Although women in South Africa now also hold important seats in government, the “politics of the pitch” continues to reflect discriminatory practices based on gender.

Women's participation in soccer has been hindered by gender expectations that men do not experience. One of the most cited reasons for lack of participation is the division of household work in black and coloured townships and rural areas. Another significant barrier is the social expectation that soccer is a men's sport and that women who engage in this activity are violating feminine ideals. This point was illustrated when members of *Banyana Banyana*, the women's team that represents South Africa internationally, were asked to exhibit cultural constructions of femininity such as wearing tight uniforms (rather than the usual baggy track-suits) and take etiquette lessons so they would learn the proper way to behave like ladies (Engh, 2010). This last point conveys another cultural restraint put on South African women who wish to engage in soccer; the fear that players will develop masculine characteristics. Pelak's (2005, 2010) studies of women's soccer leagues in the Western Cape found that several players were forbidden from participating in local soccer leagues because their parents or guardians expressed fears that they would become violent and rebellious due to the physical nature of the sport and its reputation as a man's game that perpetuated a dangerous male sporting ethos.

The sport-for-social-change programs in this study were directed primarily at boys and young men because the organizers wanted to change the conception of what a man in post-apartheid South Africa should be. A significant part of changing conceptions of acceptable masculine behavior involved challenging gender norms for boys and men, including how they relate to women and girls in their communities. However, the exclusion of girls and young women only worked to reinforce culturally upheld beliefs that girls and young women are not able to or simply should not be participating in soccer programs. Their participation “challenges male privilege and cultural myths” regarding behavior and overall capabilities, including those outside of the sporting arena (Brady, 2005, p. 47). Because soccer carries so much cultural and political symbolism in South Africa, this exclusionary practice works against what the practitioners of these programs are trying to achieve, thus contributing to the multiple organizational paradoxes described earlier in this chapter and in the three case studies. Future research on sport-for-social-change programs should investigate the presence of paradox in organizations and how it is tied to cultural constructions of gender. It is relatively simple for a researcher such as me to identify how paradox is being manifested through organizational discourse and make a blanket recommendation for change. It is not easy to tenaciously investigate why paradox is occurring and how organizational members are negotiating its presence. The next section expands on my approach to the applied communication tradition of making recommendations for change.

**Practitioners.** In this section, it is customary for applied communication researchers to lay out a specific agenda for organizational members to follow in order to improve upon whatever communication phenomena are being studied. However, this

study does not follow that protocol. Instead of laying out specific steps, I argue for a broader examination of the context involved in gendered organizing practices by grassroots sport-for-social-change programs, even those organizations whose goals do not directly address issues of gender. Sport in itself is not a genderless tool, and all organizations contain gendered discourses. Organizations also contain paradox. This study found that some practitioners did not acknowledge or identify the presence of paradox in their organizations. This lack of awareness was linked to cultural constraints associated with their regional and ethnic identities—including economic difficulties and historical positioning—that contributed to the presence of organizational paradox that was manifest through gendered discourse. Therefore, rather than advancing suggestions that can be applied in a “systematic way to an entire region or country for a particular development objective” (Kincaid & Figueroa, 2009, p. 524), I argue for more studies, but not from a traditional evaluation standpoint that seeks to prove behavior change or some other development goal. I concur with Coalter’s (2010) observation that studies need to strive for “understanding” via studies that take into consideration the “social processes and mechanisms that *might* lead to desired outcomes for *some* participant’s in *some* organizations in *certain* circumstances” [all original emphases] rather than conducting research that seeks to prove or disprove some definition of success (p. 311). However, in his criticism of the propagation of sport-for-development programs, Coalter notes that this position is not popular among programs or development agencies because of the current emphasis on organizations making grand claims of delivering results while funding agencies advocate for more proof of results. Taking the context and inevitable

complexity of sport-for-social-change programs into consideration simultaneously muddies the “funding” waters while giving us a clearer view of organizations.

### **Conclusion**

The popularity of sport-for-social-change programs is continuing to grow in South Africa. Attention garnered by the 2010 FIFA World Cup made South Africa a popular destination for international agencies to “export” their sport-for-social-change initiatives (Burnett, 2009, p. 1193), but smaller, community initiated grassroots organizations are also expanding. This study investigated the relationships among masculinity, sport, and gendered organizational practices in three small, grassroots, sport-for-social-change organizations in South Africa. Each organization was designed to contest different exemplars of hegemonic masculinity produced through local discourses influenced by the desire of men to anchor their masculine identity in something tangible that gave them either power over women (and some men) and/or a privileged status in their community. Decades of socioeconomic and political struggle due to colonialism, the apartheid era, and the HIV/AIDS pandemic combined with other contextual factors such as race, ethnicity, regional location, and gender produce what I have called the exemplars of hegemonic masculinity that endorse patriarchy, violent behavior, and sexist gender norms. The three sport-for-social-change organizations examined in this study encouraged male participants to contest local exemplars of hegemonic masculinity through various methods that include engaging in social fatherhood, de-gendering domestic work, and providing viable alternatives to joining gangs. Discourses created paradoxes that worked against the goal of contesting local hegemonic masculinities, although these paradoxes were not typically identified by organizational members.

Although I identified similarities in the influences of local discourses on organizations, I also observed differences that were based primarily on racial, regional and ethnic signifiers. These differences affected the goals of each organization and design of the resulting programs that were aimed at achieving these goals. Differences matter and should not be ignored for the sake of “development.”

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