Darnell, Simon C. "The SDP Intern/Volunteer Experience." *Sport for Development and Peace: A Critical Sociology*. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2012. 63–82. Globalizing Sport Studies. *Bloomsbury Collections*. Web. 26 Apr. 2023. <<http://dx.doi.org/10.5040/9781849665896.ch-003>>.

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The SDP Intern/Volunteer Experience*

Introduction

This chapter focuses on the experiences of young Canadians who served abroad as volunteer interns through the International Development through Sport (IDS) programme organized by Commonwealth Games Canada (CGC). Although there are many social and political dimensions and implications of such experiences, in this chapter I am principally interested in understanding the process of ‘subjectivation’ and the resultant subject positions that are produced and constrained in and through SDP service, particularly for residents of the Global North who come to SDP work from and through relative positions of privilege. In Foucauldian terms, subjectivation refers to ‘the multiple ways in which humans get tied to particular identities’ (Markula and Pringle 2006: 9) and builds on the tradition formulated by Louis Althusser (2001) in which subjects are constituted as they are hailed – or ‘interpellated’ – into dominant ideologies (cf. Felluga 2003).¹ Investigating such perspectives afforded an opportunity not only to analyse interns’ experiences at a micro-level but also to ‘ascend’, through theoretical perspectives of sport and development, to the broader political/ethical implications for the SDP sector and processes of knowledge production (Heron 2007).

This type of examination, in this case of the ways in which sport ‘pulled’ young Canadians to development and SDP and what they learned as a result, is called for given recent development scholarship. Heron (2007) has forcefully argued that the motivations for international development service often draw heavily upon, and reinforce, a northern ‘desire’ for the development of Others that in turn constructs the Self as saviour. Such processes are produced and constrained within a web of historical, social and political hierarchies of race, gender and class as well as the colonization of spaces. In turn, such service is complicated by the production of subjectivities that arguably do more to facilitate participation *within* the global order of poverty and inequality than to challenge or change it in direct and transformational ways (Biccum 2010).

The chapter proceeds in three subsequent parts. In the next section, I provide a brief overview and summary of critical development research into volunteerism, global citizenship and subjectivities before exploring results of interviews with CGC interns. The chapter concludes with a brief discussion

*Parts of this chapter are adapted from Darnell (2010a, 2010b, 2011b).

of the implications of knowledge production and subjectivation within SDP internships and international volunteering.

International development and volunteerism

A host of recent literature has investigated the knowledge produced and identities constructed within international development service (see, for example, Epprecht 2004; Heron 2007; N. Razack 2005; Tiessen 2007). This literature has shown the act of serving abroad in foreign spaces and amidst international poverty and inequality to be both deeply transformative and challenging, particularly for young people. International service offers an opportunity for young volunteers to learn about the historical and political dimensions of development inequality and foster critical engagement as global citizens amidst struggles for social justice. At the same time, such experiences can also confirm development volunteers' identities as primarily helpers of 'Others' (Heron 2007) and therefore limit or skew their engagement with broader development politics. These issues are important because claims to northern innocence within development overlook the ways in which northern institutions and organizations are implicated in development inequality and obscure understandings of the interconnectedness, complexities and hierarchies of North/South economics and politics (see Nederveen Pieterse 2010). This critical scholarship has generally positioned the development service experience within two distinct yet complimentary theoretical frameworks: hegemonic relations and the securing of innocence.

Development service within hegemonic relations

In keeping with the Gramscian theoretical approach employed in this text, it is important to recognize that international development volunteering occurs within, and does not transcend, social hierarchies and relations of power. Even if situated within a framework of universal human rights or a praxis of empowerment, the impact of overseas internships can be undermined by northern expectations, feelings of entitlement and claims to proficiency or capability (Epprecht 2004). There is a tendency in development for the myriad of social, political and material inequalities to which development attends to be reduced to identifying and implementing technical solutions, framed by a northern 'will to improve', that establish boundaries between those capable of, and responsible for, improving through development and those more likely to be in receipt of such processes (Li 2007: 7). In the SDP sector, attempts to improve school-based physical education in LMICs have been compromised by NGOs sending inexperienced volunteers into placement communities 'without notice, let alone a mutually prepared plan for their training and

deployment, significantly complicating the work of the already over-burdened teachers' (Kidd 2008: 376). Similarly, research has found evidence in SDP of a misalignment between northern expectations of development goals and values, and local expectations or demands (Guest 2009). Absent of critical self-reflection on the part of northern volunteers, the result of such encounters is that development comes to be structured primarily by the proficiency and authority of the development 'expert' (Kothari 2005).

These analyses problematize the notion of international service as socially and politically benign. N. Razack (2003: 41) argues that international social work is susceptible to socio-spatial relations of dominance, given the increasing permeability of borders resulting from technological advances and capitalist globalization. This is significant for SDP given that the internationalization, globalization and commercialization of sport all facilitate, at least to a degree, its recognition and applicability within international development initiatives (also see Maguire 2008). In turn, presumptions of benevolence in international social work (or the positioning of such encounters as simply cross-cultural learning) that fail to take interlocking power relations into account implicate the discipline in 'professional imperialism' where a presumed 'universal' methodology of social work sustains First World entitlements (N. Razack 2003: 44–5). From this perspective, the use of international social work to gain knowledge and understanding of Others can solidify a 'professional hegemony' in which the universality of social work itself remains unexamined (N. Razack 2005: 101). I suggest that such critical reflections on the universality and applicability of sport – as well as northern-led development – are still rarely taken up in mainstream SDP discourse. At the same time, such critical reflections on universality are only part of the equation. Indeed, as N. Razack found in her research with Canadian international social workers, while recognizing these hegemonic relations rendered the experience difficult for international volunteers, it rarely challenged their sense of innocence within global inequality, disavowals constitutive of a dominant subject position.

Development service and the maintenance of innocence

In Heron's (2007) research into the experiences of White, Canadian women who had served as international development workers (a sample that included herself), she connected the construction of innocence to the urgency among White, middle-class women to do 'good' work as a means of confirming 'appropriate' notions of femininity and individual responsibility. From this perspective, knowing oneself as a moral person becomes of paramount importance to development volunteers; conversely, if morality is compromised, the sense of self is ruptured or challenged. Canadian women are thus left with the need – or 'desire' – to know themselves as good people, a personal quest for which international development service provides an attractive option (Heron 2007). Development service becomes a moral imperative, fundamentally linked to the

maintenance of bourgeois innocence and the unending struggle to ‘prevent the potential shattering of moral narratives of self’ (Heron 2007: 153–4).²

These critical ideas are germane to the study of SDP because they inform and contextualize the reasons why young sportspeople are drawn to SDP work. They also illuminate the broader desire to reform sport in socially progressive ways, through the ostensibly new approaches to benevolent development that SDP facilitates and supports.

In sum, there is always the possibility for international development, the experiences it affords and the struggles to ‘educate’ northerners of its importance and goals, to produce imperial subjectivities (Biccum 2010: 21). As Biccum’s (2010) analyses of northern-led development initiatives suggest, the current organization and proliferation of international development focuses less upon the sustainable reduction of global inequality and more upon the production of subjectivities that support the global order of northern dominance and southern poverty as degeneracy to be reformed. In this way, Biccum raises the idea that development strives to integrate subjects into the machinations of global inequality (in a benevolent way for the relatively privileged and in an aspirational way for the relatively marginalized). Biccum offers an important way to theorize the experiences of people who participate in SDP as volunteers and the knowledge of Self and Other that they accrue as a result.

Still, as in any analysis of subjectivity, it is crucial to recognize that while international development experiences are the site of knowledge production, such knowledge is often tenuous, ironic, ambivalent and contradictory (Heron 2007). For example, liberal encounters with Others – facilitated by programmes like SDP internships – are often built, and rely, upon an ability to ‘tolerate’ Others but do so in such a way that the entire notion of the Other would be compromised if the encounter truly ‘liberalized’ them (Brown 2006). At the same time, such notions of tolerance are not reducible to ideology because they are fundamentally, yet often ambiguously, shaped by the very encounters (Brown 2006) that produce and constrain subjectivities. In the following analysis, I embrace this kind of ambiguity.

CGC and SDP interns

CGC’s IDS programme draws support from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and the Canadian Heritage International Sport Directorate. All 27 former interns of the programme that I interviewed were young (generally under 30), university educated, often in a sport, physical education or kinesiology department, and had demonstrated a measure of expertise with physical culture as athletes, coaches, administrators or purveyors of knowledge. As qualified candidates, CGC had placed them with a sport and/or health partner organization for a minimum of 8 months, and

they worked for their placement organization to facilitate the use of sport and play to meet development goals. In the majority of cases, these development goals focused on health promotion, education and youth development in the placement community.³ While each partner organization was unique, they were all compatible with the general mandate of the CGC programme, which positions the internship as an opportunity for young Canadians to participate in international development by using and mobilizing sport towards the goal of effecting sustainable social change. As CGC states, a major goal of the programme is to ‘deliver effective, sustainable, locally responsible, needs-based development through sport initiatives that focus on the pursuit of the Millennium Development Goals in selected countries’ (CGC 2008).

During interviews, I asked CGC interns about the positives and negatives (broadly defined) of their time abroad, the reasons that they had been drawn to an SDP internship and the ways in which service had affected them as people. Several thematic consistencies emerged through the analysis. Three are particularly worthy of critical attention and attended to here: the logic of capitalism within SDP, the bio-politics of SDP and the centrality of emotions – particularly guilt and innocence – within SDP internships.

Sport and the hegemony of capitalist development

First and foremost, interviews with CGC interns illustrated that they tended to be successful sports people (as athletes, coaches, trainers, administrators, volunteers, advocates), that they had enjoyed positive experiences within sport and the organization of physical culture, and that SDP service offered an opportunity to give back or ‘pay forward’ in and through sport. To this extent, the understanding that sport, to a significant degree, had facilitated their own success within the cultural and political economy in which they lived drew interns to view sport as a means by which to support the success of Others within the development context. That is, many interns understood their own sporting experiences to be reasons why they had been selected for a SDP internship and to be important prerequisites for doing the kind of SFD work that would be required during their placement. Joanne described sport thus:

So phys. ed. has always been engrained in me as something that I really loved ... I've always been involved in sports, since I was small, organized sport or regular sport. So I always found and understood the value of sport and different skills. Like competent as far as sports skills go, so that allowed me to have that knowledge base as far as sports skills. So I guess I brought that and I also brought the attitude of sports is a good thing and sports is beneficial to your health and encourage others to be involved in sports or anything, movement or whatever – Joanne.

To a degree, then, sport was a ‘vehicle’ towards development, both for drawing young Canadians with sport backgrounds to SDP work and for conceptualizing a basis by which to support change within placement communities. Of course, such understandings of ‘sport as a vehicle’ beg questions regarding the messages

and meanings ascribed by interns to sport and in turn being delivered by sport as a medium of development. In many cases, interns relied on somewhat familiar discourses of sport to describe and make sense of the benefits and messages being delivered through the use of sport in SDP. For example, James linked the utility of sport in youth-centred development programmes to the oft-assumed, or 'classic', benefits of sport – notions attached to sport in Canada dating back to the nineteenth century (Bouchier 1994) – that coalesce around the sense that sport participation builds character in young participants. From this perspective, youth who participate in sport are not only better athletes, and healthier individuals, but they are also better citizens because they learn social relations of responsibility via sport.

Yeah, sport really was, in this case, a vehicle because all the kids loved playing football. They did. And pretty much they would do anything to play football. It offered a vehicle for pretty much whatever we wanted it to be in this case. So there was certainly, there were all the classic advantages of youth playing sports, the camaraderie, the y'know, the leadership, learning to excel on a field and working within a group for a larger goal, delaying your own personal vested interests. Y'know, all of those classic things were there, through sport as well, but it allowed us to mobilize the community somewhat – James.

There is a host of literature to support (albeit to an extent) the notion of sporting benefits for youth in the way that James describes. Sport among youth has been found to promulgate positive values such as hard work and an orientation to succeed (Ewing *et al.* 2002), support the development of self-confidence and emotional health (Hansen, Larson and Dworkin 2003), and provide an opportunity to learn about fair play and sportspersonship (Hedstrom and Gould 2004). Clearly, James's perspectives on sport were influenced by such understandings of sport. However, discursive association between sport participation and character building among youth are not only difficult to 'prove' given the importance and complexities of context (see Coakley and Donnelly 2004; Donnelly 1993) but they often also overlook the tensions and contradictions in sport itself. For example, the same researchers who conclude that sport does indeed facilitate character development often temper their results given that the social context in which sport occurs is of central importance and because of sport's 'utility' for fostering antisocial behaviour and relations of dominance as well.⁴

Given the impossibility then, of claiming any 'truths' about the utility of sport, it is important to situate the construction of interns' perspectives on sport within the broader sociopolitical context. To this end, I suggest that such perspectives were illustrative of the hegemony of capitalist logic, if not always capitalism itself, that continues to underpin cultures and discourses of sport, international development and SDP. Not only does James's reflection illustrate that sport as a vehicle for development was intelligible to interns largely through their recognition of personally positive, sporting experiences,

but interns also understood a connection between sport participation and the development of an individualist ethos that aligns with neoliberal citizenship. While positive experiences with, and knowledge of, sport was a powerfully constitutive discourse and knowledge reservoir for interns as they negotiated the context and meanings of sport in SDP, it concomitantly supported notions of citizenship consistent with the dominant mode of social organizing and the political economy in the Global North (see Harvey 2007; Kaplinsky 2005). Sport was thus viewed as an opportunity within development to promote and facilitate the 'inclusion' of marginalized people within (the inequalities of) the contemporary global political economy.

These discursive links between sport and leadership in SDP were further evident to the degree that interns also invoked sport as a means of facilitating and promoting responsible behaviour. The discursive understanding of sport as a development tool stemmed from traditional disciplinary notions of sport as an institution of responsibility and respectability, and relative to opportunity costs, an alternative to deviant behaviour. Drawing on the Foucauldian analysis of sport as a disciplinary technology (see Markula and Pringle 2006; Pronger 2002; Shogan 1999), particular notions of sport and its benefits, in this case related to time management and responsibility, underpinned interns' understandings of the logic of SDP. The following exchange with Florence was illustrative.

SD: And if you don't write (this exam), then your school is pretty much done?

FLORENCE: Right, right. And if you do write it, there's a lot, a lot of pressure because that determines what school you go to basically. And that's why there's, there's no motivation, there's no, it's really... educationally it's a tough world there.

SD: And if they don't go to school, what do they end up doing?

FLORENCE: Mostly what those kids are doing. You hang out with your friends, you do whatever's fun to you.

SD: So then was your programme designed to sort of fill up that time?

FLORENCE: Yep. Give them something positive to do.

The issue for critical analysis here is not the accuracy of these interpretations or whether sport-focused development programmes were effective means of promoting responsibility and leadership. Nor do I suggest that supporting students' educational achievement is less than positive. Rather, what require attention are the politics of the social imagination and the particularities of the subjectivity, understood in and through these processes. It is evident,

I suggest, from these exchanges with CGC interns, that the subject imagined as an SDP partner or participant is intelligible through a requisite lack of leadership and responsibility, and the subject of the SDP intern is one of facilitating responsibility given their previous sporting experiences. That is, the focus on leadership and responsibility – individualized notions of success and achievement – references and solidifies a form of neoliberal citizenship (for both SDP intern and SDP partner, though not in the same way), a citizen for whom sport participation is a formative and/or transformative experience. As Harvey (2007), among others, has argued, there is a link between the privileging and defence of an individualist ethos and the substantiation of increasingly global neoliberal relations that solidify and justify material inequalities. Such ideas are hegemonic within the context of international development in which the variety of possible approaches, and the sovereignty of communities to enact their own development, has been largely co-opted into the neoliberal fold by the ‘professionalisation and technicalisation’ of the development industry (Kothari 2005: 425). This is the terrain into which sport is now mobilized, and it provides an ideal basis for referencing notions of sport and character development in youth, both historical (Bouchier 1994) and contemporary (see Donnelly *et al.* 2007). For many interns, then, the logic of SDP came to centre on the development of character more than the process of confronting and redressing inequality.⁵

Foucauldian genealogy illustrates how it is possible that interns came to interpret SFD in this way; it is possible if the ‘recognizable’ benefits of character building through sport are attached, discursively and materially, to development programming. The SDP sector effectively achieves this linking. It is not that the use of sport, supported by CGC and the SDP sector, is misguided but rather that the logic of neoliberalism, and the presumption and construction of a neoliberal sporting subject, is regularly present and rarely questioned. In turn, such logic suggests that the success of the few is available to the many if they would (only) work differently or harder via the lessons and principles that sport affords.

This kind of neoliberal subjectivity and capitalist logic underlying SDP as understood from the point of view of CGC interns is not entirely surprising. Indeed, much of the global efforts to support international development are based on the tenets of economics and come to rest on how to facilitate basic needs and self-determination for the vast sections of the global population who live in absolute poverty (see Gasper 2004). Three important points need to be made, though. One, the experiences of interns suggest, at the least, that the political orientation towards SDP is particular, not universal, in that it imagines and supports the inclusion of marginalized people within the current structures and machinations of competitive capitalism. We significantly limit our understandings of SDP if and when we lose site of the specificities of this political orientation. Second, then, and proceeding from my advocating for equality of

condition as a conceptual and political basis for SDP, such commitments to SDP are likely limited in supporting sustainable and egalitarian development. Third, the explication of such logic calls into question the subjects hailed into SDP and the extent to which their own (relatively successful) engagement with capitalism facilitates their support for SDP. Given the post-colonial dimensions of the SDP internship experience, I argue that race and gender, connected to bio-politics, is also important in this regard.

Race, gender and bio-politics

In the previous section, I explored the capitalist logic connected to sport that underpinned the pull to SDP volunteer work for many CGC interns and the extent to which it underpinned their own subjectivity within SDP initiatives. Clearly, social class was a formative dimension of such regimes of power/knowledge. Here, I argue, that critical scholars would be remiss to reduce the capitalist imperative of SDP, such as it is, to social class at the expense of other social categories and hierarchies. Indeed, the bio-politics of SDP call for attention to the interlocking of class with race and gender and the various encounters within the SDP volunteer experience. This is the case given that hierarchies of race and racism can be understood as a logical conclusion of a bio-political state (Foucault 1997) and that the intersections of race, class and gender with other markers of social respectability are fundamental to the construction of the colonial subject (Stoler 1995). In other words, the bio-politics of SDP are impossible to extricate from social hierarchies, and SDP runs the risk of securing, if not reifying, social relations of dominance if an anti-racist perspective is not brought to bear.

For example, despite the rhetorical absence of ‘race’ in many interviews with SDP interns, issues of gender, particularly the recognition of the ‘disempowered’ woman in the development context, were common tropes in the description of the SDP experience and encounter. The recognition of difference was most readily intelligible, and most talked about, through a lens of gender that positioned placement communities as disempowering, lacking opportunities and repressive to women. From an interlocking perspective, such observations have fundamental racialized and classed dynamics. Reflections on the repressed woman in the Global South, always intelligible here in relation to Canadian feminism, exemplified what Mohanty (2003: 170) refers to as ‘racialized gender’. James’s descriptions, for example, illustrate a perspective on gender, and the role of the SDP intern in working towards feminist causes, that was recognizable in development in racialized terms:

So yes, that was something that I noted, that there weren’t enough, even on a superficial level, there weren’t enough physical activity programmes for girls, let alone enough programmes that empowered women. But it’s, empowering women was beyond the scope of what I could accomplish there. I mean, one, it wasn’t

even really in my mandate though I kind of set my own mandate. It's something I would have liked to have worked on, but it's something that if I'd like to have worked on, I pretty much would have to move there for 5 years and have a more in-depth team and just a better knowledge of the culture – James.

From this perspective, the repression of women was an intelligible cultural aspect of the development context and placement community for CGC interns, and it offered a social and moral platform from which to take up the work of SDP. While James's perspectives on the lack of physical activity opportunities for women, and the conclusions regarding the disempowerment of women, are perhaps accurate, third-wave feminism encourages critical consideration of the ways in which such knowledge is produced and rendered technical. On the one hand, there is little empirical evidence with which to conclude that the intelligibility of the disempowerment of women in development for James was derived from comparison to a system of gender in Canada (one understood to be egalitarian and emancipatory). However, the subject position of stewardship into which interns like James were invited likely militated against their understandings of the agency of women in 'developing countries' to champion their own processes of empowerment. This tension, between local feminist agency and the empowerment of feminism through development and SDP, was a challenging aspect of the SDP intern experience.

Two significant connections can be drawn. First, interpreting the disempowerment of women in placement communities and the subsequent contributions to gender empowerment of sport were undoubtedly complicated by social constructions of race for SDP interns. The 'disempowered woman' was more intelligible and easier to speak of through encounters with people of colour. Second, race was generally avoided during interviews with interns, since it was understood to be inconsistent with liberal notions of racial equality, but the same did not apply to gender in development. Gender was, for interns, a seemingly more objective or benign example of repression and underdevelopment that required only education and perspective in order to enact cultural change. Given the traditional entrenchment of sport as a masculine domain and arena of patriarchal assertions (see Burstyn 1999), Canadian feminists, via SDP, could use the organization of sport as a means to 'educate' the people they encountered, particularly women, about the possibilities for gender equality.

For me it was almost more of a shock of 'How could you girls not realize that you had the right to play rugby?' Like how could you, but it's funny because coming from (Canadian province), I did not realize it was even more of a man's sport, I had no idea, because in High School, there's men's and women's soccer, there's men's and women's basketball, there's men's and women's rugby and my older sister played, so you just kind of go through the, it's kind of y'know, the guys play and the girls play, there was no question and it wasn't until I moved to (Canadian province) that I started to get 'Ohmigosh, you play rugby?' Like, that's a guy's sport. And that was here even! – Esther.

Esther's descriptions of the politics of racialized gender raise an interesting tension. On the one hand, as a feminist who has challenged gender stereotypes and relations of power within sporting cultures in Canada, she recognized the limits placed on women's participation in and through athletic patriarchy. That is, she did not presume a liberated Canada in gendered terms or at the least she recognized the struggle around the concept and acceptance of women's rugby. Yet, when the context changed from Canada to women playing rugby in the development context, her unit of analysis and perspective also changed, from *struggle* to a lack of *awareness* or *recognition*. This is illustrative of the racial component of transnational gender inequality; within Whiteness, gender equality is achieved through agency, but those expected to aspire to Whiteness are understood to require a gender-based education. Without a focus on interlocking systems and critical reflections on dominance, and enabled by the liberal belief in colour-blindness, this racialized dynamic of 'liberation' and 'education' is easily obfuscated.

What these perspectives illustrate, I argue, is that the commitment to social change constitutive of the bio-politics of SDP holds profound implications for processes of knowledge production and interlocking systems which sustain inequality, both material and discursive. The spatial dynamic of SDP and SDP internships – that internships be conducted to make life better overseas – largely confined gender oppression, at a discursive level for interns, to the development context. (Racialized) gender inequalities were constitutive of underdevelopment and different from interns' sense of self and home. I offer the following lengthy exchange with Serena because it speaks to interlocking systems and the ways in which hierarchies were largely sustained in and through encounters with difference.

SD: OK. Do you think about any of these ideas or categories differently, talking about race or gender or social class, having gone and seen it and experienced it in a different culture? Now that you've come back to Canada?

SERENA: Um, no not really.

SD: Because some people have told me, for example, I'm not trying to put words in your mouth, but some people have told me that they didn't really think about issues of race in these ways until they were sort of the only White person in a Black community or a non-English-speaking community.

SERENA: Well, yeah, now that I'm back home, I don't think about them.

SD: But do you think it changed some of the ideas that you had about race or class or gender or the ways you thought about them?

SERENA: I don't think so. I recognized the difficulties that they were having there because of them, but I don't think they translate here, so I don't think about them on a daily basis anymore.

SD: Hmmm. Can you expand on that a little bit? Like what does that mean, not translate here?

SERENA: Um, like the difference in expectations in terms of performance or whatever. I would consider the expectations here to be equal. I mean, maybe that's just my own naïve opinion, so yeah over there, there was a difference in expectation and here I don't feel that way so I don't even acknowledge that there is a difference.

SD: Interesting.

SERENA: Social class, though, I feel different about that now. Um, there was just, you think about the haves and the have-nots over there, and there's such a big difference between the two, but I never really thought of that happening here and now that I've come home I see that that's, that happens everywhere. And it may not be as much of a gap; it may not be as obvious, but it's still there.

The implications of this exchange are important to explore. Following Stoler (1995), even though 'sport' was discursively being 'made' in the circuitous route of knowledge production that the SDP internship afforded, there is little evidence from interviews to suggest that interlocking systems were challenged in and through the SDP experience. In fact, the opposite is more accurate; even though Serena found her perspectives on class to be 'heightened' having experienced the stark poverty of her placement community, the racial dynamic of gender inequality was solidified to the extent that Canada remained a place understood to be relatively free of oppression. In turn, her views of the underdevelopment of her placement community were hardened. Indeed, it is difficult to conceive of bases of international development and SDP, at least in its current or most palatable incarnations, which do not confirm interlocking social hierarchies in the manner described above.

This does not mean, though, that interns did not try to do just that. Amid the tensions discussed in this chapter, interns struggled to position encounters with difference in their placement communities in a way that facilitated their biopolitical commitments without implicating them in interlocking relations of dominance. Not surprisingly, though, without a commitment to deconstructing such relations, the 'optimal' – or at least the most useful – position for interns to assume was racial neutrality or attempts to look above or beyond racialized hierarchies. In this way, even if difference was encountered, it could be subsumed in and by a politics of 'equality' that depoliticized difference, facilitated the

constitution of the moral self and supported the bio-politics of change in and through sport and SDP. For example, Alexander found that working to improve sport and play opportunities for persons with disabilities was easiest when his position in the racial hierarchy had been effectively smoothed out. Colour-blindness equalled acceptance and supported essentialist, but largely apolitical, solidarities.

SD: Just to go back a second, that experience of sort of forgetting that you were White, was that, that's an interesting one, nobody's told me about that so far, of the interns that I've talked to. Were you expecting that or sort of surprised that that happened?

ALEXANDER: I wasn't expecting it but to be honest with you I took it as a compliment in the context of the conversation. Because they said, 'Oh, he see no colour', and then I realized, 'Oh, shit, I'm the only White guy here for miles' and for me to be as accepted as I was into that community, being the only White people for miles, made me feel pretty good that I was doing the right things that I needed to do in terms of building relationships. I thought, anyway. So whenever you're, like everything I tried in (country), four out of ten of them would work, right? Every initiative I tried, every sponsorship you try and get, four out of ten of them would work, so when you do actually have a success, when you're over there, you need to celebrate it because there aren't going to be that many that are just going to be flowing in. But you need to just take a minute and celebrate that because otherwise you're going to leave feeling like you did nothing, which again I did think some of my colleagues felt like they did in some cases.

Of course, from a critical race perspective, there are limitations in striving for racialized essentialism. If interlocking systems of oppression contribute to the inequality and marginalization to which development and SDP claim to attend, then essentialist arguments of 'we're all the same' (S. Razack 1998: 169) miss the roots of the problem. Yet essentialism largely marked the extent of the SDP intern's anti-inequality toolkit, in both theory and practice. The taboo of racism limited the actualization of a commitment to social change and left interns to invoke a liberal humanist ethic, to which sport was useful politically and discursively, in order to justify and support their interpretations and responses to difference and underdevelopment. The results suggest, then, that CGC interns were not trained, prepared or encouraged to take up the internship in relation to social hierarchies and their position therein. They did, however, recognize that the internship experience held profound personal and emotional significance to them, particularly in relation to the privilege that it highlighted and the guilt it produced. In the next section, I explore these results.

The emotional experiences of the SDP subject

Recent analyses of development volunteerism have pointed to the importance and relevance of emotion for understanding such experiences. For example, Epprecht (2004: 694) suggests that the strong emotions involved in development work seemingly compel volunteers to 'do something to help'. Similarly, Li (2007: 41) has explored how the contradiction of capitalist ventures within colonial saviour projects – which exploited peasants at the same time as markets were 'freed' – produced a sense of northern guilt to do something, as long as the costs were low. In this way, the importance and significance ascribed to development work is often solidified by the visceral emotions experienced by those who take on its tasks. Such emotions are far from insignificant, culturally and/or politically (see Ahmed 2004).

For CGC interns, 'First World guilt' consistently permeated the SDP volunteer experience. Guilt in this case was not tied necessarily to a sense of implication in the history and politics and marginalization and inequality, but rather to a sense of guilt in recognizing oneself, in effect, as a transnational 'have', a notion solidified by the stark material inequalities laid out in the development context and placement communities. All the interns I spoke with recognized this First World guilt; the differences among interns were in their personal interpretations of guilt and the implications for subjectivity, identity and politics that they ascribed to these feelings. While there were differing interpretations of guilt, in the majority of cases feelings of guilt did not align with, or support the production of, a politicized subject position, one concerned with attending to the relations that support the guilt-producing inequality, but instead constituted a precursor to strategies of White redemption. As Roman (1997) has illustrated, redemption discourses are often produced through the strategy of White identification with the anti-racist struggles of persons of colour as opposed to critical investigation of the privileges of Whiteness within Western liberal multiculturalism. One of the outcomes of these redemption strategies is a continuing commitment to Whiteness and solidification of the discursive intelligibility of White bodies as the entitled racial class (Modellmog 1999).

For some interns, these feelings of guilt were the direct result of the limits of their achievement in effecting change. In this sense, the helping imperative (Heron 2007) and will to improve (Li 2007) constituted both the political agenda and the discursive terrain of SDP. When these 'technical' goals could not be met, the relative benefits that interns themselves derived from SDP experience stood out in stark terms, producing a sense of guilt in having taken more than given. In addition, however, guilt was produced through recognition on the part of interns that the opportunity to derive benefits from this type of international experience was not afforded to all. They understood the social and spatial privilege afforded them in their SDP programme and placement

and experienced guilt in coming to terms with the absence of transnational reciprocity in international development. Loreena's reflections illustrate this compound perspective:

When you come as a First World person ... you think you're going to bring all of this stuff to a new country, but the chances are we're going to take away a whole lot more than we could ever give. And that can come out like, maybe I'm feeling a little bit guilty ... not as many (local people) have as many opportunities that we have as First World people to go other places, but you just see so much being in a different culture and people giving you everything – Loreena.

These kinds of results suggest that the SDP experience forced interns to recognize their own privilege, both as relatively affluent Canadians and as transnational citizens afforded a means of mobility and travel. 'First World' was not only a subject position born into but also one experienced through travelling to other countries and living in other cultures. For interns who identified with this type of guilt as part of the SDP internship, there was a sense of inevitability about it, a description of guilt as a *fait accompli* in the transnational development experience. Being the kind of person that would do this work meant being the kind of person who experienced guilt in relation to privilege.

I think that you'd have to [feel guilt]; you'd have to be fairly insulated to not feel [guilt]. And I felt guilty for my expectation of a certain standard as well. Like 'Oh, I can't believe there's no hot water' and those kind of things. As if that's important! At least I have running water. [But I did] feel guilty about all of the things that I knew I had in boxes at home waiting for me and to know that a few dollars here and there would make a huge difference – Cathy.

Cathy's recount suggests that the guilt of the SDP experience made her question the importance of material goods, both in her placement community and in Canada. For other interns, however, the process of assuaging guilt took place in relation to those persons and communities encountered through the SDP experience. Some interns understood themselves, in effect, to be 'guilty' of being privileged, understood primarily in economic and geographic terms. The experience of living abroad, therefore, combined with doing SDP work, offered an opportunity to explore First World guilt to the fullest and, crucially, to moderate it through processes of knowing, and being accepted by, the relatively disadvantaged, towards an end of White redemption (Roman 1997).

In either case, guilt was constitutive of the subject position of the SDP intern because it was an entry point into the social and geopolitical complications of the development context. Identifying with marginalized Others offered a means to attend to privilege, and address guilt if not assuage it, while leaving the discursive hallmarks of benevolent SDP largely intact. Here it is important to clarify that guilt and privilege were mutually constitutive in SDP. Not only were interns guilt-ridden because they recognized their own privilege, but

following Ahmed (2004), their claims to guilt were assertions to confirming privilege. Assuming the subject position of responsibility – a responsibility not for causing inequality as much as for fixing it – is a claim to power or ‘trusteeship’, as Li (2007) labels it within discourses of development. Guilt invoked a particular sense of responsibility: guilt for being a ‘have’ and/or for being unable to meet the responsibility of effecting changes. This stands in rather stark opposition to guilt for being implicated in the colonial and economic histories, and contemporary politics, that sustain inequality. In fact, for some interns, the guilt of privilege was unreasonable. They were willing to participate in change, particularly as stewards or catalysts, and to assume an identity of care but not to invoke guilt within a critically reflexive analysis of their own subjectivation.

I can certainly understand why a lot of people would mention [feeling guilty] and why it comes up, but ... there’s no reason to feel guilty for the way that we live life over here. We certainly are considerably more affluent here as a culture. As a culture, should our country be doing more? Maybe. I don’t know that I’m in a position to judge that. I mean, I do know that Canada contributes significantly and is one of the leaders in promoting development, I mean they sent me over there, I don’t know if that counts for much, but ... in terms of First World guilt, no, I don’t even really believe in that – James.

From this perspective, the SDP volunteer experience can be understood to align with Biccum’s (2010) assertion that northern development initiatives serve primarily to secure subjectivities that support northern dominance, both culturally and economically, yet do so in a way that maintains an ethical and benevolent sense of self. While this does not constitute the entire subject position of the SDP volunteer intern, it is worthy of ongoing critical attention.

In turn, and similar to Epprecht’s (2004: 269) analysis, guilt was not the only emotional dynamic within the CGC internship experience; compassion and anger were also implicated. That is, emotional encounters in development internships, often in response to extreme poverty, can slide into a desire to assist and an entitlement to assume stewardship (Epprecht 2004: 694). Indeed, for some of the interns I interviewed, their understandings of the shortcomings of their interventions produced a sense of shame, or the inequalities encountered in the development context led to anger. These types of responses tended to serve as both a disavowal of guilt and a response to the structural and subject positions relative to the people and communities encountered in and through the SDP placement.

I don’t think people should feel guilty for what they have, and I think, actually, that Canadian culture is really bad at doing that. It suggests that you grew up with a privileged life and you should be so thankful and almost feel guilty for it, and I don’t agree with that. But I really think it’s important that you know that other people don’t have this life, and that you have this experience. I never felt guilty, I felt angry. I felt really angry, um, because of that lack of

understanding and that lack of, y'know, compassion I guess. It was never guilt for me; it was more that I really, really hated where I came from. I hated it – Melanie.

Melanie went on to describe, at length, that her anger stemmed both from her understanding that few people in Canada (representative in this narrative of where she 'came from') appreciated the impact of their actions on places and people in the Global South. She explained that spending time in her placement community led her to consider this community her family and that she could see more direct links between Canada (or the First World) and the relative inequality of her new family. Her anger also stemmed from what she interpreted as overconsumption and greed in Canada, which stood in stark contrast to the lack of material goods available in her placement community.

Melanie's remarks illustrate the 'pull' on the subject position of the SDP intern. Serving the development process while attempting to preserve First World entitlement or advance their own identity as enablers of change became incredibly difficult, and emotional, within the geopolitical realities and inequalities that interns could not help but recognize. Some interns, such as Melanie, recognized their implication in the system they were trying to redress, but guilt as a way to deal with this would suggest, as Melanie pointed out, a discomfort with privilege. In this regard, anger at the lack of general awareness of the inequalities of the system was useful for establishing and supporting a politics of development and change. Interestingly, recognizing their own implications propelled interns to work harder to enable change through development, an emotionally constituted 'giving back' through SDP.

Finally, there was a clear sense of pleasure in the experiences described by some CGC interns, pleasure in the combination of the selfless act and the exotic culture. As I have suggested elsewhere, there seems to be a pleasure in using sport to 'cross' the development line for the northern subject (Darnell 2007). Farley (1997) has argued that there is pleasure in racist encounters and in the processes and acts of domination and subjection over people of colour. Data collected in this study do not support a conclusion that interns experienced pleasure in dominating, physically or otherwise, the people they encountered as Other. However, being tasked, both by the SDP organization and by discourses of development, with establishing a semblance of order and improvement out of underdevelopment, and doing so through sport while simultaneously negotiating the unexpected within exotic cultures in which they found themselves, was a pleasurable experience for interns. There was a clear sense of enjoyment in the position of stewardship.

I loved it, I really did love it. I was ready to take a break when my internship was up, I was getting quite exhausted um, of giving so much because I found that, especially when you take ownership of a programme like that, I was going full throttle and I forgot to sort of pull back a little bit so I was ready for it to be over, but I loved the culture and I would go back there in a second – Patricia.

Yeah, yeah, I loved it. Um, I think I mean, the vibe, to experience the vibe of that country was pretty amazing, and I didn't really experience anything negative, like all of the violence is pretty much limited to their own inner gangs and whatnot. The only thing was I remember being irritated by the end, because it's so hard to not stick out, and you're always, always being followed by a flock of people. So that was hard by the end but other than that, yeah, everything was amazing. Everything reached me and just enjoying it. I mean, 8 months is not that long, so it was fun – Danielle.

Pleasure thus stemmed from the successful negotiation of the development context. Giving of oneself, acting as a leader and recognizing one's unique cultural position allowed interns to experience the SDP internship as positive and pleasurable as they carved out a way to be themselves in unfamiliar circumstances. These were deft and complex social negotiations that required CGC interns to reconcile the pleasure and fun of the SDP experience amidst transnational and local hierarchies of race, class and gender. Amanda recounted how she used the sexist expectation that a White woman in her placement community would be seeking a sexual encounter to her advantage as a development tourist.

I did get a lot of men approaching me thinking I'm there to date. But, I'll be totally honest here. Being a woman is advantageous because I made a lot of friends and whether some of them wanted to hook up with me or not, they didn't. So they were my friends and maybe they lost out, but I had a really good time, y'know? And they were willing to like help me out and get settled and drive me around and things, like I never took advantage of it, but things just come to you – Amanda.

The above quotation is an example not only of the interlocking of race, gender and sexuality but perhaps more importantly of the *recognition* of privilege combined with an attempt to disregard or discredit its preferential effects. This combination was recurrent in the experiences of CGC interns. Amanda's description suggests a clear understanding of the benefits of Whiteness but also a concomitant disavowal of *using* Whiteness to one's advantage. In turn, there was pleasure in being in a position to negotiate these power relations, in being the subject who sets the parameters by which race and sexuality are taken up and acted upon. Amanda did not feel guilty, I suggest, because unlike other interns and other elements of the internship experience, she was able to effectively establish her sense of self. In her case, this sense of self took the form of privileged, but not compromised, Whiteness.

Notably absent from most of the preceding exploration of guilt in development service is a sustained analysis of its relation to sport or physical activity. Interviews with interns that focused on notions of guilt did not regularly invoke references to sport; therefore it is difficult to establish how sport aligns with, or diverges from, the politics of guilt as described by interns. At a broad level, I expected that sport could and would have trumped guilt

for interns in relation to subject positions, given sport's presumed acceptance and universality, but this was not reflected in the interview data. Sport was useful for interns as an entry point, and in supporting the development ethic of the SDP sector, but it did not level the playing field to a point where privilege was effectively reduced or removed. At the least, the regular recognition and invocation of guilt, as well as anger and pleasure, within SDP service illustrates the political dimensions of development, as they were interpreted and internalized by CGC interns, and suggests, in turn, that such politics are not easily overcome or reconciled even in the cases where sport as a universal and fun activity is the primary focus of development initiatives and interventions.

Conclusion

In her ethnographic deconstruction of the impact of neoliberal policies throughout the world, Ong (2006) argued that neoliberalism is intimately linked to processes of exception and exclusion. By reducing individuals and populations to their capacity to contribute to the economy (the bio-politics of capitalism) neoliberalism effectively 'excepts' persons from the benefits of citizenship. However, and crucially, Ong (2006: 6) also showed neoliberalism to be a process of inclusion, 'a positive decision to include selected populations and spaces as targets of "calculative choices and value-orientation" associated with neo-liberal reform'. In this way, the reduction of government regulations and social support that constitutes the neoliberal paradigm allows for malleable policies – and bio-political mandates – that subsume individuals and populations into the dominant political apparatus perhaps more frequently than they abject them.

I suggest that Ong's framework holds purchase for making sense of the subjectivities produced within the SDP sector, particularly as it facilitates the travel of young sportspersons to the development context. CGC interns referenced a strong modernization ethic within the SDP sector, characterized by the notion of social and political inclusion. Sport was deemed useful to the extent that it could facilitate the integration – the inclusion – of marginalized persons into globalized relations, relations that interns, at the very least, recognized with relative ease particularly because they themselves had experienced sport and physical culture in positive ways and could draw a line between these experiences and their relative class (as well as race and gender) privilege. In this way, neoliberalism is relevant to the extent that it elucidates the imagination of SDP, if not its policies (though this is often the case as I explore in Chapter 4). Sport was understood to contribute to development through the production and encouragement of motivated, successful, free individuals and communities. This neoliberal ethic of SDP wasn't explicitly reproduced through dominance

and consent between CGC interns and SDP participants, but it was hegemonic and discursively intelligible to the extent that it was readily recognized and, in turn, largely considered to be *the* (only) way to get ahead in a globalizing world. This ethic was also compatible with a First World subjectivity that positioned the intern as a steward of development.

The implications of these processes, particularly for the production of subjectivities, are significant. Not only does SDP potentially become caught up in, and reduced to, the processes of producing subjectivities that support the logic of dominance rather than challenge it (Biccum 2010), but the breadth of political orientations to development available to SDP and through the mobilization of sport are reduced in such a way that SDP becomes mostly about reproducing positive sporting experiences for Others. Given that sport and physical culture can secure hierarchies as much as challenge them, the reproduction of relations of power through sport in the service of development calls for ongoing critical attention (see Donnelly *et al.* 2011). Furthermore, when the focus of SDP becomes the delivery of sport in a way that seeks to include Others within capitalist hierarchies, and assuage the Self from the benefits thereof and its associated guilt, then SDP itself becomes a practice of benevolence rather than justice. As Lefebvre (2010) has argued, a recurring if not dominant narrative in SDP service is that of ‘exchanging sport for gratitude’ from those heretofore excluded from its boons. From a neo-Marxist perspective, such boons are not available to all and attempts to secure them for all that do not also address and challenge the political economy of inequality produce subjectivities that are implicated in, yet largely dismissive of, the relations of power that underpin development inequalities.