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Conclusion

Critical praxis and pedagogy in SDP

Introduction

With the preceding analyses in mind, this final chapter offers a series of critical conclusions about how and where SDP can position itself, sociopolitically and in terms of both research and practice. The goal of the chapter is to ‘operationalize’ Nustad’s (2001) assertion that critical (and post-) development studies offer a positive contribution to development initiatives (including, in this case, those within SDP). I focus on key questions of power that are at the core of the development context and mandate as well as central to the study of development inequality and responses to it.

In general terms, an ethical and politically engaged way forward towards sustainable development in and through SDP is to challenge, and eventually abandon, the notion of sport’s political transcendence in relation to international development and to embrace instead a carefully crafted, though explicit, political vision for SDP. Such a vision can and should underpin the way we do SDP research, the way we work with students interested in SDP and the ways in which we prepare ourselves, and others, to act as global citizens within initiatives focused on sport and physical activity. I argue that while the global interest in sport, and faith in its universality, continues to be offered as a key to its development *utility*, the accessibility that sport affords is better conceptualized as an entry point for confronting and addressing the politics and power relations inherent in international development struggles and volunteer service.

The chapter proceeds in four parts. Next, I draw on recent work in the study of development and SDP to offer an ethical framework for mobilizing SFD. This leads, in turn, to a discussion of a critical praxis for SDP, one that is attuned and committed to histories and politics of inequality and relations of power within development and sport. I then offer some connections between the discipline of critical pedagogy and the field of SDP as a way to conceptualize and actualize an ongoing commitment to a sustained, critical understanding of both the promises and perils of SFD. I conclude with some final thoughts and future questions for SDP research and practice. Through these foci, I position this chapter for an audience that includes both those working in the field of SDP as practitioners and/or researchers, and for those who concentrate

primarily on work in the classroom. It is my hope that the theoretical and political insights offered here may be of use to students or volunteers who are taking to the field of SDP, those who work with or for SDP NGOs or other organizations, or anyone who looks to sport as a way towards building a more just and egalitarian world that challenges social and material hierarchies of power and privilege.

SDP and the ethics of development

In the Introduction to this text, I made reference to Gasper's (2004) conceptualization of the ethics of development that proceed through three stages: ethical questions about development policies and the experiences they afford, ethical examinations of the core concepts and theories employed to understand those experiences and actions, and the ethics of development practice. As stated previously, I also follow Gasper in focusing attention of this text primarily on the first two stages, though they undoubtedly influence the third stage, which itself is of essential importance to critical development studies. Here, I follow Gasper's analyses further by looking at the concepts and values that underpin development work and the ethical implications for SDP that result.

As the preceding chapters have argued, there is evidence of a modernist, capitalist logic in contemporary SDP both in the philosophy of competitive, merit-based achievement and the palatability, if not privileging, of neoliberal approaches to development as they are mobilized through sport. These understandings of how sport contributes to development echo Gasper's contention that mainstream development theory in the twentieth century tended to privilege efficiency and effectiveness over other development values and conceptualizations. In this way, twentieth-century development can be understood as constitutive of and constituted by 'economism' or an economic logic of social change positioned as the basis for development policy, practice and interventions. Economism in Gasper's (2004) terms has several dimensions: that the economy constitutes a separate and relatively insulated sphere of social and political life, that this economic sphere is primary within the social order, that people are primarily economic men (sic), that most or all of life should be valued and managed in and through economic calculation, that the complexities of social development can be measured in economic terms such as gross domestic product and that the economy should be managed without interference. Economism for Gasper (2004: 81) does not equal, and is not reducible to, pro-market fundamentalism, but it does refer to 'the hypertrophy and overreliance on narrow economic ideas' which, once accepted or engrained, are hard to dislodge in and from public life. In this way, the ethical dimensions

of economism arise from the ways in which it privileges competitive rationality at the expense of other modalities and the ways in which it may secure and normalize the privilege of the successful few by perpetuating the notion that they earned their success through a benign system of merit rather than within structures of inequality. In turn, economism potentially overlooks alternative values of development and tends to downplay or depoliticize the extent to which citizens from around the world are connected in and through development issues and are implicated in development inequalities (Gasper 2004).

Two points follow from such insights when trying to make sense of the ethics of development in relation to SDP. One, economism underpins much of the logic of SDP to the extent that the convergence of sport, capitalism and the political economy of development creates a social and political terrain in which sport is understood to offer a rational and inexpensive means to development. While such approaches to development are not inherently wrong or misguided, and the analysis of the relative benefits/limitations of such approaches to development through sport ongoing, it does remind of the importance of an ethical analysis of the particular political orientations employed through SDP. Throughout this text, I have argued that neoliberal development philosophy permeates SDP in a plethora of ways. Even in the cases where analyses of SDP's politics diverge from such conclusions (see Lindsay and Grattan, *in press*), Gasper's ethics of economism remind scholars and practitioners of SDP to be attuned to the ethical dimensions of any development philosophy. This is especially important, I would argue, for point number two that reminds that one of the strengths of sport as a means of supporting development is the opportunity it affords to practice development differently (see Levermore and Beacom 2009). Within development based on economism, the issue of development and its complexities and challenges often comes to rest on what can be afforded (or not) rather than the formulation of alternative values or approaches. In response, I submit that an ethical chore of SDP is to continually maintain space for different values of development that extend beyond the neoliberal economism of development. This may mean, first and foremost, tempering our belief that the rational and utilitarian application of sport leads to significant changes within a development framework and instead positioning sport as an important cultural experience in and of itself that offers an opportunity to engage with the history and politics of development inequality.

Such ideas necessarily complicate the otherwise useful distinction between sport plus (development) and (development) plus sport. On the one hand, plus sport still maintains important ethical implications to the extent that it suggests that the focus of SDP should be on development issues and struggles, and sport in the service thereof, as opposed to the mere application of sport in the hope of sustainable change. On the other hand, resisting economism as a, if not the, organizing value or principle of development and SDP may require coming to terms with sport as a cultural expression, one that is consistently

(if not inextricably) politicized and negotiated socially, and therefore not easily ‘applied’ to the meeting of development goals. Indeed, this might mean refocusing SDP away from development and back on to sport itself, and towards a sport plus orientation, but one designed explicitly to offer a means of engaging with and challenging the structures and politics of development inequality (see Harvey, Horne and Safai 2009). Reconciling the relative strengths and weaknesses of the two perspectives remains an important ethical chore in SDP research.

At the least, critical studies of SDP call for ongoing attention paid to the ways in which the popularity and attractiveness of sport – actual or presumed – may in fact render sport particularly prone to philosophies and processes of economism, regulation and inclusion characteristic of contemporary geopolitical relations of integrated, globalized capitalism. The ethical mobilization of SFD, therefore, will require critical reflection upon the actual effects (both positive and negative) that sport has for meeting development goals and attention paid both to the possibilities and the limitations of sport in effecting social change. Critical ethnographies, like those conducted by Li (2007) and Ong (2006), provide evidence of the impact of neoliberal development and the ways in which it promotes sociopolitical regulation at the expense of self-determination. In turn, these studies illustrate the importance of continual ethical decision-making regarding the impact of sport in SDP. If SFD is principally a tool to regulate behaviour, then I suggest that it fails to meet its ethical responsibilities to support equality of condition and development as a process of self-determination (Sen 2000). In response, a critical praxis of SDP is called for.

A new praxis for SDP

The concept of praxis is an important one in the social sciences for the ways that it affords researchers and theorists a means by which to articulate the mobility or applicability of critical analyses. In this way, praxis represents the process of theory becoming practice (Lather 1991) or a way to conceptualize ‘reflective action that intervenes in a social context’ (De Lissovoy 2008b: 129). Previously (Darnell 2006), I outlined a framework for researching SDP that drew specifically on the notion of praxis as a means of linking theory and research to the ‘real world’ (see Hall 1986). Here, I revisit this praxis framework and consider it against the analyses in the preceding chapters of this book. It is important to note that in the philosophical spirit of a praxis orientation, the goal here is not to offer ‘solutions’ to the limitations of SDP, such as they have been outlined in the preceding analyses, but to offer a vision for how to conduct SDP, in research, theory and practice, in more ethical and politically engaged ways.

In developing this praxis framework (Darnell 2006), I have argued that three areas of sociological theory are particularly useful and applicable for making theory practical: post-colonial, third-wave (or transnational) feminist and post-structuralist. First, when drawing on the perspectives of post-colonial theory, it becomes clear that the notion of disinterested or politically transcendent knowledge is itself political and therefore impossible to substantiate (see Smith 1999). That is, the 'knowledge' or claims to truth that emanated from the colonial encounter were never benign; rather, such knowledge often constituted epistemic violence, the ramifications of which endure despite well-intentioned desires for a purely post- or anti-colonial world. Claims to knowledge in development and SDP, therefore, require a focus on historical and contemporary accountability and responsibility, as much as, if not more than, social or material progress. SDP within the post-colonial, including the transnational encounters that this affords, is more complex than facilitating participation; it requires recognition of the material and discursive hierarchies that colonialism solidified. Research and practice in SDP that begins from this perspective will look quite different from charitable acts. It will actively seek to oppose the colonial continuities that privilege Whiteness, secure the 'natural' dominance of the Global North and propagate a First World subject position based on benevolent inclusion.

In turn, SDP can benefit from the third-wave feminist contestation of presumed social solidarities. As Mohanty (2003) illustrates, dialogue based on the recognition and celebration of sociocultural *difference* offers more to the promotion of social justice because it rejects essentialisms that serve to secure dominance. This does not mean that camaraderie need necessarily be discarded, only that the struggles for equitable and sustainable development to which SDP programs respond are socially and culturally contextual and specific. For SDP researchers and practitioners, this perspective brings the limits of universal human rights as a basis for sport and development into sharp relief. Again, as Teeple (2005) has argued, human rights are not truly universal because they do not afford all persons the means necessary to realize their rights in practice. Combining this perspective with a transnational approach, it becomes clearer still that the presumption of universal rights can overlook, and even normalize, the tendency to seek universal, essentialist forms of social change that only operate *within* hierarchies, not against them.

Recognizing difference in this way draws upon the insights of post-structuralism, the third element of the praxis framework that I outline here. The universalist/relativist debate in development studies – one that pits a desire to rely upon and privilege the universal experiences of humanity (such as the organization and culture of sport) against a rejection of the objective standards to which development refers – becomes less important in an approach to praxis informed by post-structuralism. The critical issue for SDP is not whether development should or should not happen, and/or the ways in which sport

should be mobilized to these ends, because both of these approaches presume a social stability that has been rigorously challenged by post-structural theory (see Haraway 1991; Lather 1991). Rather, an ethical praxis embraces ambivalence in recognizing that essentializing difference is as problematic as privileging similarities (Grewal and Kaplan 1994). The issue is not whether or not SFD programmes should happen but rather the social imagination that such initiatives support. Through the lens of post-structuralism, searching for, and establishing, a stable social and political basis for action becomes secondary to embracing the ongoing irreconcilability of the ethical challenges as they have been outlined in this text. Similarly, context and political vision become increasingly important as both researchers and practitioners are left to consistently and critically reflect upon the goals and desires of the SDP sector and the limits of SFD.

In sum, I argue that a praxis orientation should start from the understanding that traditional power relations underpinning the contemporary global political apparatus have become decentralized such that geopolitical hierarchies are increasingly intelligible and yet simultaneously less questioned for their histories, circumstances and politics (see Hardt and Negri 2000). These relations of 'Empire' have the ability to reduce international development to a process of attending to the symptoms of globalized inequality and rarely to its cause. Through this text, I have strived to illustrate that the compatibility of dominant sporting culture with the bio-political regulation of the socially constructed body serves – strategically or not – to align the SDP sector with these apolitical trends in approaches to development. I argue in response that a critical praxis in and for SDP will seek to challenge and deconstruct global hierarchies, as opposed to finding and supporting evermore creative ways of motivating people to survive within discursively material inter- and transnational inequalities.

I do recognize the enormous challenge of this praxis within SDP, particularly given that material inequalities – the lacks of goods, infrastructure, opportunities and resources – continue to be rightly recognized as symbols of the need for development and SDP and as the impetus for mobilizing sport towards meeting development goals. The praxis framework that I am outlining here need not dismiss the importance of recognizing inequality or responding to it. The issue rather is the ways, both discursive and material, in which these lacks are taken up and rendered intelligible and the actions that they promote under the banner of SDP. It is crucial both to differentiate material injustice from colonial continuities *and* to make explicit the links between them because even redressing material inequality – particularly in the short term or within the dominant capitalist paradigm – does not necessarily address relations of power in a substantive way. It is possible (and problematic) for material inequalities to be taken up in the service of colonial continuities, whereby Foucauldian subjects who know themselves as sophisticated and benevolent trade on their privilege in an effort

to re-dress the effects of marginalization in and from which they benefit. Just like anti-racism goes beyond claims of colour-blindness and challenges racial hierarchies, in this praxis-based approach that I have described, research and practice in SDP should question the implications of claims to innocence and consider SDP as a sector committed to challenging oppression.

Fortunately for those interested in such a praxis, there are theoretical models in place that offer important insights. While several abound, here I draw on the work of Noah De Lissovoy (2008b) and his conceptualization of the politics and praxis of the *terran*. De Lissovoy uses *terran* as a term to theorize, describe and attempt to balance the need for a global solidarity within struggles of inequality and against the limits of a presumed solidarity, particularly as it is increasingly celebrated within globalization and new communication technologies (see Hardt and Negri 2004). In this way, a *terran* identity encapsulates the 'essential globality of any effective oppositional class as well as the situatedness of human struggle within specific geographies' (De Lissovoy 2008b: 149). A praxis of SDP must be, therefore, historically and geographically informed both with regard to development inequality and to the social and political dimensions of sport. This is necessary in order to address and resist the tendency of sport's popularity to flatten the politics of international development in the ways that Li (2007), Ferguson (1994) and others have described in development more broadly. In all cases, the inequality and marginalization that marks the 'need' for an institutional and international sector of SDP has deep political antecedents and implications. Absent of such reflections upon these antecedents within SDP though, the 'lacks' that are characteristic of 'underdevelopment', and serve to solidify and justify the need for SDP in the first place, are susceptible to reduction to the limitations or misconduct of marginalized people. Thus, from an ethical perspective, serving in the SDP sector requires awareness of the geopolitical relations that contribute to, and sustain, the very need for international development and the concomitant desire to mobilize sport as a tool to address inequality. Claims to historical and political innocence in and through SDP are ethically irresponsible.

The *terran* also offers a means by which to conceptualize and positively acknowledge the international dimensions of sport as formative to SDP, and support the momentum of SDP in contributing to international development, but to do so in a way that remains vigilant in rejecting essentialisms (of cultures, ethnicities or physicality) and situating the inequality to which sport attends through SDP within historical context. It may even be possible to bring SDP into alignment with social movements that reject top-down models of regulation and stewardship and instead stand as the product of situated learning in the context of collective action and communication (De Lissovoy 2008b: 143). Arguably, it is here that sport and SDP have the most to offer. Not only is sport increasingly recognized as a social or cultural node or hub around which such political organizing and resistance occurs (see Harvey, Horne and Safai 2009), but the

undeniable popularity of global sport like football/soccer may also offer a means by which local movements that challenge inequality can connect transnationally in a manner akin to Hardt and Negri's (2004) conception of *multitude*. Of course, to avoid the essentialist solidarities to which De Lissovoy draws critical attention, such transnational connections will have to recognize the cultural specificities of both sport and social struggle, but surely this is increasingly possible, particularly in an age of new media connectivity (see Wilson 2007). Such a praxis would also align with the argument that development initiatives should strive to support the self-determination and struggles for sustainable self-sufficiency of marginalized people more so than attempting to 'motivate' or 'educate' them towards proper conduct (see Saunders 2010; Sen 2000). Such a praxis would be recognizable 'when local struggles start to see themselves in others elsewhere' (De Lissovoy 2008b: 152).

In fact, I contend this may be where the presumed universality, popularity and relatively benign politics of sport – such as they are – are most applicable. In the cases, for example, where migrants struggle for social, cultural and economic sufficiency amidst market hierarchies, retreating state support and xenophobia (see Saunders 2010), perhaps sport offers a means by which to facilitate peaceful geographic migration and socio-economic integration or to support those marginalized along lines of race and class into legitimate cultural and political citizenship. Sport, in this way, might offer a means by which to begin to come to terms with the political antecedents of development inequalities in a manner similar to Giulianotti's (2004) advocacy of 'sentimental education'. Again, vigilance would be required to protect the transformative orientation of such endeavours and avoid simplistic – if not colonizing – claims of understanding the Other, but possibilities clearly abound to mobilize sport towards explorations and understandings of people's struggle for self-determination within the terms of the cultural and political economy and in resistance to them. As De Lissovoy makes clear, the praxis of the terran is concerned with both the incorporation of people into the global workforce as a form of domination (in a manner similar to that described by Ong 2006) *and* with their expulsion from economic and social citizenship. With such a praxis in mind, and a commitment made to challenging inequality and dominance, sport and SDP can be amended to support progressive development politics, particularly if supported by critical pedagogy.

Towards a critical pedagogy of SDP

To this point in the chapter, I have argued for the importance of ethical considerations of development within SDP and for a critical praxis oriented towards mobilizing SFD in ways that challenges the conditions of global

inequality. Both of these imperatives can be supported, I suggest, by a sustained critical engagement with the politics, policies and vision of SDP, an engagement productively conceptualized through the lens of critical pedagogy. Two reasons substantiate the importance and appropriateness of this connection. First, given that the ethos of critical pedagogy demands that it be accessible and open to a wide audience (Kincheloe 2007) and given that sport constitutes an entry point, invitation or non-threatening means into international development and its myriad challenges and inequalities, SDP informed by critical pedagogy may constitute an important and unique means by which to engage in critical conversations about international development. Such conversations may be mutually beneficial to both those in relatively privileged positions who wish to support change and to those who are considered the 'targets' or 'partners' of SDP initiatives. Amidst calls for critical pedagogy to be repositioned as a way to engage with marginalized voices – particularly that of persons marginalized along the intersections of race, class and gender (see Kincheloe 2007) – critical pedagogy seems well suited to challenge the subjugated knowledge and social and political hierarchies that have been highlighted in critical scholarship into SDP (see Darnell 2007; Guest 2009; Nicholls 2009).

Second, current approaches to critical pedagogy are consistent with challenging hegemonic knowledge and relations of power. Throughout much of this text, I have employed a hegemony framework to make sense of the ideas, politics and structures that enjoy a status of 'commonsense' in SDP. I have done so in order to show that the capitalist norms or discourses that underpin much of SDP thinking and action are not universal in conception or application and that, in many cases, SDP as a sector concerned with sustainable development would be well served to think through and beyond these hegemonic ideas. It is in this sense that a critical pedagogy of SDP may be most called for. According to Weiner (2007: 69), the chore of critical pedagogy is to 'break the hegemony of realism which suggests that the future will turn out more or less the same as the present'. Realism here can refer both to the ways in which development inequalities are often de-historicized, depoliticized or taken for granted as well as the rather staid manner in which sport is positioned in relation to meeting development goals. In this sense, critical pedagogy encourages SDP stakeholders to consider that sport will/can be radically different in the future of SDP and that notions of development (i.e. why it is necessary, how we approach it, what we do about development inequality) will/can be different as well. Clearly, this kind of re-imagining will take pedagogical and political commitment and effort, along at least three vectors.

Material inequalities and social hierarchies

A critical pedagogy of SDP will need to conceptualize, contextualize and challenge the material inequalities that underpin development and are inextricably linked

to the SDP sector. By this I mean that critical pedagogies of SDP will remind advocates of the sector that the need or impetus to mobilize SFD does not proceed, at least initially, from the universality of sport but rather from the inequalities and hierarchies, both material and social, which constitute the context of international development. While this point may seem banal to a large degree (*of course* there are marginalized people to which development initiatives, including SDP, attend) it is nonetheless fundamental to the extent that it reminds that this inequality is a result of historical, social and political organization *and* that the mobilizing of sport in response is equally socially and politically implicated and contestable. Such a measure of critical self-reflection is crucial, I argue, particularly given the number of SDP initiatives organized and funded in the Global North and implemented in the South, which run the risk of pathologizing southern poverty as degenerate (Biccum 2010) and solidifying northern responses as benevolent (Heron 2007). Instead, if critical attention is drawn to the reasons why development is needed around the world, then sport can be conceptualized in ways that challenge these relations of inequality.

In turn, the centrality of social hierarchies is key to a critical pedagogy of SDP, particularly for people who wish to work as advocates or volunteers for sport-based development initiatives. As I suggested in my analysis of the experiences of CGC interns (see Chapter 3 and Darnell 2010b) the development context in which SDP programmes operate is inextricably linked to social hierarchies particularly along lines of race, class and gender as well as sexuality and ability, all of which are complicated by the material inequalities of development. The culturally universal dimensions of sport do not overcome such hierarchies. Rather, a critical pedagogy of anti-racism and its intersections particularly concerned with the material and discursive power of Whiteness is called for (see Darnell 2007). Not all actors and stakeholders within SDP enjoy the same relations of authority and privilege. In turn, sport offers an opportunity to enter the political terrain and spaces of development but to do so in ways that challenge relations of power rather than rely on the universality, popularity or 'power' of sport to usurp these structures.

The politics and meanings of sport

A second feature of a critical pedagogy of global social change is a commitment to solidarity, which recognizes material and social hierarchies, as opposed to universalist discourses that attempt to overcome or depoliticise them. For example, De Lissovoy (2008b: 146–7) argues for 'oppositional solidarity' given that there is no stable 'abstract unity' outside of the actual experiences of oppression, through which to organize struggles for social change. When applied to SDP initiatives that seek social change through sport, these insights suggest that the universality of sport, even as it is intelligible through the immense popularity of watching and playing sport, does not serve as a

stable basis of SDP if it presumes a solidarity that is removed from the actual experiences of poverty, inequality and oppression. When situated in the context of international development, sport does not necessarily bring us all together because of the fact that development inequalities are not universal. In turn, positioning and mobilizing sport as a tool towards rights-based development, an ostensibly progressive step, does not address or overcome social inequality in any essential way. Instead, I suggest that sport may be best understood as a means by which to engage in the process of negotiating and constructing solidarity amidst development inequalities. As D. Kapoor (2009b) has suggested, development starts with understanding not only local needs but also the histories and politics of local struggles. What can bring us together through sport is a commitment to challenging the politics of inequality, but this commitment must be the starting point, like D. Kapoor (2009b) suggests, rather than starting from a universal language or meaning of sport.

Furthermore, as scholars of sport have demonstrated, sport is neither inherently good nor bad but a cultural form produced and constrained within the social milieu and susceptible to the relations of power that propagate inequality in the society at large. It is always possible, despite good intentions, for sport to be taken up in SDP in socially regressive or negative ways, such as normalizing violent competition, solidifying racial and gender hierarchies, or further solidifying the exclusion of non-participants. What is needed, therefore, is not the refined *application* of SFD but a *re-imagining* of SFD that challenges relations of dominance. I concur with Maguire (2006) in arguing that the dominant sporting status quo – characterized by competition, continuous improvement, achievement orientation and the solidification of social hierarchies – begs for critical evaluation against the vision of social change that SDP espouses. As a result, there may be an opportunity, in addition to a responsibility, to re-imagine sport as a practice that recognizes dominance and offers a tool to resist it, a project already laid out by critical philosophers of the sporting experience.

For example, according to Shogan (2007: 119) ‘this new sport ethics encourages noticing, questioning and refusing when necessary the norms and demands of sport’. The context of international development may actually offer an important and unique opportunity to interrogate and question sport in this way. That is, instead of deploying traditional, competitive sporting practices (i.e. football/soccer) as a means to model, inspire and empower achievement in development, a process that may re-inscribe and reproduce traditional norms of dominance and discipline, new forms of sports like football, or new sporting forms altogether, could literally be invented. Theoretically, these new sporting forms could use opportunities for teamwork to privilege social equity and social spaces for all. SDP is not limited or beholden to traditional sport; SDP offers a significant opportunity to re-imagine sport. Sport can offer a means of supporting and facilitating self-determination as opposed to reinforcing and

normalizing an ethos of achievement that underpins the logic of capitalism and reduces its inequities to a matter of individual failings.

‘Re-imagining’ development through SDP

Finally, according to Weiner (2007: 75), critical pedagogy is needed given that ‘the official discourse of schooling attempts to fix the meaning of being a teacher as well as end the discussion of what constitutes an educated person’. In this type of traditional praxis that Weiner describes and critiques, the gamut of possibilities of approaching social change is effectively reduced to a politics of conformity particularly along lines of subjectivity and notions of what constitutes the ‘preferred subject’. I would argue that similar tensions are evident in much of contemporary SDP policies and programming where the vast range of possible understandings of development are regularly reduced to neoliberal notions of individualized citizenship and the logic of competitive capitalism (see Hartman and Kwauk 2011). As a result, a critical pedagogy committed to development as the process of supporting self-determination, both within the political economy and amidst social hierarchies, is needed, more so than the promotion of SDP as a means of ‘educating’ marginalized people into the operations and machinations of capitalist development. Especially where sport obfuscates the particularities of development inequality, or where poverty is rendered intelligible as degeneracy rather than the effects of oppression and dominance (Biccum 2010; De Lissovoy 2008b), SDP should challenge such notions, not reproduce or tacitly accept them.

Again, I would suggest that critical scholars and teachers – of both development and sport – are well positioned to support this type of critical pedagogy of SDP by advocating and supporting a move beyond evaluative and prescriptive analyses of the role of sport in meeting development goals and towards profoundly more imaginative explorations of what sport offers to development and how it should be organized and deployed to meeting such goals. Such a shift will likely require moving beyond positivist interpretations of SDP data that tend to focus on how the application of sport leads to particular development outcomes and that can be ‘generalized’ across cultures and geographies. Instead, SDP will be asked to come to terms with the impossibility of securing universal answers to questions of justice, power and praxis (Kincheloe 2007: 16). This shift will also, crucially, require pedagogies of non-control that recognize the primary task of education and activism (through sport) as more than the transfer of knowledge from an expert to a subordinate, compatible with functionalist notions of sport in support of development. Instead, this shift will be characterized by re-positioning sport in order to facilitate the actions of students/learners as authentic subjects with agency amidst the historical specificity of inequality (De Lissovoy 2008b: 9, drawing on Paulo Friere). From this perspective, the appropriateness of SDP

and the effectiveness of sport to support the achievement of sustainable development goals is not a truth to be discovered but an opportunity to be embraced within an unfolding terrain of the political and social possibilities of social change (De Lissovoy 2008b: 10).

If all that I am describing here seems ambiguous, poorly connected to SDP policy and rhetoric, or even difficult to imagine in relation to the actual implementation of SDP programmes and initiatives, I would argue that this is largely the point. Exactly what is needed in SDP is a move *away* from questions of 'what works' and 'what doesn't' and a contemporaneous move *towards* understanding the historical and social experiences of sport and development as they are formed and performed within SDP. This may suggest the need for a phenomenological approach to SDP, one concerned less with 'generalizable', objective knowledge and more with insights into, and reflections upon, the complexities and diversities of the sporting experience (Kerry and Armour 2000). In the tradition of Husserl, the phenomenologist is asked to re-examine presuppositions and assumptions through the juxtaposition of examples, as opposed to generalizations that are ostensibly supported through empiricism (Kerry and Armour 2000). From this perspective, SDP's twin hegemonies of sporting meritocracy and the free choices provided by neoliberal development philosophy are ripe for re-examination in and through the experiences that occur within the field of SDP. Indeed, it may be the case that we need to suspend and challenge our understandings of, and beliefs in, sport (and development) in order to truly employ and mobilize sport in ways that diverge from traditional development and athletic orthodoxy.

For example, I would caution that the idea that SDP advocates like Johan Koss are 'living testimonials' to SFD (see Kidd 2008) or that there is an 'intuitive certainty' (Kruse 2006; cited in Coalter 2010b) of the contributions of the SDP sector largely resign us to the status quo marked by unequal development and achievement-based sport in the name of upward mobility. Particularly in relation to SDP research and methodology, a phenomenology of SDP would begin to open up more possibilities to implement SDP differently through approaches to monitoring and evaluation that are not restricted to the terms laid out by the dominant cultural and political economy (see Crabbe 2009).

Furthermore, phenomenology holds potential for SDP for the ways in which it draws attention to the body. As I have suggested throughout this text, SDP logic regularly invokes the notion of the active, regulated, disciplined and successful body. As Ahmed (2006: 552) describes, 'Phenomenology helps us explore how bodies are shaped by histories, which they perform in their comportment, their posture, and their gestures.' In this sense, SDP research would be well served to focus on embodied experiences and to strive to make sense of these experiences as they are constructed amidst the history and politics of unequal development. Phenomenology, in this way, opens up possibilities for rethinking – 'a queer phenomenology would function as a disorientation

device' (Ahmed 2006: 566) – in order to challenge our notions of what sport and development are and to reorient ourselves to how these politics are often literally 'played out' in and through SDP programmes.

In sum, such a phenomenological approach to understanding SDP, informed by Husserl, might ask us – as researchers, practitioners, students, champions and/or organizers of SDP – to let go of the knowledge, skills and expertise that we (think we) hold and begin to practice anew towards sustainable development. Similarly, in the tradition of Heidegger, we might think about the extent to which the SDP sector rests not just on the popularity or universality of sport but also on the organization of sport and its development mandate to make the world a better place, a mandate that is always already understood. To employ a sporting metaphor, this phenomenology of SDP would be like learning to dribble a basketball with one's left hand or kick a football/soccer ball with one's left foot after a lifetime of playing with the right. The chore of SDP is not the successful application of SFD but the learning and questioning of the organization and mobilization of sport in support of the cultural, social and geographic specificities of development struggles. This will be difficult but ultimately rewarding. For, as any good athlete knows, being able to play with one's left *or* right significantly increases the chances of a strong performance and sporting success when the game is on.

Concluding thoughts and future questions

This text has tried to embrace the sense of ambivalence that emanates from the opportunities and limitations of mobilizing sport to meet the goals of international development. There is, without question, much that remains to be done. It is both my intention and hope that this book be situated much closer to the beginning of a mass of critical research into SDP and its policies, practices, ideologies, discourses and implications than to stand as any kind of steadfast conclusion. Indeed, some of the critical issues that I have raised remain significantly under-explored, both theoretically and empirically, within the burgeoning SDP literature. To conclude, then, I offer some questions for future research into, and critical analyses of, SDP.

- 1 In what ways does the current mobilization of SFD present an opportunity to rethink and re-imagine the organization and practice of contemporary sport? What would a sporting practice and praxis intimately connected to the politics of unequal development look like? What would be its hallmarks?
- 2 In what ways can or do sport-based activist groups – or those connected to alter-globalization movements – align with (and diverge from)

the ethos and practices of SDP initiatives? What opportunities for partnership exist?

- 3 If a goal of SDP research is to enter into relationships with partners in ways that challenge and resist colonial continuities, what would these relationships look like? What would be their constitutive epistemologies and elements?
- 4 How are sports mega-events, particularly those upcoming in the southern hemisphere, taking up issues of international development within their organization and justification? Is resistance to sports mega-events as catalysts of development being mobilized? What does this resistance look like and what are its effects?
- 5 How and why are celebrities and celebrity athletes in particular drawn to SDP? What are the implications for those working in the field? How is the dichotomy of charity versus justice implicated in this relationship?
- 6 How has the changing political economy of development, complicated by the 2008 financial crisis and the responses of states and NGOs, influenced the SDP sector and the ways in which sport is now mobilized to meet development goals?
- 7 What practices of critical pedagogy, both for the classroom and the research field, are effective for expanding the possibilities of SDP and maintaining an active development imagination in relation to sport?

These questions, and undoubtedly others, remain to be analysed. Yet, based on my recent interactions with colleagues in both the sociology of sport and critical development studies, my work with students both post- and undergraduate, and the plethora of recent presentations at conferences and articles on SDP published recently in scholarly journals, I am confident that the makings of a critical mass of SDP research are in place. Given the possibilities – as well as limitations – of using sport to meet sustainable, egalitarian development, and to contribute to making the world a more just and peaceful place, such interdisciplinary and challenging research is most needed and welcome.