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# Pedagogies of Sport in Youth Detention: Withholding, Developing, or Just “Busying the Youth”?

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## Abstract

This article examines pedagogies of sport in youth detention, drawing on ethnography (primarily participatory observations and interviews) at two all-male youth detention homes in Sweden. Focusing on youths’ experiences situated in discourse and practice, three pedagogies of doing sport in youth detention are described: *withholding sport*, *busying with sport*, and *sport as developmental community*. The young men in this study experienced mixed messages through sport, revealing how rehabilitation through sport was obscured by predominant pedagogies of withholding sport (i.e., punishment or correction) and busying with sport (i.e., containment or filling the time). Yet there were glimpses of another pedagogy, sport as developmental community, and the experiences and pedagogical work underpinning this endeavor are highlighted. This study illustrates how competing functions of youth justice—punishment, containment, and development—are accomplished, and experienced, through (sport) pedagogical practice.

## Keywords

sport pedagogy, youth justice, education, ethnography, Sweden

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## Introduction

Increasingly, youth justice and compulsory care systems have taken interest in sport-based interventions as an innovative way to engage with and facilitate pro-social development for placed youth (see Meek 2014; Morgan et al. 2019). Recent research suggests numerous benefits for educational sport in youth justice contexts, including crime reduction, pro-social identity formation, the development of self-confidence and socio-emotional skills, improvement in mental and physical health, and, more generally, optimism and hope for the future (Meek 2014; Meek and Lewis 2014; Parker, Meek, and Lewis 2014; Roe, Hugo, and Larsson 2019). However, while such benefits are attributed to socio-pedagogical processes of sport, rather than participation in itself (Meek 2014; Morgan et al. 2019; Roe et al. 2019), studies have paid little attention to pedagogies of sport in youth detention, that is, *how* sport is conceived, delivered, and experienced.

Within these closed and complex settings sport occurs in different ways, taking on multiple functions and meanings (Martos-García, Devís-Devís, and Sparkes 2009; Meek 2014) derived from conflicting institutional and political missions. Meek (2014, 14) asserts that sport in prison can be characterized as “a way of containing or physically managing prisoners as much as it is increasingly recognized for its rehabilitative function,” thus suggesting that sport is negotiated among “contrasting notions of punishment, containment and rehabilitation.” More broadly, this negotiation implicates the dual missions of youth detention—to inflict punishment and incarceration while simultaneously fostering positive development or rehabilitation (Abrams & Anderson-Nathe 2013; Levin 1998).

Although sport is an important aspect of youth detention, often considered to contribute to the rehabilitation of placed youth (Andrews and Andrews 2003; Morgan et al. 2019; Parker et al. 2014; Roe et al. 2019), there is a dearth of ethnographic research examining the role of sport in youth justice contexts. In this article, I examine pedagogies of sport in youth detention, based on ethnography at two all-male youth detention homes (aged 16–21) in Sweden. How is sport arranged, practiced and experienced in this context? While sport is generally considered to have a rehabilitative function, the young men in this study experienced mixed messages through sport, revealing how rehabilitation through sport was obscured by predominant pedagogies of withholding and busying with sport. However, I also find glimpses of another pedagogy, sport as developmental community, and highlight the experiences and pedagogical work underpinning this endeavor. In doing so, this article responds to a need for research to unpack the multiple functions and corresponding practices of sport in correctional settings (Meek 2014). In

particular, this study addresses a need for sport *pedagogical* research in these settings that describes how multiple and competing meanings, discourses and practices are experienced in the concrete life situations of placed youth.

## **Background: Examining (Sport) Pedagogies in Youth Correctional Settings**

Roe et al. (2019) suggest that sport in youth justice contexts should be understood in relation to its pedagogical practice, that is, how sport is conceived, how it is delivered, and how it is experienced by young people. The theoretical approach of this study is that constellations of discourses (the ideas and structures which guide our practice), practices (pedagogical action) and lived experiences (what young people live through, and what this means for them in their unique lifeworlds) constitute pedagogies, as in significant ways of guiding or forming youth. Van Manen (1990) asserts that pedagogical research should be grounded in lived experience and praxis. In van Manen's view, praxis encompasses both pedagogical action, i.e., how we interact with, teach, or guide youth, as well as the processes and ideas which inform, develop, or challenge our pedagogical actions or methodologies. Likewise, Alexander (2001) reasons that studying pedagogies requires an understanding of the discourses in which teaching and learning are embedded. Consequently, this study focuses on doing sport within the unique discursive terrain(s) of youth justice institutions. McAlister and Carr (2014, 241) argue that although youth justice scholars have identified and described various discourses of youth justice, "how these discourses are enacted in practice, how multiple and competing rationales circulate within them and most fundamentally how they are experienced by young people is less clear."

Youth detention has been described as a "monumental balancing act" (Abrams and Anderson-Nathe 2013)—having a dual mission between punishment and care, wherein conflicting and ambiguous practices of punishment, containment ("protection"), education, treatment, and therapy are mixed (Henriksen and Prieur 2019; Levin 1998). For youth themselves, confinement is often experienced as "mixed messages" (Abrams and Anderson-Nathe 2013), and while youth detention purports to achieve justice, the experience of incarceration is often one of injustice and ambiguity (see Henriksen and Prieur 2019).

I frame my analysis within these struggles among conflicting philosophies, practices and experiences: between corrections and education. At the heart of this conflict is how youth detention homes use their power. Youth detention homes could be seen to employ power as a corrective technique in order to transform placed youth into docile and productive citizens (Foucault

1979; Pettersson 2017). In Swedish youth detention homes, correctional techniques can be seen in systems of privileges, for example in the use of token economies, whereby privileges are rewarded or taken away, as a form of micro-punishment, in order to manage the behavior of placed youth or teach them proper norms (see Gradin Franzén 2014; Pettersson 2017).

Correctionalism refers to the predominant paradigm or philosophy guiding Western youth justice (Muncie 2008)—seeking to control, correct, or even punish offending “as the outcome of deficiencies in the individual” (Case and Haines 2015, 158). When education is viewed as seeing potential in and empowering or enriching the lives of students, doing education in the correctional setting is framed as a contradictory endeavor (Sayko 2005; Costelloe and Warner 2014). This is consistent with a body of Swedish research (Gerrevall and Jenner 2001; Hugo 2013; Roe et al. 2019) wherein youth detention is considered to have a “pedagogical calling,” or mission, concerned with the growth and development of placed students. These studies reflect a continental European notion of pedagogy as a moral or ethical practice (van Manen 2015), having a calling or responsibility to do what is best for young people, and to guide or lead them accordingly. From this perspective, for example, Roe et al. (2019) describe how the pedagogical approach at a football (i.e., soccer) program for detained youth in Sweden endeavored to initiate and guide a process of growth and development for students, situating sport as a platform and emphasizing “all the other things” besides football—that is, processes of pedagogy.

Some ethnographies of youth detention elucidate how teachers and staff, in solidarity with students, seek to challenge or go against dominant correctional practices (see e.g., Young-Alfaro 2017). In this sense, correctional education has been likened to creating “spheres” (Wright and Gehring 2008) or “free zones” (Hugo 2013) of practice that contrast or conflict with the broader, more coercive correctional environment. Furthermore, some studies indicate how educating placed youth calls for critical pedagogies (Flores 2012; Scott 2017), concerned with emancipating youth from oppressive environments, not least the immediate institutional context, as well as broader societal or structural conditions. While not framed in such terms, Meek’s (2014) research on sport academies in British youth prisons indicates a potential to change correctional cultures, for example by improving resident-staff relations through sport, as well as creating new pathways for reentry and reducing recidivism, namely through building community connections and providing “through-the-gate” support.

But, as research maintains a curiosity about the possibilities for educational sport in correctional settings, in practice a rehabilitation or educational function of sport is underutilized. In several instances, sport is described as a way

to “manage” prisoners or being used to “fill time” in prison regimes with an unclear educational or pedagogical role (Martos-García et al. 2009; Meek 2014; Gallant, Sherry, and Nicholson 2015). Some research suggests that the idea of sport as education is stifled by “tough on crime” and “no-frills” correctional discourses reasoning that offenders do not deserve high quality sport opportunities (Meek 2014; Norman 2015). Besides such discourses, sport in carceral settings is fused with the logics of the total institution (Goffman 1991; Norman 2018), amounting to what Norman (2015) concludes as “a poverty of imagination” in carceral physical culture. Social control and boredom are penetrating aspects of life in youth confinement, where “bureaucratic ritualism” (Fader and Dum 2013) is a systemic barrier to experiences of meaningful care (see Andersen and Bengtsson 2019). Sport activities often take on an important (albeit temporary) function of relieving boredom or other pains of confinement, as well as providing means for (limited) resistance to or escape from social control (Bengtsson 2012; Meek 2014; Norman 2015). Yet, although such functions can be seen as limited or temporary, in the words of Sabo (2001, 62), they “say something about the potential of athletics to sustain sanity in an insane place,” and the “great many motives, messages and contradictions crammed into the muscles and athletic pastimes of men in prison.”

## **Method: Ethnography at Two All-Male Detention Homes**

The study is inspired by a lifeworld ethnographic approach (van Manen 1990; Bengtsson 2006; Hugo 2013), where the researcher seeks to participate in the social world of the subjects in order to come to a closer understanding of their lived experiences. Haudenhuyse, Theeboom, and Skille (2014) assert that in order to understand sport’s potential for improving the situations of vulnerable youth, we must first understand their concrete life situations. The significance of a lifeworld approach is to generate insights contributing to pedagogical action, with an understanding that pedagogy should be grounded in the lifeworlds and lived experiences of young people (van Manen 1990; Bengtsson 2006). This approach has much in common with traditional ethnography (see van Manen 1990; Hugo 2013), in that it enables the researcher to immerse in, and eventually represent, a diverse range of sport and physical activity experiences within the (closed) contexts of youth detention (Hammersley and Atkinson 2010; see e.g., Andrews and Andrews 2003). Furthermore, viewing that pedagogical practices in youth detention are influenced by broader discourses, varying institutional cultures, and the logics of total institutions, the research is also inspired by a critical approach (see e.g., Young-Alfaro 2017).

In Sweden, youth detention homes are state-operated and supervised by the Swedish National Board for Institutional Care (*Statens institutionsstyrelse*—abbreviated SiS). Approximately 1,100 youth are placed within SiS youth institutions each year, roughly two-thirds of whom are male (SiS 2019). Most youth assigned to these “special youth homes” are placed according to the Care of Young Persons Act (LVU), which stipulates that youth can be placed in compulsory care for “serious psychosocial problems.” Under this framework the majority of youth are detained for “living a destructive life with, for example, drug abuse or criminality.” A much smaller group of youth aged 15–17 who have been adjudicated for serious offenses are sentenced to secure youth care instead of prison under the Youth Custody Act (LSU).

The two institutions that were the sites for the study, Capeview and Summerholm, differ in several important ways, lending to a variety of observable sport arrangements, practices, and experiences. Only Summerholm had placements for youth who were *sentenced* to closed youth care (LSU). Likewise, an important distinction is that Summerholm is relatively “closed” and “secure,” both in terms of the physical environment and the stated treatment philosophy, whereas Capeview is more “open” in these respects. A key limitation or challenge to doing sport in carceral settings is the logistical impracticality of secure settings (Meek 2014; Gallant et al. 2015). The selection of these two institutions (one with LSU placements, one without) was intentional, to observe how sport was practiced and experienced in environments that were more or less restrictive, both in terms of physical environment and the treatment philosophy.

The study was approved by the Stockholm regional Ethical Review Board (2017/337-31/5). Formally, the empirical material entails over 400 hours in the field, spread more or less evenly across both institutions. Across 14 months, 25 staff and 34 youth (aged 16–20) were engaged in the study. Data was collected primarily via participatory observation and interviews, but also included various artifacts, such as staff journals. I also draw on personal experiences (Hastrup and Hervik 2005) in visiting or teaching at youth detention homes to compliment or composite this material (Jarzabkowski, Bednarek, and Lê 2014), namely in order to “weave together” (Sayko 2005) glimpses of a non-dominant pedagogy of doing sport as developmental community. When qualitatively investigating sport in or as total institutions, Norman (2018) has argued for the use of *bricolage* (Denzin and Lincoln 2011); to creatively draw from a variety of sources in order to research *around* a phenomenon whose nature is restricted, “insular,” and difficult to access.

An essential part of the study’s ethical-methodological character was to maintain a “pedagogical orientation” to the lifeworlds of participants, requiring that the researcher have a sensitivity for the situations and experiences of

the participants (van Manen 1990, 2015). As a point of ethics, my ambition was that participants should benefit in some way from partaking in the study beyond the major ethical requirements for social research (see Swartz 2011).

Doing sports or other physical activities with the boys was often a natural way to break the ice. At Summerholm, for example, I received an exaggerated reputation as a skilled basketball player and was frequently invited to shoot hoops at one of the unit's recreation yards. At Capeview, I became closer with many of the boys through football (soccer)—as we competed together or against one another and tried to integrate into a club where we all were outsiders. Besides sport activities, I felt generally welcomed by both youth and staff to visit their residential units, and was often invited to share meals, drink coffee or “just chill a bit.” Learning of my background (teaching at an American youth prison), students and staff alike were keen to discuss or compare American juvenile justice and American culture generally (e.g., rap music, sports). I leaned on my position as an outsider, non-Swede, sporty, relatively young male to help dissipate barriers, integrate in the field, and invite participants to share their experiences. This helped me carve out a position that was different from the staff, and also different from the majority Swedish ethnic/class position. In my interpretation, my visits provided a welcomed break from the routines and boredom of institutional life, and the boys were usually curious about me, liked me, and for the most part enjoyed talking to me about their lives, their interests, and, of course, sports. It was perhaps in these moments that students derived the most benefit (see Swartz 2011).

In general, I succeeded in becoming a close observer, and became pedagogically invested in many of the boys' lifeworlds. However, this approach was not without certain limitations, blind spots, or ethical dilemmas. For example, the boys may have been hesitant to show emotions and vulnerabilities (especially in the company of peers). On several occasions, I felt moved to intervene on behalf of the students. Some of the boys, with their reentry looming, asked me if I could help them find a football club on the outside. I tried to take some actions, like informing their PE teacher, but it pains me that I could only provide limited assistance. Although subjective attachments in ethnographic fieldwork may contribute to researcher bias, being affectively immersed in the boys' lifeworlds also made me sensitive to—indeed painfully aware of—the vulnerabilities, desperation, and desires for recognition experienced by youth in confinement (see Henriksen and Schliehe 2020).

In the findings I break down distinctive yet interwoven pedagogies: withholding sport, busying with sport, and sport as developmental community. To arrive at these pedagogies (i.e., themes), I conducted a thematic analysis and hermeneutic interpretation of the data (Braun and Clarke 2006; van Manen 1990). Analyzing pedagogies, as in significant, patterned ways of doing sport



in youth detention, involved considering multiple layers of data gathered through various methods—data regarding student, staff, and researcher experiences, practices, and rationales that were derived through participatory observations, interviews, and artifacts. My starting point was that an analysis of pedagogies should be grounded in the lifeworlds and lived experiences of youth themselves (van Manen 1990; Bengtsson 2006). Therefore, I first coded and collated youths' experiences, where the data showed how sport in detention tied into experiences of boredom, relief, frustration, joy, freedom, punishment, friendship, care, distant relations, inclusion, exclusion, conflict, control, hope, hopelessness, progress, resistance, and, more generally, incarceration. Next, I sought to contextualize these often-dichotomous experiences in the practices and discourses of doing sport in youth detention. I initially interpreted that, in the main, sport was practiced and experienced as mixed messages with multiple meanings—at once a carceral and educational experience. However, as I continued to examine the significant rationalities or intentions of doing sport expressed in the data, I was able to identify a third pedagogy of “busing the youth,” where there was no clear learning or developmental ambition with sport. This practiced discourse, where sport practice seemed to blur into institutional routines, also helped me understand how many of the perceived benefits of sport expressed by the boys were limited to just “sitting off” or “ferrying the time.” Finally, I returned to the data in order to refine the themes and to ensure coherence, consistency, and distinctiveness (Braun and Clarke 2006).

Within the findings I employ composite narratives, or vignettes (formatted in italicized block text later), that composite sources of data in order to capture, in vivid and fluid text, the experiential, practical, and discursive fabric of the pedagogies. Jarzabkowski et al. (2014) write that composite narratives in ethnographic research “merge the characters and events from multiple ethnographic observations into a single composite narrative [. . .] The aim of such a composite narrative may be to reveal some typical patterns or dynamics found across multiple observations through one particularly vivid, unified tale” (281). Importantly, the storylines and dialogues in the narratives are drawn directly from the data—only trivial details, if any, have been fictionalized—and the first two vignettes marginally deviate from verbatim field notes. To ensure confidentiality, all names are pseudonyms.

### **Findings: Three Pedagogies of Sport**

Sport and physical activities at both Capeview and Summerholm were arranged in similar formats, but with some key differences. Before I describe pedagogies of sport at the institutions, I contextualize the main forms, or

arrangements, through which sport occurred at the institutions. Both institutions had sport during the school day as *part of the subject of physical education (PE)*, typically in smaller groups of one to four students and a PE teacher. The institutions' respective schools also organized *special events* around sport, for example to kick off or conclude the school year. Significantly, Capeview had organized visits from the local police department (where youth and police were mixed together for a game of football) and, on another occasion, a visit from a former national team coach and well-known Swedish football player. Such occasions generated excitement amongst students and staff as well as positive media coverage.

Outside of school, there were *regularly scheduled sport and physical activities* that were organized and delivered by the unit staff, mainly during evenings and weekends/holidays. Capeview typically had evening football, during which different residential units could be mixed. Many of the students in this study had been in and out of multiple detention homes, and described how this feature distinguished Capeview: "At other [institutions] it's not like that, you only play with one unit and that" says Hassan. At Summerholm, the units were never mixed (at least when I visited) during out-of-school activities. There, the regularly scheduled activity was mainly gym (weight training), but sometimes floorball (indoor hockey) or football. Every day, each unit had a scheduled gym time that was posted in the units.

Besides these more routine activities, students and staff sometimes engaged in *spontaneous activities*, that is, activities that were not planned in advance or part of the schedule. During my visits, this included the youth wanting to go swimming in the summer, shooting some hoops in the recreation yard, wanting to play football after watching a World Cup match, or having a Friday night ping pong tournament. Even if such activities could be inspired or initiated by the boys, they still required staff permission and supervision, and could be denied or put off for a variety of reasons, like not having enough staff to supervise. Perhaps it goes without saying that detained youth were not free to do sport spontaneously, which interestingly is how most of the boys predominantly described their sport participation on the outside (e.g., playing pick-up football with neighborhood friends), but in these moments it became crystal-clear that the youth were incarcerated—and doing sport was contingent upon following institutional routines or protocols.

Lastly, both institutions engaged in *sport delivered by outsiders*, namely by sport clubs or organizations. Because these activities often occurred outside the institutions' premises, youth needed to be invited or otherwise have permission to participate (i.e., as part of their risk evaluation). In this respect, Capeview is distinguished for having an established and close collaboration with a local sport club (Stenhamn Sport Club—pseudonym) where many of

the staff were members and where some of the students participated in club sport, namely football.

Although the forms of sport had bearing on the youths' experience, they could be practiced and experienced in various, even fundamentally conflicting, ways. Likewise, these differences significantly indicated divergent ideas about, and experienced messages of, sport participation. I describe these patterns of ideas, practices, and experiences as three differentiated pedagogies, as in significant ways of guiding youth. In the following sections, I elaborate these pedagogies and how they were organized around three central ideas or experienced messages:

- Withholding sport: "How good should they have it?"
- Busying with sport: "They just want to ferry the time!"
- Sport as developmental community: "You can do this, you have opportunities here"

### *Withholding Sport: "How Good Should They Have It?"*

Withholding sport involves restricting or shutting down access to do sport activities as well as limiting the quality of sport delivery, as a means of punishing or otherwise seeking to correct youths' behavior. At both institutions, sport was withheld, both explicitly and implicitly, in order to "teach a lesson"—as in to deter youth from criminality and other undesirable/antisocial behaviors or to teach them how to "function" better as residents (i.e., following the rules). This explicitly took shape and played out in the institutions' routines and structures where sport activities were framed as privileges which could be taken away if the students did not comply with certain rules or norms. In this sense, withholding sport materialized within a practice of micro-punishment, where students at both institutions were denied opportunities to play sports or exercise. This practice mirrored the logics of a token economy. Students were sometimes barred from the privilege to play football or use the gym if, for example, they did not adequately comply with routines such as washing the floors, obeying curfew, or showering after trainings. Sport was also withheld for students placed in isolation.

The boredom students experienced as their punishment could be traced to a practiced discourse that questioned the validity of doing sport in a context meant to deter youth from criminality. As one staff member asks rhetorically:

"How good should they have it?"

*One evening at Summerholm, I go to the gym with Fabian (student) and Kalle (treatment assistant). The session is lethargic and slow. Kalle sits on one of the benches. I ask him if he works out here.*

*“Sometimes,” he says. “But I usually train at another gym.” Fabian goes around to different machines with his headphones in.*

*“What is it again that you’re doing here?” Kalle asks me. I briefly explain that I am studying sport within SiS institutions. “Part of my research is here and part at another institution.” He asks about how it is at the other institution.*

*“Maybe one of the biggest differences is that they mix the units, and play a lot of football, quite often actually.”*

*“We tried mixing the units here. It went well for a bit, but then there were some conflicts,” Kalle says, somewhat apathetically. He continues, “Summerholm is the last stop. They can’t back any further.” He explains that they must work to prevent conflicts internally by moving students to different units and to then avoid mixing them. Mixing larger groups of these boys, he implies, isn’t a good idea.*

*“What kinds of activities do you do in the evenings?” I ask.*

*“Mostly gym, sometimes we play football or floorball, but mostly gym.” We talk about Summerholm’s facilities, and, in an attempt to be optimistic, I comment that “the gym is nice, you have a good grass field, it’s near water . . . maybe the sports hall is a bit small but it works.”*

*Kalle shrugs. “Yea, it works. But they are sentenced for punishment, how good should they have it?” He adds that there is “a lot of talk about sport being able to keep youth away from crime,” but he is skeptical. I’m taken aback by Kalle’s statements—in my observations, and according to some of the boys, he’s one of the more active and well-liked staff here. Fabian tells us that he has one more exercise. Not 30 minutes have passed, and we walk back to the unit.*

Implicit in discourses of withholding sport is that incarcerated boys do not deserve high quality sport practices—new facilities or equipment, skilled coaches, etc.—because they will not learn their lesson. Doing so will undermine the purpose of youth detention to *deter* youth from crime. The message of this pedagogy, even if it is not always clearly spoken, is that institutional placement, and by extension sport therein, is not meant to be fun and enjoyable. Providing such opportunities undermines the pedagogy of correction—that the boys must correct themselves or be corrected through institutionalization or otherwise be deterred from criminality by an unpleasant experience.

Withholding sport was also intertwined with staff skepticism about gathering large groups of “disruptive” boys, and an implication that doing so inevitably risked conflicts or incidents of violence. At Summerholm, the solution was quite simply to compartmentalize activities, including sport, within the individual residential units. Most of the boys described the sport

activities as “boring,” lacking in energy and engagement, and not authentic or “real.” For example, most of the students were interested in football, but their expectations of “real” football requires numbers: minimally two teams of 5 when playing indoors and 7s for outdoor. Within the unit, however, it can be a challenge to gather enough for 3 on 3. As Rodney describes: “It’s just us, it’s boring. It’s really boring. . . You want to meet others, you want a challenge. That’s fun. You know, like this unit vs. another, you know that feels like real teams you know.”

At Capeview, conflicts between the students or other more serious violations of the rules resulted in the evening football sessions being shut down, sometimes for prolonged periods. Often, a feeling by the staff of a “rowdy” climate at the units was presented as grounds for cancelling sport activities. In some cases, the football sessions were ended abruptly because of a fight or conflict between students, or when the staff felt that the boys were becoming “tired” and “testy.” When this happens, many of the students, particularly those with strong football interests, express frustration, declaring that “everyone gets punished” for the actions of others (i.e., the students involved in the conflict), or even because the staff did not properly moderate the games. In many cases, these students (who also have a status amongst their peers because of their football ability) actively try to resolve, diminish or mediate the conflicts, and plead with the staff to be able to keep playing.

Students expressed that sport activities were often not a priority, and that their interests in sport were not recognized or legitimated:

Isaiah, one of the boys who has been placed at both homes, has a simple and seemingly reasonable suggestion for improving sport practice: “Just ask the youth what they like to do . . . Then you can come with your own ideas and see if they also want to do it.” But, as Asim (Capeview) explains, “You don’t get asked those kinds of questions here . . . They don’t really care about what we like to do.”

### ***Busying with Sport: “They Just Want to Ferry the Time!”***

In the main, sport at both institutions could be described by a pedagogy of simply “busying youth and staff” or “doing the best with the time.” What characterized this pedagogy was a lack of clear educational or developmental ambitions, both on the part of students and staff, beyond short-term aims and experiences. This pedagogy of busying the youth had a double meaning, where sport participation was at once a way to keep the boys under control but also for relieving social control. In this pedagogical practice, sport activities appear to be decontextualized, that is, they seem to occur haphazardly

and without noticeable preparations or deliberation about what happened previously and where to go next.

Staff ambitions with physical activities were mainly to “just do something with the youth” and keep things “calm.” In this sense, sport and other (physical) activities play a role in passing the time and maintaining the desired *calm*, typified in the daily staff reports at Summerholm:

UNIT 1 (Tuesday)

ROUND 1: Very calm, youth walked or watched TV.

ROUND 2: It has been a calm evening; activities have been like always gym and hanging at the unit.

UNIT 2 (Wednesday)

ROUND 1: Youth played cards everything was calm.

ROUND 2: Fun and good mood, gym and games have busied the youth and staff.

In conversations, staff at both institutions attributed sport or physical activities to the boys “behaving” or “functioning better” in their units, often in connection to a perception that students needed to exercise in order to get relief from confinement or get out their aggression: “He needs it . . . He needs to *get it out*.” In order to maintain the desired calm and good mood, this pedagogical practice focused on preventing conflicts: “most important is that there is no fussing.” Absent from this practice, however, was a noticeable emphasis on mastering sport-specific abilities, learning social skills (besides generally getting along with others), developing close relationships, or challenging and supporting the boys to do things outside of their comfort zones.

For the students, participating in sports or physical activities was described primarily as a way to “just get out of the unit,” “feel free,” or otherwise to temporarily escape boredom and other negative aspects of confinement. Moreover, doing sport was at least a way to get some “benefit” from their time, besides “sitting” all day, and “doing nothing”:

I’m sitting here—I’ve got [a long sentence]—and then I think that in order to do the best with my time here, then I train and go to school. And then have contact with my family . . . Because otherwise I’d feel bad, just sitting here and rocking in a chair, you understand? I’d make no use [of the time], I wouldn’t have any use at all. (Ian, Summerholm)

You just sit here; you sit and watch TV the whole day. Just eat and sit and watch TV. So it's really good if you can come out and run for an hour, and move around, you can sleep better. You get really tired, so that's good. (Asim, Capeview)

However, when Asim takes a broader view, such benefits seem temporary, blurring into the monotony of confinement. He describes that in detention you "Play football, behave, play football, behave. So then you feel good, then you can move from here. Do something with your life." From these descriptions, sport functions as a temporary relief from confinement, but doesn't seem to "do something" for the boys. Busying with sport is an opportunity to "get away" from the unit, but the benefits are short-lived as the rhythms of institutional life are resumed. Significantly, some students and staff tired of the resulting lack of meaning and progress of this practice and resisted this pedagogy, expressing a need to do things differently:

"They just want to ferry the time!"

*On Tuesday afternoons at Summerholm, Jeff has the largest group of students during his PE class, one of the rare instances where students from different units are mixed here. Typically, they play football on Tuesdays, but today Jeff wants to do "femkamp"—a competition with five different activities. He wants to show the boys other activities, besides football, noting that not all of the students are "football interested." What's more, he feels that the students are "just playing," and "they don't learn anything."*

*When the students arrive, escorted by treatment assistants, Rodney, who is scheduled to leave the institution in a few days, announces: "Jeff, it's my last day. We're playing football, right?" Jeff says that today we're doing something different, "Today's lesson is a five-game competition." Rodney and Isaiah (another student) are visibly disappointed and begin arguing with Jeff. They try to negotiate playing football in the last half of class: "We do your thing for 30 minutes and then we play football for 30 minutes."*

*After some debate Jeff gives in, but Isaiah claims that he only wants to play football. He gets one of the treatment assistants to escort him back to his unit. The first activity is to do as many air squats as possible, and the second is a badminton shot into a ring. The boys make it clear that they are going to put in minimal effort. Rodney takes the badminton shuttlecock and shows it suggestively to Omar. Rodney tells Jeff, "Ok, we're finished let's go to the next one."*

"Omar hasn't shot yet."

*“This is boring, man!” Rodney protests. “Why are we doing this?”*

*“They just want to ferry the time!” Caesar remarks, using the Swedish expression “De vill bara slussa tiden!”*

*When the boys leave, Jeff expresses his frustration with the lesson—he meets this kind of resistance often. He articulates a need to do things differently; he wants to do things differently. We discuss other ideas, alternatives. He enjoys having somebody to “ball ideas” with, as he feels somewhat alone in what he does at the institution. We talk about his idea to have a school football team, an idea we’ve often discussed. Perhaps Tuesdays should be about football, but they could be given more purpose and structure. They could, for example, be more about developing skills, competences in sport. But he is concerned that it is not PE, or maybe how could such an approach be justified as part of school/PE?*

*Jeff switches to his other idea which he has workshopped with some of his colleagues, to do a “training pass” in the mornings. He reasons that he could have a “free pass,” where the students could choose the activities. Perhaps just have a morning training session, he reasons, with an objective to “raise their pulse.” “A good start” to the day, so they might be more focused in school. Jeff talks about another PE teacher working at another institution who does something similar, where students get a smoothie as an incentive for attending.*

*We discuss that such ideas might benefit from involvement from the other staff. Surely there are some staff who would be interested. But Jeff is uninspired, and we talk about losing drive, and working within a culture of low ambitions and expectations.*

*“Like you have been ‘institutionalized’?” I ask, referring to the film *Shawshank Redemption*.*

*“Yea, something like that,” says Jeff. He tells me that he is looking for another job—he wants to teach “regular PE” at a “regular school.”*

Caesar’s clever use of the Swedish expression “to ferry the time” (*att slussa tiden*) captures the logics of this pedagogy. A “sluss” is the Swedish word for a canal water lock. This practice and corresponding experience are situated within the broader experience of youth detention by being likened to being “ferried” or siphoned through a system of gates or water locks. It describes a narrow journey with narrow perspective—controlled, slow, and decontextualized from the boys’ lifeworlds (i.e., their interests, needs, or futures). At best, sport as “ferrying” the students through the days helps to create minimal



trouble, conflict, or disputes. The focus is on getting through the activity and getting along with minimal conflict, and then continuing onto the next (e.g., from dinner at 17:00, to gym at 19:00, to evening snack at 21:00, to curfew at 22:00). But in this moment, they are stuck in a meaningless activity, waiting for the lock to fill.

When this happens, some of the staff seek to change the environment, or the arrangement for sport, and feel the need to change the practice in order for the youth to “actually learn something.” But, some struggle in articulating and communicating these intentions into a practice that is meaningful and engaging for the students. For instance, Jeff’s idea of improving physical activities at Summerholm—to add a “training pass” for students to “raise their pulse” and be more “focused in school”—seemed to replicate this pedagogy, as in a new and improved way for busying the students. Furthermore, although the lesson and resistance from students are not pleasing, he reflected on how one might come to accept this practice, that is, becoming pedagogically institutionalized.

### ***Sport as Developmental Community: “You Can Do This, You Have Opportunities Here”***

In this pedagogy, sport was designed to create opportunities for students to learn and develop through experiences represented to broaden their lifeworlds and future horizons. This occurred when students and staff co-created sport-based developmental communities—spheres or free zones within or parallel to the broader correctional experience—that nurtured and supported them to develop skills, interests, and hopes. What characterized this pedagogy, and stood in contrast with the other pedagogies described earlier, was an implicit message that “you can do this, you have opportunities here.” Similarly, doing sport as developmental community also involved a richness, dynamism, engagement, sensitivity, and thoughtfulness in practice: an expression of “there’s so much you can do,” articulated here by Asim at Capeview:

But there’s so much you can do . . . Just do activities, be with the youth . . . You can change the environment a bit, go watch a game. I don’t know, just have some fun . . . Just if you want, if you think outside, a bit from another perspective. Many [staff] come here, do their job, drink coffee, play cards, and don’t care about what we are going to do in the future or if there is anything. While others come here with their hearts, they show things, “you can do this and you can do this.” It’s those that have motivated me. All of those that have been bad I’ve put aside and focused on those that are good. “You can do this, you are smart.” “You can do this and that.” It’s those that give one a desire to

do something with your life. Go to school, work. “You can do this, you have opportunities here.”

As Asim indicates, experiences of developing through sport were obscured by other pedagogical practices, practices that seemed devoid of ambitions to “motivate,” “show things,” or provide opportunities for youth. In this sense, doing sport as developmental community was not a primary experience for the students. Rather, it was elusive, and was described, observed, and experienced in glimpses. Students described this as occurring in certain moments or particular contexts, typically depending on who was delivering the activities. As in Asim’s earlier description, several of the students at Capeview also described developmental communities occurring in areas outside of sport, for example in the school’s mechanics program. In this sense, many of us (students, staff, and myself) knew of or felt that there were other possibilities for sport, but it was difficult to describe or systematically observe them. In some of my earlier visits to Capeview, in 2015, I observed and experienced more of sport as developmental community. In the following composite narrative, I recapitulate one particular previous experience and weave in some of these glimpses:

“Sign me up!”

*In the afternoon, Anders, a PE teacher at Capeview, picks me up from the ferry. In the car, he tells me that we are going mountain biking with Sayyid, a student who has only been here for a few weeks, during which he has mostly been locked in the emergency ward (the unit where boys initially are kept upon placement to be investigated and assessed for their risk and treatment needs). This will be his first time leaving the institution’s premises during school. Anders explains that Sayyid has been depressed, and so it is important for him to “get going.”*

*It’s a sunny day, and there is practically no wind. We set out on the road then turn into the forest. The trail is bumpy—and mountain biking is much more demanding than I had expected. Anders leads for the first part before asking Sayyid if he wants to take over. Sayyid bolts ahead and we follow. The riding is exciting, bordering on dangerous. We chatter over roots and rocks and shoot through drops, narrowly avoiding trees or falling into a creek. After 15 minutes at a break-neck pace we pause at a clearing by the lake and catch our breath.*

*“I almost crashed, did you see that?” says Sayyid with a grin.*

*We sit in the sun and have coffee by the lake. The water laps, the trees rustle, and we sit quietly, enjoying the moment. In such moments we might talk about many things: Why was he placed here? What are his interests? How is it at*

home? How was the meeting with the social services; how is the appeal at the migration board? Or we could discuss the riding, what techniques are important, how to pick a line. But the goal here, today, is rather simple: "We should get out and enjoy the day, so Sayyid can start enjoying life again," Anders tells me. "Later, when he has landed a bit, I can challenge him, and build in other parts of the education."

After the ride we unlock and re-lock a series of doors leading to the common room in Sayyid's unit. The familiar smells of youth detention; recently mopped floors over a faint smell of sweat and cigarette smoke. The sun is blocked out and the room has a bluish, bright fluorescence. Two boys sit on the couch, watching daytime television: *Cops* (it's always *Cops*!). Our intrusion to an all-too-familiar boredom is welcomed.

"What'd you do?" asks one of the boys.

"We rode mountain bikes, in the forest you know. It was cool bro," says Sayyid.

"Anders, I want to test it too. Sign me up!" replies one of the boys on the sofa.

"Sign me up, too!"

Anders and I wheel the bikes across the football field—the centerpiece of this detention home. Well, from this angle, it doesn't really look like a detention home, more like a home for kids, kind of like a summer camp. And in some moments, it doesn't feel like a detention home, either.

"You know," Anders says proudly, gesturing to the freshly-lined, lush pitch, "it was a student who painted the lines. He works with our groundskeeper sometimes, also cuts the grass."

Back in the school building, Anders talks enthusiastically about all the possibilities for learning here. He shows me all the sports equipment, and then the football boots and Adidas warm-ups—in the Swedish colors with the Football Association's logo—which the students can keep. He shows me Capeview's Facebook page, and all the pictures posted from the sport program. Pictures of yoga, football in the summer, a badminton tournament, posts from their annual game with the local police department, and visits from a former national team coach of the men's football team, who volunteers at the program. Usually when youth homes make the news, it's about abuse, escapes, suicide, but here the sport program has gotten "good coverage in the media."

"You can do so much with sport or football as a platform. I'm really happy to have bosses who support me, who see the value in this." But, Anders adds, not everybody sees it this way.

This vignette illustrates how a process of development or rehabilitation might begin, that is, how students might become interested or invited to develop through sport. The story also highlights the pedagogical work that underpinned creating a developmental community around sport, for example being sensitive to the situations and lifeworlds of students, and also an ability to make sport meaningful—to make it come alive in ways that are exciting, interesting, and relevant to the students. This work reflected ambitions to dissipate the line between inside and outside, and, similarly, it involved thinking “outside, a bit from another perspective” as much as it involved literally doing sports outside of confinement or with outsiders. Such pedagogical endeavors contrasted and even struggled against punitive materialities (for example, the physical environment of the football pitch vs. the unit) but also faced doubts and questions about “training with criminal youth.”

During their time in detention, some of the students described how they discovered or re-discovered an interest in doing sport, and, likewise, experienced growth in certain skills and attitudes that provided new perspectives, pathways, or opportunities in life. Some of the students, particularly those involved in the club football, described learning to manage their anger, “make new friends,” and “play football for real.” Significantly, they also expressed confidence and optimism for futures free from criminality and drugs, sometimes with sport playing a key role in these envisioned futures. These developments, as well as the various interests and talents in sport expressed by many of the students at both institutions provided me much hope. Getting to know the students more, I came to see a certain meaningfulness of participating in sport as providing a chance to show one’s talent and ability, reflecting students’ desires to better themselves, but also desires for recognition—to be “seen” in a certain way. The following vignette composites students’ experiences of developing through football, told through the experience of Niklas:

“See how good I am”

*Today I follow the Stenhamn football team to a preseason scrimmage. It’s a crisp Saturday morning in March, and the players gather in a locker room, getting dressed for the game. The players’ pre-game routines and rituals are briefly interrupted by a ball and marker passed around for everyone to sign for Niklas, one of the students at Capeview who plays in the club. This will be Niklas’ last match with the team, he is set to leave the institution next week. Before they head out for warm-ups, he is presented the autographed ball and wished the best of luck. Everyone gives him a cheer and the nearby players give him a few pats on the back.*

*Niklas, 17 years-old, was placed in youth detention for ongoing criminality (smaller crimes including theft) in combination with heavy drug addiction. At*

age 14, he started smoking hash and spice, and stopped going to school. At around the same time he also gave up football and hockey. Now, at Capeview, Niklas plays football almost every day. Since being placed at the youth home, he has experienced significant growth as a footballer: "I've developed everything—shooting, passing, technique." Playing in Stenhamn's youth development team, he proudly tells me that he won the golden boot (award for most goals). He is also keen to tell me that he has played in six matches with the A-team who play in the men's fourth division. For Niklas, that means competitive football with grown men, and playing football has given him a "status" at the institution.

He likes the structure, and the "routines" of sports, routines that are somehow different from routines of institutional life. He thinks that "other detention homes should have football," a similar opportunity, because it provides something constructive, besides "criminal things." Besides learning how to "play football for real," Niklas and the other "Capeview boys" describe other life lessons through football. The boys describe processes of "getting help with being angry," "finding oneself, who I am," and, more generally, learning to "have fun and live." Likewise, they have learned to "make new friends," and have formed close, caring friendships with each other. Visiting another institution, I was touched by how a former Capeview student inquired about his friends on the football team.

On the pitch, Niklas' scrappy style of play mirrors the hard work, dedication, and tenacity he has put into football during his placement. He practices with the team regularly, and year-round. Off the pitch, he has spent countless hours travelling to trainings and games—some of which he mostly watched on the bench. I've seen him and the other "Capeview boys" sit silently in locker rooms, listening to the local boys, some close to his age, talk about parties, drinking, girls. Although Niklas and the other boys express how they enjoy the "togetherness" of playing football, they also describe feeling apart and excluded: "we are we and they are they." Perhaps their struggles to be included and overcome the stigmatization of their placement make them sensitive to my own position as an outsider, also trying to integrate into this team. Indeed, the "Capeview boys" have taken me by the hand and helped me feel welcomed and less awkward. "You should come play for us," they encourage me many times.

With his release looming, Niklas is anxious about his new life after Capeview. A few weeks ago, his PE teacher called the coach of the team in the town where he is being released to. Niklas is informed that there is a place on the team for him. Football has a large place in the life he has envisioned outside the youth home, and before his release he talks about playing football with the new team. But the connection seems dubious. He has never met the coach, plus how will the new team receive him? Niklas has lived at Capeview for nearly a year, and life on the outs, including football, is an uncertainty. I ask him what he hopes

*for from the new club and he replies, with a confidence: "That they really look at me, and see how good I am."*

## Discussion and Conclusion

Although sport is an important part of life inside youth detention, there has been little ethnographic research examining this phenomenon. The aim of this study was to investigate pedagogies of sport in this unique, closed context by examining how sport is arranged, practiced, and experienced at Capeview and Summerholm—two all-male youth detention homes in Sweden. The results describe three pedagogies of doing sport at these institutions: *withholding sport*, *busying with sport*, and *sport as developmental community*. The ways in which these three pedagogies co-existed and inevitably struggled with one another reflect how sport practice in correctional settings can be seen as a negotiation between contrasting functions of punishment, containment, and rehabilitation (Meek 2014). Students at Capeview and Summerholm experienced mixed discursive messages (see Abrams and Anderson-Nathe 2013; Young-Alfaro 2017) of doing sport, for example being punished by boredom versus a message of “you can do this, you have opportunities here.” This study sheds light on how these experiences were conveyed through praxis, in other words how significant ideas or intentions for delivering sport might be seen to reproduce practices and, consequently, lived experiences for detained youth. Importantly, although described separately, these pedagogies were not mutually exclusive in practice, and illustrate how sport can play multiple roles and have multiple meanings depending on how it is conceived, delivered, and experienced.

*Withholding sport* can be likened to a pedagogy of punishment, deterrence, and corrections. This pedagogy is connected with student experiences of being punished by boring or mediocre sport practice, where the delivery of sport was withheld explicitly in terms of access and implicitly in terms of quality. In the pedagogy of withholding sport, sport was positioned as something that is fun and enjoyable (but not necessarily enriching) and, likewise, a privilege (not a right) which could be taken away in order to teach students a lesson or how to follow the rules. In this manner, mirroring the logics of a token economy, withholding sport was used as a correctional technique to discipline and responsabilize the youth (see Gradin Franzén 2014). Although the notion of “how good should they have it?” emerged ad hoc, it speaks to a taken-for-granted discourse that questions the validity of doing sport in a context meant to deter youth from criminality. Other scholars (Meek 2014; Norman 2015) have pointed to similar correctional discourses that effectively limit the opportunities and quality or “imagination” of sport activities for

prisoners. In practice, this discourse worked to make sport disengaging for students and staff alike (Case and Haines 2015) and to invalidate youths' interests, sending the message: "they don't really care what we like to do."

The second pedagogy described, *busy-ing with sport*, can be characterized as a pedagogy of containment, "bureaucratic ritualism" (Fader and Dum 2013), and "filling the time" (Martos-García et al. 2009). What distinguished this pedagogy was an absent or weak ambition to educate or develop through sport, limiting experiences of sport to an activity simply meant for helping to "sit off," "ferry," or "do the best with the time." In this pedagogy, sport's function is to manage students and maintain the desired "calm" while, for the students themselves, participating in sport helps make institutional life more manageable. Sport practice thus had a double meaning of reinforcing but also liberating from social control aims of the institutions (see Norman 2015; Sabo 2001). Beyond filling the time, doing sport in this way "doesn't do anything" for the boys—perhaps, at least in part, because it is artificial, decontextualized, or otherwise lacking connections with the students' lifeworlds (on the outside). The metaphor of "ferrying the time" captures the insular, controlling logics of this pedagogy: using sport to funnel students through a canal and its system of water locks. It is an activity-based pedagogy, where "*pushing forward* through activities" is emphasized (Henriksen 2018, 434; see also Wästerfors 2011), rather than learning or developing through the activities. Significantly, neither the development of social nor sport-specific skills are emphasized by students or staff. Inevitably the sport activities themselves become boring or meaningless, rather than a relief to boredom, blending into the "inexorable" life of imprisonment (Martos-García and Devís-Devís 2015) where you "play football, behave, play football, behave." Frustration and resistance to this logic shows that although some of the students and staff desired other approaches, alternative pedagogies were difficult to express or did not easily materialize. As indicated in conversations with one teacher, the setting seemingly has an institutionalizing (Goffman 1991) effect on pedagogy.

The third pedagogy described in this study was *sport as developmental community*, where sport was situated as a platform for creating opportunities for students to learn or develop in ways that were experienced to broaden their future horizons. What characterized this pedagogy, and stands in contrast with the other pedagogies, was a message that "you can do this, you have opportunities here," a message that seems more in line with an educational approach to doing sport (see also Roe et al. 2019). Conceptually, doing sport as developmental community can be likened to creating "spheres" (Wright and Gehring 2008) or "free zones" (Hugo 2013)—spaces that stood in contrast to the correctional experience (see e.g., Young-Alfaro 2017). For



some of the students in this study, sport participation was tangibly connected to experiences of improvement, progress, and future optimism (see also Parker et al. 2014). These experiences seemed related to delivering sport in dynamic, sensitive, and thoughtful ways—an expression of “there’s so much you can do.” Significantly, a developmental community around football at Capeview was represented to recognize and to nurture students’ potential. The students’ experiences of developing socio-emotional skills (e.g., making friends and anger management) and football-specific skills, together with new hopes for the future, raise questions regarding how such developments might be continued, beyond the confines of institutions. How might community-based sport actors, through their pedagogies, continue this work?

An important foundation of sport as developmental community at Capeview was collaboration, both internally between different departments (educators, unit staff, and leadership) but also with outsiders, such as the local sports club. This pedagogical work endeavored to break up the strong line of inside-outside and to make sport more meaningful or “real.” Moreover, while doing sport as developmental community involved doing sport with outsiders, or outside of confinement, it also had to do with “thinking outside, from another perspective.” Meek (2014) similarly describes a promise for sport in prison in terms of an imperative to be more imaginative, “to change the environment,” and for improving institutional cultures. In the words of Gerrevall and Jenner (2001, 25), “It’s not about on the first hand new concrete methods, but more about an alternative pedagogical perspective, which in its turn can generate new ways of working.” Alternative pedagogies will need to navigate the discursive terrains of sport in correctional settings, not least conflicts between philosophies of corrections and education. Furthermore, the concept of sport as developmental community might be seen as a canvas on which to do multiple, varying pedagogies, grounded in the needs and interests of students. As Kirk (2006) has argued, the tools already exist, in the form of critical pedagogies, to sustain sport as a moral and empowering practice, and youth institutions may look more explicitly to culturally and individually relevant critical pedagogies for inspiration (e.g., Duncan-Andrade 2010). It is also important to note that practitioners delivering sport in secure care settings are limited by various logistical difficulties and regulations. Summerholm, which has placements for youth who are sentenced for serious or violent crimes, is a more restrictive environment than Capeview. Underlying risk factors (such as gang involvement) and permission requirements complicate practices like mixing units or doing sport outside of the institution.<sup>1</sup>

Framing youth detention as a pedagogical practice (Gerrevall and Jenner 2001; Bengtsson 2006), this study focuses on connecting pedagogical



discourse and practice with the experiences of placed youth themselves (McAlister and Carr 2014). An ethnographic approach involving participatory observation (see Hugo 2013) and maintaining a pedagogical orientation (van Manen 1990) was useful for coming nearer to the lived experiences of (some of) the participants, and for situating these experiences in the discursive environment of youth detention. Because total institutions are closed and controlling not just in terms of physical access but also in terms of discourse and pedagogics, I extended Norman's (2018) recommendation for bricolage in order to examine different perspectives or possibilities, specifically to "weave together" (Sayko 2005) glimpses of a non-dominant pedagogy to do sport as developmental community. Herein I have used vignettes, some of which are composite narratives (Jarzabkowski et al. 2014), to bring the reader closer to lived experiences and to show the character of the pedagogies. The keen reader will also have questions about the gendered nature of doing sport in youth detention, something not explicitly discussed herein. Given that youth detention is a "salient" context for doing masculinity (see Abrams and Anderson-Nathe 2013), research on the gendered aspects of sport pedagogies in institutional contexts is needed (see Henriksen 2018).

In conclusion, pedagogies of sport paradoxically reinforced and challenged broader correctional experiences for the students detained at both Capeview and Summerholm. While institutions of youth justice might be viewed as having an essentially pedagogical or developmental mission, they persistently function in order to control, contain, and even punish placed youth (Levin 1998; Muncie 2008; Henriksen and Prieur 2019). Clearly, sport can, and should, serve a meaningful rehabilitative purpose in youth justice contexts. However, the predominance of withholding or busying with sport at Capeview and Summerholm illustrate how doing sport in youth detention is readily molded to functions of punishment and containment. To take advantage of the pedagogical opportunities of sports, institutions of youth justice must consider how punitive or time filling practices detract from creating the kinds of communities where positive learning and youth development may occur. On the other hand, this study provides glimpses as to *how* sport might also be arranged, practiced and experienced as a "platform" or "vehicle" for potentially broadening the horizons of and creating opportunities for detained youth (Roe et al. 2019), illustrating that sport-based approaches have important potential for reducing recidivism (Meek 2014). Yet this potential lies in its pedagogical practice and must also be understood within the situated contexts of youth institutional care. Ultimately, endeavors for doing sport for the benefit of detained youth and a safe, just society must necessarily navigate philosophical dilemmas, such as conflicting missions of

corrections and education, but also necessitates thoughtful pedagogical action (van Manen 2015), sensitive to the needs, interests, and lifeworlds of detained youth.

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### Note

1. It was also observed that during football sessions at Capeview most of the boys actively sought to resolve or prevent conflicts, showing how participants employ self-regulating and inclusive practices in order to sustain pickup or recreational sport (see Rogers 2019).

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