


Spring 2012

“Nos Trabalhamos em Rede:” How the Instituto Povo do Mar Utilizes Local Networks and Knowledge to Foster Empowerment.

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SIT

Brazil: Social Justice and Sustainability

**“Nos trabalhamos em rede:” how the Instituto Povo do Mar utilizes
local networks and knowledge to foster empowerment.**

DATE: 12 June 2012

Submitted by

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Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Aldemir Calunga for being the best advisor I could hope for, and providing a comprehensive and exhilarating introduction to IPOM and Serviluz. Thank you to Fera for the lessons and for integrating me into the routines of EBTS. Thank you to Dona Maria Zinha and Socorro for inviting me into your home—I had such a wonderful time staying with you, and it was my great pleasure to get to know your family. Thank you to all the staff and volunteers of IPOM and the residents of Serviluz for helping me so much in my research and making me feel at home in your community. It was an absolute joy to do this research with you, and I hope that I can return in the future to contribute to the important work that you're doing.

Thank you to Bill Calhoun for putting together this academic program, and to Oélito and Ceissa Brandão for keeping the SIT ship afloat. This program has opened the doors for some of the most important lessons that I've learned in my academic career, and I've experienced Brazil in a profound way that I could not have, had I come here on my own and outside the program.

Most of all, thank you so much to my host family, Antônia and José Veras. Without you guys, my time in Brazil would have been immeasurably poorer. You made me laugh, took care of me when I was sick, gave me space when I needed it, and brought me into your lives in a way that I wouldn't have thought possible. As far as I'm concerned, you guys will always be my family.

ABSTRACT

The Instituto Povo do Mar (or IPOM) seeks to improve the lives of children in the favela of Serviluz through experiential education, providing classes in music, art, yoga, surfing, and other subjects. Previous studies have shown how surfing programs can provide immense psychological benefits for children who are at risk for trauma because of their impoverished environments, and the other classes that IPOM offers also give structural support to community children in various ways. In addition to the direct benefits that Serviluz children receive from these programs, IPOM also has a broader social justice goal in mind. The organization sees the education of children as a way to help the community as a whole and begin a small-scale social transformation. For my ISP, I seek to investigate the link between the psychological benefits for individual program participants and community development and empowerment for Serviluz as a whole. How do the clear psychological benefits for children contribute to social transformation? To answer this question, I conducted ethnographical interviews with program participants, the parents of program participants, and community leaders, as well as utilizing first-hand observations of IPOM classes and life in Serviluz outside of IPOM. The results of this study indicate that IPOM works closely with other non-profit organizations to foster capacity development, participation, and community pride within Serviluz, all of which contribute to an ongoing process of empowerment on the level of the individual and of the community.

Introduction

Serviluz is bordered by a lighthouse and a shipyard on one side, and Praia del Futuro on the other. The neighborhood is situated on a point of land, the meeting of two beaches, one called ‘Titanzinho’ and the other called ‘Vizinho’—because it’s Titanzinho’s neighbor. Both beaches feature dependable waves that range in size from

tiny to daunting, and small rocky cliffs that the current sweeps away from, rather than towards. At Titanzinho, the buildings and roads end almost at the water's edge, leaving just a few feet of bare sand and rock when the tide is in, but Vizinho's beach is huge, half a football field of white sand between the last houses of the neighborhood and the ocean. When you walk at Vizinho in the late afternoon, the beach is filled with activity: fishermen hauling in their nets and sorting the catch, games of volleyball and soccer, and families taking their children to swim in the shallow pools. And surfers, of course, surfers of both genders and of various ages and skill level. If you sit at a table watching the road that borders Titanzinho before curving around to encircle the rest of the neighborhood, you will see surfers with their boards walking to and from the beaches all day and into the evening as well. You can also see a bar titled 'Bar do Surf, many small stores selling surf accessories in addition to other odds and ends, and almost every man or boy that passes you will be wearing swim trunks in place of regular shorts or pants. In Serviluz, the rhythms of daily life are defined by the ocean, and surfing plays no small part in that definition.

Originally populated by displaced fishermen, Serviluz is known as a *favela* and has grown rapidly over the decades. As is the case in Fortaleza's other favelas, the bulk of Serviluz' population growth has come from the interior of the state, as rural farmers are forced to the city by drought and poverty. In his study of another favela in Fortaleza, Jeff Garmany explains the context of urban growth in the city: "Patterns of uneven development in Fortaleza are directly linked to even greater levels of social inequality in the countryside of Ceará. ...Those in impoverished agricultural areas – already plagued by high infant mortality rates, low life expectancy, and low calorie consumption levels – are

regularly the ones driving urban growth and expanding city populations in already destitute favelas, similar to what has taken place in Fortaleza over the past one hundred and 50 years. Drought is also tightly connected to urban growth in the Northeast (and particularly in Fortaleza), argue Simone Souza and Federico de Castro Neves (2002), as one can see spikes in population numbers and impoverishment in cities precisely at those times when droughts have been at their worst (e.g., 1915 and 1932).”¹

In Serviluz, this influx of urban migrants came to a neighborhood that didn’t have the option of expanding spatially (it sits on the corner of two beaches—the ocean blocks almost all expansion), resulting in a crowded neighborhood. Much like other Northeastern favelas, Serviluz suffers from more than its fair-share of gang-related violence and problems with drugs (crack, specifically). But despite the chronic underdevelopment that the neighborhood struggles with, every single person I talked to told me that they were happy to live there.² And the more time I spent there, the more I found myself falling in love with the community, as well. Serviluz’ connection with the ocean has much to do with the love and pride that residents (and now, myself) feel for this neighborhood, but it goes beyond just the mere presence of saltwater and sand. What electrifies Serviluz is the culture that people have taken from the ocean, the ways in which they use it to support themselves and each other.

The Instituto Povo do Mar, or IPOM, translates as ‘The Institute of the People of the Sea,’ and it’s a fitting name for an organization based here. IPOM seeks to improve the quality of life in Serviluz through experiential education, providing classes in music, art, surfing, and other subjects. Far from being “just” a school, IPOM hopes to facilitate

¹ Garmany, Jeff. “Situating Fortaleza: Urban space and uneven development in northeastern Brazil,” p48.

² See Field Journal, all interviews, p9-27.

a broader social transformation: on their website, IPOM's mission statement includes such lofty goals as "making a sustainable future," "rescuing the citizenship," and "recovering the lost dignity of many." If I were to summarize the organization in a single sentence to a stranger, I would say that all of IPOM's goals come down to the single goal of empowerment for the people of Serviluz.

But empowerment, of course, is a vague and fluid concept, and almost impossible to articulate. According to one of the studies I read for background research says, "Empowerment is an individually experienced process... It is not a static state, but rather a process that can develop into different directions."³ How can a non-profit organization stimulate this process within individuals? This question is further complicated when we consider the varying degrees of connection a non-profit might have to the individual in question—in the case of Serviluz, the organization might be headed by people from a completely different class background with different economic realities from the individual, or it might be headed by a relative who lives down the street. In my research, I used IPOM and Serviluz as a case study to examine the connections between a particular non-profit's method and the empowerment and social inclusion experienced by its targeted community. This turned out to be not nearly so simple as a direct line transferring a certain quantity of 'empowerment' from an entity to the individuals; IPOM, of course, is not the only variable within Serviluz that affects the neighborhood residents. Rather, what my research shows is a network of factors within Serviluz that function together to create the in-flux development process for this community. IPOM is one example of how an organization developed outside the community can step into this

³ Crystal Tremblay and Jutta Gutberlet, "Empowerment through participation: assessing the voices of leaders from recycling cooperatives in São Paulo, Brazil," p299.

network of factors, and my findings demonstrate the ways that the benefits received by the participants in IPOM's programs contribute to an ongoing process of empowerment for the community as a whole.

In this monograph, I will begin with an overview of the methodology that was used to collect all my data, and then give a comprehensive review of all outside literature that I used in my background reading on this subject. I have separated my research findings, with the first being my analysis of the benefits gained by individual participants in IPOM's programs, and the second being an exploration of how these benefits fit into the broader subject of community empowerment and social inclusion. To conclude, I will discuss my research findings in the context of global economic development and social justice, and explain the social relevance of this research.

Methodology

For my research, I chiefly utilized formal and informal interviews, observation and participation in IPOM activities. For three weeks, I commuted to Serviluz and spent the day there, mostly dividing my time between IPOM's school and the Escola Beneficente do Surf Titanzinho. I also spent four days, and three nights living with Dona Maria Zinha, a longtime resident of Serviluz and the president of its *Associação do Moradores* (neighborhood association). I participated in several of IPOM's classes in maracatu, ceramics, English, and yoga, and closely observed the surfing classes, both in the water and inside the classroom.

My key informants consisted of distinct groups of people: program participants, program instructors, the parents of program participants, and longtime residents of the

neighborhood. Each group gave me insight into a different facet of my research question. Within my program participants, most of whom were children, I sought to interview both surfers and non-surfers, girls and boys, and children of various ages.

In the process of my research, I found myself to be severely constrained by two factors: my limited time (three weeks) in Serviluz, and my limited facility with Portuguese. One of the many ways that these limitations affected my research is that the bulk of my interviews are with neighborhood residents who are closely connected to IPOM, and therefore likely to have good things to say about the organization. I had originally hoped to seek out interviews with neighborhood residents who were less closely connected to the organization, thus gaining possibly different perspectives on the realities in Serviluz. But I realized shortly after the start of my research period that, given time constraints and the fact that I was more-or-less reliant on my contacts within IPOM and its friends to help me find interviews, I would have to narrow my scope to those who were more directly involved with the organization. In this way, I attained an understanding of my informants' experiences that was deeper than I would have been able to attain had I attempted to interview a greater number of people. I am confident that this approach was the best one for my research, but I want to make it clear that my findings do not represent the voices of Serviluz as a whole, or offer any kind of objective evaluation of IPOM's work. Rather, I use the stories of a select few people and my own observations to help me better understand their personal realities, and from there I analyze how such realities fit into my overall research question.

Literature Review

Jutta Gutberlet and Crystal Tremblay. "Empowerment through participation: assessing the voices of leaders from recycling cooperatives in São Paulo, Brazil."

Community Development Journal Vol 47 No 2 (April 2012): 282-302.

Crystal Tremblay and Jutta Gutberlet's "Empowerment through participation: assessing the voices of leaders from recycling cooperatives in São Paulo, Brazil" studies a Community project from the perspective of measuring empowerment and development, and was therefore a valuable example for me to look to in terms of setting the parameters of my own study. Tremblay et al's definitions of empowerment and social inclusion were especially useful: "The concept [of empowerment] can be described as 'an intentional ongoing process centered in the local community, involving mutual respect, critical reflection, caring, and group participation, through which people lacking an equal share of valued resources gain greater access to and control over those resources.' ...Some of the key elements of empowerment are inclusion and participation, accountability and local organizational capacity."⁴ As to social inclusion, they clarify the differences between empowerment and social inclusion thus: "Although empowerment focuses on the individual level, social inclusion addresses the institutional or systems level... social inclusion seeks to provide agency to exclude individuals and to change the overall system within which the needs of the poor are to be satisfied."⁵

Tony Newman, Katherine Curtis and Jo Stephens. "Do community-based art projects result in social gains? A review of the literature." Community

⁴ Tremblay et al, p284.

⁵ Tremblay et al, p283

Of all the articles I read, this is the one that comes closest to touching upon the link between extracurricular projects and community development. Newman et. al. summarize several United Kingdom studies of community-based art projects, and through this review they seek to answer the question, “do community arts projects contribute to positive social and economic change at a local level?⁶” Because IPOM is not an art project, not all of the research in this article was highly relevant to me. However, by virtue of the fact that they are attempting to evaluate positive social results of programs that may seem, at first glance, like they have nothing to do with social realities (art projects and surfing as opposed to job training, for example), Newman et al helped guide my evaluative strategy within Serviluz.

This article was particularly beneficial in terms of alerting me to the methodological difficulties that I was to face with my research. “Applying the principles of evaluation widely accepted in the field of health and social care to the arts raises a number of difficulties... community-based arts projects present particular challenges because of the typically large numbers of stakeholders and the multiplicity of possible outcomes (Landry *et al.*, 1995). Experimental models of research – which compare individuals or groups who have received an intervention with those who have not – are often impractical, partly because of the level of complexity, and partly because of the extreme dissonance that often exists between demands for numerical accuracy and artistic temperaments.⁷” When Newman et al. use the term ‘artistic temperaments,’ what they mean is that, speaking *very* generally, those who work in artistic fields are likely to

⁶ Newman et al, 311.

⁷ Newman et al, 312.

describe and quantify the value of their work in different ways from those who work in other fields, and “encounters with the creative arts are frequently described in terms closer to epiphany than to a simple learning experience.⁸” How do you concretely evaluate an epiphany? How do you ask someone to describe in words an experience such as surfing, or a breakthrough in an art or music class? When asked to talk about their experiences with surfing or IPOM’s art or music classes, many of my informants were only able to describe the experiences as ‘*legal*’ or ‘*bacana*’ (both words for ‘cool’) with huge grins on their faces.

But even with these evaluative difficulties, the results of Newman et al.’s review suggest that community-based art projects *do*, in fact, result in a number of social gains. For instance, in one 1997 survey, there were positive gains in community empowerment (86% wanted to be involved in new projects, 21% had new sense of their rights⁹), while another 1997 survey found other gains in social outcomes (64% improved consultation between government and community; 90% better community identity¹⁰). Across all of the surveys, Newman et al. tracked substantial reports of positive outcome in the areas of Personal change, Social change, Economic change, and Educational change.

Because this article was a review of existing literature rather than an in-depth ethnographical study of one particular program, the results of my research look quite different from what Newman et al. found in the UK. Rather than an evaluative survey, I approached the organization from an anthropological standpoint that considers the lived experience of the participants and the larger context of Serviluz as a unique neighborhood in Fortaleza. Still, Newman et al.’s research was very helpful in terms of teaching me

⁸ Newman et al, 313.

⁹ Newman et al, Table 1, 315.

¹⁰ Ibid.

what previous research into these questions of Community projects and community development has uncovered.

Garmany, Jeff. "Situating Fortaleza: Urban space and uneven development in northeastern Brazil." Cities 28 (2011) 45-52.

Jeff Garmany focuses on the urban development of Fortaleza, particularly as experienced by one of the largest favelas in the city, Pirambu. Although there are many differences between Serviluz and Pirambu, Garmany's work gave me a more thorough understanding of favela development in Fortaleza. He also gives a brief historical account of community activism by favela residents in Fortaleza. "The urban poor in Fortaleza have a relatively long history of mobilization dating back to the 1950s. [Favela residents], organized around issues of improved social and economic conditions, frequently worked through community organizers and religious institutions in order to apply pressure to local government officials."¹¹

Pirambu, the neighborhood in which Garmany lived while conducting his research, has stood out as being particularly willing to mobilize into collective action. In 1962, tens of thousands of people were living in Pirambu, yet the municipal government still refused to officially incorporate it as a residential neighborhood in the city. "On January 1, 1962, more than 20,000 local residents marched from Pirambu to city hall calling upon city officials to "legalize" their neighborhood. The March was successful and, in May of that same year, Pirambu was officially incorporated into the Fortaleza metropolitan region."¹² In the following decades, community groups in Pirambu continued to mobilize

¹¹ Garmany, 48.

¹² Garmany, 49.

to help themselves, securing running water and other basic necessities for the neighborhood.¹³

Historically at least (Garmany explains that since the dawn of the 21st century, community organization in Pirambu has someone diminished¹⁴), Pirambu seems to be a strong example in favor of the possibility of community empowerment within a favela. Pirambu has been able to defend its right to exist and thus been able to thrive, to the extent that the neighborhood boasts many amenities that Serviluz still lacks (paved roads, public lighting, etc). Garmany's research paints a useful picture of what the ebb and flow of community empowerment looks like in a favela in Fortaleza, and used his conclusions to inform my study of IPOM and Serviluz.

Morgan, Paul. "‘Get Up. Stand Up.’ Riding to resilience on a surfboard." Child & Family Social Work 15 (2010): 56-65.

In order to understand some of the psychology behind what IPOM tries to do for children in Serviluz, one study was of particular help to me. In his article "‘Get Up. Stand Up.’ Riding to resilience on a surfboard," Paul Morgan studies Sunset Surfers, a pilot program to teach surfing to children from a low-income, urban and largely Aboriginal neighborhood in Sydney, Australia. The program was started by governmental welfare agencies because they perceived that conventional child welfare approaches had proven ineffective in poor Aboriginal communities, largely because of the distrust most Aboriginal families felt for the Australian government after decades of

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid.

systematic oppression¹⁵. Although Serviluz doesn't have the same history as Aboriginal communities in Australia, similar patterns of oppression and trauma within the community can be identified—Serviluz, for instance, has already been forcibly relocated once, so that the city could construct a shipyard, and the specter of certain future relocation to make room for World Cup construction looms large in the community. According to Aldemir “Calunga,” the president of IPOM, the organization has had to work extremely hard to gain the trust of the community, because in Serviluz governmental welfare organizations—and even just non-profits in general—are seen as symbols of politicians' empty promises, as ways for the government to claim they are doing good while pocketing the money meant for the community¹⁶.

Morgan goes into considerable detail about the psychological damage done to children who live in socio-economically marginalized communities. Usually, these children experience trauma through either abuse or neglect, both of which eventually manifest as learned helplessness in the child: abuse puts a child into a situation over which they feel no sense of control, teaching a sense of powerlessness and resulting in Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder; neglect warps a child's sense of their ability to overcome challenges and learn new skills, because there is no positive validation from the caretaker when a new skill is mastered; either kind of trauma produces anhedonia, which is the loss of the capacity to experience joy. “The sense of self that emerges from such early

¹⁵ “For over a century until the 1970s, Australian government policies resulted in Aboriginal welfare practices known collectively as the ‘Stolen Generations’. Stolen Generations was the systematic, forced removal of Aboriginal children from their families to be raised in institutions or by non-Aboriginal foster families.” (Morgan, p56.)

¹⁶ Informal interview with Aldemir “Calunga,” IPOM offices, April 12 2012. See Shared Journey Field Journal.

experience is one of profound powerlessness and apathy – ‘Why bother?’¹⁷”

The Sunset Surfers program was well-situated to combat these psychological damages. “When abused and neglected children are involved in structured programmes incorporating an element of challenge, such as scouts, sports or artistic activities, their experience of success fosters a sense of competence that allows them to abandon disempowering coping strategies resulting from the experience of abuse and to more effectively respond to the hazards of life.¹⁸” And according to Morgan, the program was effective in its goal of giving the children the positive experience of mastering a skill, because although many children described aspects of the sport as challenging, none of them expressed frustration and all of them expressed high levels of enthusiasm and pleasure in the program.¹⁹

The fact that the program participants described it as ‘fun’ is not inconsequential. Indeed, the association of surfing with fun, excitement and ‘coolness’ was a key factor in why the organizing agencies chose the sport to teach²⁰ and why IPOM chose surfing as its tool to aid community development in Serviluz²¹. The pleasure of surfing has important psychological ramifications for children: “The experience of feelings of pleasure is a powerful motivating factor in the process of learning to surf. It maintains enthusiasm until the pleasure associated with a sense of mastery is achieved. It enables the learner surfer to tolerate the frustration inherent in the repeated experiences of failure

¹⁷ Morgan, p59.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Morgan, p61.

²⁰ Morgan, p60

²¹ Formal interview with Aldemir “Calunga,” IPOM school in Serviluz, April 19 2012. See Shared Journey Field Journal.

that are part of learning a complex new skill, and to persist in spite of frustration until they experience a sense of mastery.”²²

Morgan’s study was crucial in terms of helping me understand the psychology behind what surfing instructors (both within IPOM and outside of it) seek to do in Serviluz. While I have found other articles studying the effects of after-school programs on high-risk youth, this is the only one I’ve found that focuses specifically on the benefits of surfing, specifically. What’s more, the criticisms Morgan has of the Sunset Surfers program makes my study of IPOM seem almost like the natural and necessary extension of his initial research. He says that “longer-term benefits resulting from changes to internal working models of self as powerless²³” can’t result from a program as short as Sunset Surfers, and that a more permanent institution (which IPOM is) would be needed to facilitate these benefits. He also cites the need for a community-based approach: “If the programme were to continue, it may be useful to work at the community level to develop a club structure to support children’s more frequent ongoing participation in surfing outside the programme, in order to achieve sustained changes in children’s attitude towards challenge.²⁴” Working at the community level within a club structure is exactly how IPOM operates.

Mastering Skills—On Water and On Land

Although Morgan’s research is particularly apt for the surfing classes in Serviluz, IPOM’s other classes are also organized around the guiding principle that helping a child to master a skill fosters empowerment and combats any negative coping strategies the

²² Morgan, p60.

²³ Morgan, p62.

²⁴ Morgan, p63.

child may have developed due to their daily situation. I found throughout the course of my stay in the neighborhood that the bulk of the surfing classes taught in Serviluz were not actually official IPOM classes, but rather were taught by the teachers of the Escola Beneficente do Surf Titanzinho—while IPOM works closely with the E.B.S.T., and many children in Serviluz attend both the surfing classes of E.B.S.T. and the other classes at IPOM, IPOM does not pay a salary for the E.B.S.T. surfing classes, the way it does for the rest of its classes.

Therefore, in analyzing what the children are getting out of all of these classes, I will address surfing separately from the other classes such as art, music, etc—because the latter are funded and organized entirely by IPOM, while the former are not. Not only are these classes given by two different organizations, but they also occupy different niches in the cultural space of the neighborhood.

Surfing

João Carlos Sobrinho, or ‘Fera’ as everyone calls him, runs the Escola Beneficente Titanzinho do Surf (EBTS) out of his house in Serviluz. The building is two stories high, with the second story consisting of his family’s living area, and the first consisting of his kitchen, a common room with a computer and television, several concrete-floored rooms reserved for surfing and yoga classes, the school’s modest library, and a workshop where EBTS and IPOM have started to build their own surfboards. Although there isn’t much delineation between the parts of the building that belong to a family home and the parts that belong to the community school, it is common practice to take your shoes off before entering into the family’s rooms.

I interviewed Fera in his living room, while his 15-year-old son and surfing student, David Sobrinho, worked on the computer and other children and surfboards came in and out of the room. During this first interview, Fera explained to me how he sees surfing as much more than simply a pleasurable activity. “We work to utilize surfing as a tool of social inclusion... Often in this fight of social inclusion... we have to rescue citizens through football, dance, surfing, and art.”²⁵ For him and his school, surfing is not the goal in and of itself, but rather a means to empower people in the community and improve people’s lives.

IPOM views surfing in much the same way. When my Community project group was first introduced to IPOM through its president (and later my ISP advisor), Aldemir Calunga, he spoke of using surfing as a tool for education and social justice. During our first formal, on-camera interview with Calunga, he described the systematic reasons behind IPOM’s organizational goals, as well as illuminating the precise, context-specific reasons that the organization chose surfing, specifically, as its chief tool in attaining those goals.

“Because the majority of formal education in Brasil is precarious... you see that most kids aren’t interested in anything... All that’s left for many communities in Brasil is informal education. Here [in Serviluz] they have the coast, waves not too strong for beginners, a climate that allows for surfing weather throughout the entire year, and people who love the sea as the source of their wealth. They are fishermen, those who work on the beach. You have to draw the child in [to education] in a way that they can understand, and here that way is surfing. So if we apply surfing, through IPOM, we can see that it’s a way to awaken a desire for learning in the child. Parallel to this, we must have resources, idols to talk with the child and act as examples for them—obviously, any educator has to be an example.”²⁶

²⁵ Translated from Portuguese: “Nossa escola... já existe 17 anos. Nós fazemos um trabalho a onde nós utilizamos a surf como um ferramento de inclusão social.” See Field Journal, p9.

²⁶ Shared Journey Field Journal, p6.

From Fera and Calunga's words we can see how, for the teachers, surfing fits into a broader vision for community development and empowerment. Turning now to the testimony of the children learning to surf in Serviluz, we can look at how their experiences reflect this vision.

Two of the teenaged boys I interviewed, David Sobrinho (Fera's son) and Flavinho Santos, are more than just surfing students—they have begun to teach their own classes at EBTS. These classes are perhaps the most obvious examples that I personally observed of how these surfing classes go beyond the imparting of information to actively empowering the students through their own participation. During the first surfing class I observed,²⁷ David leads the class through several minutes of stretches and warm-ups, with each activity designed to engage the muscles exercised in surfing. The class then moves on to focus on technique, with a volunteer stepping to the middle of the class to demonstrate how they stand up on a board—Flavinho adjusts the volunteer's position to be more correct while Fera talks to the class. Then the whole class (all boys, on this particular day) then grab their surfboards and walk together to the beach, where David and Flavinho lead them through the positions of 'kata'—a particular set of movements, almost a dance, which is designed to practice on land the same movements that are required when you're surfing. The boys practice in rows, breathing hard and focused on the movements at hand. Only after they've finished do they grab their boards and head for the water.

As I mentioned above, Fera helps teach for a few minutes in the middle of the class, but otherwise stays out of the way while David and Flavinho lead. They're good teachers, with an ability to make the other boys pay attention that I very much doubt I

²⁷ See Shared Journey Field Journal, p4.

would possess if I were in their place. Rather being a passive beneficiary of EBTS's programs, they are already exercising agency within the organization, despite their youth. Watching them teach, I feel like I'm watching an instructional video on how to create future community leaders.

I interviewed both David and Flavinho about the role that surfing played in their lives, as well as why they liked to teach the sport. The answers that they gave me about their own, personal enjoyment of surfing resonated strongly with Morgan's research about surfing's psychological benefits. When I asked David how he felt every day after he finished surfing, he replied, "Surfing is great. When you're stressed out with something, you can go surf. When things are bad at home, I go to the sea, and feel calmer."²⁸ I asked the same question of Flavinho, who told me "[After surfing] I feel calm, and light. I feel like I'm with God."²⁹

In addition to being students, David and Flavinho help teach surfing to other children. Their motivations for teaching surfing have much to do with the community ethic that Fera spoke of. "Practically everyone here knows how to surf. This is very important, because all of us can teach the next generation. From our school, there could come the next big world champion... My dad always impressed upon us, 'Whoever you teach to surf can go on to teach others.' And so we always carry this with us. You teach the others so that they can teach the next generation."³⁰ From David's words, we can see

²⁸ Translated from Portuguese: "Surfar é muita boa. As vezes quando está stressada com uma coisa a gente vai pulmar, essa estressa sim. 'Tou quando as coisas assim em casa estão muito ruim, eu vou pra mar. E depois eles passem. Fico mais calma." See Field Journal, p21.

²⁹ See Field Journal, p23.

³⁰ Translated from Portuguese: "Porque aqui praticamente o todo mundo sabe surfar. Isso é muito importante, para todos de nos que ensina a outra geração que os pais crescem. Porque dessa escolinha de nós, pode sair um grande campeão mundial.... Porque assim o meu pai, ele

that surfing is more than a sport for Serviluz residents—it is valuable, cherished local knowledge, as well as being a source of pride and a tradition that connects the generations.

IPOM's Classes

On Fridays, the only class IPOM offers is a group psychology session that's often fused with an English class. This might sound confusing, but mostly what it entails is a short, basic lesson in English, followed by some sort of group art activity. Throughout the class, IPOM's child psychologist, Jonathan Ponte, circulates around the room, helping the kids with whatever they need help with and talking with them—sometimes casually, sometimes one-on-one in a separate room—about their lives and any problems they might be having. It's less a formal class and more of a relaxed, safe environment to allow children to both stretch their creative muscles and talk about anything that might be bothering them.

At the end of my second week in Serviluz, I observed and participated in one of these classes. It was a large group, consisting of about 23 kids between the age of about five and 12. Andrea, one of the two English teachers, led the class, reading aloud the story of “The Old Woman Who Swallowed a Fly” to teach the kids the English names for all the animals in the story (fly, spider, cow, etc). After doing a short lesson on the vocabulary, she starts the kids on an art project: they have to color in the outlines of all the animals from the story as well as the old woman, cut the animals out, and glue them onto the old woman's stomach. Andrea and I circulate throughout the room, occasionally

melhor impressiona pra mim, “Quem você ensina surfar possa ensinar aos outros.” See Field Journal, p20.

helping the younger kids with the scissors and asking all of them to name the animals for us; Jonathan is in another room, talking one-on-one with one of the boys.

Later when I interview her, Andrea talks to me about her motivations for working with IPOM and what she hopes to impart through her classes.

“All of [the kids] only go to school in the morning or the afternoon. So I think what they have here with IPOM is a way to spend time constructively with other children, with adults who care, with people who want to spend time with them. And you know, like—with the maracatu, the art, and what Jonathan does, and with a little bit of the English as well, they have a chance to express themselves. If they don’t surf, what do they have to do around here? There’s not an awful lot to do. And that’s me as a teacher, I believe that children should have an opportunity to make things, to draw, to work together, to have an opportunity to express themselves. And so I think that’s the biggest thing they get from this time here is it’s constructive time with people who care.”³¹

It’s important to note that in addition to IPOM’s recognition and support of the surfing tradition in Serviluz, they also seek to expand the number of options for recreation in Serviluz, beyond just surfing.

Ascertaining the effectiveness of IPOM’s goals with their non-surfing classes proved difficult, because most of the participants in these classes were younger. In interviewing the participants in the EBTS’ surfing programs, I lucked out, because the adolescents I interviewed were very articulate and eager to describe to me what they enjoyed about surfing and why they thought it was important. Contrary to this, most of the participants in IPOM’s ceramics, music, and English classes were younger children, many of whom were shy about talking to me, and I found it difficult to use formal interviews to gain an understanding of their experiences with the program.

Still, every child that I interviewed reported positive feelings about IPOM classes. Isabele Nascimento Sousa is twelve years old, and has been involved in IPOM for a

³¹ See Field Journal, p25.

month, more or less. She says that she feels “very good, very cool” after an IPOM class, and that her favorite classes are art and English.³² I also interviewed Caoane Lima Rocha, and asked her what the differences were between her regular school and the classes she goes to at IPOM. She told me that she feels “cool” after an art class with IPOM, and that “it’s very cool that we do activities in IPOM that we don’t do at school.”³³

I also found it helpful to talk to the mothers of the kids at IPOM. Regidania Feitosa Lima Silva has two children attending IPOM classes, Caoão and Caoane (interviewed above). I asked her if she had noticed any changes in her children, since they started attending IPOM classes. She replied:

“Definitely. For Caoao, I’ve seen that he is very active. And after he began surfing, as well as maracatu, ceramics and the psychology classes, he changed... he became calmer and more patient. Before, we knew that he was very active, and now he’s become much more calm.”³⁴

Another mother, Pressiana, talked to me about her child, Caoana Seé, who is six years old and has been attending IPOM for six months. “When I see him in class, I’m happy, because he’s learning... inside the classroom he’s growing, and learning ceramics, maracatú, and on Fridays there is the psychology [class], that includes Andrea’s English class, which I think is very important for him..”³⁵ When I asked her if she had noticed any

³² See Field Journal, p15.

³³ Translated from Portuguese: “Muita legal gente faz atividades que a escola não faz.” See Field Journal, p17.

³⁴ Translated from Portuguese: “Com certeza. Ao Caoao, pra frequencia assim de vista, ele é muita ativa. E depois que ele começando surfar, tanto como maracatu, como de argilo e o psicologo, ele mudou... mais calma, mais paciente. Antigamente, a gente sabia que ele era muita ativa, calmour mais.” See Field Journal, p18.

³⁵ Translated from Portuguese: “Me sinto feliz, porque ele tá aprendendo, ele não fica na rua. Lá dentro, ele tá de crescimento, como fazer argila, e a tem maracatu. E sexta que a psicologo, então

changes in her child, she laughed and said, “He didn’t know how to make clay sculptures before, and now he’s making them. Over there in the kitchen I’ve put the planter that he made. I’m happy that he’s learning how to do this because before he didn’t have the knowledge. Before he didn’t want to pay attention [in class].”³⁶

When Pressiana talks about how her son now knows how to make sculptures out of clay whereas before he didn’t, she is saying that she thinks it’s a good thing for her son to be learning a new skill. This hearkens back to Morgan’s research: “exposure to challenges with achievable goals, encouragement and support for managing frustration results a sense of mastery for the child.”³⁷ What’s more, Pressiana’s observation about her son echoes back to Calunga’s words about using surfing and experiential education to get kids excited about learning in general.

Empowerment and Social Inclusion

I have covered the goals of IPOM and EBTS’s teachers, as well as the benefits these programs have for the individual participants. How does this picture lead to community development, and empowerment for the community as a whole? Why is IPOM good for the whole community, beyond the good it does for those attending its classes?

More than one informant tells me that IPOM acts to prevent young people from getting involved in drugs and crime, because it gives them somewhere to go and constructive things to do. Regidania says, “There are many kids that in the afternoon and

tem a aula de Andrea de Ingles, que acho muito importante para a conhecimento dele.” See Field Journal, p26.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Morgan, p59.

night have nothing to do. They end up hanging out in the street, and [IPOM] benefits them because they aren't hanging out in the street, but instead are participating in ceramics, maracatu, psychology—I think it's all very good."³⁸

The children themselves seem to agree with this view, as David tells me, “[IPOM] will definitely improve the life of many kids here... It occupies their minds, so that they can't stay in the street, learning the wrong things.”³⁹

And Raimundo Cavalcante, a longtime Serviluz resident and surfer, tells me that getting involved in surfing deters many kids from getting involved with drugs:

“For you to surf and be a good athlete, you have to keep yourself physically and psychologically in shape. Surfing is about all of this. Today you see that the surfer prefers to not use drugs, so that he may become a great surfer. In the past it wasn't this way—if you surfed you smoked pot, but today we don't have this assumption anymore. Society doesn't have this assumption of surfers who smoke pot, because the surfer is a professional, he gains global recognition, we have worldwide champions... So this is a profession that many of these children will want. I think they'll want to not use drugs in order to reach this kind of victory. I think that drugs won't lead to any champions. And today, with IPOM here, kids are inside the classrooms, kids are participating in the classroom and studying.”⁴⁰

These interviews paint a picture of IPOM's classes as a deterrent for crime in the community. Evaluating the actual effectiveness of these programs on crime rates would require a more scientific study of several years, which of course is outside the scope of my research. I therefore can't say conclusively that IPOM's classes actually succeed at preventing young people from getting involved in drugs and crime, but even without hard

³⁸ Translated from Portuguese: “Há muitas crianças, tinha muitas crianças que na tarde não fazer nada. Ficam na meia da rua, e essa projeto que ele trouxe beneficio muita crianças, que não fica na rua, que lá participando na argila, maracatu, tem psicologica bem gosto muito bom... Acho que muito legal esse projeto.” See Field Journal, p18.

³⁹ Translated from Portuguese: “IPOM... com certeza vai melhorar a vida de muitas crianças aqui. ...Ficou ocupar a mente dos outras, ta que eles não possam estar na rua, aprender as coisas errada.” See Field Journal, p20.

⁴⁰ See Field Journal, p24.

evidence, it's clear to me that the residents that I interviewed interpret these programs as important steps toward solving their community's crime problem.

As for the social inclusion aspect of community development, my research tells me that Serviluz residents feel that IPOM is having an effect on the overall system that excludes them, and are optimistic that these effects will increase in the future. In my conversation with Fera, he tells me that he's aware that a divide exists between IPOM and the neighborhood, because IPOM's leadership comes from a higher-class background than the residents in Serviluz—but he thinks that this divide can be useful. He tells me, “Cléa, you had a childhood and an adolescence in a place that was probably better than our community. But why better? Because the authorities took initiatives to improve it... here, IPOM is important because it's made up of people rich and influential. They are looking for actions that can improve this question of our community. How? Bringing the teachers for the school... and joining with the community to fight for our own objectives.”⁴¹ It's important to note that Fera is not saying that IPOM is inherently important just because its founders are rich, but rather that IPOM's upper-class connections can be useful to the community because they can get the attention of the authorities that have previously neglected Serviluz. In other words, IPOM is situated to go beyond the benefits they provide for program participants and start removing institutional barriers, taking steps towards social inclusion as defined by Tremblay and Gutberlet.

⁴¹ Translated from Portuguese: “Clea, voce teve uma infancia e uma adolescencia numa lugar que provavelmente seja melhor do que nossa comunidade. Mas melhor por que? Porque as autoridades tomaram iniciativas... Aqui, IPOM é importante porque é formado pelo pessoas ricas, pessoas influente. Eles tem que olhar para as ações que podem melhorar a questão aqui do bairro. Como? Trazer a pessoa a faculdade...juntar-se com a comunidade para lutar em próprio objetivo.” See Field Journal, p12.

Social Relevance

The founders of IPOM and the founders of the EBTS, Serviluz' Associação do Moradores, and other organizations in the neighborhood, do not come from the same cultural or class background. IPOM's founders live in wealthier neighborhoods and have more money than the founders of the EBTS and the Associação das Moradores, and no one tries to deny these facts. However, despite the class divide, IPOM works closely with its partners in Serviluz, sharing a building with the Associação das Moradores and supporting the surf classes of the EBTS. These organizations are so intertwined that it took me weeks just to figure out who in the neighborhood was doing what. As Fera puts it, "In our neighborhood, we work together in a net. Right now IPOM makes up a part of this net with us. ...My role is to support IPOM, and IPOM supports us. ... IPOM is one of many entities that are working to resolve this question of life in Serviluz. IPOM is new, and arrived to add to this net, and this addition is important for us, because we have people who have been working for 20 years."⁴²

The more time I spend in Serviluz, the more I appreciate the apt metaphor of a net. (Especially after observing the fishermen pulling in their catches at dusk, five men using all their strength to haul in one vast net from the sea.) Children run back and forth from IPOM's building to Fera's schoolhouse, getting art lessons in the morning and surfing in the afternoon, or vice versa. Tucked behind IPOM is the house that I lived in

⁴² Translated from the original Portuguese: "Assim nos trabalhamos em rede. IPOM ela faz um parte da rede agora para nos. ...Minha função é apoiar IPOM, e IPOM nos apoia. ... A IPOM é um das muitas entidades que estão trabalhando para resolver essa questão. A IPOM é nova, e chegou para somar e, que chegou pra somar é importante para nos. Já existe pessoas que trabalhavam 20 anos." See Field Journal, p9.

with Dona Maria Zinha, the president and face of the Associação dos Moradores—she has an office in IPOM’s building, and sits outside the classroom every day to watch and scold any children who get too rowdy. Two doors down from Dona Maria’s house is a ballet school and recreational center, both run by a whole other non-profit. No one seems to worry about specialization or stepping on toes; everyone’s work flows seamlessly into everyone else’s.

In this aspect, IPOM and its sister organizations are profoundly different from most of the non-profit organizations that I have personally studied or volunteered with in the U.S. American non-profits generally try to be as efficient as possible, and avoid doing work that other organizations might already be doing. Certainly, community organizations try to work with each other and support one another, but the knotty, complex pattern that weaves together organizations in Serviluz is an altogether different creature.

It’s highly possible that there are tremendous downsides to this approach that I was not able to uncover in only three weeks, and I can’t say for certain that this network approach would work in every neighborhood. But from my observations, IPOM’s close connection with the team of local organizations in Serviluz not only helps all organizations thrive, but also serves to mitigate the feelings of cultural differences between IPOM and its community. Like I said, no one denies that IPOM’s founders are richer than most Serviluz residents, but at the same time, when I drive through Serviluz with Calunga, he stops every fifteen feet to wave to someone he knows, and IPOM staff are regularly invited to have lunch inside Dona Maria’s house. Beyond the level of personal connections, I have seen that many of IPOM’s programs have built upon

programs that already existed in some capacity in Serviluz, whether they were begun by the Associação or by EBTS. For instance, IPOM has a program that employs women in Serviluz to sew totes and handbags out of recycled material. IPOM then sells the bags and the profit is split between organizational costs and the womens' salary. Before IPOM arrived in the neighborhood, the same women were working on a similar project under the Associação das Moradores. The project had stalled, and so IPOM worked with the Associação to organize a new one. Instead of attempting to start from scratch, IPOM worked to build the capacity of a previously extant program.

Economic development programs throughout the world crash and burn for a multitude of reasons, one of which is an inability to adapt to and work with local realities. The funding of your organization or its brilliant ideas hardly matter if you have no idea how to work with the people that you're trying to help. It's entirely possible that IPOM may crash and burn in the future as well—they're only two years old, after all, and I hear plenty from the organizers about the intense stress and uncertainty inherent in getting a baby non-profit off the ground. But the partners that they have found in Serviluz make it much more likely that if they falter, it won't be the end. They have proven themselves adaptable to the world that they've found themselves in, which is a lesson that many NGOs throughout the world would do well to take note of.

Conclusion

One day, while we were swimming at Titanzinho, one of my friends with the EBTS told me that there's an old saying that goes, "To take a bath in the ocean is to clean

the soul.”⁴³ We were sitting on black rocks at the water’s edge, covered in a fine crust of sand mixed with saltwater, and I was sunburnt and sore from getting beaten up by the waves. We were surrounded by children with surfboards, bobbing up and down in the waves like corks. My soul felt squeaky clean.

The soul-cleansing property of their backyard is only one of the many things that Serviluz residents have to be proud of. They have engineered an ingenious, efficient web of community organizations to support anyone who needs it; they have deep wells of knowledge that they can use to teach each other as well as people coming in from outside. They have a surplus of extremely talented surfers. All of these factors contribute to an ongoing process of empowerment for the community as a whole, and I feel confident in saying that many of the children learning to surf and sculpt and drum and speak English today, will be breaking down the barriers of social exclusion as soon as they grow up.

⁴³ See Field Journal, p8.

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Appendix

1. Could you have done this project in the USA? What data or sources were unique to the culture in which you did the project?

No. The geographical factors of this project made it so that it was necessary for me to do it in the precise neighborhood where I did. Perhaps organizations such as IPOM exist in the U.S., but they would lack the same cultural and organizational context, and this context was part of what I came to study.

2. Could you have done any part of it in the USA? Would the results have been different? How?

I could have studied surfing classes in the U.S., but they would not have been in a favela, and therefore the results would lack the context of an organization being in a favela.

3. Did the process of doing the ISP modify your learning style? How was this different from your previous style and approaches to learning?

Because of my lack of background in anthropology, I had to learn a lot of the techniques required for research methods on the go, after I was already in the field. Before, I would never have attempted to undertake a project without knowing precisely what I needed to do beforehand. It has given me more confidence in my ability to adapt to challenges on the fly.

4. How much of the final monograph is primary data? How much is from secondary sources?

I utilized four secondary sources, but most of the argument in my final monograph relies on primary sources for support.

5. What criteria did you use to evaluate your data for inclusion in the final monograph? Or how did you decide to exclude certain data?

My criteria was how relevant the data was to my argument.

6. How did the "drop-off's" or field exercises contribute to the process and completion of the ISP?

They were tremendously useful. Without these exercises, I wouldn't have been able to muster the courage to interview complete strangers in another language.

7. What part of the FSS most significantly influenced the ISP process?

The Community Project, by a mile. This would be true even if I had not chosen to do my ISP on my Community Project.

8. What were the principal problems you encountered while doing the ISP? Were you able to resolve these and how?

The problem I encountered was that I realized that my original problem statement, which stated that I was going to evaluate how well IPOM contributed to community development, couldn't really be calculated objectively. I resolved this by changing my problem statement.

9. Did you experience any time constraints? How could these have been resolved?

Yes. These could have been resolved by a longer ISP research period.

10. Did your original topic change and evolved as you discovered or did not discover new and different resources? Did the resources available modify or determine the topic?

No.

11. How did you go about finding resources: institutions, interviewees, publications, etc.?

I found publications through my home institution's library, and I found the institution through SIT and my informants through my advisor.

12. What method(s) did you use? How did you decide to use such method(s)?

Formal and informal interviews, observation, and participation. I decided to use these methods because SIT told me to.

13. Comment on your relations with your advisor: indispensable? Occasionally helpful? Not very helpful? At what point was he/she most helpful? Were there cultural differences, which influenced your relationship? A different understanding of educational processes and goals? Was working with the advisor instructional?

Absolutely indispensable. Calunga did a great job helping me find informants and freely giving me information about the organization, and was available to answer questions. I have no complaints.

14. Did you reach any dead ends? Hypotheses which turned out to be not useful? Interviews or visits that had no application?

No.

15. What insights did you gain into the culture as a result of doing the ISP, which you might not otherwise have gained?

I got insight into the importance that geography can have on culture, specifically in relation to the ocean. I didn't feel the full impact of how Serviluz is shaped by its beach location until I did my ISP research there.

16. Did the ISP process assist your adjustment to the culture? Integration?

Yes. It vastly improved my language skills and introduced me to a wider variety of Brazilian families than I would have experienced just in my homestay.

17. What were the principal lessons you learned from the ISP process?

Too many to list here. Mostly I learned to emulate the sociability and friendliness of Northeastern Brazilians.

18. If you met a future student who wanted to do this same project, what would be your recommendations to him/her?

Narrow your focus as much as you can, and don't do more interviews than you think you need. Research how to do an ethnography beforehand so that you go into the project with the right skillset.

19. Given what you know now, would you undertake this, or a similar project again.

I would only undertake a similar project again if I knew that I would have more than a week's time to write the final monograph at the end.