Brazilian Perspectives on the 2014 FIFA World Cup and the 2016 Olympic Games

Kishan Patel
University of Vermont

Follow this and additional works at: http://scholarworks.uvm.edu/hcoltheses

Recommended Citation
Brazilian Perspectives on the 2014 FIFA World Cup and the 2016 Olympic Games

Honors College Thesis
Name: Kishan Patel
Advisor: Professor Ben Eastman
Department of Anthropology
University of Vermont
Table of Contents:

Acknowledgements ............................................................................................................. 3

Chapters
1. Introduction ..................................................................................................................... 4
2. Setting the Stage ............................................................................................................. 18
3. The 2014 FIFA World Cup ............................................................................................... 28
4. The 2016 Olympics (Bidding and Preparations) ......................................................... 58
5. Conclusion ...................................................................................................................... 77

Works Cited ....................................................................................................................... 79
Acknowledgements

In no particular order, I would like to acknowledge and thank those who have helped me complete this thesis. Mom, Dad, Niki, and Rio, you have always been a fantastic support system in my life and your contributions to this thesis are greater than you’ll ever know. Ben Eastman, you have allowed me to take two amazing things in my life, sports and anthropology, and dedicate myself to them to my heart’s content. I will be eternally grateful that I had the privilege to meet you all of those semesters ago because you have never ceased to be an inspirational professor or person. Deborah Blom, yours was the first anthropology class I had taken, and having you evaluate and discuss my work four years after that point was truly rewarding. I still carry with me the advice you gave on how to be a successful college student. Erica Andrus, thank you for taking an interest in my work even though I brought you into the thesis process near the end. I am so happy that I came in to your office to ask quiz review questions that one morning because I got to meet you properly. My friends John, Jon, and Katie, thank you for listening carefully when I needed it, helping me prepare for my thesis defense, and reminding me to stay calm, respectively.
Chapter 1: Introduction

I started watching the FIFA World Cup when I was 12 years old. While most of the 2006 tournament has become hazy in my memory, I recall when England Captain David Beckham curled a shot around a bunch of Ecuadorian players to book his team a place in the quarter-finals. I remember physically jumping out of my seat in my grandmother’s apartment in London when the goal went in. From that moment onwards, I have loved soccer or ‘the beautiful game’ ever since.

Eight years later, I was excited to watch the 2014 World Cup in Brazil. Over the last few days I had read various newspaper articles that predicted Brazil to win the tournament. I also believed that they would win because they had always been overachievers in World Cups with five championships since the creation of the tournament. I knew that watching this opening match would be exhilarating because Brazil has traditionally supplied fast, intricate, and dazzling soccer. Thus, the opening match between Brazil and Croatia ought to be a landslide.

After some organized passing moves, Croatia sent a low ball across the face of Brazil’s goal, only for Marcelo (one of Brazil’s most talented defensive players) to tap the ball into his own net. I remember my jaw dropping and staring in disbelief at the television set. The mighty Brazil had started this tournament in the worst possible manner. The cheering and chanting by Brazilian fans inside of the stadium quickly became a painful silence. The camera honed in on people putting their hands over their faces in shame and disappointment. I disliked how Brazilians had to experience this moment in their own country, especially with the world watching. Still, this was the Brazilian National Team and my hope had not evaporated for the score to turn around. Minutes later, Neymar, the most talented attacking player on the pitch, sent a shot into the bottom right hand corner of Croatia’s net. Neymar started celebrating with his
arms widespread like a bird, Brazil’s goalkeeper Julio Cesar punched the air, and the fans jumped up and down and screamed in delight. I am not ashamed to say that I mirrored the fans completely. In truth, I was utterly ecstatic for these people who cared so deeply and so passionately for soccer.

Brazil saw out the victory comfortably in the end, which capped a perfect opening night of the 2014 FIFA World Cup. I followed Brazil’s matches as often as I could after that. They performed reasonably well for most matches and their fans were second to none.

When Brazil faced Germany in the semi-finals, I was riding in a car with my family from Manchester, England to London England. My aunt was texting me the score line because I was missing the game due to traveling. Twenty minutes into the car ride my aunt told me Germany was up five goals to zero against Brazil. I shook my head in disbelief and told her to stop making fun of the team I had come to support. When I reached my grandmother’s home in London, I switched the television on to see a little boy pushing his glasses up his face so he could wipe the tears streaming from his eyes. I also noticed that his whole body was shaking as he cried, which conveyed the magnitude of the final score line. Brazil lost seven goals to one, which is unheard of at such a high level in the game. This was embarrassing, shocking, devastating, tragic, and disgraceful for Brazilians, as far as I could tell.

I began to try and make sense out of what I had seen once the World Cup had ended that summer in 2014. This was the third World Cup I had watched and I had never seen anything like this before. More specifically, I had never seen such emotional fans before. As a direct result of this observation, I wanted to learn more about sports and games\(^1\) in Brazil. I knew Rio de Janeiro

\(^1\) For this thesis, games can be thought of as activities in which people compete with “equally binding rules” (Eastman 2014: 1) placed upon them for the purpose of pleasure and also establishing winners and losers. Sport
would host the Olympics in 2016 and this only added to the questions I started asking about Brazil.

Thus, in this thesis, the questions that I seek to answer concern how Brazilians view the world around them and create meaning (Geertz 1972: 16). Most importantly, this includes the question, “what do the World Cup and the Olympics mean to Brazilians?” This question quickly develops into asking, “what do the bidding processes, preparations, executions, and results of these events mean to Brazilians?” The answers to these cultural questions are also inevitably related to the economic and political components of Brazil. Therefore, I am also asking broader questions such as “what does it mean to be Brazilian right now as a part of a country aspiring to move from global marginalization to the global center?”

The simple answer to my questions about meaning involves the idea that Brazilians will form attitudes on these mega-events\(^2\) based their specific social identities. Considering that race and sex, for example, are largely associated with socio-economic status as a result of colonization and miscegenation (racial mixing), certain groups of Brazilians will be more discontent than others with the forthcoming mega-events in Brazil.

To describe colonization and miscegenation, I will use Gilberto Freyre’s *Casa-Grande & Senzala* as a guide. This work by Freyre (an anthropologist, sociologist, and historian) was a massive contribution to the field of anthropology in Brazil because it closely examines the complex processes at play during Brazilian colonial times.

\(^2\) A mega-event can be defined as an event which draws international attention in the form of tourists and spectators due to sporting events that are being showcased in a host nation or city. For the purposes of this thesis, the term will usually refer to the 2014 FIFA World Cup or the 2016 Olympic Games, both of which can be classified as mega-events.
Brazil’s racial situation is frequently idealized as a utopia where three races\(^3\) have mixed and coexisted for centuries. For example, there are records of the children of Portuguese colonizers attending school with indigenous Indian children. A phenomenon occurred where “the schools must…have been part of a process of coeducation of the two races, the conqueror and the conquered, a process of cultural reciprocity” (Freyre 1987: 171). Without skeptical eyes, this situation seems absolutely perfect. If children of different races are coexisting in a working environment peacefully, then the future should be bright for Brazil. One would be overly critical to think that there were not at least some aspects of mixing races that worked well because Brazil did eventually develop into a functional democratic nation. What made the transition smoother in certain areas was the fact that “the family and not the individual, from the sixteenth century, was the great colonizing factor in Brazil” (Freyre 28). While colonization can sometimes be marked by mass killings and displacement of the colonized population, the Portuguese were more interested in infiltrating families and using the indigenous Indians to advance their goals.

Frequently, Portuguese men would “encounter… the naked indigenous Indian women with their loose flowing hair” (Freyre 12). This exposure to a new type of woman allowed the “union of the Portuguese male with the Indian woman” to be “incorporated into the economic and social culture of the invader” (Freyre 3). The name for this colonization strategy based on miscegenation is *tropicalismo*, and it was extraordinarily powerful. Still, despite the coexistence between the Portuguese and the Indians, there was no denying that the Indians were exploited from day one, which led to their subordinate status in modern day Brazil. Essentially, the Portuguese used the Indians as slaves and also as a way to become familiar in their new territory.

\(^3\) I say three races (Indigenous Brazilians, Portuguese Brazilians, and Afro-Brazilians) in order to make clear and simple the phenomena that occurred many years ago. Typically a discussion of race in Brazil involves acknowledging that a racial spectrum exists instead of three clear cut categories.
Eventually, they exhausted the Indians for they were “sorry workers”, and “the Negro had to be substituted for him” (Freyre 180). To put this move into context, if the Indians were subordinate to the Portuguese, Negroes were subordinate to both. They were brought to Brazil for the soul purpose of performing labor because the Indians could not do it. The Africans brought in also didn’t have the knowledge of the land to offer the Portuguese, like the Indians did, and that lowered their status even more. These Negro slaves were completely and mercilessly objectified such that a common phrase in Brazil erupted to describe how “Brazil is sugar, and sugar is the Negro” (Freyre 277). Due to this mentality, there is a “close association between darker skin and manual labor” (Owensby 1999: 65). Therefore, today, darker Brazilians tend to be of lower socio-economic status than lighter skinned Brazilians. These Brazilians may tend to push back on hosting the World Cup and the Olympics because public spending will go towards these mega-events and not growth for the working class.

It should be mentioned that if Indian and Negro males were exploited, the women of these races were treated even worse. Another phrase became popular in Brazil during colonization such that it allowed words to become actions. The idea was that women of different races had different purposes such that the Portuguese colonizers said “white woman for marriage, mulatto woman for f******, and Negro woman for work” (Freyre 13). The subordinate status and objectification of women still exists today such that it has become part of modern Brazilian culture. Specifically, Brazilians distinguish between the ‘house’ and the ‘street’. Within these separate domains, gender roles are prescribed to men and women. The difference consists of the “inside and the outside, hence between feminine and masculine” (Freyre 65). Men are meant to go into the world and street where there are “unpredictable events,

---

4 This must be taken with a grain of salt. When I say this position of women is part of Brazilian culture, I mean that historical processes may have created a slight tendency for this to happen.
accidents, and passions” (Freyre 64). Alternatively, “the Brazilian kitchen is a special place, exclusively female, and - even today, in a time of change and modernization - separated from the rest of the house and usually hidden, which is not the case with houses of North America and Europe” (Freyre 65). Based on simple cultural norms like this, women may not be encouraged by society to go out into the world. If women are not supposed to participate in an unpredictable world, globalization, the World Cup, and the Olympics will not suit them at all. As more emphasis is placed upon communication and relationships, women may tend to struggle because society has already created obstacles for them to participate outside of the house, even without globalization. This phenomenon, in turn, lowers socio-economic status and increases dependency on public spending away from the World Cup and the Olympics.

Alternatively, given the difficulties that darker Brazilians and women tend to face, white Brazilian men tend to have the best socio-economic positions. Perhaps the best example of this economic advantage can be described with how white men have passed down opportunities to their sons. It was not uncommon for priests to “transmit their white and even mestizo descendants an ancestral superiority due to social advantages that included culture and wealth” (Freyre 452). Thus, simply being a light-skinned man tends to give one a startling socio-economic advantage from birth due to the social structure in place hundreds of year ago.

Perhaps the best way to examine this racial advantage is through the distribution of land in Brazil. It is estimated that “1 percent of the population controls almost half the land [in Brazil]. The system is called enfiteuse and it means that some people in Brazil still have to pay taxes to the descendants of former Portuguese royals and nobles” (NPR 2015a: 1). If these laws are still in effect and have not been repealed yet, then the logical conclusion must be that they are so ingrained in Brazilian society that it is difficult to efficiently modernize the system. Thus, in
order for Brazilians to own private property and break the tax system, they must take their case to the courts instead. Individuals such as Regina Chiaradia, who live in the Rio neighborhood Botafogo, are finally getting the chance to voice their minds about the injustice of the system. She comments, “if people buy a property, they may think they are the owners, but technically they aren’t. A lot of people just can’t believe it and they become enraged. I’m not going to pay an enfiteuse so that some family can live without working. You are being robbed” (NPR 2015a: 1). Regina belongs to a group that attempts to dismantle this passage of property since colonial times. She seeks to identify the few families that reap the rewards without working hard and also to spread awareness to others. If the few families Regina talks about are able to purchase more private property because of their status, globalization, which inevitably brings the privatization of property, will leave even less for 99% of Brazilians. Basically, rich Portuguese descendants may be able to use their money to get richer, and the rest of the people of Brazil will struggle more and more.

These phenomena and inequalities are important to keep in mind as we move forward. Indeed, they provide us with a very general idea about which groups of Brazilians may have the privilege of participating in and welcoming the World Cup and the Olympics. However, I cannot fully answer my questions with this information alone.

In order to address my questions about how Brazilians create meaning out of the World Cup and Olympic processes in more detail, I have developed a specific methodology. This thesis includes two main components. In the first component, I use work by scholars such as John MacAlloon, Henry Walker, Alan Tomlinson, and Christopher Young to put a theoretical framework of games, sports, and mega-events in place. Here, the purpose is to provide some context about what games, sports, and mega-events are capable of doing for people and nations.
The second part of this thesis involves analyzing how Brazilians experienced the bidding, preparation, execution, and aftermath of the 2014 FIFA World Cup in Brazil. This second component will also include an examination of how Brazilians experienced the bidding and preparations for the Rio de Janeiro Olympic Games in 2016. In order to perform this analysis, I will use archival methods as opposed to ethnography. That is, I will draw my data from photographs, interviews, and Brazilian newspapers. While this is far from meeting the holistic qualities of ethnography, we can still learn something about how these people consider the World Cup and the Olympics through quotes and facial expressions documented in the Brazilian media and the American media. For example, it is evident from examining an article in “O Estado de S. Paulo” that many Brazilians believe their president is a “mentira” (a liar) due to the way she promised support for the people but made accommodations for FIFA, foreigners, and Brazil’s elite instead.

Given this methodology, it is fair to question why my work needs to be grounded in the anthropology of sports. I could have used, for example, psychological methods to understand Brazilians in relation to these mega-events. The anthropology of sports focuses on certain themes that are particularly useful in examining my question about how Brazilians understand, interpret, and create meaning out of the World Cup and the Olympics. First, the anthropology of sports acknowledges the range of those who are really participating in sports and games. As Noel Dyck puts it, this range can be anywhere from “a few onlookers to thousands and even millions of spectators who, though they may observe the proceedings either from close up or from a considerable distance, nonetheless watch, ponder, interpret, debate, and celebrate what they witness and experience” (2000: 13). In other words, so long as people are paying some kind of attention to the sports or games in question, it is the responsibility of the anthropologist studying
sports to understand how those people, and not just athletes, relate to those sports and games. As a result, grounding this thesis in this discipline requires that Brazilians who pay attention to the mega-events are central to the discussion at hand.

Second, in accordance with the broader purpose of anthropology, the anthropology of sports seeks to focus on how athletes, spectators, fans, and other participants create meaning out of what they observe in athletic performances. Noel Dyck applies this principle of the discipline to soccer by noting it as an “opiate of the masses”\(^5\) which allows for the “killing of time” in a “world without meaning” (31). Basically, people are actively seeking out a way to spend their time in a way that results in them experiencing pleasure and feeling a sense of purpose. The World Cup and the Olympics, then, composed of games, can also be analyzed in this way. In sum, using the anthropology of sports as my lens ensures that I will not stray too far away from how Brazilians create order out of chaos with respect to these mega-events.

However, absolutely essential to how Brazilians create meaning out of the mega-events is understanding the unique qualities of games. After all, games are at the heart of both the World Cup and the Olympics. Further, how Brazilians make sense of the games themselves also relates to how they will form attitudes on the other aspects of mega-events like the bidding, preparations, hosting outside of the sports venues, and legacies. It is my intention that this section enhances what I have already discussed with respect to the anthropology of sports.

In order to define the qualities of games, I will compare ritual\(^6\) to games in order to hone in on the most essential points to understand. Specifically, I will use the ritual that is Brazilian

---

\(^5\) This phrase was originally used by Karl Marx to describe religion. The idea was that religion was a break from the struggle associated with industrial labor and capitalist exploitation. Noel Dyck has applied the phrase to describe how soccer brings people pleasure by allowing them to temporarily escape everyday life.

\(^6\) A ritual can be defined broadly as an event where people come together for a common purpose in a way that is scripted and repetitive in order to reinforce social structure or transition individuals into new social roles. However,
Carnival (a ritual) and mega-events (composed of games). First, I will paint a picture of how Brazilian Carnival functions in Brazilian society. Second, I want to compare the scripted procedure of Carnival with the unscripted nature of games. Third, I will discuss how Carnival has relatively low stakes compared to the high stakes involved in mega-event games. Finally, I mention how there can be elements of scripted-ness and low risk in games due to the ability to prepare for them. In this way, games share qualities with rituals.

Carnival involves the complete inversion of Brazil’s typically hierarchical social structure once a year. That is, we can observe a shift from a hierarchical society into an egalitarian one for a few days a year. The primary way in which this happens is through social role reversals. For example, macho men can become “incredibly timid in sexual confrontations” (DaMatta 1991: 84). Whereas normally these macho men would approach women and place pressure on them to engage in a sexual manner, the men can ignore the pressure society places upon them to act in a masculine way. Similarly, women who would normally be on the receiving end of these aggressive approaches can approach the de-masculinized men and condemn the way society forces women to be passive. Therefore, Carnival represents a chance to blow off steam and relieve any frustrations that society creates through assigning specific social roles. Through this relieving of tension, one can classify Carnival as a “ritual of rebellion” (Gluckman 1954: 30). This specific kind of ritual emphasizes the idea that the hierarchy in Brazil creates a building frustration in people that must be released once a year. Once this release happens through Carnival, Brazilians go back to their lives with the hierarchy reinforced for another year.

With this description of Brazilian Carnival, we can extract two points of comparison and contrast between this ritual and the games that mega-events are centered upon. First, Brazilian
Carnival remains an incredibly scripted procedure whereas games and mega-events do not have the same scripted nature. In Carnival, Brazilians acknowledge that they will go to the streets, dance, condemn social roles, vent frustration, and ultimately return to their normal lives. Alternatively, games and mega-events do not have the same scripted procedure because how Brazilians act depends upon how athletes perform. If Brazilian athletes perform well in their competitions, Brazilians can vent their frustration just like in Carnival because they have the chance to forget about the problems associated with life outside of the games. Further, solid athletic performances can translate into feelings of nationalism, pride, and euphoria. However, if Brazilian athletes perform poorly, Brazilians do not have the chance to vent their frustrations because they are forced to return to the mundane nature of everyday life without experiencing a pleasurable release through sporting victory. As a result, feelings of shame, humiliation, disappointment, and frustration are exacerbated when defeat occurs. In sum, games and mega-events have this “contingent nature” (Levi-Strauss 1966: 32) based on athletic performances whereas rituals like Carnival do not.

These polarized potential outcomes bring me to my second point when comparing rituals and games and it includes a discussion of stakes. On the one hand, Carnival seeks to create temporary equality. On the other hand, games establish winners and losers such that hierarchies are created. In this way, the games are “inherently risky” (Schieffelin 1996: 80) in nature because there always remains the possibility that “things may not go well” and the athletes one supports could be on the losing side (MacAlloon 1984a: 9). The goal then, particularly in hosting mega-events, is to use this set up of winners and losers to show the world that your nation can compete on a global scale and become a “nation among nations” (MacAlloon 1984b: 326). By winning the games embedded in mega-events, Brazil can associate its nation and its people with
the concept of competence. Alternatively, by losing the games in these mega-events, Brazil invites the world to watch as it creates an association between Brazilian-ness and incompetence. This possibility sums up the risk involved in hosting mega-events in contrast to the low risk of performing rituals.

In writing these sections on the risky and unscripted qualities of games, I also acknowledge that the outcomes of games do not depend one-hundred percent upon chance. While games are indeed defined by uncertainty rather than inevitability (Levi-Strauss), athletes and coaches seek to push the odds in their favor such that the outcome of games depend less on chance and more on preparations. Cuban baseball teams, for example, demonstrate this idea well because “the state, coaches, and athletes created a script for winning and crucially, they followed it. Winning became probable rather than improbable, actual instead of possible” (Eastman 2016a: 3). If we apply this situation to Brazil, there falls upon the Brazilian athletes and coaches a responsibility to figure out a way to win and then execute that strategy. That is, the games themselves are in many ways a culmination of months and years of scripted planning and athletic training. In this way, games are incredibly similar to rituals.

Again, the purpose of this section was to demonstrate the qualities of games in comparison to rituals in order to provide context for how Brazilians interpret mega-events both inside of and outside of sports venues. Now I will make a transition, while staying within the realm of the anthropology of sports, to describe the broader significance of this work.

I have noted how the anthropology of sports offers a unique way of answering the questions I seek to answer. However, it should be understood that the anthropology of sports has been cast aside in the past because it represented “modern and not historic principles” of anthropology (Dyck 14). Recently, sport has been described as a “highly gendered and embodied
experience that transforms both the physical bodies and the inner selves of its practitioners” (Sehlikoğlu 2014: 1). That is, there seems to have been a shift towards acknowledging the magnitude and relevance of what we can learn about human beings through sports. It is my hope, then, that through this thesis I can add a small contribution to a discipline that remains relatively young. Additionally, I look forward to seeing how this work fits in with future research focused on games, sports, and mega-events, particularly when it relates to Brazil.

This thesis is unique because I am asking questions about Brazilian attitudes during a time when the country has been selected as the first in South America to host the Olympics. Given Brazil’s unique position, the nation has an opportunity to bring itself and South America into a more central position in the global community. That is, Brazil has a chance to show the world, through these highly scrutinizing mega-events, what it and the continent have to offer. Brazil, ideally, will showcase its ability to organize and execute large-scale events efficiently in addition to the other areas that represent its potential as a nation like soccer athletes and plastic surgeons. Thus, we can really learn in this sector of the anthropology of sports more about what Brazilian-ness is and what it will become. Brazilian-ness may be about to become more about leadership, competitiveness, and competence. Still, these mega-events may also perpetuate Brazilian-ness as being about continual untapped potential.

My work may also be useful in terms of understanding how other countries may be affected by hosting mega-events. Specifically, the intense globalizing properties of the World Cup and the Olympics will almost always create opportunities for foreigners and locals to street-support and share living spaces. What I’m really getting at here strikes at the core of what mega-events are about: parting, having fun, and leaving the mundane nature of everyday life behind for a few weeks. These actions, particularly in how they are intricately related to games, cannot be
thought of as unique to Brazil. What does differ between nations involves paying attention to the magnitude of these activities based on the outcomes and expectations of the games on show.

Having explored the significance of this work, I will now conclude this introduction with an overview of the Chapters in this thesis. In Chapter Two, I shine the spotlight on case studies by John MacAloon and Harry Walker in order to demonstrate how sports can create national unity and bring segregated parts of society together, respectively. I then move into discussing the potential pros of hosting mega-events like reinventing a country’s image and also the potential cons such as economic stress. Finally, I conclude the Chapter with Brazilian reactions and interpretations of the Pan American Games and the Confederations Cup. In Chapter Three, I paint a picture of the way Brazilians viewed the bidding, preparation, execution, and aftermath of the World Cup. Specifically, this includes events like winning the World Cup bid, the World Cup matches, street supporting, and seeing empty stadiums. In Chapter Four, I switch gears and describe how Brazilians felt when they won the Olympic Bid in addition to how Brazilian Olympic Committee members advocated for the wonderful time people would have at the Olympics. Then, I discuss the most recent events in Brazil, which includes the refurbishment of the favelas (slums), the treatment of disabled Brazilians, the protests against President Dilma Rousseff, and the rapid globalization facing Rio de Janeiro and Brazil. Finally, in Chapter Five, I take a step back and provide an overview of what was discussed as well as the main limitations, strengths, and conclusions of this thesis.

Chapter 2: Setting the Stage

With those pieces of the puzzle in place, the purpose of this chapter is to ‘set the stage’ so that I can bring to light the general forces that contribute to how Brazilians feel about the World
Cup and the Olympics in their country. Specifically, the forces include the nature of sports and games and the capabilities of mega-events. To highlight how these entities can and have influenced Brazilian attitudes, I want to shine the spotlight on Brazilian soccer star Mané Garrincha.

Garrincha lived from 1933 to 1983 and is widely known as one of the best players to have graced soccer because of his dribbling style. Teams with Garrincha in them created “goals and thrills” (Bartholo and Soares 1963: 8) which enhanced the image of Brazilian soccer as fluid, beautiful, and quick. To this day, Brazilian fans demand that soccer is played in these exciting ways. Therefore, this is an example of how the nature of Brazilian soccer will influence the expectations and demands that Brazilians will have of their own team during the World Cup. These expectations and demands cannot be separated from the attitudes that will be molded concerning the mega-events.

With that example in place, we can consider two studies that tell us about the nature of sports and games. These studies are also provided in order to create context for later chapters when I discuss the World Cup and the Olympics, which are centered on sports and games.

First, John MacAlloon, an anthropologist and historian who studies cultural performance theory, found how national unity in Puerto Rico increased through great athletic performances. MacAlloon describes a time where Puerto Ricans belonged to one of three political parties, “autonomistas, estadistas, and independistas” (1984b: 319), sport was an entity that allowed Puerto Ricans to feel part of a single nation. In other words, in politics “status is ambiguous and conflicted”, but in “international sport it is not” (MacAlloon 1984b: 326). Despite political differences due, at the time, to post colonialism, relations with Spain, and relations with the United States, the use of sport for political unity shined through at the 1982 Central American
and Caribbean Games. In an amazing showing, Puerto Rico showcased “brilliant performance after brilliant performance” such that “the competitors won an astonishing 105 medals” (MacAloon 1984b: 343). Taking a step back, a staggering phenomenon occurred. Despite the deep divisions between Puerto Ricans in political contexts, Puerto Rican competitors, and supporters by extension, pushed their nation towards international recognition through their medal count. At least in this way, Puerto Ricans felt that they were a “nation among nations” (MacAloon 1984b: 326). In my view, it seems possible that any political divides among Brazilians could at least be temporarily alleviated and replaced with nationalistic sentiment through the Olympic medal count. Due to the structure of the Olympics, Brazilians can celebrate any number of medals, even if there are only a few. Thus, the nature of sports, in these contexts, may allow for positive attitude formations as opposed to condemnations of the Rio 2016 Olympic Games.

One can still elaborate on how sports may influence Brazilian attitudes on the forthcoming mega-events in their country. The second study I want to examine involves anthropologist Harry Walker, whose work concerns the Urarina people of Amazonian Peru. He offers insight as to how participation in sporting events can allow marginalized populations to integrate themselves as part of a nation. Walker, while writing on the function of soccer in Amazonian Peru, describes how indigenous populations can “integrate themselves into a nation” (2013: 3). Intercommunity matches are the basic mechanism for this to occur. Through these matches, soccer takes “formerly antagonistic sectors of society” (Walker 21), and creates a “right to citizenship” (Besnier and Brownell 2012: 452). That is, even if indigenous populations and the majority of Peruvian society cannot work together, at least they recognize and respect the opposite group within soccer matches. In other words, “sport creates connections between people
at the same time that it strengthens local and national identities (Besnier and Brownell 454).

Ideally then, both inside and outside of soccer, Peruvians acknowledge each other first and foremost as Peruvians due to this strengthening of identities. This argument takes an optimistic viewpoint, and while this is a specific case concerning Amazonian Peruvian soccer, it may be worth thinking of this as a case of how sport can facilitate interactions in Brazil. For example, if favela residents and the indigenous populations of Brazil participate in the celebrations of the World Cup and the Olympics with the majority of Brazilians, favorable outcomes can occur socially and politically. The same effect can happen in Brazil as it did in Peru where simply participating in each other’s existence strengthens both local and national identities. Given this chance to participate in the mega-events, we could see positive attitude formations for both marginalized Brazilians and Brazilians who are more at the center of society.

Again, the purpose of highlighting these two studies was to demonstrate the ways in which the nature of sports can influence attitudes formed about the mega-events in Brazil. In sum, we can extract the idea that solid athletic performances allow citizens to feel united in their common nationality, regardless of segregating social identifiers that may also be present. Additionally, sports and games have the potential to act as bridge between marginalized and less marginalized populations of a given nation due to the way participation is required for their execution.

I want to make a transition now by asking a broader question: What are the pros and cons of hosting the World Cup and the Olympics? These pros and cons become important because Brazilians may find that they can tap into one or more of these factors, which will influence how they feel. The answer to the question, while certainly not simple, may be answered while examining the past World Cups and Olympics that have been hosted. In general, however, the
main benefits and drawbacks for hosting mega-events include, international exposure, economic effects increased or decreased social cohesion, and changing a nation’s image.

There are three nations worth discussing that hosted mega events in order to change their international image. Germany, Spain, and South Africa all hoped to “enhance their destination image” (Kim, Kang, and Kim 2014: 161). That is, these three countries wanted to make themselves desirable to foreigners for tourism and business. The ability to quantify destination image as something that increases or decreases is particularly difficult. Still, perceptions of Germany, Spain, and South Africa changed after their respective events.

Germany’s Munich 1972 Olympic Games were about mending Germany’s image and place in the world through the Olympic ideals. This mending process needed to occur because of the country’s history of Nazism. Key to spreading the ideas which fed into World War II was the 1936 Berlin Games. During this mega-event, Nazi propaganda was used to influence the spectators present. Through this process, Germany created a situation where being German related to being part of the so-called superior Aryan race which in turn called for the dehumanization of Jews. In order to reverse these ideas many years later, the 1972 Munich Games were a chance to change how the world’s citizens viewed what it meant to be German. The idea was that Germans wanted to reinvent themselves as people who did not tolerate discrimination in any way. Thus, the Olympics came into play because at the heart of the Olympic Movement remains the push for the betterment of humanity and the condemnation of discrimination. Indeed, these Olympic Games were an “attempt to make a small contribution to the survival of the Olympic ideal” (Tomlinson and Young 2006: 122). Through Rio 2016, Brazil will seek to shed the image of itself as a country that has been ravaged by dictatorships and
stagnation. Therefore, celebrating a new idea of Brazilian-ness will become essential if Brazil is to pull off this reinvention.

South Africa hosted the 1995 Rugby World Cup and used it to propel itself away from apartheid. This was the time for the world to see South Africa as a united nation and not one divided by racial structures. Essentially, the Rugby World Cup, like other “mega events, can serve the purpose of providing intangible benefits in the form of nation building” (Matheson and Baade 2004: 1095). Nation building can be defined broadly as social and political growth. As history shows, South Africa succeeded with its plan to use a mega event to accomplish its nation building goals because the country moved farther away from apartheid. On an international level, “the 1995 Rugby World Cup in South Africa represented an opportunity for the country to announce its re-emergence as a full member of not only the world’s sporting community but its political community” (Matheson and Baade 1095). To participate in international politics, South Africa needed to be unified as a nation first, and rugby created that opportunity. Moving away from politics, spectacle and changing a country’s image destination are inevitably linked. Essentially, “spectacle specifies no further affect than diffuse wonder or awe” (MacAlloon 1984a: 269) which leads to the formation of “collective memories” (Tomlinson and Young 228). That is, certain images will be so powerful that they will stay with the viewers forever. Through these images, change and redesigning a nation are possible. For example, “the picture of South African President Nelson Mandela wearing the jersey of the white South African captain Francois Pienaar while presenting him with the championship trophy, was a powerful image to the world indicating that South Africa had emerged from its years of racial oppression and served to unify the country” (Matheson and Baade 1095). Brazil will seek social and political changes just like South Africa did. Ideally, special attention will be paid to uniting Brazilians with different racial
and socio-economic identities which will lead to a united nation fully participating in international politics.

When Barcelona hosted the 1992 Olympic Games, the mega event’s success transformed the city. The transformation was so drastic that the phenomenon was deemed the “Barcelona Effect” (Wagar 2009: 5). More specifically, the term refers to how “Spain has continued to reap increased tourism and tourist dollars... Barcelona has gone from a location once dwarfed by Madrid and other European cities to one of the most visited locations in Europe” and “the city has efficient transportation systems, athletic venues, and public housing locations” (Wagar 5).

Essentially, Barcelona 1992 epitomizes the ideal Olympics because the Olympic Movement includes, “promoting a positive legacy from the Olympic Games to the host cities and host countries” (Olympic 2015: 1). Ideally, Rio de Janeiro will be able to look back in 2026 and see better public housing, transportation, and other services that point to the 2016 Olympic Games as the source.

In contrast to Barcelona 1992, which showcased a strong economy for many years after the mega event, Athens 2004 was perhaps one of the worst Olympics held in terms of economic prosperity. With Athens, the “impact effects were quite strong during the preparation phase and the year the Olympics took place” but the long term effects were not as remarkable (Kasimati and Dawson 2009: 145). Here, short-term success outweighed the long-term opportunities for growth. One might blame Greece’s current economic situation on the 2004 Olympics. While it is difficult to point to a singular event for an economy plummeting, Greece was guilty of being the “biggest Olympic spender at roughly $12 billion U.S. dollars” (Wagar 4). Athens epitomizes what can go wrong in hosting the Olympics without a strong and careful financial plan in place. Brazil, then, must in weary of spending too much money on assets that will not eventually
contribute to the economy in the future. Stadiums tend to be economic drains, with Sydney 2000 as a prime example. Alternatively, infrastructure such as transportation, as showcased in Barcelona 1992, can be valuable if it continues to serve the country after the mega-event has ended.

At this point I have examined how Brazilian history, the nature of sports and games, and the nature of mega-events are three powerful forces to consider when discussing Brazil and mega-events. My aim is to now dive into how these forces shaped responses to Brazil hosting the Pan American Games, the Confederations Cup, the World Cup, and the Olympics.

Hosting the Pan American Games was essentially a warm up for the mega-events to be held in 2014 and 2016. The Games were met with mixed reactions from Brazilians because on the one hand some people were swept up in the fun of the preparations and others subtly voiced their discontent of hosting.

One of the individuals who was excited about the preparations for the Pan American Games was Jose Antonio Afunson, aged 65. He volunteered to help organize the Pan American Games. He discusses his experience with the event by saying, “it is a great joy to volunteer and I’m influencing my daughters and granddaughters to sign up and participate as well. It is a change to win a lot of knowledge and make friends” (Rio2016 2015a: 1). Thus, not everything concerning large international events like the Pan American Games are focused on political and economic progress. In this case, someone’s life has been changed for the better because of the Pan American Games. I believe there will always be a substantial amount of the population that gets swept up in the fun of an international event. Even those who are critical of the dirty work that must be done in order to host the Games may hold their tongues while the actual excitement unfolds. For example, it was common for journalists to subtly note the issues of the Pan
American Games without openly condemning them. This phenomenon stems from the idea that people excited by the Pan American Games did not want to be brought down to reality, which means that the journalists had to be careful with what they wrote. The social pressure to be emotionally invested in the Games can be linked to the South Korea and Japan World Cup where individuals would turn to one another and ask, “why aren’t you cheering?” (Tomlinson and Young 226). By radiating indifferent or negative ideas in times of general excitement, people are singled out as spoil-sports. That is, sport can be thought of as something that can literally be spoiled because it depends on a kind of cooperation. In observing and indirectly participating in sports, people foster an atmosphere that feeds into influencing the sports in question. By this I mean that if fans and media outlets cheer athletes on and become swept up in the excitement of sports, then it makes the whole experience of watching sports more enjoyable. Alternatively, if enough people disturb the fun or the celebrations, it can harm everyone else’s experiences such that they can be deemed spoil-sports. In accordance with this idea, the newspaper Zero Hora published an article with careful language with regards to the Pan American Games. Ana Maria Acker writes, “I will not get into the controversy of the astronomical expenditures on the organization of the games. It will be up to the investigating authorities, but when it comes to Brazil, everyone knows the end of this film” (2007: 1). My guess would be that individuals who are happy volunteering like Jose Afunson are the exception rather than the rule, but Acker must still be careful in what she says. Therefore, while Acker makes some reserved statements, her tone ends with a definitive air of resignation due to poor decision-making in Brazil’s history. Based on the way that the article is written, it appears that most Brazilians are all too familiar with disappointment where decisions relating to the public are concerned.
This disappointment transformed into action when Brazil hosted the Confederations Cup, a tournament that acted like a rehearsal for the World Cup a year later. Generally, two main events occurred which summed up the Confederations Cup. First, many Brazilians protested before and during the Cup. Second, the Brazilian national team won the tournament, which calmed the protests slightly before they really erupted before the World Cup a year later.

Demonstrators chanted, “we don’t need the World Cup” and “we need money for hospitals and education” (Dettoni 2013: 1). The Brazilian people could not have been clearer about what they expected from their government. Instead of hoping for positive results by investing in a mega-event, they argued that it made more sense to pour money directly into the ailing areas of Brazil. Normally, soccer has a way of calming these protests and once the sporting events begin there are fewer demonstrations. While this was definitely true during the World Cup in 2014, the opposite held true during the Confederations Cup. There were shocking reports of “a few thousand protestors gathering outside Brasilia’s football stadium on June 15 as the Confederations Cup opener saw the national team play Japan” (Dettoni 1). The tendency for protestors to resist participating in the either the street celebrations or the matches of the Confederations Cup, is in opposition to the idea that, “ritual-like trappings surround public athletic events” (Blanchard 1995: 51). In other words, the fact that the events of the Confederations Cup could not draw in Brazilian protesters into a state of ecstasy speaks to how strongly they felt.

The positives to take away from the Confederations Cup were that the victory for the Brazilian National Team would at least set up Brazil for possible success a year later during the World Cup and calm the protests temporarily.
Two integral members of the Brazilian National Team’s success in the Confederations Cup, Neymar and Felipe Scolari, voiced their thoughts on Brazil’s first place finish. Their words do not just apply to soccer because they call for international recognition as well. Neymar in particular said, “Brazil have shown the World that the Brazilian National Team is back. We showed that we deserve respect with a great win over the world’s best” (Smith 2013: 1). The victory was essentially a warning to the rest of the world that Brazil had arrived both on and off the international soccer stage by defeating other extremely competent soccer nations. With the World Cup only a year away at this point, there was room for Brazil to send a message that it was ready to host such a massive tournament and welcome the world to its country. One must also consider the speaker in the situation. Neymar, Brazil’s best player, sits in a unique position because the “athlete is an exemplary figure who embodies the moral values of the community and serves as a symbol of these values” (Birrell 1994: 75). Thus, what Neymar says about the Confederations Cup holds value inside of the world of soccer. Ideally, these sentiments translate into nationalistic sentiments. I believe that the positivity from an athlete of this stature provides belief in the National Team in anticipation of the World Cup.

The coach, Felipe Scolari, addressed the Brazilian people directly to comment on how the team succeeded with a passionate fan base. Scholar said after the final, “I also want to draw attention to the support the team have had off the pitch” (Smith 1). Due to the way that soccer holds meaning with respect to Brazil’s history, that force alone was enough to incline some Brazilians to support the national team, despite the protests. In addition, those who did support the team were rewarded in full with a mighty victory at the end of the Confederations Cup. The victory was a sign that Brazil could go on to win the World Cup and that was enough for many Brazilians to feel excited at least where the sport itself is concerned.
Thus, the key point to extract from the Confederations Cup is that there existed at this point a continual building of tension among Brazilians due to a lack of attention paid to public services. Tasting Confederations Cup victory allowed for the protests to break down temporarily. This relationship between victory or defeat and calmness or tension will crop up again as I move into discussing the World Cup in Brazil.

Chapter 3: The 2014 FIFA World Cup

This chapter will focus on the bidding, preparations, execution, and aftermath of the 2014 FIFA World Cup in Brazil. Despite the eventual condemnations of hosting the FIFA World Cup, it cannot be diminished how elated some Brazilians were when they found out that the tournament would be theirs. As the news traveled, “celebrations broke out in various towns around the country with fireworks and festivities set to continue into the night” (BBC 2007: 1). Despite Brazil’s geographic size, there was a collective appreciation for the scintillating and romantic idea of the World Cup in Brazil. Perhaps the most direct example of the pride and nationalism at the time was when “100 people unfurled a green and yellow banner with the words ‘2014 World Cup is ours’ at the foot of Christ the Redeemer” (BBC 1). Considering the Christ the Redeemer statue overlooks Brazil’s capital city, it holds national significance like the Washington monument in the United States. The use of the Brazilian flag adds to the idea of celebrating the World Cup bidding victory as an event of national pride. Still, an equally important factor must be considered when examining nationalism in Brazil during this time period. The FIFA World Cup, at the end of the day, centers on soccer. In many ways, the celebration of the bid was a celebration of Brazilian soccer and all it stands for. A lot of people
felt that “the sport was returning to its spiritual home and it was football’s homecoming” (Ronquillo 2012: 30). Brazil has added players and style to the sport like no other nation in history. It becomes clear, then, why the celebration of the bid held meaning for some Brazilians.

As time wore on, however, for many Brazilians, the tournament was less about soccer and more about the potent social issues in Brazil. Essentially, tensions grew after the initial euphoria of winning the bid had passed.

To provide an overview of my argument for the remainder of this chapter, I would like to provide an analogy between the building of tension that Brazilians felt before the World Cup and the building of tension in crowds at soccer matches. In order to do this, I will point towards American writer Bill Buford’s work on English soccer. Buford writes about his experiences attending Cambridge United’s matches in a domestic tournament and how it felt to wait for a goal to happen. He describes how, “Cambridge United had advanced to a stage in the FA Cup by tying with 3 of its opponents. With one, there had been 3 replays before a positive result was achieved. Not scoring, themselves or their opponents, was a feature of their play” (Buford 2001: 167). In one particular game, Buford notes how a few shots nearly found the back of the net, but to no avail. In these instances, Buford commented, “I could feel everyone around me tightening up, like a spring, triggered for release. Except that there was no release. There was no goal” (169). This building of anticipation that Buford describes epitomizes both soccer and this next chapter in a nutshell. One can fully understand how frustrating it must be to witness games without goals in them. Every time that a game goes scoreless, or the expectations of the fans are not met, a tension builds. Therefore, if a goal does happen, the chance to celebrate is taken with tremendous gusto. Again, a connection can be drawn between this element of soccer and the way in which many Brazilians experienced the World Cup. That is, many Brazilians were dissatisfied
with hosting the World Cup and the tension created outside of the matches (due to lack of care for the public) needed to be released. Therefore, expectations continued to grow for this tournament to end in glory as the Brazilian national team reached the semi-finals and the partying on the streets intensified. Unfortunately, Brazil lost horribly to Germany by 7 goals to 1. At this point, the release that Brazilians demanded in soccer never came, and all of the expectations and tensions became humiliation, not celebrations. The release that Brazilians did get to experience included the fun, celebrations, and socializing that encompass the World Cup, which prevented tensions from surfacing during the tournament.

With this essential theme of tension in place, I would like to now show the other side of how many Brazilians felt about the World Cup Bid, especially after the initial celebrations.

A São Paulo Professor, Rafael Alcadipani, discusses how Brazilians were forced to shift their attention from their beloved soccer to FIFA’s demands. Alcadipani comments, “it's not a World Cup for the people, for the regular Brazilians who are crazy about football, who love the Brazilian team. What FIFA has made — especially with those arenas, which are very expensive to maintain — is to create in Brazil a kind of apartheid football, where the blacks will be playing and the whites will be watching it, because the blacks and the poor people cannot access these stadiums anymore” (NPR 2014a: 1). In other words, FIFA created divisions where barriers should have been broken down both in terms of race and socio-economic status. While winning the World Cup bid allowed a few Brazilians of different backgrounds to celebrate together, the expensive nature of the tickets and the public spending will prevent certain Brazilians from participating in the fun. One working class woman, Maria Merces de Paula, describes how she does not feel excited by the bid or the preparations for the World Cup. She says, “for me personally, in other years we would decorate the street, people were more excited. That is not the
case this year” (NPR 2014a: 1). Due to her background and the way that money has been spent in the country, Maria cannot enjoy the World Cup when she knows the broader impacts of the tournament. For the mega-event to be worth hosting, individuals like Maria need to be involved, at least on some level like decorating. As Besnier and Brownell put it, “spectatorship has an emotional component” (452). That is, seeing the matches, or at least, observing the decorations and feeling attached to them, allows people to be swept up in the World Cup hysteria. However, it appears that individuals attached to the World Cup were in the minority after the bidding process finished.

Upon noting the lack of popularity after the World Cup bid, politician Romário de Souza Faria voiced his concerns that Brazil was hosting the tournament. He initially “supported Brazil’s World Cup bid”, but eventually went on to say the “expense is now crippling us” (Guardian 2013: 1). Romário recognized that the circumstances in Brazil had changed as the World Cup approached. In accordance, he comments, “other politicians were in charge of the country and our political reality was different. I supported the bid because it promised to generate employment and income, promote tourism, and strengthen the country’s image” (Guardian 1). In many ways, Romário speaks about the potential ideal outcomes of hosting the mega-event. He reflects on a time where economic, social, and political growth were all possible with the tournament as a guiding force. The issue continued to be that as the tournament drew closer, each of these ideal outcomes looked less and less likely. In one final statement, Romário said, “I never thought the World Cup would solve all our problems, but now my fear is this will deepen problems we already have. Only FIFA is profiting, and this is one more good reason to go to the streets and protest” (Guardian 1).
To increase any frustrations stemming from the World Cup bid, the preparations for the tournament were not handled optimally either. In some ways, Brazil’s government failed in protecting its citizens during this time period. Two particularly significant events occurred, and they reflect instances where the Brazilian government could not stand firm in the face of adversity from FIFA. Specifically, the federal government relaxed the ban of alcohol inside of soccer stadiums and also indirectly played a part in the deaths of three construction workers in FIFA stadiums.

One might question how lifting an alcohol ban during soccer matches leads to the accusation that the Brazilian government does not protect its citizens. To understand the issue completely, one must return to the year 1995 in São Paulo. The ban was created “as a response to a violent fight between the supporters of two opposing soccer teams which led to a death and to many injuries” (Caetano et al. 2012: 1). The implementation of the ban speaks to the seriousness with which the situation was handled at the time. Then, to have FIFA demand that the ban be lifted such that the World Cup can make as much money as possible creates a great deal of tension. In fact, when FIFA secretary general Jerome Valcke said that the country’s organizers need “a kick up the backside”, Aldo Rebeldo, a Brazilian politician, responded by saying that the “country no longer recognizes FIFA secretary general Jerome Valcke as a spokesperson” (NPR 2012a: 1). Despite this tension, the ban was lifted before the tournament started and alcohol was sold to fans.

Allowing alcohol in the stadiums becomes a risky business because of the nature of games. Games insist that people subject themselves to unpredictability (Eastman 2014: 1) because no one knows that will happen inside of a stadium. So, in my opinion, there is little to be gained from making an unpredictable event even more unpredictable with alcohol. Essentially, the
government lifted a ban which could spark violence, demonstrations, or riots. Luckily, no one came to any harm as a result of this decision, but the move speaks to the weakness of the Brazilian government in that moment and the might of FIFA when it brings the World Cup to a country. Still, it is difficult to blame Brazil when FIFA can create pressure supported by immense resources. One could argue, however, that Brazil needs to learn to stand its ground during these confrontations if it is to become one of the top nations in the world. Therefore, the World Cup and the Olympics can serve as sort of test for Brazil when it is confronted with difficult decisions.

While there were no fatalities due to alcohol during the World Cup matches, the deaths of the construction workers in FIFA stadiums might have been preventable. In one particular incident, a metal structure collapsed during the creation of the Corinthians Arena. According to firefighter official Marco Lopes, “at least three people died in the accident” (NPR 2013a: 1). One construction worker, José Mario da Silva, saw the accident and commented, ”I walked right underneath the crane on the way to lunch. If it hadn't collapsed at lunchtime, a lot more people would have died” (Watts 2013: 1). Workers like José often do not have the luxury of rejecting the opportunity to work on a FIFA stadium. While the salary borders upon insulting and the hours are long, opportunities for moving up the socio-economic ladder are sparse. Therefore, even when an event like this takes place, construction workers must continue their tasks, despite the risk. Unfortunately, José’s take on the accident suggests a desensitization process where Brazilians have almost become accustomed to these events. In a way, the Brazilian government escaped international criticism and had luck on its side. Still, I believe that better planning could have saved even the three workers. Part of the problem was simply the amount of rushing and the number of hours put into the projects, which led to the accidents. That is, FIFA breathed down Brazil’s neck to have the stadiums ready in time. While FIFA deserves some of the blame, the
local and national governments should have implemented reasonable goals, regulations, and limits surrounding the stadiums. These long preparation processes are essential to attaining the favored outcome of mega-events like increased nationalism, solidarity, and unity. As MacAloon puts it, “investment of resources in preparation, anticipation, and transportation, contribute to the excitement” (MacAloon 1984a: 9) of cultural performance. While the World Cup itself was one of the most exciting in terms of matches, the poor preparations created outcomes that are the opposite of what would be desired. The deaths and impractical regulations did not allow for excitement to build and instead drained excitement away. Instead of nationalistic excitement, many Brazilians felt ashamed of the situation in Brazil. In addition to shame, the frustration and anger in response to the World Cup bidding and preparations resulted in widespread protests across the nation. The protestors’ objective was to voice that they did not want to host the World Cup at all, especially at the expense of solid public services.

In 2013 in Sao Paolo, protestors chanted, “the people have awakened” (NPR 2013b: 1).

To put these words into context, one year before the 2014 FIFA World Cup in Brazil, the city of Porto Alegre announced an increase of 20 cents in bus fares. In response, the Free Fare Movement organized protests to challenge the bus fare increase. The support in Porto Alegre was substantial enough to reverse the decision to raise the cost of public transportation. São Paulo government officials met similar opposition to that of Porto Alegre when they attempted to raise bus fares. It was here, in São Paulo, where the protests exploded into life. With each passing march in the major city, more people attended and voiced their concerns. São Paulo, in turn, triggered protests in Rio de Janiero and then many other cities across Brazil (Dent and Pinheiro-Machado 2013: 1). In many ways, the protests in São Paulo were exemplary of the other protests across the nation. What started as a demand to stop rising bus fare costs quickly escalated into a
vocalization of a variety of larger issues (Oliven 2013: 1). Among these issues, the most important were police brutality, insufficient public spending on health and education, evictions, and most importantly, lack of proper citizenship for Brazilians (Oliven 1).

These protests were effective in bringing Brazilians together for a common purpose. In a country where there have been recurring problems of economic class inequality, these protests allowed Brazilians to enter into a state of unity with members of similar and also different economic status. Still, it seems odd that protests could easily unite the middle and lower classes. Fascinatingly, these two classes shared similar demands. Public transportation, for example, highlights this point well. The lower class Brazilians do not tend to have the money to purchase cars like the upper class does (Holston 2014: 892). They need a cheap, uncrowded, and efficient public transportation system that is nothing of the sort in most cities in Brazil (Holston 892). Increasing the bus fare adds to the problems that these people face every day. The middle class, on the other hand, faces crowded streets with too many cars (Holston 892). In either case, both categories of people united in need of efficient transportation systems. Even if this unity is not permanent, it exposes the shared feeling of frustration due to the shire mass of people present.

The source of what makes this recent unification even stronger is that these are repeatable demonstrations. Every time protests are performed, more people join in. Then, repeating the same messages at the protests solidifies the common goal that Brazilians share to change the system. It is through these two elements of unification and repetition, that the protests were successful in at least limiting the bus fare and calling attention to larger issues.

One individual leading the charge in these protests is 19 year-old Luiza Mendetta. As part of the Passe Livre (Free Pass) Movement in Sao Paulo, Luiza has been attempting to make public transportation free. Since 2005 she has fought to change the whole system and she has
finally made a giant step forwards in that respect. Luiza comments, “everyday I take the bus for instance. And I know how much it sucks and how its horrible to be in there and how mistreated we are, how the conditions are very below what would be acceptable, how expensive it is. And I think everyone lives that” (NPR 2013b: 1). Her description of public transportation strikes at the heart of a problem that cannot be resolved by taking to the streets once a year and then returning home like with Brazilian Carnival. By participating in the Free Pass movement, Luiza Mendetta seeks to completely overhaul the poor public transportation system through a continual return to the streets to protest.

The desire to change the system is particularly enticing to look at right now because of Brazil’s identity. Brazil has repeatedly been labeled as a “country of the future” and as “incompetent” (Dent and Pinheiro-Machado 1). In a way, the issues surrounding the protests are a mark of what it has meant, at least previously, to be Brazilian. The protests themselves are a call to change the future of what it means to be Brazilian, especially in terms of the “state” that Lisa Wedeen mentions as part of her “nation-state” distinction (2008: 65). Wedeen’s expertise is in political science and this distinction she made was in reference to her work on nationalism and citizenship in Yemen. Her ideas can be applied to Brazil in the following ways. As a nation, Brazil is, at least ideally, marked by beauty, healthiness, and a racial utopia. The political and bureaucratic aspects of Brazil, essentially the “state” (Wedeen 8), is not supporting or overlapping with the Brazilian nationality. I would argue that this is not dissimilar to the paradoxical nature of how Wedeen describes a presence of both “Yemenness” and state problems in Yemen. Just as many Yemeni people felt a collective feeling of shame towards their

---

7 This essentially means that the time for Brazil to shine as a nation always seems to be in the future, and never quite attainable. The phrase has become a stigma where some Brazilians believe that their country will never offer social, political, and economic excellence the way some other nations do. It was thought to have been first been said by Charles de Gaulle, the 18th president of France.
system, Brazilians feel collective anger at how their system works. Thus, the widespread protests become slightly less shocking upon examining this anger.

As a direct result of this frustration we can observe scripted actions to how Brazilians perform the protests. Here, step one is often to participate in the use of social media. Before a protest, it is routine to see common phrases circulate online (Oliven 1). In this way, taking to the streets is an aftermath of what happens on social media. In these social spaces, Brazilians can see how other people around the world live their lives. This phenomenon allows Brazilians to desire the opportunities like those offered in more “advanced” societies (Owensby 116). The goal of the protests, in many ways, is to catch up with other nations. Then, the lack of opportunities in Brazil creates frustration and leads to protests in the streets. Step two is to physically bring oneself onto the streets where the protests happen. Step three is to join in with what everyone else is doing at the protest—protesting. In São Paulo, this meant using posters and vocalizing with others. The beauty of the posters is that they are accessible to new protestors coming in (they are easy to make) and that they put everyone on the same page. Similarly, the chants and slogans, which often rhymed, were effective in unifying everyone and because they are also easy to perform.

The unscripted aspects of the protests include the post-protest vandalism and unplanned violence. These protests are meant to be peaceful ways of demonstrating dissatisfaction. When people take advantage of these protests and vandalize or loot stores, that is unscripted behavior. This undermines the protests themselves because some people are creating corruption out of an event that is designed to put an end to corruption. How the scripted and unscripted behaviors intermingle might determine the effectiveness of a given protest. It also needs to be noted that what is deemed “scripted” and “unscripted” in this context is slightly subjective. Still, by assigning these designations it is possible to understand the protests from a different perspective.
I now want to shine the spotlight upon some more specific protestors in order to solidify the picture of Brazil as a country experiencing unrest right before the World Cup.

In two separate articles, the Brazilian newspaper *Correio Braziliense* posted images of protestors in front of FIFA stadiums with banners in their hands. One banner reads, “In the street there exists a fight in this country, I am Brazil” (2013a: 1).

The mention of ‘the fight in the street’ refers to a common cultural idea in Brazil. There are differences between the house and the street because “the category *street* basically points to the world with its unpredictable events, accidents, and passions; the *house* refers to a controlled universe where everything is in its proper place” (DaMatta 64). If the street already represents uncertainty and an element of chaos, taking to the streets to participate in protests is a testament to how passionately these people feel about having their opportunities at a minimum. In further support of this point, Brazilians are not meant to “violate unknown or unperceived hierarchies”
(DaMatta 64). That is, social norms dictate that people must go into the street in a way that is somewhat cautious\(^8\). Here, with the protests, caution has truly been left in the home and one sees the true feelings, thoughts, and emotions of dissatisfied Brazilians. The second banner reads, “If the robbery doesn’t finish, then Brazil will stop” (Correio Braziliense 2013b: 1).

These statements could not be clearer in expressing that the protestors are warning the elite in Brazil that they matter and influence the wellbeing of the country as well. Citizens see the event as a ‘robbery’ and a ‘fight’, which suggest violence. More specifically, the term structural violence may be more appropriate because the forces creating the violence consist of social institutions and entities. The words highlight the power imbalance from those at the top of the socio-economic ladder against those who are struggling at the bottom. Alice de Marchi, a

---

\(^8\) This wording should be kept in perspective and I acknowledge that not all Brazilians are cautious and timid outside of the house.
protestor, comments, “our cities are run in the fashion that money is freer than people. I think we’re seeing an uprising of a new political generation of people, of these 99% of Brazilians that don’t want the 1% to run everything as they have for the last 500 years” (NPR 2014b: 1). The opportunity to make noise and create a situation where the government cannot ignore its citizens must be taken. The visibility of the World Cup has allowed people to voice the threat to inequality and take action. In the future, there may not be as many clear chances to form widespread protests across the nation. In a way, Brazilians have used globalization as a way to combat globalization.

All three sets of protestors desire public spending in areas which will support those with medium to low socio-economic status. The last place that these Brazilians want to see money go is into black hole stadiums or into infrastructure that does not help anyone except for tourists. Considering that there will always be a population that demands and deserves public services, the issue must be addressed as soon as possible. Therefore, the areas of education, healthcare, and public transportation need to be addressed in order for the (potentially reoccurring) protests to be put to rest indefinitely.

The way to put these protests to rest temporarily includes the celebrations, fun, and socializing during the World Cup. That is, the World Cup itself can allow the tensions and protests built up from the bidding process and the preparations to be alleviated for a little while.

The celebrations that take place outside of the sports venues during the World Cup occur on a massive scale. Two key aspects of the partying during the World Cup include street supporting and socializing through sharing (living) spaces. Of course, these celebrations are only possible because FIFA decides to bring their tournaments to a host country or city.
FIFA’s specific programs include Football For Hope and Say No to Racism, which are heavily oriented towards sustainability and anti-discrimination, respectively. The extent to which these goals are executed properly can be thoroughly debated when considering the vast number of World Cups and Olympic Games that have taken place since their inception and also the recent FIFA corruption scandals. Still, in terms of street supporting and people sharing both living and public spaces, the World Cup meets some of FIFA’s goals.

Street supporting was particularly prevalent at the 2002 Korea and Japan FIFA World Cup. It is estimated that in South Korea, “five million people were reported to have participated in the street celebrations throughout the country” (Tomlinson and Young 216). The shire number of supporters in the same place and time creates effects that are greater than if the individual had experienced the events in isolation (Durkheim 1995: 210). These gatherings are made more meaningful due to the fact that they are often accompanied by vocalizations. These vocalizations can take the form of chanting and rooting for the sports team on display. Through these actions, “street supporters generate a collective enthusiasm, which is likely to enhance a sense of solidarity” (Tomlinson and Young 228). Here, the idea is that people can create common ground such that one’s specific social, economic, and political identities are not as important as the fact that you are supporting something bigger than those identities (Durkheim 210), at least temporarily. These effects are obviously not limited to South Korea and Japan’s World Cup. *Estado de Minas* reports that in Brazil people like Marihana Santos experienced street supporting first hand. Marihana discusses how she “accommodated a Chilean family, although they rarely stayed in the house” (Werneck 2014: 1). Occasionally she joined them, as she said, “we walked the streets and listened to different languages. Important was the strengthening of friendship and joy of participating together in the World Cup party” (Werneck 1).
At least in these types of situations, Brazilians could enjoy meeting foreigners and enjoy games with others first and foremost as human beings. In accordance with the human identity we all share, games allow people, on a fundamental level, to “seek out utter astonishment” (Eastman 2014: 1) together. Thus, at the core of the World Cup celebrations, there exists a “pleasure for the sake of pleasure” (Eastman 2014: 1). In my view, these basic facts about humans, games, and celebrations allowed many Brazilians to experience the party effect of the World Cup. As a direct result, there will always be a group of Brazilians that remember the World Cup with fondness because of the euphoria they experienced. Most importantly, this euphoria ensured that Brazilians had a chance to forget about the issues facing Brazil while the World Cup took place. It is no coincidence that the protests stopped as soon as people started celebrating in the streets together and had the chance to release any tensions tying them to everyday life in Brazil.
In addition to the street supporting, sharing spaces, particularly living spaces, also held value in terms of allowing Brazilians to feel positively about the World Cup. Tomlinson and Young describe how individuals at the 2002 South Korea and Japan World Cup “formed meaning and collective memories attached to specific times and places”. Thus, simply being in the same space and experiencing positive moments together holds a certain level of permanence. Paulo Felipe dos Santos, a hostel employee, accounts his experience with this phenomenon. He says, “I miss the foreigners because it was great to meet people from different cultures” (Werneck 1). The photo posted with his words showcases flags from around the world hung around the doorway into the hostel. Upon each flag there are signatures from people of the corresponding nationality.

Here, the experience of living together and sharing space, even in separation from the heat of the celebrations, allows Brazilians like Paulo to feel content with the World Cup proceedings. In addition to sharing spaces, Brazilian culture tends to instill a sense of hospitality into those who experience and live it.⁹ This key piece of culture stems from the idea that Brazilians are

---

⁹ This statement must be kept in perspective and I acknowledge that not all Brazilians have a strong sense of hospitality ingrained in their minds.
“punished for trying to enforce the law or for believing that they live in a truly egalitarian universe” (DaMatta 167). They must “be well aware of whom they are talking to, and this leads to a style of personal relationships that is very ‘warm’, intimate, and expansive, as visiting foreigners have systematically noted” (DaMatta 167). Therefore, when foreigners from all over the world pour into Brazil, the locals have a predisposition to be kind and respectful to their guests. Marihana and Paulo are excellent examples of this behavior, and it is reasonable to conclude that these kinds of responses were not rare during and after the World Cup. In sum, many Brazilians enjoyed the World Cup despite what was happening in terms of the deeper social, economic, and political issues facing the nation.

Another enjoyable aspect of the World Cup for many Brazilians included music, which has always been a key aspect of the World Cup celebrations. Rio songwriters Thiago de Mello and Pedro Sâmoraes invented a slightly new style of samba to play during the World Cup. Essentially, their music is a reminder that samba allows Brazilians to celebrate together and by extension it fuels nationalistic sentiments.

Due to the lack of widespread education systems in Brazil, samba music has become a way for Brazilians to hone key skills. Thiago de Mello reports that “many Brazilians learn how to speak, write, and even how to feel by listening to songwriters” (NPR 2014c: 1). If Thiago speaks the truth, then samba connects Brazilians in an extraordinary way. The music allows participation and celebration during the World Cup where it could otherwise not occur. Due to a ‘samba education’, Brazilians can sing and talk about how they feel with other Brazilians. Through these connections, the origin of samba’s nationalistic qualities becomes relevant. Considering that the music holds a deeply rooted meaning in Brazil due to its role in miscegenation, samba cannot be separated from nationalism. Pedro Sâmoraes comments, “my
Brasil is a world of powerful imaginations that precede me” (NPR 2014c: 1). Pedro refers to the generations before him that made samba music so special in Brazil. The beauty and uniqueness of the music separates Brazil from other nations in that it speaks to the, as Pedro puts it, “utopian heritage, ambitions, and aspirations of Brazil, which feel appropriate as Brazil takes its place among economic powers and hosts the World Cup and the Olympics” (NPR 2014c: 1).

Therefore, in my view, these two artists have used music to allow Brazilians to express their national identity more than other identities during the World Cup. The songwriters’ music “can express the soul of a nation” and its “effectiveness is derived from bodily involvement” (Rivell 1994: 601). That is, the music reminds people of their shared, unique nationality and includes everyone because the body remains the medium for which the sound is transmitted.

Essentially, these last three topics, samba music, street supporting, and sharing spaces all share an element of enjoyableness or pleasure. Through these activities, pleasure toned down the tensions that Brazilians felt before the tournament.

I want to discuss, then, in more detail, what aspects of the World Cup allowed for pleasure to move in where frustration had been. I cannot emphasize enough how fun and “pleasure for the sake of pleasure” (Eastman 2014: 1) remain at the core of the World Cup. Here, I want to appreciate even more the voices that said the World Cup a wonderful, fun, and exciting experience.

Journalist Ricardo Zuniga provides valuable insight into what the World Cup party looked like. He reports,

“Right now there’s a big festive atmosphere throughout the country. The whole country is caught up in World Cup fever. You can feel the excitement here in Rio de Janeiro and throughout the country. There are thousands of fans…it’s just a big party. You can see the streets are lined with Brazil’s national colors of green and yellow. There are flags everywhere. You’ve got to remember that Brazil loves soccer. The whole country is fixed on their screens. They’ve been dreaming about winning their sixth championship since they won the last in 2002. Having the World Cup back in Brazil after 64 years is a dream come true for them” (NPR 2014d: 1).
Zuniga describes a situation where the excitement of the tournament could be felt in the air. In this way, the positive feelings brought about by the tournament are infectious and they reel people into the World Cup hysteria. As sociologist Émile Durkheim puts it, “once individuals are gathered together, a sort of electricity is generated from their closeness and it quickly launches them to an extraordinary height of exaltation. Every emotion expressed resonates” (Durkheim 217). Through this effect, the result becomes a party that everyone present wants to participate in. Considering that Brazil is crazy about soccer, the party became even more enticing because the World Cup is a chance to win a dreamlike sixth international trophy. Honing in on the dreaming aspect, I feel compelled to again reference Durkheim’s work because he understood how people gathering together could create a collective mental lift. He notes that in these gatherings, “we take full measure of how far above ourselves we were” (Durkheim 212). This notion of dreaming about glory which may take the form of partying together on the streets, has a kind of unquantifiable benefit. In these moments, the sole purpose of the World Cup becomes about having fun and experiencing euphoria, and not about any broad economic or political benefits that the tournament may or may not bring.

In retrospect, the temporary excitement and euphoria are the reasons that government officials and committee members advocated for hosting the tournament in the first place. Indeed, the way in which the collective excitement threw water upon the fiery protests right before the tournament demonstrates just how powerful and worthwhile these feelings can be. Additionally, it would be the hope of those who advocated for hosting the tournament that the positive emotions would translate into nationalistic sentiment. Based on Zuniga’s accounts of the World Cup party, nationalism shined through for the month during the tournament. The decoration of the streets in Brazilian national colors and flags contrasts directly with the discontent before and
after the World Cup. Thus, the tournament organizers can be delighted with the way in which Brazil was brought together on a national level temporarily, but they may be less satisfied with the before and after of the mega-event.

Now I want to examine a specific behavior that the World Cup matches in particular generate, which people view as fun. I would classify these behaviors as acting on superstitions, but with the caveat that the superstitions are not born out of anxiety, but enjoyment. Pedro Rica, 29, a Brazilian National Team fan, “watches all the games in the same T-shirt, in the same place on his sofa, with the same beer” (NPR 2014e: 1). The idea here centers on needing to behave in this way in order to influence the outcome of the game. While people may or may not acknowledge the lack of control they have over the World Cup matches, putting on the T-shirt, sitting on the couch, and drinking beer, are essentially about having a good time. A more humorous example includes Marcelo Barreto, a sportscaster from the network Global. He says, “everyone believes they have to sit in the same chair for every match and stay there no matter what call of nature they may feel” (NPR 2014e: 1). Again, this behavior almost certainly has no impact on the outcome of the soccer match, but it is done in good fun. In these ways, we see a direct relationship between enjoyment and the way in which the World Cup matches create these opportunities. More specifically, games create these opportunities because they demand a certain lightheartedness when you cannot control the outcome. This stems from the idea that there is a “deep uncertainty about games – what they mean, for what or who they are intended, and so on” (Eastman 2014: 1). As people make sense of what they are seeing, they perform odd behaviors where pleasure and fun erupt as a result. One can look to behavior within stadiums to further emphasize this point. One would hardly describe chanting as a way to have fun, but it becomes that way in the environment of World Cup stadiums because it puts into words what everyone is
feeling; an unbelievable sense of community and excitement. In sum, if you are watching from your television set, chanting inside the stadium, or participating in street celebrations, having a good time shines through in all of these environments. Again, having a good time and feeling a strong sense of community contribute to how Brazilians were able to replace frustration with fun.

Until this point, my discussion of fun and pleasure has focused on activities indirectly related to the World Cup matches. To fully understand the ways in which Brazilians wanted to vent their frustrations with this tournament, we have to take a look at the Brazilian National Team. If this team performed well and won the World Cup, Brazilians would attain the ultimate release of tension they were seeking and few would be able to complain about hosting the tournament. Alternatively, a poor performance, which the National Team exhibited, would result in widespread humiliation and an eventual resurfacing of the voices condemning the tournament. The creation of these extreme outcomes involves understanding how spectacle functions in the tournament.

Over a billion people around the world watched at least some part of the 2014 FIFA World Cup. Based on this numerical figure, the spectatorship element of the World Cup cannot be refuted. However, Brazil was definitely looking for this attention in an attempt to gain global recognition and to prove that it could successfully host a World Cup. This chance to advertise the nation through spectacle has risk involved. By this I mean, humans are “skeptical of spectacle” due to its “potential tastelessness” (MacAlloon 1984a: 249). That is, the tournament itself could be completely and utterly boring such that Brazil harms its image. More generally, “things may not go well” (MacAlloon 1984a: 9) and Brazil must be careful to host a World Cup that is sound both in terms of the soccer matches and the external events surrounding the tournament. Generally, Brazil did not showcase any catastrophic issues outside of the World Cup matches.
Within the World Cup matches, the Brazilian National Team and its supporters went on a metaphorical roller coaster ride. In the first match, Brazil scored a goal against itself and Brazilian fans were both silenced and given a dose of anxiety for what might come next. Still, it did not take long for the team to correct the result with Brazil comfortably beating Croatia 3-1 and superstar Neymar scoring two goals in the process. The Internet erupted in commentary after the final whistle was blown. This match alone “generated over 12.1 million tweets” and the “most mentioned player in the messages regarded hero Neymar” (Conmebol 2014: 1). In terms of spectacle, this match already captured the viewership and commentary of many people around the globe. The excitement behind the talisman Neymar cannot be ignored as Brazilians, who made up a substantial portion of those tweets, undeniably felt confident of future victories as they did when soccer legend Mane Garrincha once played for them. If that was not enough, the use of ‘hashflags’ on twitter allowed users to vote on who they believed would be most likely to win the tournament. Unsurprisingly after the first match, “Brazil led, followed by Spain” (Conmebol 1). In sum, the support behind the team, especially from Brazilians, was sensational. Despite the protests before the tournament, Brazil’s first victory calmed everyone down. This air of calm was evident as Brazil moved swiftly through to a semi-final match with relatively few issues plaguing the nation through most of the matches.

In other words, many Brazilians stopped voicing their frustration and either supported the national team or participated in the celebrations. Brazilians were in a position to immerse themselves in the anticipated success of the National Team during this match and not on serious issues that they face every day during their normal lives. Unfortunately, the National Team’s run ended when Neymar suffered a fractured vertebra upon receiving a nasty tackle and captain Thiago Silva was banned for making his own harsh tackles. O Globo specifically uses the word “devastation” to describe how fans felt when they learned the news (2014: 1).
In the next match, Germany destroyed Brazil 7-1 to record the largest margin of victory in a semi-final match ever. Brazil conceded 5 goals in 20 minutes which is unheard of in soccer. This moment was a crashing back down to Earth for Brazilians because the huge anticipation that this team created did not end with a positive climax. On the contrary, each step towards winning the World Cup, only for the tournament to end in utter failure, created humiliation instead of pride. With the world watching, Brazilians strongly felt the “strong emotional component” (Besnier and Brownell 452) of spectacle, which was present in the supporters’ faces. BBC captured photos that showed “fans looking tearful” (McNulty 2014: 1).
One Brazilian, Irani Scarbossa, who lives in London, comments that she “went to work
the next day and people wouldn’t stop talking about it. Really, like everyone apologized saying
they were sorry” (NPR 2014f: 1). She describes her experience meeting new people since Brazil
lost by saying, “every time I meet someone and I say I’m Brazilian, they mention it. I have to
remind people that Brazil is still a five-time world champion” (NPR 2014f: 1). In many ways,
these interactions that Irani experiences are the exact opposite of what Brazil wanted for its
citizens by hosting the World Cup. Ideally, Brazil would have won and people around the world
would connect that victory with them, instead of the pity they seem to be receiving. In order to
avoid that pity and shame, individuals like Aarao Miranda, a traveling Brazilian lawyer, said, “if
I go back to Germany, I will probably not tell them I’m Brazilian” (NPR 2014f: 1). These words
demonstrate an alarming situation where Brazilians cannot even express their national identities
freely. As such, the spectacle aspects of the World Cup, which were supposed to increase
international recognition, well and truly backfired.

Still, the analysis of the World Cup based on spectacle only provides part of the picture.
The structure of the World Cup itself also augments the extreme outcomes of either the release or
exacerbation of tension. In comparison to the Olympics, which spreads out winning and losing
into many different events, the World Cup creates drama because “for most people there is one primary team to follow, there is one competition, and a limited amount of scenarios” (van Hivoorde, Elling, and Stokvis 2010: 98). As a result, “the longer a national team remains in the tournament, the more people will be drawn into the celebration of national pride” (van Hivoorde, Elling, and Stokvis 98). My interpretation of this includes a sense of building expectation as a team progresses throughout the soccer tournament. While winning the cup always remains the primary goal, moving closer and closer to that target raises the expectations of a team finishing the job. Therefore, the tournament inevitably finishes with a clear “(anti-)climax” where you either fulfill the fans’ expectations or fall short (van Hivoorde, Elling, and Stokvis 98). Thus, the term anti-climax becomes perfect to describe Brazil’s performance. The team succeeded in staying in the tournament until the semifinals, but due to the structure of the World Cup, this does not count for much except greater disappointment.

To add insult to injury as the tournament ended, the total spending on the World Cup in Brazil amounted to fifteen billion dollars and a substantial amount of that money came out of taxpayers’ wallets (FIFA 2014: 1). The money largely went to the refurbishment and creation of soccer stadiums across the nation. The stadiums exacerbated issues of high maintenance costs and poor public services such as neglected hospitals and streets. Correspondingly, the tensions that evaporated during the tournament came back stronger than before, especially because the National Team lost in an extraordinary fashion.

Quite simply, the operating costs of the stadiums built throughout the country are so high that it is almost impossible for them to serve any practical use outside of hosting a mega-event. For example, the Brasília newspaper Correio Braziliense highlighted the fact that “Kiss, the band, performed on Friday April 24th, 2015 in the parking lot of the Mane Garrincha National
Stadium in Brasilia” (Mendes 2015: 1). The fact that a popular band like KISS cannot create the funds necessary to cover the operating costs and play inside of the Mané Garrincha National Stadium is alarming to say the least. Having to play in the parking lot of such a venue demonstrates how little the government considered life after the World Cup. Not only are the maintenance costs too high, but also this event and the stadium itself can be shameful for Brazilians. José Cruz, a blogger and sports reporter for Universo Online, seems to agree with this sentiment as he wrote, “they [KISS] didn’t do the concert inside the stadium, they did it outside because of the high costs. The idea was that big concerts could generate income for the venue, but that hasn’t been the case. That shows how ill-prepared the government is to manage a big sports venue and transform it into a source of revenue. I don’t see any World Cup legacy to Brazil except the debts we have inherited and the problems we now have” (Cruz 2014a: 1). Cruz does not believe what the government has told Brazilians over the last few years. While there are certainly positives to extract from the 2014 World Cup in Brazil, the debts and problems seem to be the most potent outcome. To exacerbate issues, there seems to be a disconnect between citizens and the government with regards to trust. Citizens cannot have faith that their government will support them because of decisions like the one made concerning the Mané Garrincha National Stadium. Shortly after the short-term economic and social outcomes of the World Cup, the Brazilian sports minister promised that unlike the World Cup, “the Olympics will leave a legacy” (Cruz 2014a: 1). While the minister acknowledges the discontent among Brazilians, he still pushes for a legacy for the Olympics. At this point, any believers in the idea of hosting a mega-event to solve problems most likely became skeptics. As long as expensive stadiums might be left behind after the Olympics, the government may need to reevaluate its planning in order to start to build trust with the people of Brazil again.
The easy answer to covering the maintenance costs of these stadiums is to use the stadiums to generate profits. However, until the Olympics arrive in 2016, there are few sporting events that would be worth holding inside the stadiums from a financial perspective. Even though Brazil has an obsession with soccer, “six of the twelve stadiums built for the World Cup are in states that do not have teams in the Serie A of the Brazilian Championship 2015” (Cruz 2014b: 1). Additionally, Leanderson Lima, a sports reporter in Manaus, says, “local league games have very low attendance, and it costs a lot of money to put games on at the arena. In Manaus nowadays, local team matches actually take place in two training centers, and not in the World Cup stadium” (Cruz 2014a: 1). The Serie A league was never one of the most lucrative leagues in the world, which makes teams playing in a league below Serie A, Serie B, even less likely to cover maintenance costs. Once again, the planning surrounding the World Cup becomes questionable because there was never any solution presented as to how these stadiums would be supported by local leagues bringing in a fraction of the maintenance costs. To put the idea of local leagues supporting a FIFA World Cup stadium into perspective, it is worth examining some staggering statistics. The Brazilian newspaper Estado de Minas reports that the attendance level for a Serie B match falls “…between 4,000 and 5,000 people. The number sits well below the capacity of the stadium, which will reach 44,000 people” (Estado de Minas 2014: 1). Such a large margin between capacity and attendance suggests a lack of planning by the Brazilian local and federal governments. I believe the country’s leaders were overexcited by the idea of launching Brazil with a world soccer tournament and it’s possible that they didn’t think far ahead enough as to what the consequences of hosting a world party might look like. The World Cup might have seemed like a quick fix whereas attacking problems in medicine, education, and public transportation are far more difficult to solve. In any case, the great irony here includes the
The poor decision-making manifests itself most clearly in the form of poor public services. José Cruz says that there is “garbage piled in the streets” and that there are “250,000 people without public transportation and doctors and nurses from public hospitals without power…” because “the Federal District Government has no money”. Yet at the same time, “the same government built the Mané Garrincha stadium in two years” (Cruz 2014c: 1). The common factor linking issues of sanitation engineering, public transportation, and medicine is poor public spending. Oddly, the issue does not seem to be a complete lack of attention on public spending. Scholars have noted that, “the Brazilian government allocated $7 billion dollars for infrastructural developments such as airport, port, and transport construction” (Almeida 2015: 13). Despite throwing money in these areas, citizens like Rodrigo da Fronseca must spend his time handing out fliers in an attempt to gather people for his protests. Rodrigo describes that since 2010, “gas prices have gone up, the water system has been destroyed, electricity bills are going up. We are tired of paying for the mistakes of the government and their rampant spending” (NPR 2015b: 1). Thus, the problem for Brazilian citizens is how the seven billion dollars was spent. If the infrastructure had targeted the objective of helping Brazilians get to work, then there would be far less frustration. However, it seems that the money poured into improving infrastructure focused on allowing foreigners and tourists to enjoy their temporary stay instead. The combination of blatant disregard for Brazilians depending on public services and the lies told about the World Cup have created frustration and shame among Brazilians. More specifically, I am referring to Brazilians of lower socio-economic status who need public services to survive. As the gap between the rich and the poor shows few signs of diminishing,
Brazilians desperately need a government that supports its people first and not FIFA, foreigners, and the ultra-rich instead.

Before opening the next chapter, I want to note that in this section I have argued how tensions created from the World Cup bidding and preparations were only cast aside temporarily during the World Cup matches. As soon as the tournament ended in the national team’s humiliation and empty stadiums were left behind, it became easy for Brazilians to return their attention to the real issues in Brazil.

Chapter 4: The 2016 Olympics (Bidding and Preparations)

In this chapter, we will see similarities between the initial elation at winning the World Cup bid and the initial elation at winning the Olympic bid. Subsequently, I will describe the potential fun one can have during the Olympics and then follow that up with how the Games will impact marginalized Brazilian populations. I will end the chapter and thesis with how many Brazilians are calling for President Dilma Rousseff’s impeachment because of how the country is changing around them. In sum, the central argument of this chapter involves describing how Brazilians might get swept up in the bidding process and the Olympic experience, but they also acknowledge the pressing issues facing Brazil and how some of them are related to the Olympics.

A collective enthusiasm that appeared during the World Cup reappeared on the Copacabana beach when it was announced that Rio de Janeiro had won the 2016 Olympic bidding process. The New York Times reports that “tens of thousands of people begun the celebration…where people dressed in shorts and bikinis jumped to samba music” (Macur 2009:
1). This cultural event has two key components. First, samba music has become an integral part of Brazilian culture because Afro-Brazilians created it and it subsequently spread in popularity among most Brazilians. In samba, “the world is sung in a collective way and the music acquires a seductive, all-encompassing aura…based on the mixture of three races” (DaMatta 109). In sum, samba allowed national identities to overshadow local or physical identities such that everyone could party together in celebration of the Olympics. Second, the element of celebrating on the beach carries meaning. It is not uncommon for Brazilian beaches to be separated into different sections based on a given individual’s identities. Due to the attention placed on beauty in Brazil, “the hedonistic pleasures of health and the display of the erotic body coexist with nuances of class and subculture. In Rio de Janeiro, beaches are divided into numbered points, each drawing a different crowd” (Edmonds 2010: 133). One must consider that from day to day, Brazilians are not comfortable associating with other Brazilians who are different to them in a beach setting. If Brazilians have come together to occupy the same space despite a tendency to stay separated, the power of nationalism shines through. In this situation, Brazilians stood united when obtaining victory over other cities and countries. In this way, Rio de Janeiro has made a global impression. The Olympic Games have never been held in South America before, despite the fact that they have been held regularly since 1896. Brazil, and more specifically Rio de Janeiro, has the opportunity to lead South America in its fight for global recognition, social equality, and development. Therefore, Brazilians could feel prideful in this local, national, and international victory.

The celebrations were sparked when officials declared a holiday for city and state employees. The idea is that not only have people gathered together to explode in happiness when they find out the news about the bid, but they are being encouraged by local leaders to
experience this event with optimism and carefreeness. I would argue that the celebration was essentially a ritual where leaders happened to insist upon “some sort of pre-existing script” (MacAlloon 1984a: 9). Brazilians followed the instructions that their leaders outlined for them, which made for a powerful celebration. While certain rituals may reinforce attitudes instead of changing them, there are elements of other rituals that can create attitude changes. The people participating in the celebration likely formed “collective memories” (Tomlinson and Young 228) due to their “collective enthusiasm” (Tomlinson and Young 228). In other words, the collective feeling of ecstasy had a greater effect on people than any individual emotions (Durkheim 210).

After the beach party ended, Brazilians could continue to remember these moments, which might influence future opinions and perspectives on the Olympics. Still, if we view the celebration as a ritual of rebellion, Brazilians will generally go back to how they felt before the celebration. Therefore, the party becomes a way to temporarily relieve the social tension concerning Brazil’s problems.

There was perhaps no better political leader to resolve social and political tension between people than former President Lula. His speech to the Brazilian people concerning the Olympics was inspiring to say the least. He charismatically announced, “today is the most emotional day of my life, the most exciting day of my life. I’ve never felt more pride in Brazil. Now we are going to show the world we can be a great country” (Macur 1). When a president as loved and adored by a nation makes a speech like this, particularly after outstanding economic growth during his presidency, the people of Brazil were always going to feel a sense of optimism. One must consider that Brazil has been labeled time and time again as a ‘country of the future’ by people around the world, most notably by President Charles de Gaulle of France. This was the end of that phrase and that Brazil could finally push forward as a world leader with
the promise of a better quality of life for all Brazilians. Lula specifically acknowledged that “we aren’t the United States, but we are getting there, and we will get there” (Macur 1). The United States is known around the world as a place of opportunity, social equality, economic strength, and political strength. Lula’s connection might have seemed like an empty promise if not for his status and the fact that President Barack Obama made a similar speech supporting Lula.

President Obama’s speech complemented Lula’s nicely when he said, “this is a country of the future no more. For the people of Brazil, the future has arrived --- a country that shows dictatorship can become a thriving democracy” (Folha de S. Paulo 2011: 1). Now Brazilians didn’t have to just trust Lula that Brazil would be like the United States. The President of the United States himself advocated for his belief in Brazil and naturally there was plenty of positive belief surrounding the announcement of the Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro.

I want to switch gears here and paint a picture of how winning the Olympic bid will allow Brazilians to enjoy the Olympic experience, according to the Brazilian Olympic Committee. The Committee’s support in favor of hosting the Olympics has been grounded in the idea of having a beautiful, wonderful, entertaining, fun, and pleasurable experience.

Leonardo Gryer, of the Brazilian Olympic Committee, links the potential positive experiences of the Olympics with those of the World Cup. In his view, “the experience that people had when they arrived here for the World Cup, despite the criticism, was that they had a wonderful time. Because that’s our way. And they will again for the Olympics” (White 2015: 1). As Leonardo puts it, having a ‘wonderful time’ is what hosting these mega-events is all about; having a good time for the sake of having a good time. That line of reasoning begs the question ‘what is it about the Olympics that make them enjoyable?’ Craig Holland, the regional planning member for the Maracanã, provides the answers. He describes the Olympic experience by
saying, “There are many possibilities for the fans. You could spend the morning at the Maracanãzinho watching an early session of volleyball, then head to the Olympic stadium to watch a packed evening session of athletics” (Rio2016 2015: 1). I want to start my analysis by saying that viewing the accessible athletic events cannot be separated from the nature of sport. That is, the qualities of sport are at the center of what makes the Olympic Games so fun, exciting, and pleasurable. I think most importantly, when people travel around the Olympic park in Rio de Janeiro or even watch from their television sets, they will be looking for the “utter astonishment” (Eastman 2014: 1) that sports generate. People are actively seeking out the unpredictability or uncertainty that sports bring due to the fact that nobody knows what will happen next during an athletic event. This tendency to move towards the unpredictability and seek out sports suggests an “intrinsic motivation” (Eastman 2014: 1). That is, people enjoy the Olympic sporting events because they are self-motivated to view exciting and uncertain outcomes in the contests.

Up until this point in the chapter, we have seen how Brazilians have received opportunities to enjoy themselves through the Olympic processes. In other words, these are the benefits of hosting the mega-event. However, many Brazilians still believed that winning the bid and hosting the Olympics could be nothing more than curses.

O Globo, a national newspaper stationed in Rio de Janeiro, showcased the disadvantages of hosting the Olympic Games as front page news. One of the first few sentences reads, that this move is “bullshit to divert our attention from the real problems of our city! We need to solve our very serious problems without factoids and half solutions and false promises. Many cities that hosted the games, even in rich countries, had great difficulty in paying the Olympic costs” (Menezes 2008: 1). The strong language, the attention to Rio’s problems, and potential economic
woes are all in direct contrast with the local and national enthusiasm felt by Brazilians swept up in the celebratory rituals. The points made by Marcio Menezes are all, in truth, completely valid arguments. Rio’s problems could easily be exacerbated with the arrival of the Olympics. It is difficult to determine how the event will affect the problems Menezes has outlined due to the fact that it will not occur until 2016 and that there are such a wide variety of factors that determine economic, social, and political growth after these mega-events. Still, Menezes even lays out a plan of how the money spent on the Olympics could be spent to improve Rio de Janeiro. His vision is to “inject the money to make middle class condominiums” near the slum Jacarepagua instead of refurbishing it for the sake of the Olympic Games. As it stands, Jacarepagua will be refurbished because “the Maracana [stadium] is surrounded by slums” (Menezes 1). I believe many Brazilians would whole-heartedly support the injection of money into the middle class condominiums that Menezes has suggested. Choosing to allocate funds in these ways might see trust develop between Brazilians and their government. Too often in Brazil, there has been a “distrust of institutional politics that characterized the middle-class outlook after World War II” (Owensby 237). Therefore, providing growth for the middle class through a better living situation is a far safer investment, both in terms of relationships and financial return, as opposed to hosting the Olympics.

Additionally, allocating resources more carefully towards sustainable projects would benefit the most vulnerable populations in Brazil, instead of harming them. Specifically, Brazilians who live in favelas and also disabled Brazilians need to be supported instead of making the Olympics the top priority. In order to make this point clear, I will spend some time examining the favelas in relation to recent events in Brazil.

Favelas are the informal settlements in Brazil where the vast majority of people
inhabiting those settlements are marginalized Afro-Brazilian populations. Rio de Janeiro in particular is home to some of the most elaborate favelas in the country, which makes it a perfect archetype when investigating favelas for an anthropological project. As Rio prepares to host the 2016 Olympic Games, scholars question what place the favelas have during a time of overwhelming globalization. Will globalization increase social cohesion between the favela residents and Brazilians of higher socio-economic status? In contrast, will it increase the stratification between these classes? However, branding the Olympics as solely a force of globalization does not allow for an honest analysis of Brazil’s social inequality. Thus, any reference to globalization and the Olympics here acknowledges that the Olympics is not one hundred percent about globalization. Still, I will trace the history, tourism, structural violence, and culture within the favelas of Rio de Janeiro to determine how globalization and the 2016 Olympic Games will impact them.

The heart and soul of Rio de Janeiro’s bid to host the Olympics was that it would allow the city to focus on social and urban development. Part of that idea is that the favelas in particular will undergo a complete makeover in terms of infrastructure. More specifically, the makeover will consist of new sewage lines, home repairs, trash collection systems, health clinics, and public spaces. The settlements themselves will either be touched up or demolished so the world can look at Brazil with optimistic eyes as opposed to ones of frustration and disapproval. Making these changes forces the relocation of those living in the favelas to more modern housing. On the surface, it seems that this new injection of upgrades could only be beneficial. Certainly in the short-term the residents will reap the benefits of the Olympics putting pressure on the local government to fix its favela dilemma. I would argue that these changes in infrastructure are nothing more than temporary solutions to the rapidly approaching Olympic
Games. That is, once the Olympics have passed, why should the government continue to provide renovations to the favelas? Unless Brazil continues to remain in the spotlight after the Olympics, the pressure from other nations to take care of the favelas will disappear as will the motivation for the local government to make the favelas more presentable. Further, while pouring money into the favelas can solve the problematic aesthetics, it is not so simple to provide equal footing for job opportunities, to stop police brutality due to racism against Afro-Brazilians, and to fully integrate Afro-Brazilian people into a society as more than just second-class citizens.

The divisions between Afro-Brazilians and the elites in Brazil have a deep history that is relevant in understanding the issues at play today. Rio de Janeiro was originally a Portuguese military outpost and when Afro-Brazilian slaves were eventually released, they sought habitation in the hillside upon realization that there was no place for them on the flatlands of Rio. The residents of the favelas were even forced to be relocated during the Brazilian military dictatorship, and the recent relocations due to the hosting of the Olympics is bound to resurface old tensions. These are the routes of an example of structural violence that medical anthropologist Paul Farmer describes as “suffering ‘structured’ by historically given processes and forces” (Farmer 2004: 40). Structural violence harms those with subordinate identities; in this case, I am referring to the marginalization and discrimination of Afro-Brazilians due to their skin color and their tendency to be of a lower socio-economic class. The Olympics, and its shadow of globalization, could easily perpetuate these issues of racism and classism. Ideally, an increase in the productivity of the nation would allow money to trickle down to those in the favelas. In reality, the local government invests in stadiums and tourist hotspots as opposed to healthcare, education, and transportation. The elites of Brazil are in a position to brush aside any inconvenience that this spending may bring because of the power and money that they possess.
Favela residents suffer because they depend on programs that provide government assistance to them such as public education, health insurance, and transportation. As Brazilian Carla Dauden puts it, “I think the Olympics and the World Cup are great events, but they’re not what our country needs right now. We do not need stadiums, we need education. We do not need Brazil to look better for the world. We need our people to have good health. We do not need more parties. We need people with jobs and a sustainable way of living” (NPR 2013c: 1). Therefore, we are seeing problems rooted in colonization become exacerbated with poor financial investments such that more Brazilians struggle. In essence, while the globalizing aspects of the Olympics approaches, the discrimination against Afro-Brazilians increases.

In spite of that discrimination, the favelas, like any settlement of people living together, have a unique culture. Some of the most iconic components of favela culture include distinct music, dances, and poetry among a host of other aspects. I would argue that it is impossible to consider the history of Brazil without acknowledging how Afro-Brazilians have contributed a wealth of cultural substance. Ideally, the Brazilian government and those in positions of power to change the inequality facing “favelados” would appreciate these contributions made by Afro-Brazilians and in turn that would change how they are treated, perceived, and valued in Rio de Janeiro. As a result of international pressure caused by hosting the Olympics, Brazil’s local government wants to demolish some of the favelas and by extension, their culture. If the goal of bidding for the Olympics was to create “modes of urban and social development” (Gaffney 2010: 25) and if globalization promises more political, social, and economic interconnectedness, then how do elaborate demolition and eviction projects accomplish those goals? The answer is that those goals are accomplished, but who reaps the benefits of those accomplishments is a different matter. Again, it is the elites in Brazil that can welcome globalization. I believe it is in this area
that the local government has made an error because if Brazil wants to develop further, culture from the favelas can be a valuable tool in making that happen. Brazilian officials could and should understand the significance of the art forms that have erupted out of the favelas. Cuba, for example, has demonstrated that it is possible to use culture and art created by marginalized black communities as a way to move forward as a country. Sujatha Fernandes, who studies social movements in different countries, notes that the “diplomatic activism of artists, building new networks and relationships, may be crucial to the way Cuba evolves” (2006: 136). I am not suggesting that Brazilians or Cubans should be exploited for their art, but it is my hopeful and idealistic view that cultural contributions might correlate with social equality.

Unfortunately, recent developments in Rio have led to the creation of tourist sites out of the culturally rich favelas. As the Olympics draws nearer and tourists begin to pour into Rio de Janeiro, there has been an increased demand to see not only the beaches and resorts that Rio has to offer, but also the favelas. Tourists want to take cable cars up the hills to examine what life is like in the favelas. If the promise of globalization is social cohesion, then why are favela residents being put on display like animals at the zoo? Now, some scholars have claimed that these tours may be “acceptable if the locals benefit” (Freire-Medeiros 2009: 582). The idea is that if tour companies are making a profit, then they will share a portion of that profit with the “favelados”. The hole in this argument is that the favela residents are in no position to make demands for money. The growth that is happening before their eyes is so rapid, so expansive that there is very little they can do about it. I would argue that allowing these people to endure tourists constantly stalking their way of life is dehumanizing and it only exacerbates the treatment of Afro-Brazilians as second-class citizens.
So far, I have painted a pessimistic picture of the globalizing aspects of the Olympics when they come in contact with Brazil. I have stated that globalization allows for the political, economic, and social benefits for the elites of Brazil, and that it will harms favela residents. However, on a more optimistic note, there are advantages to globalization for favela residents. First, if “favelados” are given the opportunity to participate in the pace, excitement, and acceleration of Brazil, then they will at least have the chance at a different life than what they have now, should they desire a change. Still, in order to provide these opportunities, it requires changing people's attitudes towards issues like racism, which takes time and social justice. Second, the Olympics have brought attention to the favelas one way or another. If the government manages to continue to support the favelas after the Olympics is over, then the future is bright for Brazil and the favela residents. One can only hope that lingering international pressure will translate directly into combating social inequality. Third, Brazil is a country that perseveres despite a grueling history. In spite of colonization, a military dictatorship, and issues of classism, racism, and appearance discrimination, Brazil has endured and continues to develop as a nation. Recent years have seen the most growth, particularly under President Lula who increased international trade to the point where Brazil’s GDP skyrocketed. His profits paved the way for investments in social programs and saw Brazil fight pressing issues of hunger. Perhaps the productivity of the Olympics will allow for spending on social programs similar to how Lula utilized his resources so majestically. Again, money is only part of the problem, but it is useful if the context and specifics of a given situation are understood. Then, through perpetual progress of valuing Afro-Brazilians, Brazil can move forward in the right way at the local, national, and international levels.
The idea of valuing favela residents becomes particularly important when considering how specific individuals like Jean Thomas will experience the effects of the Olympics. If the Olympic Movement is about inclusivity, unity, and celebrations, hosting the Games becomes less valuable if favela residents cannot participate or if they suffer so that the show can go on.

Jean Tomas is one of many residents in the favela Vila Harmonia who has suffered because of the Olympics arriving in Rio de Janeiro. She saved money to build a house in Vila Harmonia where she could raise her son, but they were forcibly evicted. She tells NPR, “there is frustration to have worked so hard, dreamed so much, only to leave everything behind” (2014g: 1). Jean elaborates by discussing the uncertainty and the problem with moving; “they were asking us to sign papers without knowing where we were going. Our lives were built around where we lived” (NPR 2014g: 1). Unfortunately, it is more convenient for the Brazilian government to move the favela residents into barren and treeless apartment complexes in Rio de Janeiro suburbs without fully considering their ability to work, travel, or pursue education. On transportation, Jean comments, “they talk about this special bus line for us out here but it’s not the miracle they say it is. They want us to go as far away as possible and still serve them [Rio’s elites] (NPR 2014g: 1). The fact that the bus cannot effectively transport Jean Tomas where she needs to go epitomizes a cycle of problems where the economically disadvantaged are not afforded enough opportunities for growth. In other words, the favela residents will not be able to contribute to society without the opportunities to contribute to society.

The great irony of the situation becomes clear when considering that the Olympic Games are supposed to aid both in social development and national development. More specifically, “humankind-ness and mutual respect remain at the center of each Olympic Games” (MacAloon 1984a: 264). That is, the platform for social and national development includes treating all
people as human beings first and foremost. By attempting to hide or exclude favela residents, Brazil violates the ideas put forth by the Olympic movement. The ideas are in place so that positive attitudes, beliefs, and actions can be extracted after the Games, but the exclusion and hiding of favela residents only leaves resentment and frustration behind. This poor treatment of Brazil’s most disadvantaged sends the message that the country does not care for these people and it does not want these people as part of society. However, favela residents and Afro-Brazilians in particular need to have the chance to participate in the Olympic celebrations because, “participating is a right to citizenship” (Besnier and Brownell 454). In sharing these spaces, all of the people present might be identified by their human identity and also their Brazilian identity before any others.

However, to share the same spaces, different Brazilians need to be able to enter those spaces. In continuing a discussion of supporting vulnerable populations during a time of intense globalization, I wish to focus a little bit on how some disabled Brazilians view the Olympics.

As the World Cup and the Olympics arrive in Rio de Janeiro, the city must be tailored, in terms of infrastructure, to suit the mega-events. More specifically, the changes in infrastructure will include erecting tourist accommodations like hotels and public transportation instead of meeting the local population’s needs. Rio de Janeiro’s disabled population in particular will suffer because of the lack of action in creating accessible pathways.

Lilia Martins, a member of a group called The Center for Independent Life, highlights the difficulties for persons with disabilities to travel throughout Rio de Janeiro. She reported to NPR that, “the roads are filled with holes and it is a nightmare for people with disabilities. There is no maintenance. We only go a short way before the pavement becomes cracked and broken with huge roots popping up” (2015c: 1). While the mega-events will bring hotels, restaurants, and
other buildings appealing to foreigners, simple infrastructure like ramps and paved sidewalks are being neglected. The frustrations that members of these groups share are justified in that Brazilians should be confident that their public services needs can be met. The ability of Brazil to pay attention to its vulnerable populations can be a measure of the development of the nation. While sidewalks and ramps may not seem like important endeavors, one must remember that the inability to get to work because of ramps and sidewalks can have devastating effects on the socio-economic status of these individuals.

Even Rio de Janeiro’s mayor, Eduardo Paes, spoke about the inaccessibility of the city and how plenty of work needs to be done. Paes acknowledges that, “this isn’t a city you want to live in if you have a disability. The Paralympics will change the culture here, I hope. Brazilians will see people with disabilities on the streets, see them doing amazing things. And we will learn to finally live together” (NPR 2015c: 1). The mayor acknowledges that Rio does have a disability access problem and he may be right in saying that the Paralympics can inspire change. Indeed, able-bodied Brazilians will have the chance to see disabled Brazilians perform miraculous physical feats. In doing so, able-bodied Brazilians can see the Paralympic athletes, first and foremost, as Brazilians and not people with disabilities. The chance to see imperfect bodies with positive eyes may be in contrast to the default view of bodies in Brazil. In Brazil, there is a “tradition of seeing the body as a highly social surface and a fair target for public scrutiny” (Edmonds 102). For example, many women modify their body because “plastica is linked to work aspirations” (Edmonds 106). Additionally, Edmonds documented females commenting on how they “will never be with an ugly man, fat, badly taken care of” (237). I am not condemning Brazilian culture, for the “love of the body” (Edmonds 237) seems to be at the heart of these practices, but I am saying that if able-bodied individuals must bend to these social
standards, disabled individuals might be under even more scrutiny. Therefore, the introduction of culture less critical of bodies, in the form of the Paralympics, can serve as a way to start changing circumstances for individuals like Lilia Martins. However, we must be careful in saying that the Paralympic Games can inspire change in Brazil. While the attention that the Games bring will be an incredible first step, it is up to Brazilians with and without disabilities to continuously fight for equality. More broadly, government officials need to respond to the attention this matter receives in order to produce the most favorable economic, social, and political outcomes that are possible for disabled Brazilians.

Of course, the most accusable government official, not just in terms of disability accommodations, but also broader issues, would be President Dilma Rousseff. It is impossible to discuss Brazilian perspectives on the 2016 Olympics Games in Brazil without shining the spotlight upon her. Many Brazilians accuse President Rousseff of running a corrupt campaign, lying about the changes she wants to make in Brazil, and allowing the economy to spin out of control. Additionally, a plethora of Brazilians believe these factors all contribute to the idea that the timing could not be worse for Brazil to host the Olympics. Thus, the purpose of this final section is to demonstrate how Brazil could begin hosting the Olympics during social and political turmoil.

The alleged corrupt campaign Dilma Rousseff ran to become president directly led to the decline in credibility of the Workers Party in Brazil. Essentially, the Partido da Social Democracia in Brazil claims, “the completion of campaign spending in excess of the informed limit and a campaign financed by donations from contributors hired by Petrobras” (O Globo 2015: 1). Regardless of whether or not these allegations are true, the fact that they were made so public soils the Workers Party as a whole. At this point, the Workers Party stands for each of the
potential corruption scandals committed during Dilma Rousseff’s election. As a result, “the Workers Party is experiencing a major upheaval in its history. Worn by acts of corruption and fractured campaign promises unfulfilled by Dilma, there are even those who argue for the output of the Workers Party for the foundation of a new party” (Brígido 2016: 1). Dilma Rousseff created political instability in Brazil during a time when the country needed its leaders in power to be organized and efficient. If the Olympics arrive at a time when a major political party does not function properly, then the ideal scenario of Brazil using mega-events to showcase its proficiency will not be achieved. The very purposes of hosting mega-events include a “significant impact on the host country’s destination image and country image” (Kim, Kang, and Kim 161) and “putting a country on the map” (Matheson and Baade 108). Therefore, there remains a possibility that Brazil will showcase political turmoil instead of solidarity. Again, Dilma Rousseff has played a significant role in establishing the uncertain times in Brazil. As a result, the campaign allegations, the free-fall of the economy, and the false promises of change in Brazil have all led to the majority of Brazilians calling for Rousseff’s impeachment.

In order to voice their concerns, Brazilians engaged in protests as remarkable as the ones held before the World Cup. José Posada, a real estate broker, is just one of the people calling for Dilma Rousseff’s impeachment. He “would like to see the people that are involved in corruption behind bars and to have a government that thinks of the people of Brazil” (NPR 2015d: 1). To the people, it appears that government officials are more concerned with retaining their power than helping Brazilian citizens. Unfortunately, this has led to people like Marcos Lima, a businessman, to make statements like, “right now, we lost a little bit of hope” (NPR 2015d: 1). One must recall that Brazil’s history includes two dictatorships, widespread slavery, and, for the current generation, an observable period of long-term inequality. If people are saying that they
have lost a little bit of hope, then it could be a mark of how damaging and reckless the politicians have been over the past few decades. Even one of the strongest units in Brazilian society, the family, has been shaken into action. One family of protestors simply wrote on their posters, “Dilma out and impeachment now” (NPR 2015e: 1).

In Brazil it is said that the street is an uncertain place to put oneself into spatially speaking because it involves, “movement, novelty, and action” (DaMatta 64). In accordance with masculine gender roles, only the man of the house consistently leaves to take action and help the family in the unpredictable outside world. Thus, if entire families are leaving their houses, it is alarming because the corruption is so strong that household social structure and culture have been disrupted. I believe Brazilians should be applauded for taking part in these protests so that real change can occur. The zero tolerance position suggests that there may be hope for Brazil because of how its people have stood up and shown what happens if politicians allow widespread

---

10 Again, we must be weary of making sweeping generalizations like this. I make this statement mainly to communicate that the socially prescribed roles of family members have been disrupted.
injustice to occur. From this point onwards Brazilians will always have critical eyes towards people in power and it will create pressure for those in power to act in the best interest of the people. By taking to the streets and demanding change, it becomes far more difficult for power to be abused because the threat of widespread unrest remains a constant threat. In a sense, the demonstrations act like a spectacle where the protestors and the government officials are the two parties involved. MacAloon’s view of spectacle includes a set of “actors” and “performers” (1984a: 249). He insists spectacle “is a dynamic form demanding movement, action, change, and exchange” (1984a: 255). As a result, “we are suspicious of spectacle” due to its “irregular and occasional” (1984a: 251) nature. While MacAloon makes his remarks with respect to the Olympic Games, one must consider the possibility that spectacle also occurs outside of the Olympics Games on the streets. In my view, there is a situation where Brazilians are putting on a show with aspects of what scholars conceive of as spectacle, in order to shake the government into action. Due to the way spectacle makes us “suspicious” or “uncertain” (MacAloon 1984a: 251), the protests are difficult to ignore and Brazilians can make a real impact.

I believe that these protesting Brazilians have extraordinarily compelling reasons to voice their opinions. If Brazil’s policymakers keep making decisions the way that they are, Brazil and Rio de Janeiro in particular will be difficult to live in for the average Brazilian. To see what Rio de Janeiro may look like in the forthcoming years, it may be worth examining what an expert has to say about it.

Christopher Gaphney, a professor of city architecture in Rio de Janeiro, describes what Rio will soon look like by saying, “instead of creating a space of conviviality, a space of shared culture, of community, of conversation, you are going to have this very isolated element where after 5 o’clock in the afternoon, it’s going to be dead. You are creating banks, parking lots, and
Trump towers” (NPR 2014h: 1). Gaphney continues by commenting, “it’s putting public spaces into private hands, to the detriment of the city’s poorer denizens” (NPR 2014h: 1). In summation, he believes, “being born in Rio in 2020 is going to be great for those who can afford it because Rio is simply becoming a playground for the global rich” (NPR 2014h: 1). Gaphney’s comments are not terribly surprising considering some of the effects of globalization.

Given this description of Rio de Janeiro and globalization in general, one may ask why Brazil would introduce globalizing events like the World Cup and the Olympics in the first place. A great deal of this has to do with competition and power dynamics at an international level in addition to redefining Brazilian-ness.

To convey my argument, I want to reference the way in which American baseball has depended on and competed with Dominican baseball. The relationship boils down to the “superlative skills and sustained excellence on the field of play” (Eastman 2016b: 136) showcased by Dominican baseball players, which resulted in an “emergent American dependence on Dominican talent” (Eastman 2016b: 136). Essentially, Dominicans have created a place for themselves inside of American baseball because the talent is just too attractive to reject. What results is a situation where the Dominican Republic has a small amount of power over America socially and economically. As a result of this power, America must at least respect and consider the Dominican Republic because it depends on the island nation. Again, this all started with strong athletic performances. In relation to Brazil, this situation creates support for the way in which showing off Brazil’s talents, both on and off the field of play, can create a more competitive Brazil on an international level. Essentially, the World Cup and the Olympics in addition to the globalization they bring, can allow Brazil to form dependency-based relationships with other nations based on what it has to offer. Then, as an international competitor, not only is
the nation in general seen as competitive, but so is Brazilian-ness. Thus, Brazil can utilize these mega-events to redefine what it means to be Brazilian.

More broadly, until the Olympic Games actually take place, it will be difficult to fully understand the ways in which Brazil and Brazilian-ness are becoming shaped. Indeed, evaluating these ideas after Rio 2016 has passed would make for a richer discussion of recent events in Brazil.

Chapter 5: Limitations and Conclusions

This thesis has examined how Brazilians thought, felt, and experienced the 2014 World Cup and the embers of the 2016 Rio de Janeiro Summer Olympics. There are a few limitations with the methods employed within this thesis. First, the archival methods used here often do not include full interviews with Brazilians. To gain a solid and substantial understanding of an individual’s perspective on the World Cup and Olympics in Brazil, lengthier interactions must be recorded. Second, ethnography is to anthropology as the scientific method is to chemistry. The chance to observe body language and also see how someone sees the world requires the opportunity to interact with him or her in person for long periods of time. Third, it is difficult to incorporate all the perspectives of different groups of Brazilians given the great diversity of the nation. How Brazilians interpret these mega-events clearly depends on a given individual’s specific identities and experiences.

Alternatively, the benefits are threefold. Given the frustration and dissatisfaction felt by many Brazilians with respect to these mega-events, I did not trigger these emotions by engaging with people in-person. Additionally, some general trends can be observed in terms of the attitudes, feelings, perspectives, and thought processes of Brazilians with regards to the mega-
events. Lastly, the ability to perform research on a topic that unfolds in real time gave me the chance to comment on a part of the anthropology of sports that has not been fully explored yet and that will receive a lot of attention soon.

We can observe three overarching general trends in Brazilian attitudes through my research. First, the attitudes formed on the World Cup and the Olympics are heavily based upon Brazil’s history of colonization and miscegenation in addition to the nature of sports and also mega-events. Second, the fun and celebrations during the World Cup allowed Brazilians to temporarily leave behind the pressing issues in Brazil. Additionally, Brazilians had high expectations for their National Team, which were not met and this allowed tensions regarding public services to resurface again shortly after the tournament. Third, winning the Olympic bid and potentially having a fantastic experience in the Olympic park were arguments in favor of hosting the Olympics. On the other hand, Brazilians could not ignore the lack of attention given to public services or the poor decisions made by President Dilma Rousseff. They especially could not ignore where the Olympics and these two areas overlapped.

The story is far from over and anthropologists will surely snatch the opportunity to explore this unpredictable and fascinating country’s situation. Future research should examine how the Olympic events impact Brazilian attitudes. Additionally, a more thorough examination of the material covered in this thesis will only aid in our collective understanding of Brazilian perspectives on hosting these mega-events.
Works Cited


Cruz, José. “Brazil’s World Cup Legacy” *Universo Online* 5 Nov. 2014. Web.


Smith, Ben “FIFA Confederations Cup: Brazil have regained respect –Neymar.” BBC. 1 Jul. 2013. Web.


