THE IDEOLOGY OF STADIUM CONSTRUCTION: A HISTORICAL SOCIOLOGY MODEL OF POWER AND CONTROL

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Donald L. Coombs

THE IDEOLOGY OF STADIUM CONSTRUCTION: A HISTORICAL SOCIOLOGY MODEL OF POWER AND CONTROL

The Ideology of Stadium Construction seeks to define the application of community power in the process of building sports stadiums. Using data culled from a literature review, this project examines the recent construction of sports venues and the political, economic, and social ideas driving their proliferation. A three dimensional approach to applied power provides a theoretical tool to illustrate and analyze the blueprint of stadium construction. Taking a more broad view of the culture of business in the United States suggests the public funding of stadium construction arching towards Antonio Gramsci's sense of hegemony. Beyond attempting to merely define the political process driving stadium construction as a significant social problem, this project introduces potential alternatives to the organizational method currently in place.

Peter Seybold, Ph.D., chair

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Prologue: A Primer on Stadium Construction: The Public's Policy?

Experiencing a steady upward trajectory in cost, frequency, and physical footprint over the past generation, the construction of new sports venues constantly occurs all around us. The increasing popularity and participation in the institution of sport corresponds with the escalating financial burden in producing these facilities. The responsibility for funding these venues became muddled and perpetually undefined, eventually relying more heavily on local taxpayers to foot all or a significant portion of the bill. Socially normalized over time, a history of documented success provides a fertile training ground for enterprising executives hoping to score access to the community treasury. Those deriving status, wealth, and power internalize successful tactics, choosing when appropriate to apply these oft-repeated public policy schemes. Concurrently, debt service on several demolished and abandoned sports cathedrals still exist in several communities (Appendix A and B).

A pre-defined moment in time exists when the public debate over funding the next bigger and better stadium commences. Epitomizing the development cycle of stadiums, architectural trending provides a means to better understand this constantly evolving process. Modern, "retro" styled architecture attempt to emulate facilities previously demolished, including the emotional attachment older fans my experience with these long disappeared facilities. However, fans visiting historically significant sports venues will undoubtedly note environmental differences. The "real" retro experience lacks prominent luxury seating options and larger concourses maximizing corporate advertising and retail opportunity. Architectural tastes and the demands of the sports business will continue evolving, further replicating this cyclical process.

The seeds of stadium growth projects, sowing from the wallets of the taxpayer, bloom into the mammoth brick and mortar buildings defining the contemporary American skyline. Leveraging the success of this direct economic strategy by professional sports leagues, other organizations within the institution of sport have become accustomed to traveling to their statehouses to advocate for public dollars. Seemingly, broad state support for the sports industry appears limitless—motorsports, high school stadiums/gymnasiums, and minor-league, amateur, and niche professional sports including soccer and ice hockey all vying for their slice of the corporatized American Dream. On occasion sports based legislation does fail, however, most of the time the sports business eventually receives the funding they seek in subsequent attempts.

With the legislative success of the sports industry in obtaining public funding for infrastructure, from an organizational perspective, suggesting an alternative funding method implies an irrational error in judgement. More basically, why would any business owner seek to pay for something themselves with another party willing to act in proxy?

As with many of the riddles defining contemporary social problems, citizens most disproportionately affected through this type of public expenditure remain least able to resist its enactment. Enduring sustained attacks on public education, the exploding costs of medicine, and shouldering the burden of regressive taxes, including sales and services taxes funding stadiums, middle and working-class families pay a high-cost for the luxury of sports entertainment. From a distance, it appears the sports industry expresses little respect for the individuals belonging to their fan base through refusing to resist the redistribution of community wealth.

Those who follow sports closely seek out niche news and information. The culture of sports provides a marketing platform for educating a wide audience of consumers about potential new stadium projects, interspersed with other sports scores and news stories. Pro-stadium construction arguments found in these media sources appear compelling on the surface. Fans willing to pay their hard-earned money to attend a game should experience the most comfortable amenities available. Stadium construction projects create jobs and potentially contribute to the vitality of specific areas within the community. Economic development surrounding stadium projects may materialize in the future. Access to professional sports teams allows for elected officials to project a "big city" image. Most important to the general fan, the financial commitment to the team solidifies their immediate future.

For many years, with little critical thought on the topic, I found myself generally supportive of stadium construction proposals. I would look forward to visiting new venues when they opened. The construction of Lucas Oil Stadium, a short walk from my campus in Indianapolis, corresponded with my increasing interest in sociology. The literature I considered through this course of study provided me with the training to consider social, political, and economic questions and ideas through a more critical lens.

Specifically, the literature I confronted in preparation for this project profoundly impacted the perspective I present in the following pages.

Broadly, this project seeks to define how stadium building projects advance from simple ideas on an executive's note pad through the process of becoming brick-and-mortar reality. Exploring the process of applying social power to initiative, protect, and finalize stadium proposals provides a more full understanding of the ideology driving this phenomenon. Opening the public coffers with every request from the sports industry, the burden of producing sports stadiums has transitioned into a readily acceptable use of state power (Appendix C). With four more venues projected to open over the next two years in the top three spectator sports and countless others throughout the rest of the professional and amateur sporting apparatus, this subject will remain critical for communities weighing the merits of stadium construction projects (Appendix D).

Studying Stadium Construction – Economic Outcomes and Political Processes

Cataloguing available research on the public funding of sports stadiums, Rick Eckstein and Kevin Delaney describe two broad themes of research (2007). The first school of thought embraces a thorough statistical analysis determining the financial efficacy of large-scale public investment in sports stadiums. These studies have produced a near unanimous volume of literature suggesting public financing of sports venues do not justify the use of increasingly scarce public funding (Delaney and Eckstein 2007). The substantial benefits supplied by local governments in the process of building stadiums cannot be economically justified, as the direct beneficiaries are specifically team owners and players, not the community or taxpayer (Baade 1996). This collection of quantitative research has yet to show signs of slowing or disrupting legislation allocating public funding for private stadiums.

The second, less prolific theme, details the political processes driving the construction of sports facilities (Eckstein and Delaney 2007). The role of political processes within social events provides the critical link between understanding social action and social structure (Abrams 1982:7). Taking this perspective, we can begin to approach "sports as an independent institution, that reflects and legitimates broader social inequalities of wealth, power and prestige," (Eckstein, Moss, and Delaney 2010:503). While in the minority of sports sociology research, several excellent studies examining political decisions have commenced, including Delaney and Eckstein's *Public Dollars, Private Stadiums: Battles Over Building Stadiums* (2003), Costas Spirou and Larry Bennett's *It's Hardly Sportin': Stadiums, Neighborhoods, and the New Chicago* (2003), Robert C. Trumpbour's *The New Cathedrals: Politics and Media in the History of Stadium Construction* (2007), and Neil de Mausse and Joanna Cagan's *The Field of Schemes: How the Great Stadium Swindle Turns Public Money into Private Profit* (2008). Contributing thoughtful analysis, each of these projects focuses on local developments following sports teams seeking tax dollars for new stadiums. Regardless of the specified research orientation, the sheer depth of existing literature reinforces the notion of stadium construction as a significant community event and critical research subject.

Figuring prominently in the research on the construction of sports stadiums, case studies allow for the closer investigation of these two themes. Nevertheless, advancing the observed gap between efficacy and process studies, I will forego the use of this method. By taking a step back from conducting a case study, I will instead work toward defining the collective ideas propelling the process of providing taxpayer funding for the construction of sports stadiums and the ideology supporting this economically unsound behavior. Working through this project, I will provide specific attention to the method by which certain ideas are purposely nurtured in the hearts and minds of Americans. Regardless, data collected from case studies have greatly influenced my understanding of this topic and subsequently provided the intellectual engine behind this literature review.

Advancing through this project, I draw upon research originating through the study of history, economics, public policy, political science, and most often, sociology. While considering a wide range of interdisciplinary research, I will specifically rely on the methods of historical sociology. Devoted to gaining a full understanding of the nature and effect of large-scale structures and processes of social change, this tradition concentrates on a broader view of how historical events contribute to the modern social condition (Skocpol 1982:4). With their own distinct methods, the study of history and sociology may seem vividly conflicting. Victoria Bonnell's essay on *The Uses of Theory, Concepts, and Comparison in Historical Sociology* succinctly outlines general differences (1980). Sociologists accept deductive reasoning, embracing the use of secondary sources within their analysis, where historians work toward incorporating primary sources leading to their interpretations. Sociologists begin with their theory, allowing for the possibility to exist their hypothesis could be proven false. Historians appear more apprehensive in their willingness to take on projects using a comparative analysis across national borders and across extended eras. Sociologists prefer a broader approach to their research, maintaining large-scale trending impossible to analyze during short time spans.

With the surface tension between the two disciplines, accepting both orientations appears virtually impossible. This inherent conflict drove both disciplines to create niches within, accepting their individual discipline's methodological assumptions. For the sociologist, understanding historical contexts and pressures which contribute to the present reality of any given society is critical. Connecting social theory to specific historical events and narratives occurs logically. This connection provides an efficient method of sketching a coherent explanation of the development of specific social occurrences and facts. "Historical sociology is not just some special kind of sociology, it is the essence of the discipline," explains Phillip Abrams, just "try asking serious questions about the contemporary world and see if you can do it without historical answers," (1982:1-2).

The Four Themes of Stadium Construction: Hegemony, Trojan Horses, Shock Doctrines, and Celebration Capitalism

Before advancing any further, I must clarify my thoughts and objectives in using the term ideology. I am simply referring to the dominant pattern of ideas governing thought and action throughout society. Extending beyond a mildly interesting research subject, ideology can determine life and death under specific circumstances (Zinn 1991). In geopolitical terms, the existence of two opposing political ideologies provided fuel for spurring on the Cold War. The *Ideology of Stadium Construction* exists without a cohesive, organized interlocutor. Regardless of resistance, once the dominant ideology begins transitioning to unquestioned fact among thought leaders and prominent citizens, the process of hegemony starts playing out.

Researching Brazil's preparation to host the World Cup in 2014 and the Olympics in 2016, Dave Zirin illuminates two ideological themes surrounding publicly financed stadiums (2014). Presenting on stadium construction in Brazil, his ideas remain equally valid in assessing the ideas propelling the construction of sporting venues in the United States. First, Zirin defines publicly funded stadium construction projects act as "neo-liberal Trojan horses." After granting public acceptance for such projects and the public money transferred to private hands, the hidden costs begin to appear in dizzying proportions. Occurring in both the international sporting events of Zirin's attention and those in the U.S., the hidden costs of these projects are rarely discussed, including the use of public dollars for infrastructure improvements around the stadium. Additionally, financing structures of these projects, extending years into the future, rarely arise during the community discussion of stadiums.

Drawing on Naomi Klein's 2007 book *The Shock Doctrine,* Zirin crafts the second theme he explores. Through a significant community event, usually with tragic underpinnings, a given population becomes softened up and subsequently less resistant to economic decisions generally disregarded by the majority. Describing this process Klein explains these, “orchestrated raids on the public sphere in the wake of catastrophic events, combined with the treatment of disasters as exciting market opportunities,” (2007:6). Tweaking this concept slightly, Jules Boykoff refers to the public funding of sports stadiums as “celebration capitalism,” a more specific description of the euphoric celebration following the announcement of international sporting events or new sports venues (2014).

More specifically, these thinkers describe distinct moments on the timeline of stadium construction. Zirin and Boykoff both elicit strong logic in their assessment, regardless of semantic differences. The waning euphoria disappears, economic promises remain left unfulfilled, and the totality of the bill becomes visible. After continued financing of these venues becomes burdensome, the manufactured economic crises rise to the surface. The reaction of politicians in the United States concerning this phenomenon mimics the reaction of those who have bought into this ideology abroad, austerity—the wholesale and widespread attack on public goods and social services.

Public Policy – The Intellectual Machinery of Progress and Growth

Bad economic principles do not appear out of thin air, they become enacted through the passage of public policy. Any study of a specific public policy, such as this one, must begin by reviewing the manner in which the policy is suggested, debated, and formed. Elite economic institutions and organizations, such as the World Economic Forum, the International Monetary Fund, and the World Bank, play a significant role in shaping and passing public policy, reports G. William Domhoff (1970). Presenting specific initiatives at conferences such as the annual World Economic Forum gathering at Davos, Switzerland, these organizations hold distinct sway over economic thinkers. Back home, corporate-financed think tanks employing academic experts serve to package and distribute ideas to political leaders (i.e. Heritage Foundation, Cato Institute, Center for American Progress, and the Brookings Institute). Elite foundations such as the Ford, Rockefeller, and Carnegie Foundations fund social research likely to provide results supporting their ideology (Seybold 1982).

Most significantly for Domhoff, members of these aforementioned institutions serve on "blue-ribbon commissions" or "task forces" articulating the policy recommendations amenable to elite and corporate interests to the public. By selecting members likely to provide a favorable position to corporate interests, these commissioners work under the guise of bipartisanship.

Convening to recommend methods to lower the national debt, the Simpson-Bowles Commission exists as an example of one of the most recent policy recommending commissions. Their recommendations included lowering revenue in the form of reducing both income and corporate tax rates, while simultaneously increasing the retirement age and reducing Social Security benefits (National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform). The idea of the national debt becoming a crisis leads to political attacks on the most vulnerable populations.

Allowing a greater level of financial freedom for the wealthy could encourage greater levels of local economic investment and thereby create jobs, the commissioners argued. The lack of stipulations requiring those receiving economic benefit from reinvesting accumulated wealth back into the economic system for “trickle-down” to occur, illustrates a significant breakdown in the tax cuts as an economic stimulant philosophy. Economic elites may just hold on to their money, instead of investing and enjoy the fruits of their wealth through conspicuous consumption.

These policies are designed to assist and support those with the ability to nurture their existence from simple ideas all the way through the process of becoming written law. Pocketing the money and enjoying the fruits of being situated on the right side of the economic divide provides much incentive for those rigging the economic system to favor themselves and their associates. Superbly defining the relationship between the working class, the elite and the manifestation of public policy, Thomas Frank writes “when one gains wealth through the direction of social, economic, and political policy, the other is sent into belt tightening mode,” (2005:45). Learning to transfer their own private troubles regarding their business and corporate interests to the public arena, we may refer to this as the sociological imagination of corporate persons. Clearly not the mark Mills aimed, empowering the most economically powerful at the expense of the majority.

Even though municipalities face the prospect of an overall net loss if they choose to maintain professional sports, Mark Rosentraub and David Swindell demonstrate the public has the opportunity to accomplish some goals through focusing their negotiation strategy (2009). The potential for mitigating some financial loss exists through organized strategies, such as attempting to focus economic benefit to specifically targeted areas, maximizing potential tax revenue, and seeking to coax the greatest level of intangible benefits related to the imagery and idea of being a “major league” city. Rosentraub and Swindell suggest the only real option available to cities focuses on the pursuit of a public/private partnership with local sports franchises (2009). This public negotiation model implies no alternative. Choosing to ignore the whims of the billionaires may otherwise lead teams to entering “free agency” and subsequently testing their ability to secure public dollars from another location. Free-agent franchises place the “home” of a team on the free-market, searching for the best location-based incentives for their business.

Locally justifying the public investment in private growth projects assumes the most probable form. Framing benefits towards satisfying the needs and goals of the specific community in question remains an efficient tactic of the new stadium movement. Varying and numerous, the most prevalent of these tactics argues in favor of a neoliberal economic culture promoting centralized, urban growth to increase local revenue. Maintaining sustained growth, supporters argue, grows the local tax base and increases economic opportunity for all those willing to reach out and invest. Assisting in communicating these economic ideas to Americans, metaphorical and visual cues such as “a rising tide lifts all boats,” “morning in America,” and “trickle-down economics” elicit and maintain a base for providing public funds for privately owned growth projects. With the scientific community continually suggesting the alternative, these misleading value-free phrases provide additional support for such ideas.

One of the most interesting questions concerning the process of stadium construction seeks to understand how public funding proposals continue achieving public policy success. Local growth coalition theory provides a beneficial theoretical lens to understand how consent for this policy coalesces at the local level (Delaney and Eckstein 2007). The central issue for those with the ability to provide "the resources to make their caring felt as a political force" centers on the formation of a climate of sustained economic growth (Molotch 1976: 310). Pro-growth advocacy organizations support policy preferences with their checkbooks. For sports stadiums built in the modern era, a united class of community elites and their ability to mobilize growth coalition activities positively influences the potential for stadium proposal achieving success (Paul and Brown 2001).

Access to the front door of the political machinery supplies a key to attaining a voice in the policy debate. Schattsneider defined the political or pressure system as having "an upper-class bias." (1975:32). Growing more distinctly visible in the years since Schattsneider conducted his study, upper class bias cannot be traced to one event, individual, or corporation but rather the strength of ideology. The uneven recovery following the 2007 financial collapse and the *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission* Supreme Court decision exponentially strengthened the upper-class bias of the pressure system. Manifesting through public policy, upper-class bias creates an economic atmosphere where those with the greatest level of access to the political system shape rules in their own favor.

Aligning public policy toward economic growth and more specifically, the maintenance of a positive urban image to "sell the city" satisfies the goals of a very specific, narrow stratum of the community. Approaching a more moral and egalitarian public policy for the needs and desires of the public, reflected in the diverse goods, products, and services shared amongst the entire population, should exist as the ultimate community goal. Historically, municipalities maintain varying degrees of control over these special industries and services. Existing among the most basic and important public services, communities cooperate together to manage the highway system, parks, education, and emergency services. Utilities with a public interest should proceed with the public interest in mind. Considering other privatized services, such as internet access, medical care, and professional sports should receive greater consideration for utility privilege. Commodifying these shared goods directly results in providing opportunities for private industry through an economic system where the possession of wealth exists as a golden ticket to influencing the direction and scope of public policy decisions.

The Ideology of Stadium Construction

Eckstein, Dana Moss, and Delaney cite Pierre Bourdeau's suggestion for examining how the sports industry displays values less devoted to the competition playing out and focusing more attention towards the industry's drive to produce a shiny product for mass consumption and more significantly, mass profit (2010). Accepting the sports industry as akin to any other industry represents a vital link in understanding the motivation behind specific action. Defining the business of the sports industry, as Bourdeau suggests, directs my work in the first chapter. Specifically, I will detail cultural advantages benefiting the sports industry. I plan to accomplish this task by creating an abbreviated review of recent American history detailing the advantages arising from the legal system, by the nature of the sport industry's product, and the current prevailing economic ideology.

Demonstrating public policy as a virtual carbon copy of the agenda of growth advocacy groups raises a more significant question. How can a meaningful conversation or debate occur when the goals of both parties align nearly identically? With each side seeking to attain as much of their preconceived goals as possible, the public negotiation model exists merely as a high stakes chess match. Approaching team officials for a meeting, local politicians have already accepted the conclusion they will provide taxpayer dollars to keep the team and peripheral benefits in town. Stadium proposals failing in the negotiation stage often represent a weak, non-cohesive local growth coalition failing to focus resource as a measure to attain the support of the community, rather than an ideological divide between the negotiating parties (Eckstein and Delaney 2006).

Groups favoring proposed stadium construction projects prefer discussions to remain outside of the community consciousness. Once negotiations occur openly, predetermined policy prescriptions may no longer hold sway over communities. Strong protest movements provide an avenue through which ordinary people can gain power and refocus policy conversations and direction (Piven 2006). Particularly rankling some in the community, the process of debating funding sports venues resembles the political systems in a plutocratic or oligarchic society, not a democracy (Lekakis 2014). Residing at the center of this perceived negotiating table between municipal leaders and team owners lay the primary themes of power and control. Examining power as a property to be accessed, possessed, and wielded by self-interested individuals and more specifically self-interested corporate individuals is the overarching goal of the second chapter. A three-dimensional approach to interpreting applied power through the community debate over new sports venues will help develop a more full understanding of community power. This approach assists in labeling and defining industry tactics which might not otherwise receive attention.

Taking these themes in compilation, the historical precedence for establishing a pro-business social, economic, and political culture and combining the applied social power propelling public funding of sports stadiums, represents the essence of the

Ideology of Stadium Construction.

The final chapter will commence with a short discussion of the state of the stadium construction ideology in 2015. A disturbing level of control in new stadium developments in Detroit and Atlanta has recently emerged. The dominating posture of the professional sports industry appears on full display when stadium construction proposals remain under wraps until construction plans are complete and the community financing secure. Concurrently, cities are achieving a more effective defensive strategy for countering the efforts of team representatives and league officials. My final task centers on achieving objectivity, which in a sociological sense requires a full review of all possible alternatives (Mills 2000).

In completing this review process, ideas suppressed within the political system become more easily studied, defined, and debated. Accepting the policy defined above has become the default public policy in municipal and state governments, but researchers should not consider this an inevitable policy and future economic decision may evolve (Delaney and Eckstein 2007). Addressing the process of defining alternative organizational structures posing a viable solution to deficits through comparative analysis occurs in the third chapter. In progressing through this project, a cohesive theory explaining why publicly funded stadiums continue appearing with increasing frequency will be developed. By increasing the level of knowledge available to the public, the greater the community arsenal in combating a social process distinctly disadvantaging the economic fortunes of one economic class in favor of another. Devoting specific attention to barriers blocking the implementation of reform, it is my hope other scholars will join with me in advancing the literature on the presented alternatives.

Fulfilling the Potential of Sports Sociology

Explaining the hyper-construction of sports stadiums within the context of the economic, social, and political organization of the United States, the *Ideology of Stadium Construction* embodies my attempt to provide an analysis of how applied power drives the process of stadiums construction. Witnessing the sports industrial complex's ability to capture the public policy apparatus through industry-related advantages leads one to question how far this process will extend. Advancing beyond just simple labeling of this phenomenon as a social problem, this project attempts to initiate a discussion on potential organizational alternatives.

Reflecting on sports sociologists' inability to develop theory explaining macro-sociological processes, Eckstein, Moss, and Delaney wrote a 2010 paper titled "Sports Sociology's Still Untapped Potential." Topics such as the funding and financing of youth, college, and professional sports, the interdependent relationship between the corporate media and sports franchises, and the connection between the institution of sport and the political system have yet to be fully developed in the academic literature. Representing an integral role in the *Ideology of Stadium Construction*, these interconnected themes garner support from a broad coalition of backers providing ideological cover for the transfer of public wealth to private pockets. This process continues marching on without any sign of slowing—a direct affront to the scientists who have exposed this phenomenon as a sham, an illusion benefiting those with the greatest economic leverage.

Benefiting from an interdisciplinary approach, relying on key concepts from sociology, as well as ideas originating in the study of economics, political science, and history, this project prominently develops themes in sports sociology. Specifically, applying a three dimensional framework to study the application of power in the construction of sports stadiums provides a clear view of how stadium construction projects develop. Taking on this project as a literature review strengthens this study by allowing me to step back and benefit from the existing case studies. From this starting point, I can present a series of general themes to interpret and define the *Ideology of Stadium Construction*. Witnessing every method I will cover does not necessarily occur in each stadium construction project, therefore, using this method allows for a more complete analysis of the overall phenomenon. This project contributes to the literature relating to stadium construction by labeling and defining the collection of ideas driving this phenomenon and more specifically inventorying and analyzing tactics used to apply pressure to communities to commit public dollars.

Cases transferring ownership of sports teams provide a quantitative representation to the extent of financial success sports businesses have achieved. Even with the astronomical financial values attached to sports teams, they still sell well above their market value, with members of the top economic strata lining up for the opportunity to enter this exclusive club. Considering other trends affecting the value of sports teams, including media deals for television rights and corporate partner and sponsorship deals offer increasingly lucrative lines of profit, the value of teams should be rising. But, we must collectively ask ourselves how much longer committing taxpayer dollars to these wealthy organizations remains necessary for American communities.

Ch#1 – Unmasking the Game: An Inventory of Industry Assets

> I know where I'm going and I know the truth and I don't have to be what you want me to be. I am free to be what I want.
> —Cassius Clay (in 1964)

> In a time of universal deceit, telling the truth is a revolutionary act.
> —George Orwell (1903-1950)

> If the past has nothing to say to the present, history may go on sleeping undisturbed in the closet where the system keeps its old disguises.
> —Eduardo Galeano (1940-2015)

Occupying a lofty position in American culture, the institution of sport takes place all around us—the professional games easily visible from every major city across the country, the footprint of youth sports central to every small town, and within our libraries, a nearly endless volume of literature on the subject. Filling all of the National Football League (NFL) facilities requires the equivalent population of the fourth-largest city in the United States (n=2,258,430). Beaming into Americans living rooms, every household with a cable package has access to the Entertainment and Sports Programming Network (ESPN) at a cost of around $5 per household (Stelter 2013). Generating upwards of $5 billion per year with participation numbers roughly equivalent to the population of Texas, the institution of little league sports exhibits the characteristics of big business (Kelly and Carchia 2013). Beginning with middle school and running all the way through the top of the education system, sports teams comprising of the student body represent the institution. Interlacing sports within religious organizations through church athletic leagues and fraternal organizations such as the Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA) or Athletes in Action (AIA) shows the overlapping nature of sports and culture. Claiming the institution pervasive throughout American society still seems somewhat an understatement.

Clearly, the American public possesses a great interest in this institution. Resulting from collective passionate enthusiasm, the professional sports industry receives strategic assistance and protection through the institution's central cultural location. This assistance originates from various community sources, providing shape to the institution and industry we recognize today. The cultural position of the institution of sport becomes critical when attempting to understand the business behind the game. We must consider the act of participating in commerce does not occur in a vacuum. Activity relating to business ownership takes place within the parameters debated and defined within the political system. Extending to all specific and direct action, individual politics govern action in all facets of their lives, including through their ownership responsibilities (Weber 2004). Failing to consider the socio-political culture of business and industry when attempting to understand the process behind how stadiums develop fails in drawing a complete portrait of this phenomenon. If this project was seeking to understand why a specific species of tree grows in a given location, wouldn't the environmental factors significantly contribute to the report? Scientifically, considering the growth of brick and steel structures is similar to the growth of considering organic matter—environment matters.

This chapter attempts to achieve a greater level of understanding relating to specific circumstances of preference for the institution and business of sports. This process is simultaneously political and social. Arising from advantages provided through the political system, as well as from members of the public who are wholly engrossed in the game playing out on the field. Cheerful robots exhibit a blind allegiance to teams, owners, and to their own memories and emotions, consenting to the looting of the public coffers because of their greater interest in the spirit of competition. Bringing to light the facts of the sports industry allows the reader to disassociate oneself from the product. Combining together, these social processes provide the sports industry a special economic position unattainable by any other industry.

The Heroic Free Market

A subsection of American culture elevates the everyday action of participating in ownership activity to the levels of heroism. During the 2012 Republican National Convention this notion was on full display as the phrase "we built that" was used ad nauseam. Marginalizing the contributions others make to specific individual accomplishments, this catchphrase fails to exhibit an understanding of social location in exchange for a self-congratulatory pat on the back.

The social origins of this philosophy, where the American ideal type of rugged individualism merges with a strict adherence to free-market principle will become clearer through this discussion. Equivocating business activity with heroism originates "from an earlier age of laissez-faire, of epic individual efforts," associated with the settlement of the Western United States (Trachtenberg 2007:228). This philosophy does not advance along a linear path, rather ebbing and flowing with the collective American psyche. Rising first in the Gilded Age and then again as reactionary movements to the social programs coalescing out of presidents Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal and Lyndon B. Johnson's Great Society.

The impulse to consume, with the exception of specific physiological needs, cannot be considered innately biological. Trachtenberg's theory of the pedagogy of modernity shows how businesses representing mass production imbued Americans with the urge for mass consumption (2007:131). Teaching society how to consume and more importantly how these products could improve individual lives. Those with the ability to purchase the products on the showroom floor were purchasing freedom from the drudgery of the informal economy of the home. The pedagogy of modernity in contemporary society seems most readily found in a toddler who has consumed too many television commercials—they have the ability to tell you exactly what products and services they require and how it would improve their lives.

The local department store contributed to educating the community on the rapidly expanding products and services available in the early 20th century. Representing the ideal type of home décor, personal style, while reinforcing the social norms of communication and etiquette through tea and snack rooms, these extravagantly designed places of consumption rapidly became the center of activity in many cities and towns. Some department stores even contained satellite post office branches.

Evolving patterns of production, focusing prominently on mass production as opposed to specialized production of luxury items for the economic elite's conspicuous consumption, became increasingly prominent as a means to expand potential revenue sources. The city was "the place where people assembled to labor in production and to consume in consumption, that is, the products of their own labor returned to them in advertised commodities…," (Trachtenberg 2007:139).

Representing a new form of ideological control, products created through the factory-based system kept individuals striving for greater consumption. Recognizing his role in this process, Boston Department Store owner Edward Filene set about defining his objective to "sell to the masses, all that it employs the masses to create," (Ewen 2001:54). Mass advertising sought to capitalize on the creation of social habits and desires, changing individual expectations of beauty and aesthetics. One early advertising specialist describes this theme in their work, "advertising helps to keep the masses dissatisfied with their mode of life, dissatisfied with ugly things around them. Satisfied customers are not as profitable as discontented ones," (Ewen 2001:39).

One of the great political questions Americans have grappled with concerns the role of the federal government in the nation's economic matters. Confining myself to the most recent generation for brevity, this discussion could easily begin much earlier, during the rise of industrialization, or even earlier. Ascending to the Presidency during the 1980 election, Ronald Reagan swept into office articulating a platform labeling the government as the problem, not the solution to correcting the ills of the American economy. Americans feeling an inability to trust their government arose from learned experiences. Kicking one party out of the White House for embracing a long-term entanglement in Vietnam, the leader of the oppositional party would resign in disgrace. Returning to the former party the nation became consumed with a hostage crisis, where many Americans believed ineffectual leadership failed to free those in Tehran more quickly.

Introducing this anti-government philosophy *en masse* to Americans at this moment achieved success largely through the experience of contemporary history. Using the imagery of the Chicago Welfare Queen who was gaming the social safety net, Reagan harnessed blue-collar anger across the country—where many saw themselves as working as hard as ever, but failing to gain economic ground. For all his charisma, Reagan had a penchant for avoiding substantial issues in favor of canned themes and catch phrases. The 40th President of the United States will be remembered for his role in exchanging the politics of moral concern for that of American celebration (Stone 2012 and Mills 2008).

Shifting away from what E.J. Dionne, Jr. referred to as the Long Consensus, or the avowed commitment to balancing the free-market system with programs combatting the resulting social discomfort of capitalism (2012:7). Instead Reagan and the neo-conservative movement turned the clock back one hundred years in terms of economic philosophy, lurching back towards a radical form of individualism unseen since the Gilded Age.

Before ascending to the White House, Reagan's ideological spirit—the *Heroic Free Market* was already set in motion by corporate advocacy groups. Penning a memorandum to the Chamber of Commerce in 1971, Lewis F. Powell, a corporate lawyer from Richmond, Virginia who sat on the board of Phillip Morris, asserted the American economic system was under a broad assault, by "varied and diffused" sources.

Arising from “perfectly respectable elements of society,” such as media organizations or from the university system, Powell argues these attacks must be countered by supporters assuming a more aggressive stance in extolling the values and virtues of the free-market.

One can witness the struggle for ideological control over the media and university, prominently displayed in the open. Manifesting not through force, but rather through ideological control which “takes many less total and more mundane forms, through the control of information, through the mass media, and through the process of socialization,” (Schattsneider 1975:27). Transitioning cable news into the realm of “infotainment,” where the focus lies more on recycling party-sanctioned talking points in a method to harden ideological positions rather than a presentation of social events. Providing equal time to parties for the expression of talking points, serious members of the media accept both sides arguments as fact without little critical questioning. In essence, ceding its critical function of holding those in power accountable and becoming a virtual lap dog for the interests of those in power. In fact, perceived critical questioning can lead to blacklisting and specific journalists may lose access as a result of perceived slights.

Arguing the university system resembles a corporate service station, Seybold explains, students are no longer encouraged to “think big” and the intellectual mission of the university subsequently compromised. In further developing this idea he continues, “instead of leading the fight against the decline of the public sphere and the erosion of democracy, universities have accepted the conditions imposed on them by neo-liberalism and have adjusted to the new status quo," (2014). For example, by purchasing professorships on the free-market, individuals retain some level of control over who receives a job offer, and therefore the ideas they may espouse.

Taking this route, energy mogul Charles Koch gave $1.5 million to the economics department at Florida State University and unsurprisingly used this oversight to hire professors for a new program who focused on extolling the virtues of the free-market (Hundley 2011). Declaring one document responsible for changing the entire course of social and economic policy certainly qualifies as an overstatement or as some might label it, a conspiracy theory. Nonetheless, undeniable and far-reaching, the social reverberations of the development of an elite class consciousness surround these ideas. Accepting a seat on the bench of the Supreme Court after offered by President Richard Nixon, Powell's philosophy of a strict free market ideology followed him to the bench. Serving as a long-term solution for inducing ideological control, shifts on the Supreme Court happen slowly as a result of the lifetime appointments. Following Powell's appointment, a string of cases to enrich the rights of corporations and the power of economic elites occurred in two significant, sweeping waves.

Beginning in 1975, with a unanimous decision in *Cort v. Ash*, the court held corporations possess the constitutional right to fund advertisements against specific political candidates. The next year in *Buckley v. Valeo*, the Court struck Federal Election Commission (FEC) limits on the amount individual political campaigns could spend pursuing public office (1976). Writing the majority opinion in *First National Bank of Boston v. Belloti*, Powell threw out a statute barring banks and corporations from campaign spending on referendum proposals (1978). Representing the initial groundwork for money and wealth as an acceptable vehicle for the application of free speech, these cases began chipping away at regulations regarding corporate spending.

Initiating in the mid-2000s, the second spate of cases continued down the same path. Striking down Vermont's campaign financing regulations in *Randall v. Sorrell*, the Court referred to the contribution ceiling as miniscule and that the entire process of campaigning may become endangered if not removed (2006). A ban on corporate financing for issue-based advocacy leading up to elections, as long as the advertisements do not support or denounce a specific candidate was lifted in 2007's *Federal Election Commission (FEC) v. Wisconsin's Right to Life*.

The unraveling of American democracy continues with the case garnering the most attention in this series of cases, *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission (FEC)*, where the court defined financial contributions to political campaigns as free-speech protected by the First Amendment and as an association of individuals, corporation carry the identical rights as individuals. Writing the majority opinion, Justice Anthony Kennedy explained legislatures had no business attempting to create "fairness" and "there is no such thing as too much free speech." Dissenting, Justice John Paul Stevens claims this decision "threatens to undermine the integrity of elected institutions across the Nation."

The most recent ruling removes aggregate individual limits on contributions to national political parties and political action committees, although individual contributions to candidates still remain at $2600 per candidate (*McCutcheon, et. al. v.*

the Federal Election Commission (FEC) 2014). Remaining somewhat muddled still, individuals may participate in candidate fundraising events, paying well over the contribution limit just to get in the door in some cases. Gaining favorable decisions in 70% of cases they have argued since Roberts and Alito joined the Court in 2006, the Chamber of Commerce has been successful in pushing its agenda through the Court, where between 2012 and 2014 their winning percentage rose to 80% (Donnelly 2014).

Allowing greater flexibility for those contributing to the political system cultivates a social atmosphere favoring those with the greatest ability to subsidize the spread of ideas. Expanding the free-market system as advocated by Powell and the overall celebration of a business-centric culture has resulted in the fire sale of the public portfolio. Outsourcing the responsibility of utility holdings, toll roads, the education system, the management of municipal functions, such as parking meter services, aspects of the medical system and the social safety net, and even the hiring of corporate mercenaries to wage war, may create more private sector jobs, but raise a great number of questions concerning the morality of handing these functions off to public industry.

Writing in 1960, E.E. Schattsneider asked his readers to:

> "Imagine a political system in which votes are bought and sold on the open-market, a system which it is taken for granted that people will buy all the votes that they can afford and use their power to get more money in order to buy more votes, so that a single magnate can easily outvote a whole city. Imagine a situation in which elections have become a mere formality because one or a few individuals are owners of a controlling number of votes. Suppose that nine-tenths of the communities are unable to exert any appreciable influence. Suppose moreover that the minority is entitled to very little information on what is being done. This is the way the political system would be like if it were ran like a business," (1975:118).

Declaring the United States a Plutonomy, a 2005 internal memo from the management team at Citibank, invited the entire company to consider this notion while reflecting on the future direction of business decisions. Defining the political and social world we participate, Schattsneider's words are no longer just a simple exercise in thought—they exemplify our world.

The dissolution of the Long Consensus, in favor of a corporate governing philosophy has disproportionately affected economic opportunity within the working classes. Drew DeSilver details the significant depth of wage stagnation for American labor:

> "Today's average hourly wage has just about the same purchasing power as it did in 1979, following a long slide in the 1980s and early 1990s and bumpy, inconsistent growth since then. In fact, in real terms the average wage peaked more than 40 years ago: The $4.03-an-hour rate recorded in January 1973 has the same purchasing power as $22.41 would today," (2014).

At the same time, productivity gains by the American worker have skyrocketed. In the 40 years between 1973 and 2013, productivity has nearly increased by 75%, while compensation has only risen by 9.2% (Cooper and Mishel 2015). Upon gaining momentum as a cultural and ideological force, the entrenchment of the *Heroic Free Market* corresponds with the increasingly opulent demands for the construction of sports venues on the public's dime.

Professional Sports as a Microcosm of the Heroic Free Market

A defining characteristic of the sports industry revolves around consumer's natural interest in competition for entertainment. Extending beyond the games played on the field, many fans constantly check smart phones for the latest transactions, scores, and highlights. My purpose behind detailing the rise of free-market ideology as a cohesive cultural force, in the section above, is to provide the context for the social and economic conditions which the sports industry exists. In this section, drawing on historical themes, I will provide three specific examples detailing how the sports industry receives advantages because of its unique location within American social life—through the antitrust exemption provided to Major League Baseball (MLB), the non-profit status provided to many sports leagues, and the lack of fan and community oversight on the by-laws governing the organization of sports leagues.

Establishing a challenge to the professional baseball duopoly of the National and American Leagues, the Federal League began play in 1914. Following their first season, the Federal League brought suit against the other two leagues for colluding to monopolize the industry. Landing on the docket of Judge Kennesaw Mountain Landis, he urged the sides to come together on an agreement. More notable for later accepting the newly minted position of Commissioner of Baseball, a result of the 1919 Black Sox scandal, Landis became the driving force behind the maintenance on racial segregation. Discarding the Reserve Clause, the Federal League established itself as a league where players enjoyed much more freedom. In Major League Baseball (MLB), the Reserve Clause binds players to their teams, even after the expiration of their contracts. Grabbing player's attention, a total of 81 of Major League Baseball's (MLB) players changed employers, opting instead to take the field for Federal League teams (Abrams 1999:307).

Following the 1915 season, Major League Baseball (MLB) owners concocted a strategy to end the challenge of the Federal League, eventually purchasing four of the eight Federal League teams. Further, allowing two owners to take over struggling Major League Baseball (MLB) teams, one team was already under central control of the Federal League. This left just one Federal League owner without a team in Major League Baseball (MLB). The owners of the team on the outside, Baltimore's Federal League franchise sought to purchase a Major League Baseball (MLB) franchise, however, he was ultimately blocked by other owners. Charles Comiskey of the Chicago White Sox lacked belief in the city quipping, "Baltimore is a minor league city and not a hell of a good one at that," (Abrams 1999:308). Filing a Sherman Anti-trust violation, the owners of the Baltimore team sued the owners of the National and American Leagues for conspiring to monopolize baseball by eliminating the Federal League. Accepting the case in 1922, the Supreme Court delivered a unanimous decision written by Oliver Wendell Holmes. Holmes referred to baseball games as a "purely state affair" and while team employees must cross state lines to labor, this fact "is not enough to change the character of the business," (*Federal Baseball Club of Baltimore v. The National League of Baseball Clubs, et al* (1922).

The Supreme Court developed its opinion based on two circumstances. First, the court viewed participating in organized professional baseball not as an act of commerce, but rather only an exhibition of skill. Secondly, the relevant aspects of conducting the business of baseball did not occur across state lines, only in the team's hometown. Understanding the growth professional sports would later undergo in the 20th century, these justices could not have even fathomed the social and cultural reach of the product we consume today. This may seem a confusing decision, but both legal scholar Nathaniel Grow and current Supreme Court justice Samuel Alito have argued the Court made the correct decision and contemporary criticism of the decision misplaced (2014, 2009). Grow admits the decision would likely be different if heard by today's Court, citing the widening interpretive expansion of interstate commerce through the Great Depression and growth of the sports industry for the potential reverse in thinking (2014).

Nevertheless, the Court passed on opportunities to reverse its decision in *Toolson v. New York Yankees, Inc*. and in *Flood v. Kuhn* (1952, and 1971). In *Toolson v. New York Yankees, Inc.*, the Court advised Congress to enact a law overturning the anti-trust exemption if they saw fit. Justice Harry Blackmun acknowledged facts no longer aligned in such a way to provide this exemption in his opinion in *Flood v. Kuhn*, but failed to overturn it because the Court felt the consequences would be worse than just letting the exemption stand. The business of baseball remains the only industry operating under a judicially created exemption to the Sherman Anti-trust Act. While the Supreme Court may have a chance to reconsider this again soon, Economist Roger Noll believes that even if the exemption negated, the possibility a legitimate competitor to Major League Baseball (MLB) emerging remain very slim (Parker 2015).

Together these cases illustrate the political system's ambivalence towards correcting this issue and placing a protective bubble around the industry. Exempting Major League Baseball violates the spirit of anti-trust legislation—arising as a method of consumer protection from monopolies which have no competition and no reason to offer a reasonable exchange rate for their service. Leaving the exemption in place protects those with a profit motive in the industry, not the consumer or the labor (Butler 2014). In fact, eradicating this law would lead to potentially disastrous results for Major League Baseball (MLB) owners. Keeping prospective teams and owners out of the league potentially become more challenging. Collectively blocking the relocation of other teams would no longer be possible. Finally, overturning this decision would nullify the Reserve Clause, still in effect for players with less than six years of experience and before athletes reach Major League Baseball (MLB), would void prospects associations with specific teams. In this case, choosing to pursue inaction by elected officials reveals significant benefits to the industry itself.

Further assisting the industry, federal tax code provides tax-exempt status to many professional sports leagues. Not applying to specific teams or individuals, only to central league offices. Ten sports organizations with profits exceeding $10 million dollars continue to claim this exemption including the National Hockey League (NHL), women's and men's professional golf (LPGA, PGA), and professional tennis (ATP) (Tracy 2014). Support for nullifying this exception has found bi-partisan support, however those with teams and associations in their district refuse to support such measures, fearing it could be used against them in future re-election bids. After years of pressuring the league to change its 501(c)(6) status from outside groups and advocates, the NFL relinquished its non-profit status in 2015. With Roger Goodell's salary hovering around $35 million per year, ranking his compensation near the top of other executives from other industries, continuing to argue the league deserved this status became untenable and frankly, embarrassing (Pinsker 2015).

The lack of oversight of community oversight on professional leagues provides a third asset to the sports industry. Structuring league by-laws to undercut local control over the direction of teams serve to keep communities flexible to owner's demands. Expanding further on this concept in the third chapter, I will illustrate examples of communities seeking to gain greater control over "their" teams and facilities. Lacking oversight can potentially have both positive and negative effects. Removing owner Donald Sterling from the Los Angeles Clippers franchise, a positive because of his racism and tendency to put out a terrible product, but raises a question of whether the league should be able to unwillingly separate an owner from his property. Further, claiming a responsibility to do so, the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) determines the behavior of student-athletes—much like an employer, but without the compensation. Additionally, many communities may choose to alter offensive team names, if citizens or politicians had authority over such matters.

A Recipe for Social Cohesion?

E.E. Schattsneider, a political scientist, suggests a sociologically interesting question while working from the premise that some identifiable factor establishing the cohesiveness of communities must exist (1975:23). Historically, professional sporting events bring members of the community together to cheer in common cause. Evolving from a mechanism for entertainment, the production of professional sports grew into a community persona representing the people of their cities. Living within a specific urban community and representing “their” teams signifies a “tie that binds” an individual to their community (Trumpbour 2007:315). When “the team’s performance and identity can be expected to play a role in defining it’s fans sense of civic loyalty and participation in a community transcending the confines of family, ethnicity, and neighborhood,” it is clear the team satisfies an important community function (Spirou and Bennett 2003:315).

Arguing in favor of other individual and community themes in solving this social riddle remains possible. Some may find focusing descriptions of the tie that binds a community together as physical landmarks, institutions, elected officials, or public spaces. Some may be seeking a certain geographical location to be close to family. Another, possibly more cynical connection, attaches citizens to their community through their employment in a given location. Regardless of these other possibilities, suggesting the institution of sports offers a compelling response to the question.

Representing their sports franchises, sports stars became local celebrities and de facto representatives of the team’s city. Many athletes advertised a wide array of local businesses, but Michael Jordan’s high volume national ad campaigns took this representation to a new level. With brands such as Gatorade and Nike Jordan would pave the way for Tiger Woods, Peyton Manning, and LeBron James to step into similar roles. Athletes seeking to maximize their financial potential may even consider comparing potential marketing opportunities in choosing to labor in different locations. Combining community recognition with perceived hard work on the playing field, a relationship develops between fans and players. Eliciting a similar emotional connection, individual sports venues may take on this characteristic through often and repeated attendance. Through their labor, athletes symbolize the sense of connection between individuals and their community. The uniqueness of the sports industry is further revealed in a thought by David Morris, “the people of Detroit don’t congregate around the television to watch Ford or GM workers build cars; Seattle residents don’t watch Microsoft employees design software,” (1998).

Providing breadth to this camaraderie amongst a sports franchise and their fans, Neil de Mausse describes the summers of his youth. Serving as his introduction to a wide swath of society, de Mausse looked on from his outfield bleacher seats with,

> “Latino families, members of the rap group Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five, a Japanese sports reporter who happily gave up her press box seat to sit with the real fans, and an elderly cowbell wielding man named Ali, who commuted from his native Puerto Rico every baseball season to watch his team in action,” (2008, XVI).

Lamenting every Yankees fans worst fear, George Steinbrenner moving the historic team out of the Bronx for New Jersey, de Mausse was fearful “that ours could be that last generation to share in this sudden camaraderie,” (2008: XIV). While Steinbrenner’s threatening posture turned out baseless in the Yankees, the anxiety de Mausse felt was the result of historical evidence. The fallout from the 1957 East Coast exodus of the Giants and Dodgers to San Francisco and Los Angeles still psychologically stung for many New Yorkers living through the experience.

Uprooting a team from the community instantaneously reveals the social connection between the community and the teams playing there. Fearing the loss of the home team damages the overall community psyche. The feeling of distress experienced by de Mausse and every other fan in this position contributes to the process of softening the community towards folding to team's financial demands. Responding in desperation, many support measures to publicly fund stadiums. Failing to grasp the staggering economic costs, civic and team loyalty clouds judgement.

Pondering what fans are owed in return for their allegiance to the game, Dave Zirin prepared a response to *New York Daily News* writer Mike Lupica. Lupica argued that fans "are owed nothing in sports, no matter how much you care. You are owed nothing no matter how much you've rooted and no matter how much you have paid." Crafting a strong counterargument for what communities and fans who root for their local teams are owed, Zirin writes:

> "I couldn't disagree more. We are owed plenty by the athletic industrial complex. We are owed loyalty. We are owed accessibility. We are owed a return on our massive civic investment. And more than anything, we should raise our fists to the owner's box and say that we are owed a little bit of goddamn respect. We aren't owed this respect because it's the human thing to do. We aren't owed any love because we cheered ourselves hoarse and passed the precious rooting tradition down to our children. We are owed it because the teams are ours as much as they are theirs. Literally. By calling for and receiving public funds, owners have sacrificed their moral, if not financial claim of ownership," (2010: 8).

Becoming part of a team's identity, geographical location encompasses a significant part of a team's identity, however, the community and the team's fans do not hold the keys to the business. At any moment, whether on a whim or through careful planning, a single individual or family may create an entire city worth of enemies by relocating their business. Accepting capitalism and free-market economics places the creation of growth and profits by individuals above the desires of an entire community.

Acknowledgement of this process hardly occurs in the structure of the American *Heroic Free Market*. There is no debate concerning the worthiness of this system for governing the professional sports enterprise. Believing this conversation on organizational alternatives essential, I will begin to confront this process in the third chapter.

Growth as Social Cohesion

Many in the community undoubtedly subscribe to the sports as a community tie thesis. An individual's answer to this question may even potentially suggest their economic standing. However, evidence suggests that the strongest tie that binds the community together is sewn by economic class and the ability to invest and create profit through the process of centralized, urban growth. Recently built stadiums distinctly reveal divisions of social classes. As Dinces explains, recent stadium construction contains structural design designated with the economic elite in mind, less centered on the game playing out on the field and inclusively providing greater opportunity for conspicuous consumption (2014).

The urban place itself is a market commodity, providing wealth and power to those who control access and the ability to influence growth activity. Significant social questions with political and economic implications arise concerning the means and tactics used for achieving this growth. "Setting off this chain of phenomenon," Harvey Molotch explains, "constitute the central issue for those serious people who care about their locality and who have the resources to make their caring felt as a political force," (1976:310).

Interpreting the process of economic growth within the urban setting as an agent for community binding sets up the next chapter which explores how accumulated social power is applied in the community debate on public funding for sports stadiums. This chapter argues the institution of sport and particularly, the professional sports industry receives special advantages in the act of completing its day-to-day business. Further exacerbating this social malady, the public's great interest in the game unfolding on the field, where cheering as a fan bleeds into individual's lives and many blindly support stadium construction projects without fully considering the cost. This chapter has aimed to begin the process of removing the rose-colored glasses of fandom, so that a study on the business of sports may begin. Overall, this chapter contributes to placing the social location of the institution of sports in American society.

Ch#2 – The Blueprint for Stadium Construction: Applying Community Power and Attaining Social Control

> It has been said in criticism that I am too much fascinated by power. This is not really true. It is intellect that I have been most fascinated by, and power primarily in connection with that. It is the role of ideas in politics and society, the power of intellect, that most fascinates me as a social analyst and as a cultural critic.
>
> —C. Wright Mills (1916-1962)

> Nothing discloses real character like the use of power. It is easy for the weak to be gentle. Most people can bear adversity. But if you wish to know what a man really is, give him power. This is the supreme test.
>
> —Robert Ingersoll (1833-1899)

> The corporate grip on opinion in the United States is one of the Wonders of the World. No First World country has ever managed to eliminate so entirely from its media all objectivity—must less dissent.
>
> —Gore Vidal (1925-2013)

Floyd Hunter's *Community Power Structures* (1953) and C. Wright Mills' *The Power Elite* (1956) began the process of identifying and defining the origins of community power. Interviewing members of Atlanta's elite, ascertaining this status through identification from other elites, Hunter found participants believed power to be concentrated in the hands of a few top business executives and corporate lawyers. Recognizing patterns, Hunter discovered his research subjects living amongst themselves in small gated communities, occupying seats on many of the same corporate boards, and most wholeheartedly accept the doctrine of constant growth (1953, also see Domhoff 2005). Concluding community power dispersed through overlapping cliques of corporate circles, Hunter's evidence could have lent itself to a more radical analysis. Filling this void, C. Wright Mills defined Hunter's "overlapping cliques" as a cohesive social class, explaining “they occupy the command posts of the social structure, in which they are now centered the effective means of power and wealth…” (1956:4).

Defending the idealistic notion of power as readily attainable by any member of society, critics of Hunter and Mills lined up quickly to dispute their claims. Maintaining the governing system open to a wide variety of general interests, residents control the outcome of elections and therefore direct subsequent public policy (Hajnal and Trountstein 2010). Leading the charge, political scientist Robert Dahl, referred to Hunter’s work as a “morass of ambiguities and unexamined contradictions (1960). Publishing *Who Governs?* in 1961, Dahl studied the town of New Haven, Connecticut, arguing power resides in the competitiveness of a two-party system, where local elites and business leaders possess only a peripheral level of influence. Traveling to Atlanta on two separate occasions, pluralists studied in Hunter’s wake (Domhoff 2005). Attempting to provide counter evidence, both accomplished the opposite, presenting evidence strengthening arguments pointing to a society dominated by elite ideas.

Replicating Hunter’s methodology, M. Kent Jennings reported finding many of the same individuals within Atlanta’s elite social circles (1964). Explaining economic growth in Atlanta a direct result of an expansion of the business district into low-income minority neighborhoods, Clarence Stone identified these neighborhoods least likely to fight against this expansion. The work of Mills and Hunter, explains Domhoff, “upset political scientists to no end…they simply concluded that business dominates local and national governments in the United States in a very direct way, and that politics and politicians are secondary because they more or less have to do the bidding off the owners and managers of big business," (2006:1).

Any functioning pluralistic community power structure would have opposing views down party lines by issue. Generally speaking, only a marginal divide exists between American political parties when it comes to supporting growth machine politics. On providing public funds for the construction of sports stadiums, both parties push for such action. Diagraming this phenomenon, de Mausse and Cagan point out, "this pattern has been followed in cities large and small, those run by Democrats and Republicans, by free spenders and those traditionally stingy about every cent," (2008:63). However, suggesting this strategy as wrongheaded, President Barack Obama's 2015 budget includes a proposal to end the process of providing tax-free bonds to the sports industry (Grabar 2015).

In recognizing the existence of the small group of individuals with the ability to get things done in the community, either through disposable wealth or political ties, social researchers can then begin to illustrate how these individuals exercise community power. Analyzing how this small group of individuals focus their efforts fighting for stadium construction on the public dime, this chapter will utilize a three-dimensional approach to analyzing applied social power in the community. Accessing each of these dimensions reveals additional tactics, working separately and congruently, to gain consent for the use of public funding within the construction of contemporary sports stadiums. Through a constantly multiplying set of cases, occurring in towns and cities though out the United States and around the world, this blueprint for eliciting public funding in the name of constructing stadiums has transitioned into normal operating procedure of local and state governments.

The First Dimension—Locating the Application of Overt Power

Defining "this first, one-dimensional view of power involves a focus on behavior in the making of decisions on issues over which there is an observable conflict of (subjective) interests…" (Lukes 2005:19). Taking place in this first dimension, a direct analysis of the actions and behavior of teams specifically advocating stadium proposals with public funding (Appendix E). Tactics in this dimension specifically aim to gain the consent of the community, specifically those who attend sporting events and root for the local team. Those advocating for stadium projects benefit from communities' caring attitude about the local sports franchise and the general economic well-being of their city.

The opening salvo by the pro-stadium construction movement attempts to drum up support for a new venue by defining the current facility as obsolete. While this argument takes many forms, the most prolific route presented by teams argues an aging facility actively limits potential revenue streams. Two other common arguments presented by teams regarding the obsolescence of an existing stadium include a greater demand for luxury seating and insufficient concourse space. Threatening to move or sell his team unless the city agreed to consummate a new arena deal, Miami Heat owner Mickey Arison told city officials the Miami Arena limited his revenue streams by not having enough luxury seating and opportunities to sell advertising space (Navarro

1996). Arison eventually received a new arena, shuttering a facility only in operation for eight years that was built entirely with taxpayer funding.

While Arison paid the entire cost of the new building, the city of Miami provided $38 million worth of land and continues to pay an annual subsidy of $6.5 million to the team (Petchetsky 2013). Arison recently requested the city contribute more, suggesting $17 million as more appropriate. Generously, the team agreed to pay rent when building the arena, nonetheless, the agreement grossly skews in favor of the team. The threshold for the city to receive its share of arena profits was surpassed for the first time in 2013, a year where his team won the NBA Championship. The arena revenue totaled over $30 million—the city received a check for $257,000, nearly equaling LeBron James's $231,000 per game salary (Hanks 2013).

While not angling for a new stadium, Indiana Pacers owner Herb Simon utilizes the revenue limiting argument when he applied pressure to the city of Indianapolis to rework the team's arena contract (Kravitz, 2009). This line of thinking would be more compelling if backed by hard evidence, but the community remains expected to rely on the owner's financial assessment at face value. Announcing an inability to raise enough revenue to stay in business, one of two realities exists in this situation. First, to hold on to a vanity project which fails to provide a profit, Herb Simon and company show terrible business acumen. More likely, considering evidence of Simon's executive talent, I believe he saw an opening to apply pressure on local political leaders and to increase his overall revenue. When asked about the Pacers (NBA) financial losses, public policy analyst Mark Rosentraub scoffs, "I don't buy it. There are a lot of ways to categorize financial losses and gains," (Schoettle 2009).

We may refer to another tactic for applying power in the first dimension as the psychological "non-threat" threat. Functioning to increase docility in a specific population, a treatment of psychological shock administered to members of the community directly from team executives and public officials (Klein 2007). Convincing community members their team could cease to exist in the near future explains why some in the community readily agree with team management on the public funding issue.

Accepting this line of thinking implies a whole-hearted acceptance of the notion of sports as a "tie that binds" the community together. When shopping for a new home, team owners generally universally accept and apply this tactic. Supplying examples of this tactic should be a simple task, as nearly every case of stadium construction where pressure to chip in money is applied to the community. Taking part in public flirtations with the city of San Antonio as a clear message to the politicians and community in Oakland, Raiders (NFL) owner Mark Davis will not hesitate to relocate the club if the price is right (Florio 2014). Probably preferring to stay in Oakland, the team has legitimate problems with their 50 year-old stadium, including its inability to keep sewage underground during moderate rainfall (Durkin 2014).

Over the years, a host of potential landing spots for "free-agent" franchises have emerged, providing leverage for additional team demands. NFL teams, including the Browns (the first iteration, before moving to Baltimore and becoming the Ravens), Bengals, Seahawks, and Colts have each used the threat of moving to Los Angeles to pressure other communities to increase their financial support of these teams. Coming full circle, the Rams and Raiders both seem focused on a return to the City of Angels, while San Diego's Chargers also angle for a new venue.

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, a similar situation occurred in Major League Baseball (MLB) where the White Sox, Mariners, and Giants each flirted with St. Petersburg, Florida, a city that clumsily built a domed stadium without a primary tenant. Gulf Coast business leaders aggressively sought the attention of the White Sox, with the city attempting to provide the stadium rent-free for the first ten years if the team failed to make a profit. Additionally, the Florida state legislature showed a willingness to chip-in $30 million to speed up the construction timeline before the team ultimately secured a deal to stay on the south side of Chicago (Spirou and Bennett 2003:69).

In presenting plans to the public, teams casually suggest the growth potential for the areas surrounding stadium construction projects. Until materializing, assuming economic growth will appear exhibits poor decision making. However, estimated financial projections from consultants never frame the issue in this manner. Generally, embellishing their level of control in manufacturing growth through public spending of sports stadiums, local political leaders have less control over this process than they imply. This theme confronts Miami officials after investing $120 million building four parking garages at the new Marlins Park. Expecting to cover debt expenses from two sources, a flat fee from the team for day use and leasing 8,500 square feet of ground level commercial property.

Backfiring in their faces, an unfortunate series of events transpired. The team placed such a poor product on the field, the games quickly became sparsely attended soon after the excitement of the newness wore off and the city was subsequently unable to fill the retail space. Three separate national chain restaurants abandoned plans to open in this space, leaving only a lonely cigar store in the commercial space as of May 2013, more than a year after the new venue opened (Byrnes 2013).

A new tactic gaining momentum and popularity relies on the presentation of a visual rendering of how proposed stadiums could look. Purposely sleek and futuristic, creating models such as these allow residents to view the stadium in a more tangible light. Computer generated propaganda generates support from citizens who attend events or can imagine themselves attending events at this venue. Employing this tactic, Indianapolis' minor league soccer franchise, released a computer generated model of the soccer-specific facility in hopes of finding support from the state's legislature and citizens, who remained skeptical (Alesia 2015). While not achieving success in this situation, this tactic would contribute in the right situation. Likewise, employing this medium, the Atlanta Falcons released a video of their new stadium. However, this video was released after community funding had already been committed (Brown 2015).

The Second Dimension—Locating the Application of Covert Power

For critics of Dahl and the pluralists, the driving force behind their objections involves action occurring within second dimension of power. Describing this dimension of power, Bachrach and Barutz in their paper "The Two Faces of Power," instruct researchers to account for the mobilization of bias within community decision making (1962). E.E. Schattsneider makes clear the social positioning, from which this bias originates when he remarked, “the flaw in the pluralist heaven is that the heavenly chorus sings with a strong upper-class accent,” (1975:35). Concerning action generally outside the consciousness of the American public, the second dimension of power supplements and reinforces action in the first dimension.

Convincing those holding the levers of governmental power and other community elites that specific stadium projects advance the goals of community is the central focus of applied power in the second dimension (Appendix E). Beyond the direct action of specific team owners, paying close attention to the peripheral action of secondary community actors, including politicians, corporate advocacy organizations, local business owners, financial institutions, unions, and members of the media is critical for researchers investigating power at this level. Advocating and escorting public policy prescriptions from basic ideas through the process of becoming brick-and-mortar reality, stadium proposals need reinforced support from these social positions.

In general, government officials have little interest becoming associated with the process of losing a professional sports franchise to another city. From their perspective, keeping the local team in town is a priority in the formation of their political legacy. Memorialized by a plaque adorning the facilities façade, our political leaders generally support these projects regardless of the future financial ramifications. After all, they will be long gone before the financial ramifications of their mismanagement become widely apparent.

Former Indianapolis mayors Richard Luger and William Hudnut took time laying the groundwork for the city to transition towards a sports-based economic sector after the local manufacturing base began fading. In terms of what this type of government spending accomplishes, Indianapolis can generally claim success. Hosting the Pan American Games, countless NCAA Final Four weekends, and the National Football League's (NFL) Super Bowl, Indianapolis becomes part of the discussion when other cities contemplate making similar economic commitments.

As research showing the economic benefit of this public spending become more widely recognized, continuing to claim this strategy becomes more difficult for public officials. As a result, Indianapolis Mayor Greg Ballard decided to go in another direction, choosing to emphasize possession of a team as part of the "big-city" image (Cadle, Carroll, Medhin, and Pfaff 2013:12). The consequences to image-based decisions are real: Ballard eliminated arts and tourism grants, reduced public library hours and closed public pools, in addition to funneling property tax revenue towards covering budget shortfalls (de Mausse 2013).

Other locations seeking a similar status boost or "big city" appeal have not been nearly as lucky. Choosing to invest heavily in a waterfront sports complex, including a minor-league baseball field and multipurpose arena, Stockton, California chose to borrow heavily at a time when their finances were already questionable. During the public debate councilman Dr. Harry Nickerson plead for measured, safe stewardship of taxpayer funds, reminding his fellow councilman, "the cupboard is bare and you are still borrowing millions of dollars (Center for Investigative Reporting ~11:30). Approving this public policy during the appearance of a healthy economy, right before the stock market sank under the weight of the derivatives market in 2007. Stockton would eventually declare civic bankruptcy as a result of poor financial planning (Pieczenik, Ritsher, and Madlena, 2013).

Playing a direct role in applying pressure on local officials to pass such public policy, political interest groups seek to play a direct role in applying pressure on local governing officials to pass such legislation. Hiding in plain view, groups advocating for growth use their reach to influence public opinion. Local branches of the Chamber of Commerce chapter assume the most public visibility and consequently achieve the most success. Others such as the Club for Growth or libertarian leaning research institutes such as The Heritage Foundation and The Cato Institute also contribute to shaping beliefs about public policy.

Continuing to argue stadium construction projects contribute to local growth potential, even when a significant majority of academic literature suggests the opposite, these organizations push an ethically challenged community agenda in order to make a location increasingly friendly to business interests. Referencing a potential downtown soccer stadium, the local Chamber in Washington D.C. argued “the new stadium and related developments, benefitting the District far and wide, provide the city an optimal minimal risk and maximum return opportunity for those it serves,” (Wingo 2014). Expecting taxpayers to pick up about half of the total costs, equaling $150 million, the D.C. proposal does not appear to have “minimal risk.” Possibly appearing an insignificant burden in comparison to other stadium projects, we must consider this amount is between two and three times the value of the entire club itself (deMausse 2014b).

Luring the Atlanta Braves to the northern suburbs of Cobb County with public funding for a new stadium, the county Chamber went beyond basic advocacy. Many within the elected and non-elected government structure of Cobb County, including local judges and county commissioners, participate in Chamber activities (Walls 2014). One former Cobb County commissioner experiencing this phenomenon first-hand explains, "The problem is they control reality for the board of commissioners, and the only view the board of commissioners ever gets is the view the Chamber presents. It wouldn't be so bad if there was another viewpoint presented to the county," (Walls 2014).

Although loudly proclaiming opinions through the Chamber's vast resources, other community groups hold influence simultaneously. Through Jerry Reinsdorf's maneuvering for a new venue for his White Sox (MLB), a group called Save Our Sox (SOS) coalesced. Initially, SOS applied pressure on team and civic leaders to create a solution involving their current facilities. SOS proposed petitioning the federal government to designate Comiskey Park as a national historic monument. However, after Reinsdorf's increasing public flirtations with Florida's Gulf Coast, the community members representing SOS began singing a more desperate tune (Spirou and Bennett 2003: 68). This is a textbook example of the psychological non-threat, coercing many of the members in the group into complying with Reinsdorf's demands. SOS evolved on their position to eventually begin advocating for public funding to ensure their team remained on the south side of Chicago.

Unions may seem to be the opponent of corporate interests, when negotiating collective bargaining rights for their members. However, in the process of stadium construction their goals clearly align. The business of construction profits through the ideological adherence to the notion of perpetual growth, when business slows the entire business model crumbles. Thus both contractors and unions apply pressure for potential stadium projects. In reality, caring very little for who foots the bill, those employed in the construction business prefer to continue receiving a paycheck. Large-scale building projects, such as stadiums, can sustain entire operations for months or longer. In St. Louis, construction unions graciously volunteered to provide an around-the-clock shop, without overtime benefits, as part of a stadium proposal to assist in keeping the Rams from moving to Los Angeles (Hunn 2015b).

Likely leading the charge on such projects are local financial institutions providing financial services for such projects (Delaney and Eckstein 2003: 9). Providing a necessary service, these institutions deserve a profit. Nevertheless, seeking a higher level of scrutiny to protect taxpayers for poor institutional choices should be more of a priority for local politicians. Reclassifying bonds purchased in 2005 and 2007 to build Lucas Oil Stadium, the Indiana Finance Authority paid over $70 million to Goldman Sachs to secure a fixed interest rate on the remaining debt (Preston 2015). Originally organizing the financial agreement against future interest rate increases, this plan backfired when after the Federal Reserve kept interest rates artificially low after the financial collapse of 2007.

Financing a total of 28 stadium deals, Goldman Sachs kept on staff a go to banker just for these situations. Greg Carey's job description included specializing in "crafting deals that are lucrative for team owners, often at the expense of taxpayers." (Farrell and Martin 2015). This nagging sense of entitlement to public funds and the reckless disregard for the public interest is jaw dropping. Accumulating $139 billion in total fines over just a two year period, Goldman Sachs actions within the industry "are wasteful if not fraudulent," (Zingales 2015:4).

The Third Dimension—Hegemony in Stadium Construction

The third dimension of power transitions away from the notion of concerted action as the only method of applying community power. Leading Lukes to the question, "Why should one exclude the possibility that power may be at work in such a way as to secure consent and thus prevent such conflict from arising?" (2005:7). Applying power in the first and second dimensions through concerted action contributes to power in the third dimension and strengthens ideological control.

Italian theorist Antonio Gramsci's concept of hegemony plays a central role in developing an understanding of power in this dimension. Historian Edward P. Morgan characterizes this concept as "elite domination of the mass of people, not through coercion, but through people's consent," (2010:10). Morgan continues, this "occurs via the penetration throughout the culture of an ideology that 'this is the way things are.'

To the point that ‘the way things are’ becomes the way things must (or should) be in the popular imagination,” (2010:10). Lukes cites Perry Anderson’s interpretation of Gramsci’s hegemony as a term denoting the ideological subjugation of the working class, enabling rule by consent (2005:144). Former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher’s political rhetoric associated with TINA (there is no alternative) as a defense of economic and social policies equals hegemony expressed through the political system to limit the debate of political ideas. Of course, alternatives to any strategy always exist.

The reviewed literature on stadium construction suggests the social conditions relating to the process of providing public funding for stadium construction arching in the direction of Gramsci’s sense of hegemony. Defining *The Heroic Free-Market* as nothing less than a passive revolution—Gramsci demonstrates exercising power relies on the strength of ideology, not just the pressure of the bayonet. Viewing the public financing of stadiums as just another aspect of the sports industry, undoubtedly exhibits evidence of the existence of hegemony. Remember, while large-scale public works stadium projects for war memorials or international sporting competitions received funding, providing tax payer dollars towards nearly every sporting venue constructed is a much more recent phenomenon. Additionally, the cost of producing venues continues to trend upwards, while stadium lifespans continue to shrink (Isadore 2014). Providing this level of public funding for the construction of sports stadiums, the average citizens has become trained to accept the *Ideology of Stadium Construction*, with the only alternative in the public’s mind revolving around the loss of their team.

The most representative feature of power in the third dimension revolves around required maintenance which must “be actively constructed and fought for,” (Joseph 2005:63). Each of the actors mentioned throughout this chapter are responsible for performing maintenance and actively constructing the *Ideology of Stadium Construction*. The words and actions of the men occupying the most powerful positions document evidence of hegemony in stadium construction. Speaking to a group of Associated Press reporters in late April 2015, National Football League (NFL) Commissioner Roger Goodell announced, “I think we’ve been very clear with every community, including the L.A. communities, that we want to see real progress. It has to be substantial. This is not a new issue to any of these communities,” (Miklasz 2015). Goodell’s message implies to each of the cities competing in the standoff to house three NFL teams that they must produce public funding to pay to play now or risk losing out in the long term.

Taking the lead role in communicating the leagues extortive demands to city leaders, NFL Executive Vice President Eric Grubman explains exactly what they must do to remain in the league. With a tone closer to demanding, rather than negotiating with the city of St. Louis, Grubman told the city officials a new stadium replacing the 19 year old Edward Jones Dome was necessary to continuing the partnership between the city and the league. During this meeting, the NFL executive described the situation as a “race” between cities to buy-in (Hunn 2015a). In meeting with Oakland city officials, Grubman scolded local politicians for their inability to create a politically palatable method for the taxpayers to pay for a new stadium (Artz 2015).

On the notion of an expiration date on a stadiums ability host events, owner of the Washington, D.C.-based National Football League (NFL) team, describes the current condition of his home stadium as “a great place to feature our home games, but its 17 years old now. I think it’s time for us to start looking and we’re doing it,” (Petchetsky 2014b). While seeming like the prose of a delusional billionaire, Snyder would not make this statement if the public funding precedent did not exist. Fleshing out the magic in the 17th year of the stadium lifecycle which appears to be the moment when owners feel comfortable returning to local officials with their extortion routine, Petchetsky points to the Carolina Panthers of the National Football League (NFL) who received $200 million in public dollars to spruce up their 17 year old facility and the Atlanta Falcons who began to publicly advocate for the replacement of the Georgia Dome during its 17th season (2014b).

Taking a cue from league central offices, hiring executives to apply pressure on cities to invest tax dollars in privately owned sports teams, individual teams are hiring executives to serve in the same capacity. The Detroit Pistons (NBA) recently hired former top-tier player agent Arn Tellem as Vice President of Palace Sports and Entertainment. Owner Tom Gores expectation for Tellem revolves around returning to downtown Detroit after the team left for the northern suburb of Auburn Hills in 1988 (Foster 2015).

With the team owners, industry executives, growth advocates and beneficiaries, and local elected officials espousing the *Ideology of Stadium Construction*, others within communities must buy-in to doling out public dollars towards these projects to avoid community dissent gaining traction. Two statuses provide reinforcement for the efficiency of buy-in from community sources exist. First, arriving to the community in the form of social scientists moving outside the academy, performing lucrative consulting work readily accepts TINA in the public funding of sports stadiums. The well-intentioned intellectual fails to hold a critical lens to the social havoc created by this philosophy. The second source, more visible by the average citizen looking for clarity, the fourth estate plays a direct role in applying power through their social positioning.

The Media—Projectionists of Power

As the only occupation listed in the United States Constitution outside of the political apparatus, journalists hold a vital position keeping those occupying the most powerful positions honest. Defining freedom of the press in more complex terms than with a simple yes or no response—the depth freedom must be considered as well (Zinn 1990:210). Citing government action against Jim Risen of *The New York Times*, the continued effort to prosecute Julian Assange, and journalist attacks in Ferguson, Missouri including reporters shot with rubber bullets and pepper spray, the group Reporters without Borders ranked the United States 49th worldwide in protecting the rights of the press (Greenwald 2015).

Those seeking to uphold the enormous responsibility of the spirit of a free press find themselves the target of state violence. Interpreting the threat of state force as a significant threat to their own personal and professional well-being, most steer clear of challenging social conditions. When the press stops challenging those within the most powerful positions, a critical switch occurs, where the initial spirit of the press turns on its head, becoming an organization projecting the economic, social, and political views of the powerful. The relationship between the powerful and those performing the task of holding them accountable becomes uncomfortably close. We see this mingling occurring at events such as the White House Correspondents Dinner. Affiliating with powerful people, creating and maintaining personal relationships, will eventually alter an individual's ability to report clearly.

In exercising the first dimension of power, the media acts in a direct manner, laboring to recycle industry talking points presented by team officials. Moving into the second dimension, we must examine the unseen, but closely intertwined relationships between the media and local elites. This closeness may explain the failure of the local news media to provide critical insights or delve into why some in the community may oppose stadium building projects. The consolidation in print media has driven an increase in cross-market publishing, where a local reporter pens a story published across each source owned by their particular company. A total of 50 media outlets controlled 90% of all media sources in 1983 in the U.S., revisiting the same 90% share in 2011 shows a total of 6 media giants have seized control (Lutz 2012). A continually shrinking range of ideas, propelled by a monumental level of contraction in the media industry, strengthens power in the 2nd dimension.

Detroit provides an example where the media clearly projects ideas with a distinctly elitist tone. Less than one month after the city announced its pending bankruptcy, Governor Rick Snyder proclaimed the state on the hook for ~$450 million of the estimated $650 million in cost for a new downtown Detroit arena for the National Hockey League's (NHLs) Red Wings. Providing a forum for pro-growth interests, an application of first dimensional power, *Detroit Free Press* reporter Tom Walsh provides journalistic cover for Snyder's public policy (2012). Providing a well-reasoned critique of stadium-specific public subsidies as controversial when your own city has just declared bankruptcy should flow naturally from critical thinkers.

However, Walsh repeats the talking points of the growth machine—suggesting Detroit becoming less of a place if it lost their hockey team, community funding for the stadium appears a sound financial deal, and this spending will turn a blighted area into a "vibrant, year-round business district." Journalism such as this provides an intellectual path to reinforcing the *Heroic Free Market*, celebrating the Americanized version of socialized capitalism where profits are privatized and the financial risk is socialized across the population. Implying state funding remains available in developing stadiums, regardless of the impact on the economic and physical well-being of the city and its residents.

After declaring bankruptcy, Detroit asked 32,000 public pensioners to voluntarily return the benefits they earned. Concerned the state would take even more if they did not comply, the retirees voted for a 4.5% reduction in earned benefits, as well as a contracting future cost of living benefits increases (Davey 2014). However, even before the agreement went into effect, this number rose to 6.7% (Cristoff 2015). At nearly the same moment, the city of Detroit was separating some of its most vulnerable citizens from a vital resource. In Detroit, the average water bill is nearly twice the national average.

The city began shutting off water to 12,500 homes, while simultaneously sports venues were allowed to rack up significantly higher fees. Examples include a city-owned golf course owing over $400,000, the Red Wing's Joe Louis Arena owing over $82,000, and the Lions Ford Field over $55,000 (Clark 2014). Struggling to maintain the basic civic services, PBS News Hour's Hari Sreenivasan explains the level of crisis in Detroit, "Forty percent of the city's streetlights don't work for lack of repair crews. The average response time for the Detroit Police Department to a 911 call is 58 minutes. And buses are constantly late if they come at all…" (2013). Hardly scratching the surface here, I will discuss this case further in the third chapter, illustrating how the city continues to practice bad economics in exchange for subsidizing some the country's wealthiest corporations.

Having a vested interest in creating a social environment where ideas relating to the construction of stadiums elicit positive thoughts in the minds of the community, members of the local media (and to a lesser extent, the national media), vocalize pro-development talking points while trivializing concerns. Contraction in print journalism places jobs within the field at a premium—ensuring individuals within these coveted positions encourage stadium projects as a measure of ensuring the long-term stability of teams within their given location, while also hoping to ensure their own job security. Those attempting to challenge such notions will find a difficult and possibly hostile working environment.

Sports journalists hardly seem as vile as Hunter S. Thompson asserted, calling them “a rude and brainless subculture of fascist drunks, a gang of vicious monkeys jerking off in a zoo cage…more disgusting by nature than maggots oozing out of the carcass of a dead animal,” (Zirin, 2010:5). Nevertheless, journalists serve the critical function of placating elite interests by limiting dissent and recycling pro-growth talking points handed down from the growth coalition and by projecting the sports-as-a tie community tie thesis. Because of their great community reach, the corporate-owned media machine has the ability to reach more eyes and ears due to ease of access, enabling their P.R. machine the ability to achieve greater influence.

Addressing Critiques of Three Dimensional Power

I will now respond to two criticisms concerning the three dimensional approach to power. While Lukes specifically addresses these critiques in his 2nd edition, for the benefit of the reader, I will summarize them here. Additionally, I will consider how these arguments appear when taken in context of providing community funding for sports stadiums.

Arguing power in the third dimension occurs only in extremely rare circumstances, James Scott argues the dominated will always take a position of resistance under these circumstances (1990). This line of thinking downplays the importance of an individual’s failure to recognize or possess the ability to take action against their domination. Examples of Stockholm Syndrome and other power relationships throughout history dispel this notion (e.g. not every slave openly or covertly rebelled against the Southern power structure). Likewise, not every American draftee disagreeing with the war policy in Vietnam burned their draft cards, left for Canada, sat in jail, or poignantly discarded their medals of valor in protest.

Within the *Ideology of Stadium Construction* very few members of the community recognize their own economic domination, as Scott implies, many will remain blinded by their deep interest of the product. For those recognizing the process playing out, they may not possess access to the levers of social and political power or the ability to speak out against it. Economic domination, in this sense, does not necessarily signify nothing received in return, as this community expense ensures the team will remain in the community for the next couple of decades. Some receive more benefit from this community spending than others, including fans of the team and individuals in the positions profiled above. The ultimate goal for those with the most social power rests in the ability to successfully control those most disproportionately affected by the lack of economic fairness in such public policy to aggressively argue on your behalf.

A second mode of attack originates from theorists arguing willing compliance to domination cannot be accomplished through the third dimension of power. Appendix E suggests this is partially accurate—achieving social control cannot develop with power exclusively in the third dimension. Action occurring within the first two dimensions of applied power works in tandem to create and reinforce the third dimension. Lukes cites Jon Elster who explains “our minds are playing tricks on us” as a function of what Elster calls the “sour grapes mechanism, (2005:124). Relying on the anecdotal evidence of a child's fable, Elster weaves a tale about a fox targeting a bunch of grapes. After a few unsuccessful attempts to reach the snack, the fox regrettably concedes. Sulking away the fox begins the process of convincing himself the grapes sour and his attempt to retrieve them a fundamentally flawed idea and well, he really didn't want the grapes anyway.

The obscenely unequal distribution of resources in the United States influences critics of this process to continue defining and reporting on these economic boondoggles. These consequences make Elster's argument offensive to the senses. Moving beyond the absurdity of attempting to prove facts about the real social world with a contrived fairy tale, those philosophically opposing such public policy waste are not jealous or envious of others' power. They simply believe this process a tremendous waste of community resources, which continues to provide an economy working most efficiently for society's haves, while the have-nots struggle for access to basic human rights.

Confronting Ideological Hegemony

For individuals and communities, the most effective method combating ideological hegemony and TINA attitudes towards building sports stadiums begins with starting a sustained community discussion concerning alternatives. Continuous engagement of the public with ideas presented in this project has the potential to develop a cohesive social movement resisting the misuse of community funding. An evolution concerning the philosophy on publicly funding stadiums exists through questioning the hypocritical nature of the *Ideology of Stadium Construction*.

For sociologists, defining social problems such as the one discussed in this project serves as an overdue opportunity to re-establish and grow our discipline. At a time when departments face falling budgets, the elimination of entire programs, and the general essence of liberal arts and humanities as a course of study under attack, we have a responsibility to become more vocal on the substantial social problems of our time. Most importantly, providing the "big ideas" society must accept to approach these problems. The next chapter delves into a discussion of the "big ideas" necessary for us to address the *Ideology of Stadium Construction*.

Ch#3 – Assessing Current Trends and Presenting the Alternative

> Power concedes nothing without demand. It never did and it never will.
> —Frederick Douglass (1818-1895)

> I am not a champion of lost causes, I am a champion of causes not yet won.
> —Norman Thomas (1884-1968)

> The question should be, is it worth trying to do, not can it be done.
> —Allard Lowenstein (1929-1980)

The problem of self-interest in the act of participating in day-to-day business activity pits team owners against the community. Conceptualizing how the allocation of tax dollars for private stadiums appears to the residents of urban neighborhoods, de Mausse and Cagan write:

> "Not everyone has fled for the suburbs, and for those left behind—historically, minority, working class, poor people—sparkling new stadiums and arenas represent both a luxurious form of entertainment and an appalling misuse of increasingly rare public funds. Moreover, adding egregious insult to injury, in city after city, the new sports facilities are often funded by regressive taxes—by flat levies on consumer items that never take into account the consumer's economic status. Those most needing scarce urban funds to be directed towards improved schools, infrastructure, job opportunities, and the like are footing a disproportionately high percentage of the construction bill. Those taxed the heaviest are the same abandoned urban residents least likely to be able to afford to attend games at the new stadiums," (2008:148).

With accountability to the community as the central focus, this process reveals an increasingly irresponsible act. Accepting posh handouts from their "home" communities with poverty rates hovering at embarrassingly high levels, including Indianapolis, Minneapolis, and Miami where poverty rates sit between 20% and 25% and Detroit at nearly 40%, defy logic (U.S. Census Bureau 2009).

Although some appear particularly awful human beings and community citizens, we should resist labeling all owners irresponsible. While many owners and league entities undertake philanthropic efforts to improve the conditions of the community, this goodwill gesture should not minimalize the wider damage done by others their industry. Zirin elaborates, “It’s not that all sports owners are venal, snacking on baby seal quesadillas with Goldman Sachs executives before going to their publicly financed dog-fight. The issue is that, evil or not, accountability and accessibility do not rank high on their to-do lists,” (2010:5). Demonizing team owners falls short of accomplishing anything substantial. Instead of pointing fingers at those who have seemingly abused this process, we must begin to take responsibility of an organizational method and our economic system which allows for these economic abuses to occur.

Beginning the process of bringing to light how the community can attempt to hold owners accountable satisfies C. Wright Mills’s call to consider the research problem, as well as possible alternatives to the problem (2000:130). Two basic issues exist in grappling with seeking out an alternative, or at very least measured action holding individual owner’s accountable to public claims on their economic contribution. First and foremost, pursuing action to relieve taxpayers of the conflict arising when privately owned teams seek public subsidy. Focusing on keeping teams rooted within their community and eliminating the “free-agent” franchise phenomenon where cities are pitted in a literal money-stacking competition against each other comprises the second challenge. Considering the overall body of evidence, questioning whether the current economic arrangement remains suitable for the professional sports industry seems appropriate.

Recent Cases – Resistance and its Consequences

Recent attempts to secure public assistance for stadium construction reveal industry and the public sector becoming more sophisticated in their preparation and execution of a concerted strategy. Keeping the public in the dark during negotiations has emerged in cases where public dissent appears certain. In Detroit, many community leaders understood a replacement for the aging Joe Louis Arena necessary to satisfy the needs and desires of the Red Wings (NHL). However, with the city facing tough decisions related to their upcoming bankruptcy proceedings, the time for development investment didn't seem appropriate. Announcing the plan to finance 58% of the new arena with future tax revenue, neither Michigan Governor Rick Snyder nor Red Wings (NHL) officials acknowledged these discussions taking place before a press conference announcing a plan had been finalized (Bradley 2014).

Achieving the same level of secrecy, the Atlanta Braves and Cobb County nearly finalized a stadium deal without the public becoming aware (Petchesky 2014a). By a vote of 5-0, Cobb County Commissioners allocated almost $400 million, nearly two-thirds of the cost of the project. The team and their partners in the local county government took measured steps to quell community dissent. County commissioners did not reveal voting would take place on the project until after 6 PM on the Friday of a 3-day weekend. With the vote occurring on the next Tuesday evening, the council buried the story, announcing the plan at a moment when most of the community was distracted.

On the night of the vote, allowing for only 12 public comments, the County Commissioners heard arguments only from the perspective of local business. To fill these spots, potential speakers began arriving five hours before the meeting, a very questionable proposition for most working people. After concluding public comments, the council held no debate, only a vote (5-0) to consummate the deal. Forcibly removing anyone daring to interrupt and voice opposition, Chairman Tim Lee declared the agreement “in the best interest” of those in attendance. Referring to this project as a measure of corporate welfare and calling it a “slap in the face” for working people, Rich Pellegrino, a representative of Citizens for Governmental Transparency, arrived about an hour before the meeting, unable to make his comments publicly (Petchesky 2014a).

Beginning to see through the smoke and mirrors routine continually orchestrated by the forces of growth, greater numbers of elected officials and community members express resistance to the *Ideology of Stadium Construction*. Having ceased playing the role of intellectual dupes to the billionaire class and standing up to political interest groups expressing no alternatives, some local politicians have stepped up. Anaheim city officials presented a well-reasoned response to the executives of their baseball team seeking public assistance. Anaheim Angels (MLB) owner Arthur Moreno proposed a deal to keep his team in the city, signing a new long-term lease and paying around $150 million out of pocket for upgrades to Angels Stadium (Petchesky 2014c). In exchange, Moreno requested the city transfer ownership of 155 acres of publicly-owned land which currently provides parking space on game days. Moreno, a real estate developer, envisioned using the land for a mixed-use development around the stadium.

Seemingly amenable to such an idea, Anaheim Mayor Tom Tait performed due diligence in his capacity as a public servant (de Mausse 2014a). After speaking with financial consultants who appraised the land for $225 million, Mayor Tait made a reasonable request for the team to re-examine the deal and make an attempt to close the observed gap. Moreno failed to respond to Mayor Tait's request. Upset after receiving the cold shoulder, Tait took the step of appraising the value of the land without Angel Stadium of Anaheim. The consultants found the land around the stadium increasing in value with the stadium removed, ballooning up to $325 million (Marroqiun 2014). Much like a petulant spoiled child, Moreno took his ball and went home, refusing to continue negotiating with the city. Soon after, Moreno opened negotiations with other Orange County locations. Claiming he could build a new stadium all on his own, Moreno has nevertheless shown his preference for bilking the tax-payer.

Blindsided by their own state government, city officials in Detroit have sought a creative solution to holding team owners accountable for their grandiose promises of job creation and new tax revenue (Bradley 2015). Legally binding documents, known as Community Benefit Agreements (CBAs), between a city and business entity place a legal guarantee on consultant's claims during the proposal process. Communities tired of getting burned by unmet, grandiose claims provide an extra layer of protection for taxpayers and ensure job placement for inner city and minority residents.

The pivotal point in Detroiter's learning this lesson may have occurred after the city supplied Marathon Petroleum a total of $175 million in tax breaks in 2007. While the multinational corporation claimed this would allow them to create jobs, a total of 15 new jobs in the city, taxpayers provided a nice gift to further the multinational's profits (Guillen 2014). Hoping to avoid another Marathon-like situation, members of the city council asked Illitch to provide a good will gesture and sign a CBA in exchange for gifting land to his team for their new arena. After Illitch declined this request, three members of the city council voted against providing his business this massive gift. Although this dissent could not derail the project from moving forward, the process of developing alternatives in the minds of local politicians has begun.

Initial data arising from the use of CBAs in Los Angeles and Pittsburgh illustrates the benefits taxpayers receive through these agreements (Bradley 2015). In LA, the Staples Center CBA provides "publicly accessible park space, open space, and recreational facilities," and to "target employment opportunities to residents in the vicinity of the Figueroa Corridor; provide permanent affordable housing; provide basic services needed by the Figueroa Corridor community; and address issues of traffic, parking, and public safety," (Policy Tools: Community Benefit Agreements and Policies in Effect: Staples Center CBA). In Pittsburgh, a 2011 CBA for the Consol Energy Center development provided nearly 40% of available jobs for residents living in the low-income areas surrounding the stadium (Belko 2011).

To say the least, business leaders and their advocates hold proliferation of such ideas in a deeply negative light. Rodrick Miller, president of the Detroit Economic Growth Corporation situates his defense of the status quo as follows:

> "We know from years of recruiting companies that Detroit still has big obstacles to overcome related to costs, image, and workforce to compete against other cities and our surrounding suburbs. If we raise the height of the barriers with Community Benefits Agreements we will simply have to pay more in public incentives to get businesses to jump over them. We can't afford that. Isn't it more cost effective to lower those barriers?" (Bradley 2015).

This heightened level of fear concerning CBA's holds is indefensible. Accountability does not equal greater investment from the community. This strategy has significant potential to reign in the extravagant figures casually ballyhooed about by consulting firms paid by teams angling for new facilities on the public dole. Regardless, we must consider this step only a half-measure—an insignificant Band-Aid on a bullet wound. CBAs certainly provide a small step in the correct direction by attempting to force owners to follow through on their economic promises. Nevertheless, the city remains financially liable for guaranteeing the project-related bonds unless noted in specific CBAs.

Buy Teams, Not Stadiums

Neil de Mausse recently penned an article calling for cities to buy teams, not stadiums (2014b). Following this concept has the potential to satisfy the goal for creating an alternative to the current organizational structure. Providing a couple of cases with compelling evidence to support his reasoning, de Mausse describes the madness of this type of public expenditure. While approving subsidies for a $183 million soccer stadium, the Washington D.C. City Council could have purchased 60% of the D.C. United (MLS) franchise for just $30 million two years ago. In 2009, Miami spent over $800 million to house a baseball team only valued at $277 million. As de Mausse states, "the numbers make your eyes glaze over after a bit, but add them up and you get *all* kinds of crazy. If the goal of fronting cash for new sports venues is to keep team owners from using their monopoly-given right to skip town and leave fans with no one to root for, then one workaround is obvious: cut out the middleman, and buy the team," (2014b).

Legal and ideological hurdles exist to installing any alternative model, as suggested in the previous chapters. The current status of corporate welfare for the sports industrial complex provides reason enough to reevaluate supporting such organizational structure. If you buy Dave Zirin's argument that the community should literally receive a return on its investment when some of the richest members of the community come to the taxpayers for assistance in running their enterprise then suggesting organizational change is warranted (2010:8). Professional leagues and their owners would attempt to repress any advancement of such a system, interpreting this as an attack on the system they oversee.

One moment illustrating such an ideological hurdle occurred after the death of San Diego Padres owner and McDonald's founder Ray Kroc in 1984. While Joan Kroc maintained a keen interest in helping players overcome drug addiction, she possessed little interest in the game being played on the field or the tediousness of the day-to-day front office and management activity. Wanting to focus on her social service philanthropy, but having severe apprehension a new owner would uproot the team, Joan felt stuck. This anxiety was rooted in the city nearly losing the team in the mid-1970s. This deal was considered so close to becoming finalized, trading card companies printed their 1975 editions emblazoned with a generic Washington D.C. label instead of featuring the Padres logo (Norris-Tirrell and Schmidt, 2010:97).

After this momentary community scare, the maestro of the Big Mac stepped in to secure the team's future in San Diego. Joan Kroc moved to skirt the possibility of new owners extricating the team from the community by donating the team to the city, including a $100 million trust for future operating costs. Major League Baseball (MLB) and a specifically cohort of National League owners blocked this action and the team was sold to a group of business men in 1990 after vowing to keep the team in San Diego.

Several professional sports teams utilizing alternative ownership structures exist, most notably, the National Football League's (NFL) Green Bay Packers. While allowing the ownership structure of the Packers through a grandfather clause, the National Football League's (NFL) bylaws now prohibit such method. Article 3.2(a) pertaining to league membership reads, "no corporation, association, partnership, or other entity not operated for a profit nor any charitable organization or entity not presently a member of the League shall be eligible for membership," (Constitution and Bylaws of the National Football League 2006:3).

Likewise rooting out this potential, the National Basketball Association (NBA) and Major League Baseball (MLB) also ban the practice. The National Basketball Association

(NBA) reserves the right for the commissioner to reject any organization not headed by a single entity (Article 4(b), Constitution and By-Laws of the NBA). The Major League Baseball (MLB) Constitution, as shown blocking the San Diego Padres proposal above, includes a clause where three-quarters of team owners must approve a team ownership transfer (Article V, Section 2(b)(1), Major League Constitution).

The Green Bay Packers (NFL) stand alone as the only top-tier professional sports team in the United States not owned by a single individual, partnership, or for-profit corporation. This method of organization contributes to the long-term viability of the team, continuing to operate in the smallest television market of any top-tier professional sports franchise. The non-profit corporation running the team offers stock to their fans and members of the community (Norris-Tirrell and Schmidt 2010). Prohibiting transfers and generating no dividends, Packers' stock exists simply as a novelty item or status symbol. Placing team profits in a trust providing grants to local organizations, stadium maintenance, and future renovation projects. Shareholders elect a board of directors and the board of directors appoint a seven member executive committee serving as the decision making body for the organization.

The Potential and Peril of Eminent Domain

League by-laws remain fluid. A change of course always remains a possibility, possibly even a probability if the political will to force such changes becomes palpable. Municipalities would need to wait until owners become willing to sell their teams and even then, no guarantee exists an owner would accept the public's bid over that of a private investor. One legal clause may provide an opportunity for communities. The Takings Clause of the Fifth Amendment allows for the state acquisition of private property for public use or benefit in exchange for just compensation of property. Eminent domain has been used to justify the seizure of private property to clear land for new stadiums (Sibilla 2014, de Mausse and Cagan 2010, de Mausse 2014b).

More damaging to the collective psyche of the community, involves the loss of shared neighborhood landmarks. Originally opening in 1910 after a tip from Charles Comiskey alerted his friend John McCuddy to the location of his new ballpark. Over the years, many fans came to associate the space with attending White Sox games. The bar eventually became so intertwined with the game being played that beginning in the 1980's the bar only opened its doors on days where the White Sox played home games. Citing a *Chicago Sun-Times* editorial from 2000, Spirou and Bennett attempt to summarize Chicagoans feelings, "Packed with baseball memorabilia, McCuddy's was the kind of place that stadium designers today try to recreate at the new ballparks around the country," (2003:107). Standing in the way of progress, McCuddy's occupied a space near third base in the new Comiskey Park.

Even with a handshake agreement from the city, the bar would not re-open (Sirott 2011). The city offered the owners a vacant building about three blocks from the new venue. The owners did not believe this location satisfied their ideal needs and believed the city promised an on-site or across the street location. The distress in the voice of Pat Senese (John McCuddy's grandson) is clear, "And it's not the money either," he explains, "I don't want the money. It's the place. It's the name that should remain across the street. Do you just break history off like a stick? Wash it away? I want my grandchildren to see that sign up there. That is what I want," (Spirou and Bennett, 2003:106). As Spirou and Bennett concede, the failure to replant McCuddy's in the community, failed to recreate a municipal icon by connecting present to the lore and history of the past (2003).

Distinctions between the potential use of eminent domain for sports teams and the use of this clause to clear way for new stadiums need recognition. When taking an individual's home or business through eminent domain to build stadiums, the advantage directs towards the business of sports. Community benefits to having the new stadium exist, however, they come with a lofty price tag and benefits hardly skew egalitarian. When a sports team becomes the subject of an eminent domain attempt, sharing the value and benefits created by the team rises to top priority, similar to the collective supply of other community utilities such as water treatment or electricity service.

Gaining ideological acceptance of such ideas appears to be a difficult proposition. Despised in conservative circles where individual property rights trump the need for public utilities, eminent domain contains an inherent negative connotation. As IIya Somin, a law professor at George Mason University suggests, "the right approach to corporate welfare abuse is not to use eminent domain against the property of businesses who lobby for it, but to simply refuse to give in to their demand," (2014). Blocking the advancement of corporate welfare seems an acceptable path for community activists, but Somin's strictly legal definition provides little consideration for the health of the community, both socially and economic, derived from the presence of a professional sports team. Additionally, there is no consideration of public officials applying their power behind completing such projects. An outright rejection of using eminent domain on professional sports teams signifies a position taken out of willful ignorance, as historical trends show teams willing to uproot themselves from their "home" communities in search of an immediate and direct financial windfall.

Those railing against the use of eminent domain cite a 2005 Supreme Court case, *Kelo v. the City of New London*, where the court upheld economic development reason for cause enacting eminent domain. The offensiveness of this case does not arrive from the court's decision, rather the investor's failure to remain committed to following through with the development. While the 2007 financial crash played a significant role, the land still remains fallow nearly 10 years later (Sibilla 2014). The act of taking the Kelo's property became unnecessary and the dissent over the result warranted. Nevertheless, anger directed towards the clause itself seems misdirected and more appropriately directed towards the individual investor for failing to produce. When eminent domain serves to benefit the entire community—not just those seeking economic development, this method holds great value.

My hometown, Mooresville, Indiana recently set in motion an eminent domain order to gain control over the privately held local water utility. However, the town remains void of wild-eyed communists looking to institute publicly run industry and public works programs at every turn. In fact, Mooresville remains a typical conservative Midwestern suburb—with local elections decided during primary season and where many residents still fondly remember the day President Reagan visited thirty years ago

(Franklin 1985). The town took action after the Pennsylvania-based American Water Works, Co. Inc. failed to promise necessary infrastructure improvements after repeated price hikes and the promise of further rate increases to come. Initially offering the company $6.5 million in exchange for the town's water infrastructure, American Water Works rejected the offer (Olsen 2013). An Indiana jury heard arguments and viewed data from both sides before arriving at this figure, eventually placing a $20.3 million value on the property. Even after amassing two years of legal fees, the town balked at this figure, eventually dropping their pursuit (Kenney 2014).

Remaining familiar to sports historians, two cities attempted to eminent domain teams in the early 1980s. With ticket sales falling through the end of the 1970's and early 80's, Baltimore Colts owner Robert Irsay engaged in very public flirtations with Phoenix, Memphis, Los Angeles, Jacksonville, and Indianapolis. Baltimore officials engaged the team in discussions without negotiations progressing. Feeling backed into a corner, Baltimore officials placed an eminent domain request to the state of Maryland. This measure easily passed the Maryland Senate by a vote of 38-4 and the governor would sign the bill into law soon thereafter.

Baltimore officials had reason to believe this measure could be successful. Two years previously, the city of Oakland took the same path, attempting to acquire the Raiders franchise after team officials signaled a move south to Los Angeles. The trial court found in favor of the team, asserting intangible property could not be condemned under the rule of the law. Reversing the lower court's decision, the California Supreme Court held "providing access to recreation to its residents in the form of spectator sports is an appropriate function of city government," (Sibilla 2014). Furthermore, intangible property holds no special property differentiating it from other property and remains subject to eminent domain laws. The case was remanded to the lower courts without closure, where it would stay until December 1983, after the Colts situation resolved itself.

While eminent domain can influence the dynamics of power in negotiation situations, it can also provide negative, unforeseen consequences. Immediately after learning of Baltimore's plan, Irsay phoned Indianapolis Mayor William Hudnut letting him know the move was official and the team and Indianapolis needed to move quickly. Immediately dialing his neighbor John B. Smith, Hudnut had received a promise from the C.E.O. of Mayflower Transit to assist in getting professional football to Indianapolis. Instantly ordering a fleet of trucks in the area towards the Colts headquarters in Owings Mills, Maryland, Smith fulfilled his promise. Irsay hired labor from a fraternity at the University of Maryland, paying them to package and load memorabilia and office equipment. Many of these students were sending off the team they rooted for on Sunday afternoons (McKenna 2014).

Concerned the state police would intercept the team's frenetic escape, Irsay instructed truck drivers to follow separate, individualized routes out of Maryland. When the Governor officially signed the bill, nothing of the team remained under his jurisdiction. After a drawn out battle over the rightful "home" of the team, the two cities and the team arrived at an agreement to drop litigation (Hudnut 1986). As part of a nine-point plan, the Colts paid nearly half of the legal fees racked up by the City of

Baltimore, returned memorabilia to the city of Baltimore, and pledged support to a potential expansion franchise in Baltimore. Like the attempt in Baltimore, the Oakland eminent domain case would eventually end in failure, after an appeals court ruled that seizing the team would disrupt interstate commerce (de Mausse 2014b).

While both attempts at utilizing eminent domain taking control of sports franchises unsuccessful to date, the potential for success still exists. As economist Roger Noll explains, "Whether eminent domain would work probably varies from state to state and from judge to judge," (de Mausse 2014b). Pitfalls in this strategy clearly exist, nevertheless, turning the other way and refusing to confront this problem as a community only continues emboldening brazen oligarchs. Given the examples discussed at the beginning of this chapter, a cohesive ideological resistance to funding stadium construction is gaining momentum in some areas of the country.

While the path to confronting *The Ideology of Stadium Construction* remains somewhat vague, the alternative unacceptable course continues exacerbating community inequality.

If eminent domain requests achieve success, the assessment of fair market value creates more questions. How much would a city need to pay to wrest "their" team away from the owners? Would owners receive the value *Forbes* has attached to their franchise? This seems unlikely considering recent transactions occurring in the sports business have eclipsed this number significantly. Taking a cue from the experience of my hometown, how far over value would public officials and their constituents accept before finding the costs too astronomical?

Unless relinquishing the team remains their choice, owners would argue for compensation based on the potential of future profits. Precedent reinforces this argument. Merging with the National Basketball Association (NBA) in 1976, four teams from the American Basketball Association (ABA) were annexed and would begin play the following season: the Indiana Pacers, New Jersey Nets, Denver Nuggets, and San Antonio Spurs. However, before the deal could become final, the three remaining American Basketball Association (ABA) owners required compensation. Accepting $3.3 million cash payments, owners of two teams, the Virginia Squires and the Kentucky Colonels, happily moved on from their teams. The owners of the third team, the Spirits of St. Louis presented a little more trouble—wanting to take advantage of what they lacked in the now defunct league, lucrative rights to national television contracts.

Eventually the bean counters and all their men settled on an agreement providing Spirits owners Ozzie and Daniel Silna 1/7th of the television contract rights for each of the four annexed teams (Sandomir 2012). Receiving $2.2 million upfront as well, this sum pales in comparison to the money gained through this incredible foresight. The contract the Salinas signed lasted into perpetuity. With the latest broadcasting rights deal, the Salnas total take rose to over $300 million (Sandomir 2014). Finally voiding the contract in 2014, the National Basketball Association (NBA) and its four member teams agreed to pay the Salinas a flat fee of $500 million to end the contract. This example shows enough cash floating around the sports industry to please even the greediest of hucksters.

Facing an uphill battle through ideological resistance, eminent domain may not work as a politically palatable plan of action. Back in the first chapter I described Ronald Reagan's call to tackle government inefficiency during his political ascendency. With the popularity that follows this sort of ideological thinking, one expects some in the community would automatically dismiss the idea of a "government-ran" sports team or water company. Whether or not an eminent domain request achieves success remains wholly dependent on specific judges and jurors. While threatening to use this order against an owner, the potential for adverse effects clearly exist, as was the case in Baltimore. Cities have only expressed interest in this measure as a last ditch effort to keep the team in town after the team has motioned a departure. From the data considered above, it appears individuals and their small businesses are more at risk for eminent domain requests than large or wealthy corporations.

Models of Community Ownership in Professional Sports

Growing out of the conflict between sports franchises and their "homes" this project offers a discussion on potential methods for communities to seize control from team owners and their garish demands. For those arguing for an alternative organizational structure, preparing to lead this transition once our communities call for such action demands specific organizational models which have received some level of stress testing. In this spirit, a few thoughts on community-based ownership models will conclude this chapter. Three organizational models deserve our attention, including community, fan-owned, and worker-centric models. The central thrust of this discussion hinges on providing real-world examples meeting the goals of this project.

The ideal management structure of a publicly-owned team would look nearly identical to teams owned by a single individual or corporation. While labeling the following as alternative organizational structures, team management, along with the packaged product, must appear identical to product consumed presently. Available models show teams generally controlled by an appointed board of directors making overarching financial decisions, including the appointment of a general manager to oversee and make decisions concerning the game being played on the field. This power dichotomy can already be found in most teams and the teams that do not follow this general rule, historically, perform poorly over the long term.

Some diversity in organizing and funding such ownership ventures exist, either through the formation of non-profit corporations or as a directly managed branch of the local government. Providing specific funding and organizational models, Appendix F shows Minor League Baseball (MiLB) teams operating under such arrangements (Dorothy Norris-Tirrell and Susan Tomlinson Schmidt 2010:99). Non-profit corporations, per the U.S. tax code, must hold a specific public or collective good as the focus of their mission statement (Norris-Tirrell and Schmidt 2010:100). With this designated tax status, non-profit corporations cannot distribute earnings or profits to their shareholders. After providing for the care and upkeep of the team, staff, and its facilities, the organization must reinvest remaining profits back into their community-based specialized mission statement.

Dorothy Norris-Tirrell and Susan Tomlinson Schmidt's case study on the Memphis Redbirds Baseball Foundation provides a clear example of how a team organized as a non-profit corporation can benefit the community (2010:102-105). The team's mission, "baseball is our business, but the community is our bottom line," is rather broad, providing a great deal of discretion as to how profits can be focused towards building a better community. Former President of The Redbirds Foundation Dave Chase told researchers that Memphis became "a safer place when our stadium lights are on," (Norris-Tirrell and Schmidt 2010:105). In addition, funding two programs focusing on expanding little league baseball in urban neighborhoods, serving 2,000 area youth each year, the programs invests $600,000 back into the community each year.

Funding of this organizational structure may also take place as part of the local governing budget. In this example, necessary financial backing, including building stadiums, would be undertaken as an aspect within the budget of the local governing entity. Teams would exist as just another branch of the local government, such as the parks department or the office issuing marriage licenses. Long-term fiscal responsibility in management would lessen the public burden in the production of sports stadiums, as well as relieve the tax burden on the residents of the area. Appointing board members to direct the team could occur in any number of ways, including by the city manager/mayor, town council, governor, state legislature, or even through a general election of local residents.

However, as I attempted to show in the first chapter, a "government takeover" of sports may be less than ideologically palatable. Even with resistance folding, other hurdles may still block the path within individual cities and states. For instance, the Indiana State Constitution forbids the government from going into debt. An ambitious infrastructure project in the mid-1830s sought to ease travel in the state. Borrowing heavily to finance the project right before the Panic of 1837, the state nearly went bankrupt. More than a decade later, this financial calamity still weighed on delegates of the Second Indiana Constitutional Convention, where they voted to add this clause. Because of this, attempting to purchase a team or infrastructure requires a present surplus.

Skirting this inconvenient fact, the state created a series of complicated relationships between state agencies. The Indiana Finance Authority and the Indiana Stadium & Convention Building Authority, under the umbrella of the non-profit Indiana Sports Corporation, created through legislation, remains ultimately responsible for performing as a container for the necessary debt in building large-scale spectator sport infrastructure.

Outside of the National Football League's (NFL's) Green Bay Packers model, the concept of fan-based ownership remains more familiar to fans across the Atlantic Ocean. Responsible for controlling a total of thirty English Football Clubs, fan-owned trusts suggests one possible solution (Cahalane 2013). Accounting for a few historic exceptions, in Sweden, Turkey, and Germany majority ownership must remain in the hands of clubs fans (Eurosport 2013). The popularity of fan ownership growing throughout Europe results from several instances of foreign owners swooping in for the prestige of owning a sports team (Blickenstaff 2014). With fans in charge, loyalty to the community and a full understanding of team history seems innate.

Providing an example, Blicketstaff alludes to the deterioration of Portsmouth, a once regular Premier League team, now fallen on hard times. A note to Americans who may not completely understand the process of promotion and demotion in the English Premier League (EPL), running a team into the ground in English Football elicits much greater consequence than within any American sports league. Shuffling down to the league below their current for the following season, teams at the bottom of the table or standings receive a demotion to a lower league, where the teams at the top receive a promotion to a more competitive league. Further problems impacting the team's fan base and shrinking local economic impact increase arise with continued futility. Adding his voice to the chorus of thinkers calling out the sickness of privatization within the professional sports industry, Blickenstaff argues, "there's something not quite right about some guy flying into town and just taking over, not when generations of fans have filled the stands and grown to share an identity with the club…These clubs aren't playthings for mega-rich citizens of the world. They're community institutions," (2014).

Benefitting greatly from the ideas of economist Richard Wolff, this third and final model pays greater attention to those laboring in the creation of profit (2012). Wolff's research on worker self-directed enterprises (WSDEs) describes how the labor used to create products holds the potential to take a more central role in conducting the administrative matters behind running a business. In this organizational model, laborers collectively, through a democratic process, manage the direction of the company and most critically, the direction of financial surplus. As laborers, from players, to management, to P.R. staff, to ticket takers, to the person selling beer in the aisles, each individual would maintain a voice and voting rights in organizational matters. Shifting the focus of an organization from protecting its accumulated capital, to protecting its human capital, results in the most significant advantage of the Worker Self-Directed Enterprise Model (WSDE) (Barker 2000). For instance, in a moment of economic downturn, the collective group of workers control whether laying-off coworkers or reducing salaries holds the most positive way forward for their organization.

In this model, the players and other employees decide whether a new stadium makes sense within the picture of their own personal finances. Not just theoretical, several businesses currently practice this model. Supporting over 80,000 workers in numerous industries, the MONDRAGON Corporation in the Basque Region of Northern Spain provides an interesting case. Finding success closer to home producing computerized automation equipment over the past thirty years, Isthmus Engineering and Manufacturing in Madison, Wisconsin utilizes a Worker Self-Directed Enterprise Model. Overall, having the potential to provide a more equitable solution, this model places those profiting off the current circumstances as responsible for covering the cost of workplace maintenance.

Each of these models provides systemic improvements to the current organizational structure. Nevertheless, considering the evidence introduced throughout this project, if all options remain on the table, communities should seek the pursuit of what I characterized above as a government-backed and community managed model.

The nature of profit motive and self-interest within the sports industry, as a public good in which the community remains significantly invested, drives this assertion. Leaning towards this direction primarily because fan and worker owned models, even if run as a non-profit, whether by 5 or 500,000 capitalists, does little to shed the community from the expectation of providing tax dollars to enhance, remake, or build new teams facilities.

Epilogue: On the Purpose of Government and Social Responsibility

Seeking to broadly define the process by which stadiums transition from ideas to reality, this project suggests a wholesale reimagining of the sports industry should commence. A coalition of the most wealthy and powerful members of society rely on convincing those economically disadvantaged by such spending to support these projects. Accessing many tactics in the *Blueprint for Stadium Construction*, the most effective maneuvers by proponents rely on the unmeasurable, the pride derived from staging a professional team. These remain the best arguments proponents of this process can muster, as financially the *Ideology of Stadium Construction* wreaks havoc on cities. In many instances, this type of shared investment creates local financial crises, leading towards further pushes for austerity or regressive tax increases. De Mausse and Cagan offer the primary question we must all ask ourselves at the conclusion of investigating this matter, **"who is our government serving and why?"** (2008:XII). Further investigation defining how this one industry shapes public policy to further its own interests should occupy the focus of sociologists concerned with disappearing democracy.

The actions of those advocating, directing, and accepting the *Ideology of Stadium Construction* expresses an attitude of organized irresponsibility. As C. Wright Mills explains, "when irresponsible decisions prevail and values are not proportionally distributed, you will find universal deception practiced by and for those who make the decisions and who have the most of what values there are to have," (2007:18). This irresponsibility extends beyond just those holding the power to make publicly funded stadiums a reality. Those in the middle and working classes, blinded for their love of the games playing out on the field serve as intellectual dupes, while the richest Americans transfer funds from the community coffers to their private check books. Regardless of the powerless, the structural immorality of funneling public dollars towards private stadiums could not stand without the politicians and men of business exuding this troubling philosophy. After all, “political men can grant financial favors only when there are economic men ready and willing to take them. And economic men can seek political favors only when there are political agents who can bestow such favors,” (Mills 2000:346). Both public and private forces can claim responsibility for fanning the flames of this disastrous tire fire.

The institution of sports and its participants cherish no concept above fairness—undertaking a great collective effort to maintain a level playing field. Rigging the game to benefit one of the participants jettisons any claim of integrity. Subsequently, many argue for asterisks in the record books next to baseball players testing positive for steroids or HGH, demonize Lance Armstrong as a pariah by those who once considered him a hero, and many became irritated at Tom Brady for using underinflated footballs in an otherwise non-competitive 2015 playoff game. The notion of maintaining fairness runs through the American culture and bleeds into the sports world. However, the reality of the sports industry is quite different than its mythology. In an industry dominated by billionaires and often organized only for their benefit, the public’s interest in the sports industry has compromised the overall economic stability of communities by maintaining public policy which socializes costs and privatizes profits.

Appendices

Appendix A: Demolished Stadiums Where Taxpayers Continue to Pay Debt and Debt Services

	Yr. Open	Team(s)	Orig Cost	Rem Debt	Payoff Yr	Year Demo'd
Giants Stadium (Meadowlands, NJ)	1976	Giants(NFL), Jets (NFL)	$78M	$266M*	2025	2010
Kingdome (Seattle, WA)	1976	Seahawks (NFL), Mariners (MLB), Supersonics (NBA)	$67M	$83M	2016	2000
Hoosier Dome (Indianapolis, IN)	1984	Colts (NFL)	$78M	$61M	2021	2008
Veterans Stadium (Philadelphia, PA)	1971	Eagles (NFL), Phillies (MLB)	$60M	$.30M	2020	2004

*Entire Meadowlands Complex.
Source: McGinty and Palmer, 2010

Appendix B: Abandoned Stadiums Where Taxpayers Continue to Pay Debt and Debt Services

	Year Open	Team(s)	Original Cost	Rem Debt	Payback Year	Last Year*
Astrodome (Houston, TX)	1965	Oilers (NFL), Astros (MLB)	$27M	$32M	2032	1998
Civic Arena (Pittsburgh, PA)	1961	Penguins (NHL)	$22M	$10M	2019	2010
Memphis Pyramid (Memphis, TN)	1991	Grizzlies (NBA)	$65M	$4M	2022	2004

*Last year for a tenant in one of the "big 4" professional sports.
Source: McGinty and Palmer, 2010

Appendix C: Are Taxpayers Responsible for Your NFL Stadium?

	Yr Opened/Renovated	Total Cost ($)	Taxpayer %
Cowboys Stadium[1]	2009	$1.15B	44%
Lucas Oil Stadium	2008	$780M	87%
Soldier Field	2003	$726M	61%
Invesco Field at Mile High Stadium	2001	$683M	61%
Paul Brown Stadium	2000	$669M	83%
Lincoln Financial Field	2003	$588M	35%
Reliant Stadium[2]	2002	$526M	61%
Ford Field	2002	$504M	51%
University of Phoenix Stadium	2006	$493M	68%
Cleveland Browns Stadium[3]	1999	$446M	73%
Edward Jones Dome**	1995	$431M	100%
Qwest Field[4]	2002	$422M	71%
M&T Bank Stadium	1998	$409M	66%
LP Field	1999	$378M	76%
Arrowhead Stadium	1972/2000	$375M	67%
Georgia Dome**	1992	$364M	93%
Superdome[5]**	1975/2006	$353M	100%
Lambeau Field	1957/2003	$339M	100%
Oakland Coliseum[6]**	1966/1996	$314M	91%
Heinz Field	2001	$312M	84%
Raymond James Stadium	1998	$240M	100%
Qualcomm Stadium**	1967	$229M	89%
Jacksonville Municipal Stadium[7]	1995	$222M	91%
Mall of America Field*	1982	$189M	75%
Ralph Wilson Stadium**	1973/1999	$174M	94%
Candlestick Park*	1960	$154M	100%

*No Longer in Use

**Attempting to Secure Funding for New Stadium or In the Process of Building New Stadium

1. Now AT&T Stadium
2. Now NRG Stadium
3. Now First Energy Stadium
4. Now Century Link Field
5. Now Mercedes Superdome
6. Now O.co Coliseum
7. Now EverBank Field

Source: McGinty and Palmer, 201

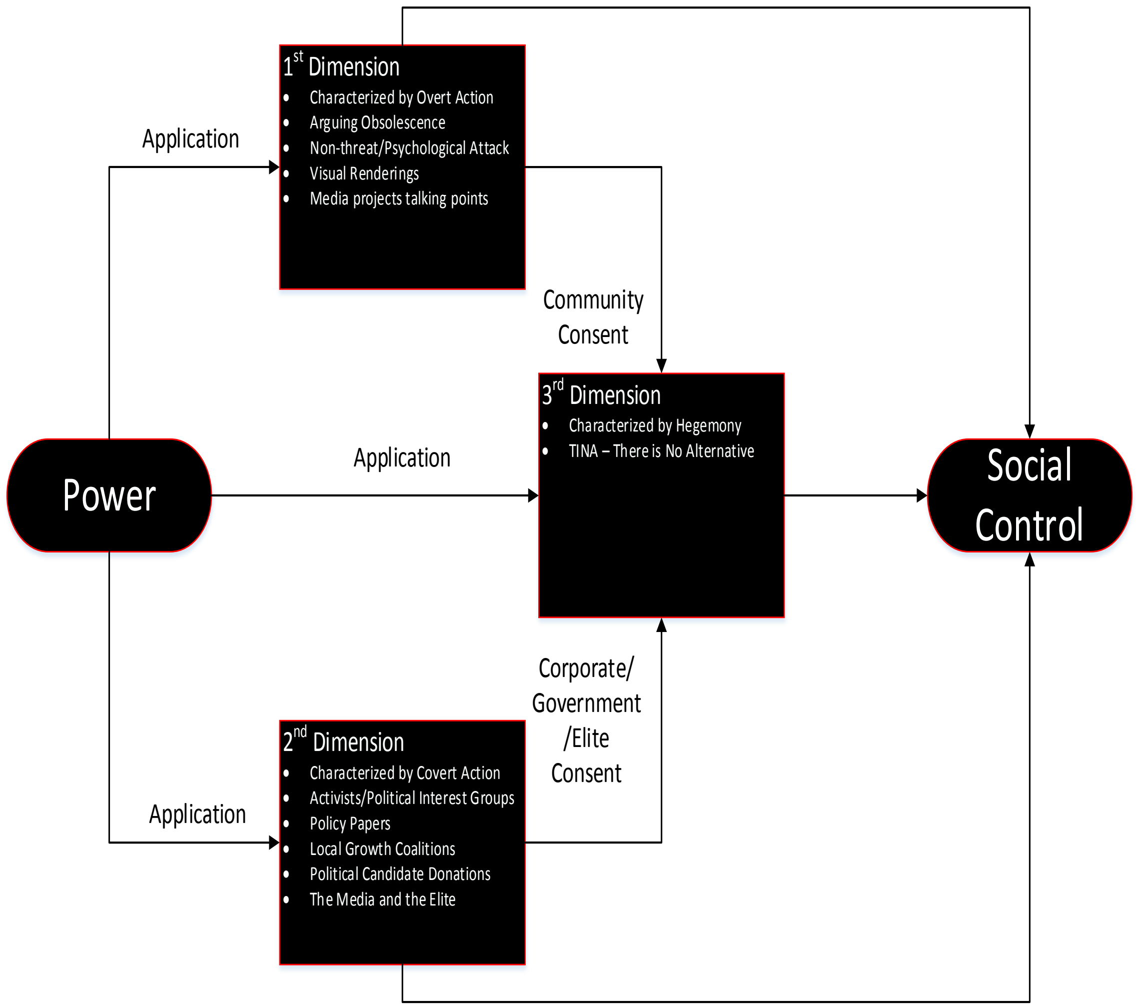
Appendix D: Professional Sporting Venues, Opening 2016/17

	Year Opens	Projected Cost	Public Funding (%)	
NFL Vikings[1]	2016	$1.024B	State $348M (34%)	City $150M (15%)
NBA Kings[2]	2016	$448M	City $255M (57%)	
NFL Falcons[3]	2017	$1.2B	City $200M (17%)	Yearly Hotel Tax (?%)*
MLB Braves[3]	2017	$672M	County $300M + Interest (45%)**	

*Over the next 30 years, the Falcons will receive 39.3% of the city's 7 cents for every dollar hotel tax for operating costs of the stadium. This total alone could rise to be in the hundreds of millions of dollars.

**Debt service for these bonds will originate from new local taxes in Cobb County (a northern suburb of Atlanta) including a special services tax, motel tax, and rental car tax. Sources: (1) Lillis, 2013, (2) Belden, 2014, (3)Tucker, 2013.

Appendix E: A Three Dimensional Power Model for the Construction of Sports Stadiums



Appendix F: Community Ownership Models

Model	Ownership Entity	Funding Distinction	IRS Standing	Governance Structure	MILB Example
Local Government	Municipality, County, or State	Part of Government Budget	Nonregulated Body	Unit within Government	Scranton-Wilkes Barre (PA) Yankees
Non-profit—Fan Owned	Nonprofit Corporation	Common Stock Offering	Not Recognized (tax-paying)	Board of directors, elected by shareholders	Appleton (WI) Timber Rattlers
Non-profit Government Backed	Nonprofit Corporation	Local Government	Charitable Recognition (tax exempt)	Volunteer board appointed by local government leadership	Toledo (OH) Mud Hens
Non-profit Charitable Purpose	Nonprofit Corporation	Private Donors	Charitable Recognition (tax exempt)	Volunteer board of directors, self-electing	Memphis (TN) Redbirds

Source: Dorothy Norris-Tirrell and Susan Tomlinson Schmidt 2010: 99

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Curriculum Vitae

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Professional Objective

To prepare for a PhD program and continue seeking employment opportunities contributing towards positive social change within my community.

Education

Indiana University, Indianapolis, IN
Master of Arts in Sociology: Organizations Concentration
December, 2015 GPA: 3.836

Indiana University, Indianapolis, IN
Bachelor of General Studies: Education and Sociology Concentrations
December, 2010 GPA: 3.274

Reports, Publications, and Conferences

Donny Coombs. 2015. "The Ideology of Stadium Construction: A Historical Sociology Model of Power and Control." (MA Thesis).

Marc Wiehn and Donny Coombs. 2014. "Damien Center SAMHSA Final Data." *Report to the Damien Center.*

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Marc Wiehn and Donny Coombs. 2011. "Summative Evaluation of the Sustainable Support Services Model." *Report to Partners in Housing.*

Donny Coombs, James B. Luther, Daniel Hillman, et al. 2010 "Assumptions Among Newly Identified HIV Positives Related To Care Entry." *Report to the Indiana State Department of Health.*

Work Experience

Ivy Tech Community College, Indianapolis, IN. Aug. 2015 - Current
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