Building Sociality Through Embodied Interaction:
Designing and Implementing A Multiethnic Youth Summer Camp in Rural Bulgaria

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Melissa Maceyko, PhD
California State University, Long Beach
Department of Anthropology
1250 Bellflower Blvd.
Long Beach, CA 90840-1003
Melissa.Maceyko@csulb.edu

Abstract: This paper uses ethnographic and linguistic data to assess the design and enactment of a multiethnic youth summer camp in rural north-central Bulgaria. This camp sought to use team-based sports and physical problem-solving activities to facilitate the building of positive relationships between young people who identify as ethnically Bulgarian with young people who identify as Roma. These identities represent groups in conflict, as Roma peoples, who make up roughly 10% of the total Bulgarian population, are continually ostracized and marginalized in popular culture as well as through policy. Drawing from existing literature on embodied communication within team sports and the negotiation of rules and relationships through interactions during play, I consider the practical implications of this kind of camp-design for mitigating inter-ethnic conflict through fostering more expansive forms of sociality.
Introduction

The relationship of community listening, collaborative arts experience, and social justice is clear... [we should] understand processes of finding expressive form that have the potential to be transformative for individuals, relationships, and communities (Hyatt 2018).

It’s already hot at 9:45am on this early August 2019 day and there is hardly a cloud in the sky. Did I remember to put on sunscreen? I’m not sure. With my compatriots, approximately 10 other American and Bulgarian professors, teachers, students, and non-profit workers who have temporarily become camp planners and counselors, I have rushed around all morning to finalize plans, set up activities, post bilingual camp rules, and prepare a “welcome” table for this, the first day of our pilot summer day-camp. A group of approximately 20-25 Bulgarian children, ages 8-14, will be arriving soon—some from the local village of Stolat (Столът) and others from the nearby town of Veliko Tarnovo (Велико Търново).

Finally, with a moment to pause, I am enjoying my surroundings: the 2,200 acre property in rural north-central Bulgaria where this camp will be held (Figure 1). I stand silently in the shade of an old wooden barn looking at the verdant rolling mountains in the near distance. I am enveloped by the smell of pear blossoms and the sound of birds chirping pleasantly in the trees. I breathe in deeply. The calm before the chaos of a busy youth-camp.

This idyllic property is owned and operated by the non-profit Stone and Compass, an education-focused organization that works hand-in-hand with the United Nations to advance youth leadership and sustainable development projects. Stone and Compass is hosting and sponsoring this free day-camp with the explicit goal of bringing together young people who identify as ethnically Bulgarian with young people who identify as Roma. These identities represent groups in conflict, as Roma peoples, who make up roughly 10% of the total Bulgarian population (CIA World Factbook 2020), are continually ostracized and marginalized in popular culture as well as through policy (Kanev 2019; Stewart 2013). Finding ways to build positive relationships between these segments of the Bulgarian youth population is critical for mitigating inter-ethnic conflict through fostering more expansive forms of sociality.

As my mind drifts to these larger issues of inequality and inter-ethnic conflict, the facility’s resident dog, Bobby Shopska, trots over to lay down next to me in the shade, and my mind returns to the intricacies of camp-planning: will we need his leash? where is his leash?
Before I can contemplate further, the first camp attendees arrive at the front gate.

The first group to arrive is composed of young people wearing shorts and t-shirts, some on-foot and some riding two or three to a bike. This group enters through the front gate tentatively, carefully placing their bikes along the nearest wall, as if readying themselves for a quick escape. From a distance, I greet them in English and in halting beginning-level Bulgarian. They collectively move toward the welcome table where I am now standing. They are patient as we begin our camp experience with an exchange of gestures, smiles, and confusion until one of the Bulgarian-speaking counselors appears to more clearly direct them.

A few minutes later, a van enters through the front gate. As soon as the vehicle comes to a stop, the doors open and another group of similarly-clothed young people pour out into the entryway. As they run in various directions, laughing loudly with backpacks bouncing, the bilingual teacher (English-Bulgarian) who has accompanied them steps from the van, yelling at them to stop. Some listen. Others do not. Their teacher yells again, directing them toward the welcome table, and they begin to comply. As members of this second group trickle toward the welcome table, the first group collectively steps back, eyeing the new arrivals.

Between these two groups of Bulgarian young people, clear differences of comportment, corporeality, and physical distancing appear immediately, indexing perceived and actual understandings of unequal power relationships and social distance. As forms of power and relationality are indexed on the body, and between bodies, our goal in designing this camp is to see if and how we can intervene using concepts of embodied action and embodied communication to begin to mitigate the potential for inter-ethnic conflict. After this first day, when there was clear physical distancing between the two distinct groups of attendees, we witnessed a breakdown of physical distancing between individuals, as well as an increase in group integration and socialization.

In this paper, I suggest how specific aspects of this camp contributed to beginning the process of building sociality between these two groups of young people. I do so by first offering a baseline analysis of this pilot program, presenting an overview of the camp itself, then explaining the theory behind embodied action and communication on which it was, in part, built. I then turn to a brief analysis of two representative camp activities before ending the paper by assessing the successes of the camp in building sociality between these two groups of young people and proposing a metric for more comprehensive program evaluation in the future. As much of the literature on the use of collective activities and sport for building sociality and mitigating ethnic conflict is derived from studies of formal education and formal development programs (e.g. the “sports, development, and peace” movement), this analysis draws from a unique set of linguistic and anthropological theories to provide a necessary and alternative understanding.
of how we might develop and assess youth programming that seeks to achieve the goal of conflict resolution.

**Background: Roma-Identity and Bulgarian-ness**

This camp sought to focus on a model for building positive relationships between Bulgarian youth who identify as Roma with Bulgarian youth who do not. This kind of relationship-building is critical in the larger socio-political context of Bulgaria: in line with a pattern that has been documented throughout Europe, Roma peoples in Bulgaria continue to be marginalized and ostracized (Stewart 2013).

However, the positionality of Roma peoples in Bulgaria is particularly notable in light of Bulgaria’s unique status as both the poorest country in the European Union (EU) and the country with the “fastest-shrinking” population in the world (Alexander 2017). Like many Eastern European countries, contemporary Bulgaria continues to be shaped and re-shaped by post-communist political and economic shifts, European Union membership, persistent corruption, and increased migration. However, the dual experience of widespread poverty and demographic decline in Bulgaria creates a situation in which questions of identity are clearly in the foreground. Indeed, the outsider status of Roma peoples in Bulgaria is particularly notable in public discussions of population decrease, where the influx of Roma families is frequently framed as a burden rather than a boon to boosting population numbers (Alexander 2017; Chaudry 2019; Kanev 2012).

While the history of Roma-focused ethnography indicates that many who identify as Roma might also express a certain level of disinterest in identifying as Bulgarian, the public positioning of Roma peoples as a homogenous group that is not Bulgarian has persistent social and political impacts. This is clear in the lived realities of Roma peoples in Bulgaria, who tend to experience unequal access and ostracization in many sectors of Bulgarian society (e.g. education).

In the face of this widespread problem, which is driven by persistent ideological labeling and stereotyping that is created and recreated in everyday ideas and practices, we developed this pilot day-camp. Although “the Roma” describes an enormous diversity of peoples and social forms (Goldston 2012; Stewart 2013), fostering sociality between Bulgarian youth who identify as Roma and those who do not at the local and hyper-local level seeks to take steps to break down homogenizing and negative stereotypes that perpetuate distrust and marginalization, which ultimately impact policy and practice. This pilot program sought to develop a model that might achieve these ends, and thus a model that might eventually be implemented more broadly.

**Embodied Action and Communication: Models For Building Sociality**

Programming for the camp, noted in Figure 4, was designed through a collaboration between experts in theater arts, modern dance, sociolinguistics, educational design, anthropology, youth literacy, and second language acquisition. Although different planners offered activity and design suggestions based on their specific areas of education and experience, one common element emerged as central to camp design through this collaboration: the importance of embodied action and embodied communication in building sociality.

Embodied action and communication models offer a departure from contemporary models that use competitive team sports, such as soccer, as a mechanism for conflict resolution, within the context of development, as represented by the “Sports, Development, and Peace” movement (SDP). SDP, a sector of development programming that “uses sport to advance personal, social, and community forms of development,” is tied to a number of global development Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), as well as to the United Nations (UN) (Giulianotti 2011). SDP programs are also used explicitly in some cases as a mechanism for conflict resolution (Gadais 2019). Although SDP has become increasingly popular since the 1990s in formal development circles, the use of sport in an attempt to quell conflict and inculcate specific values systems through embodied action has a much longer history. This can be seen explicitly in the introduction of the game of Cricket to the Trobriand Islanders by British Christian missionaries in the early 20th century as an attempt to create an alternative outlet for both interaction and competition, with the express purpose of quelling local violence-based conflicts (Leach and Kildea 1975).
As SDP has become more popular in 21st century development work, a number of critiques have been waged against SDP projects, including, as Giulianotti (2011) and Gadais (2019) note, the ways in which some projects have contributed to, rather than eradicated, existing ethnationally conflicts. As with the introduction of Cricket in the Trobriand Islands, some SDP projects have also attempted to, more or less consciously, impose rule-guided sports programs that “manufacture self-governing, responsible, neoliberal subjects in line with the Global North’s dominant ideologies” (Giulianotti 2011, 210; see also Kidd 2008). Both Giulianotti (2011) and Gadais (2019) agree that additional research and more rigorous program evaluation are needed to assess the impacts of existing SDP projects, and to shape potential future projects.

While a great deal of conflict resolution work has focused on the successes and failures of SDP, this camp did not focus explicitly on sport nor was it designed or analyzed as an SDP study. Although interventionist, this camp model sought to create the conditions under which participants could express their own creativity and agency and their capacity to work together in ways that they found to be beneficial. Through play, we hoped to foster meaningful interaction and create the conditions for recognizing the individual and collective humanity of seemingly different others. As Hyatt (2018) suggests,

> The relationship of community listening, collaborative arts experience, and social justice is clear...we should understand processes of finding expressive form that have the potential to be transformative for individuals, relationships, and communities (xi)

To this end, the camp was designed and considered through theories of embodied action and communication, considered within a specific cultural context, applied to the building of sociality through team-based and collective activities. In this context, the concept of “embodiment” is considered through contemporary theories of phenomenology, sociolinguistics, dance studies, and cognitive biology, which focus on the role that the living body plays in the world, and the ways in which the living body is thereby entwined with cognition, sociality, and the active production and reception of acts as communicative (Goodwin and Cekaite 2018; Herzfeld 2009; Hyatt 2018; Streeck 2015). Such theories shift ideas about building sociality (and mitigating conflict) away from a focus on language-forms themselves to instead focus on communication as a more corporeal and w/holistic process.

In phenomenological theory, the body is thought of as an active “co-maker of life-worlds,” constituted partially by its relation and reaction to that which is encountered in everyday life (Husserl 2012). Similarly, a number of cognitive biologists have used the discovery of “mirror neurons” to posit that, “what our bodies know how to do is also what they are able to see,” which aligns these researchers with phenomenologists as they suggest that an autonomic cognitive-communicative processes is at play when we watch and learn from others, and by extension, participate in a shared cultural system (Streeck 2015: 422). Thus, considerations of embodied action, communication, and sociality that derive from theories of the active body also necessarily note the relationship between bodies and between subjects in the world, referred to as intercorporeality and intersubjectivity, respectively (Murleau-Ponty 2014; Streeck 2015), and the ways in which we recognize forms of sociocultural belonging in the bodily movements of ourselves and others (Herzfeld 2009). In essence, shared and familiar patterns of action between subjects and bodies are thought to create the basis for mutual understanding, or as Heidegger (2008) notes, “mutual understanding is founded in being with one another” (154). Such conceptions of bodies, and in turn relationality, sociality, communication, and embodiment, present a departure from both SDP models and from older dualist models in which the body was positioned as passive: a producer and receiver of messages and an “instrument at the service” of the brain and/or other internal systems (Streeck 2015).

These theories of embodied action and communication have been applied to analyze relationality in team-based and collective activities—such as sports, dance, and singing. Such activities are unique as they overtly require, “heightened and practiced abilities for tacit intercorporeal coordination and action” (Streeck 2015: 425). Many of these activities also necessitate extreme bodily coordination and
communication, including anticipatory action, which produce forms of hypercooperativity (Goldman 2007). If recognition and repetition of coordinated movement can lead to the emergence of a distinct collective identity, or “we-subject” (Streeck 2015: 425), then closer attention should be paid to activities in which this kind of coordinated action is both necessary and intensified when compared with other activities in everyday life. In sum, activities that necessitate heightened intercorporeal action may lead to distinct forms of recognized collectivity. This can be useful if we consider how this kind of collectivity may emerge among humans who had previously been strangers and/or who had previously recognized one another as members of different and divergent identity-groups. As Pearce, Lunay, and Dunbar (2015) have suggested in an analysis of the use of singing as a social cohesion activity in adult education classes in the United States, this kind of collective embodied action may “quickly bond large human groups of relative strangers” (2; see also Kilanowski 2012).

In addition, studies of embodied action have shown how forms of communication and agency are modeled and challenged between participants. As Goodwin (1998) has noted throughout much of her work, and as contemporary studies of multimodality have asserted (Ahearn 2017), body positioning and orientation can indicate individual affect and stance-taking, wherein the body conveys commentary on or towards the words and acts of others. In the context of games and group activities, specifically, Goodwin (1998) has noted how embodied communication is used to build, reify, and challenge game rules and the conduct of game-participants, including participation roles and rights. For instance, Goodwin (1998) suggests that participants’ negotiations over whether or not an individual is using their body “correctly” during a game of hopscotch should be analyzed as an important process, as such interactions reflect the ways in which participants understand not only embodied action, but also the mechanisms through which larger social rules and structures are built, reified, and challenged. In essence, the rules of an everyday game and their negotiation are a template for larger recursive forms of human association and interaction, and the possibilities for impacting future change (see also Hanes and Weisman 2018).

It is this theoretical perspective, rather than SDP, that inspired major elements of the pilot day-camp discussed in this piece, including the goal for conflict-mitigation. This can be seen in the design and implementation of two representative activities from the camp in Bulgaria, both of which relied heavily on embodied action and communication: The Naming Game and The Hula Hoop Game.

**Pilot Summer Camp 2019**

The decision to pilot this camp was made by Stone and Compass co-founders Rob Goodwin and Julie Kiernan, in conversation with myself and one other CSULB colleague in early March of 2019. The pilot project was envisioned as a week-long (M-F) day-camp, where attendees would arrive in the late-morning (10am) and depart in the early-afternoon (1pm). The basic daily structure of the camp can be seen in Figure 4 below. In sum, the camp would provide guided games and activities, as well as snacks and lunch, and would be offered to attendees free of charge. Initial camp dates were set based on the in-country travel of co-founders and planners as well as the availability of the Stone and Compass center during the summer of 2019. The aforementioned volunteer-staff, who had experience with and thus necessary clearance for working with young people, was recruited from the non-profit and academic networks of the original camp planners.

In this section I will focus on two aspects of the camp that highlight our effort to use the concepts of embodied action and embodied communication to mitigate the potential for inter-ethnic conflict between these two groups of young people: recruitment and representative activities.
Recruitment

As this camp was to be run as a pilot, recruitment of camp participants was limited to less than 30. Recruitment nonetheless faced challenges given the limited number of young people in villages and the stated intention of the camp: to bring together Bulgarian youth who identify as Roma with Bulgarian youth who do not. Necessarily, what ended up being successful recruitment efforts relied heavily on the knowledge and networks of allies and partners in Bulgaria.

Recruitment of camp participants occurred in two distinct phases. In phase one, Stone and Compass founder, Julie, worked with the general manager of Stone and Compass in Bulgaria, Emo, to conduct outreach in the village of Stolat (Столът), where the Stone and Compass center is located. As of 2011, the population of Stolat was estimated to be approximately 320 (National Statistical Institute 2011). As mentioned above, contemporary villages in this region of Bulgaria have very few young people (National Statistical Institute 2011). Yet, many of the young people who remain in these villages identify as Roma (Amilipe 2018). Given all of these factors, the Roma-identifying camp attendees were recruited from Stolat, largely through word-of-mouth invitations within the village. In sum, Julie and Emo walked to areas within Stolat where villagers tended to gather—at the small park in the center of the village and at informal markets (See photographs in Figure 5). Here, they could speak with young people and caregivers. Fliers providing information about the camp were also posted in these locations.
As there were no apparent non-Roma-identifying youth in Stolat, in phase two, participant recruitment was expanded regionally. Stone and Compass founder Julie worked with a local Bulgarian partner named Galya, an English-language teacher who runs a small summer English-immersion program for young people in Veliko Tarnovo. All of the students in Galya’s program were invited to attend the pilot day camp free of charge, with Stone and Compass also providing daily transportation. In 2019, all of these students were non-Roma-identifying Bulgarian youth from Veliko Tarnovo. Notably, even though the summer camp provided ample opportunity for students to interface with L1 English-speakers and language/literacy educators—a fantastic opportunity for any English-language student in an immersion program—and even though the summer camp was offered to these students free of charge, at least one parent opted to remove their child from the camp because they knew that Roma-identifying children would be present.

Figure 5: Photographs of Central Stolat. The central photo is the view entering the center of Stolat from the North. Photos, labeled clockwise from left, represent the view from the central photo: the abandoned schoolhouse; the public park; residential homes.
Activity 1: The Naming Game

Although camp attendees made and wore English/Bulgarian name tags each day, the following name game was repeated each morning, as well. Participants included attendees and available counselors.

In this game, participants form a circle. A first participant says their name, pairing the verbal utterance with some kind of movement. For instance, the participant in Figure 6 below would say their name, “Rob,” while striking the pose shown. The next participant in the circle has to repeat the previous participant’s verbal utterance (name) and accompanying movement, then add their own. The third participant in the circle has to repeat the two previous participants’ verbal utterances and accompanying movements before adding their own—and so on. The activity continues until all participants have had a chance to add their name/movement. The game allows for agency in self-naming and promotes recall of others’ names, through pairing verbal naming with embodied action.

It should be noted that while this game does attempt to help participants with learning and remembering others’ names, and in this case also with practicing pronunciation in different languages, it was in no way meant to be a punitive exercise. Repetition was emphasized over direct correction. Also, collective recall was emphasized over individual recall of names and movements. Over the first few days “hints” were freely given if and when participants forgot previous participants’ names and/or accompanying movements. Furthermore, attendees were asked to repeat this activity on a daily basis and to use the same accompanying movement throughout the week; therefore, by Day 3 of the camp, the Naming Game was run as a collective review, with all participants stating names and movements in unison. It should also be noted that camp attendees not only repeated these actions collectively during the Naming Game itself, but also used naming-movements spontaneously with one-another in other contexts within the camp (e.g. during free time). Camp attendees and counselors also occasionally used naming-movements to help them recall names that they had momentarily forgotten.

In introducing novel naming-movements, this activity intentionally provided individuals with greater agency in self-naming. It also created opportunities for greater interpersonal equality as attendees were given explicit permission to guide adults as well as peers in properly pronouncing their name and performing their associated naming-movement. In addition, the novelty of the naming-movements, and the shared knowledge of this group in using and re-using these movements created the conditions for the emergence of shared and familiar patterns of action. As suggested above, such shared and familiar patterns can, in turn, foster the development of deeper intersubjective and intercorporeal understanding, and help to build sociality and collectivity. Not only does remembering and properly using individual names humanize others (García-Moya, Brooks, and Moreno 2020), as suggested above, recognition and repetition of coordinated movement can lead to the emergence of a distinct collective identity, or “we-subject” (Streeck 2015: 425). In this case, this kind of personal, intercorporeal, and intersubjective understanding was thought critical to both humanize individuals and to develop connections between these hyperlocal groups, who represented macro-groups in conflict.

The Hula Hoop Game (Group Problem Solving Game)

This game was one in a series of group creation or problem-solving games, which were done on a daily basis. While available counselors often modeled these games and explained the rules (in Bulgarian and English) prior to the start of the game (see Figures 7 and 8), participants during the actual game were mainly camp attendees. After getting to know attendees on the first day, counselors assembled teams for
these kinds of problem-solving games and appointed team leaders with the explicit goal of integrating Roma-identifying and non-Roma-identifying participants: as shown on the daily schedule in Figure 4, on the second day of camp, teams were introduced and team members were asked to come up with a team name. These teams remained consistent throughout the week, accruing points for winning competitions and meeting goals across different activities.

The Hula Hoop Game was one of these activities. This game is an embodied problem-solving task. As shown in Figures 7 and 8, in this game, the participants of each team form a circle. After a hula hoop is placed on the arm of one participant, all participants join hands. The goal of the activity is for participants to work together to pass the hula hoop around the circle without letting go of their hand hold. In this case, the activity was timed, with the fastest team to pass the hula hoop around the circle twice winning the round (in a multi-round contest). Participants were given time to verbally strategize with their teammates before each round and were encouraged to direct one another during the activity itself.

Figure 7: Counselors modeling the “Hula Hoop” Game (upper right) while camp attendees watch.

Figure 8: Close-up of counselors modeling the “Hula Hoop” Game

This activity represents a clear moment in which a group can demonstrate hypercooperativity, a form of momentary collectivity through which participants coordinate bodily movements and anticipate the movements of others. Although participants were permitted to speak during the activity, they also critically communicated and coordinated action through the body itself, individual and collective. As Pearce, Lunay, and Dunbar (2015) note, such activities can “promote fast cohesion between unfamiliar individuals which bypasses the need for personal knowledge of group members gained through prolonged interaction” (5).

Furthermore, as embodied action and communication were necessarily negotiated by participants in real-time to solve this low-stakes problem (how to move the hula hoop), activities such as these create the conditions for Roma-identifying and non-Roma-identifying young people to test-out forms of communication, including mechanisms for listening and understanding, that they might use in a more high-stakes problem-solving setting. As in Goodwin’s (1998) analysis of hopscotch, negotiations over whether or not an individual is using their body “correctly”, or observations about how one might more efficiently move the hula hoop around the circle can offer the opportunity to both model interactions and to reflect on individual and shared strengths and weaknesses in embodied actions, which can shape the mechanisms through which larger social rules and structures are built, reified, and challenged. In other words, this kind of activity has the potential to foster more productive forms of inter-ethnic understanding and conflict mitigation if and when applied in other settings.
Pilot Summer Camp: Program Evaluation

I now turn to a brief assessment of the pilot camp, focusing on the representative activities above. Although a longitudinal study is needed to properly assess longer-term impacts, here I draw from my observations as well as from information gathered from an informal briefing held with attendees on the last day of camp (see Figure 9) to assess the ways in which this camp-design was able to begin the process of building sociality between these two groups of Bulgarian young people in the short-term.

On the last day of camp, an informal debriefing was held with camp attendees in the barn on the Stone and Compass property. As attendees sat in a circle on the floor, two counselors asked attendees to answer three questions: What is one positive thing you learned this week? What is one positive thing you learned about someone else this week? What was your favorite thing about this week? Questions were presented one-by-one, verbally, in Bulgarian and English. Attendees responded by raising their hand and answering verbally when called upon by one of the counselors. Responses were written in Bulgarian and English on large sheets of paper. The results can be seen in Figure 9, below.

These responses highlight two important outcomes: attendees tended to use individual names in their responses and positive feedback was almost always directed toward an attendee or counselor who claimed identity in a different macro-level group. First, responses to all three questions tended to include positive feedback directed at individual attendees. The focus on individuals was not inherent in all questions asked (especially Question 1), and the use of individual names within responses was unprompted. Such focus on individuals and use of individual names might be connected to the emphasis that was placed on learning and using the names of others throughout the camp, including the daily enactment of the Naming Game. As mentioned above, the Naming Game led to clear recall and use of individuals’ names, alongside naming-movements. A number of studies, in the United States and Europe, have shown that the act of simply remembering and using a name, with specific pronunciation (and in this case personal naming-movements), is often perceived as a sign of respect, understanding, and support (García-Moya, Brooks, and Moreno 2020). This kind of acknowledgment among strangers and acquaintances, although small and seemingly pedestrian, has been shown to create the conditions for building more lasting, memorable, and significant interpersonal relationships in educational settings and to foster positive affect through personalizing and humanizing others (García-Moya, Brooks, and Moreno 2020). In addition, responses here show that attendees tended to direct positive feedback toward someone who claimed identity in a different macro-level group. Although this pattern emerged in responses to all three of the questions
asked, responses to question 2, *What is one positive thing you learned about someone else this week?*, were particularly instructive on this point, as individual names were offered in every response, making it clear that Roma-identifying attendees were genuinely offering positive feedback on non-Roma identifying attendees and counselors, and vice versa.

Another important phenomenon that emerged throughout the week, but that was most notable on the last day of the camp, was a breakdown in physical distancing between individuals, as well as an increase in group integration and socialization. During the camp time-windows in which group problem-solving activities were taking place, the teams themselves were cohesive, becoming the relevant unit for socializing and problem-solving. Although team-composition was created by counselors, there was no overt complaint or effort to shift team composition. Interactions during these activities were frequently marked by gestures and facial expressions that indicate positive affect: smiling, laughing, and high-fives. As opposed to the first day, where there was clear physical distancing between the two distinct groups of attendees, there was less of a tendency to maintain a great deal of physical space between bodies, as attendees increasingly leaned over a shoulder to help fold a paper airplane or bent down to move a foot to model a dance step. During free-time, attendees were increasingly interactive, socializing with one-another based on shared interests in specific activities (e.g. dancing; hula hooping; soccer; card-games) rather than based on either team-composition or ethnic identification. The representative activities, described above, suggest how they contributed to beginning the process of easing certain kinds of inter-ethnic tensions and building this kind of embodied sociality

In sum, these verbal and non-verbal responses show cursory evidence that the camp had an impact on building sociality between seemingly disparate groups of young people.

However, in spite of the positive verbal feedback offered in Figure 9 and in spite of observed increases in physical and social integration between Roma-identifying and non-Roma-identifying attendees, these patterns of integration were in no way totalizing. There was still a tendency for the two original groups to re-form into distinct social and physical units during some periods of unstructured time, such as lunch and pool-time. It is unclear what motivated this kind of re-grouping, or whether this kind of re-grouping had anything to do with specific identity factors, as opposed to existing friendships and forms of social closeness. Such separations might have also been language-based or logistical, as well. For instance, most Roma-identifying attendees had little-to-no productive English skills, and many counselors little-to-no productive Bulgarian skills, so moments in which language-centric or English-medium interactions were heavier might have been alienating for Roma-identifying attendees. Also, issues of logistics, which in some cases reflected socio-economic expectations, had impacts on grouping and physical space. One prominent example was created by the need for swimwear, as non-Roma-identifying attendees from Veliko Tarnovo tended to spend time in a changing-area to don special swimwear before entering the pool, while Roma-identifying attendees from Stolat tended to simply jump in to the pool wearing whatever clothing they had been wearing throughout the day. Physical re-grouping may also have been impacted by the timing of lunch and pool-time, which occurred at the end of the camp-day. At this point, the two groups would necessarily need to physically separate as they began to travel in different directions, via different forms of transportation, toward their homes.

More data is needed to measure the shorter- and longer-term impacts of camp-design and implementation. Thus, I now turn to offer suggestions for expanding recruitment and evaluation in the future.

**Suggestions For Future Camps**

As this camp was conducted as a pilot program, and was done as a collaborative project, camp recruitment, design, and implementation was not settled prior to my arrival in Bulgaria in early July of 2019. This planning timeline meant that plans for a comprehensive program evaluation were constrained, as was access to necessary resources. Furthermore, although I worked in tandem with Bulgarian-speaking counselors, asking questions about what I was seeing and hearing, it should be noted that one major limitation on my own observational potential was my own lack of Bulgarian language proficiency during the summer of 2019. Below I make suggestions to enhance future recruitment and data collection.
Recruitment. In the future, recruitment issues will be addressed, and recruitment expanded, in consultation through two important partnerships: local educators and Amilipe, the biggest non-profit Roma-run and focused organization in Bulgaria, self-described as a “center for inter-ethnic dialogue and tolerance” (2018). Through working with Amilipe members and local educators, we hope to expand local and regional recruitment of Roma-identifying and non-Roma-identifying youth. Amilipe has specifically offered to help cultivate positive relationships with regional Roma-identifying populations, beyond the village of Stolat.

Surveys and Video Recording. As mentioned above, in 2019, an informal debriefing on the last day of camp provided some data about camp successes and weaknesses. In the future, oral pre-camp and post-camp surveys will be used to expand data availability. These surveys will focus on how camp attendees view Bulgarian-ness and Roma-identity and will measure potential changes in these views immediately following their camp experience. Post-camp surveys will also maintain a focus on themes addressed in the 2019 informal debriefing, particularly responses offering positive feedback about individual camp attendees. In addition, video recording will be implemented to allow for more expansive analysis of language use and embodied action, including bodily closeness, gestures, and comportment between specific attendees and groups. Video recordings will also allow for more opportunity to assess attendees’ spontaneous vocalizations and interactions in a more structured way. Assessment tools drawn from Conversation Analysis (Goodwin and Cekaite 2018) will be used to create a standard a mechanism for this analysis.

Follow-Up Correspondence. In the future, willing camp attendees will also be contacted for informal interviews in the months and years following their camp experience. This will allow for the gathering of longitudinal data to see how/if attendees’ experience with the camp might have impacted their outlook or interactions with other Bulgarian youth in the longer-term. Drawing from theories of Discourse Analysis (Johnstone 2018), informal interviews will be used to assess longer-term camp impacts based on what individuals spontaneously choose to report as well as the ways in which they frame their interactions with others relative to their memories and descriptions of the camp experience. Also important will be how attendees perceive and report on their experience with the camp and their understanding of camp impacts. Interview data will be assessed based not only on attendees’ reporting, framing, and perception, but also on similarities in and differences from original baseline surveys and words/actions captured in recordings during the camp itself. As this camp seeks to recruit attendees from the region in which Stone and Compass has a presence, the ability to execute this kind of longitudinal study seems highly plausible.

Conclusion
On the last day of camp, I again stand silently in the shade of an old wooden barn looking at the verdant rolling mountains in the near distance. This is the calm after the chaos of a busy youth-camp. It is currently 3:00pm, and it is very warm. If I did remember to put on sunscreen, it is almost certainly gone by now.

Although departure time is normally 1:00pm, today everyone has lingered. Most of the camp attendees and counselors have mingled near the tables that had been set up for our final lunch, exchanging contact information and hugs as they continue to nibble on pieces of the magnificent home-made cake that has been provided as a “thank you” and “farewell.” In the barn, Emo puts his arm around one of the attendees from Stolat, a young man who has threatened to punch another attendee, his younger friend from Stolat, as the friend has verbally outed his crush on another attendee, a young girl from Veliko Tarnovo. A few other attendees sit on folding chairs, clearly embroiled in one last intense game of Uno.

As everyone begins to move toward the gate, where I stand, the two groups seem less separate than they did on the first day. Thanks and waves and handshakes are exchanged. Everyone promises to return in 2020, whether or not this is possible or likely.

One camp might not change the lived realities of Roma peoples in Bulgaria, who tend to experience unequal access and ostracization in many sectors of Bulgarian society; however, as this
A widespread problem is driven by persistent ideological labeling and stereotyping that is created and recreated in everyday ideas and practices, we can only hope that this kind of camp model might have an impact, creating opportunities for fostering new forms of sociality between Bulgarian youth who identify as Roma and those who do not at the local and hyper-local levels.

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References Cited
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