

Parkour/Freerunning as a Pathway to Prosocial Change:

A Theoretical Analysis

By

Johanna Herrmann

Supervised by

Prof Tony Ward

A thesis

submitted to the Victoria University of Wellington

in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Science in Forensic Psychology

Victoria University of Wellington

2016

Acknowledgements

Special thanks to my supervisor Prof Tony Ward for his constant support and constructive feedback throughout the pleasures and struggles of this project. His readiness to offer an alternative perspective has provided me with many opportunities to grow as a critical thinker, researcher, and as a person. I am grateful to Prof Devon Polaschek, Dr Clare-Ann Fortune, and all members of their lab for encouraging me to pursue an innovative research project, as well as for providing inspiration, insights and connections to other specialist research areas in offender rehabilitation. The German Academic Exchange Service deserves special mention for the financial support that allowed me to take up my dream course of study in the country that is farthest away from my home. Finally, I would like to thank Damien Puddle and Martini Miller for lively discussions, valuable feedback, and sharing the passion regarding research, *parkour/freerunning*, as well as youth development.

Abstract

Parkour/freerunning is a training method for overcoming physical and mental obstacles, and has been proposed as a unique tool to engage youth in healthy leisure activities (e.g., Gilchrist & Wheaton, 2011). Although practitioners have started to utilise *parkour/freerunning* in programmes for youth at risk of antisocial behaviour, this claim is insufficiently grounded in theory and research to date. In fact, the common misrepresentation of the practice in the media has led to confusion and debate about the nature of *parkour/freerunning*. In a conceptual and historical analysis, I explore what *parkour/freerunning* is, and how it can impact on the practitioner. Results from the analysis reveal values, goals and assumptions that *parkour/freerunning* is built upon, as well as a set of physical, mental, socio-moral and cognitive-behavioural skills developed through the practice. As illustrated by its history, *parkour/freerunning* has emerged as a highly versatile tool for self-development and change. These insights are used to discuss how *parkour/freerunning* relates to contemporary frameworks of offender rehabilitation. A comparative analysis demonstrates that *parkour/freerunning* is largely capable of meeting the standards of rehabilitation practice guided by the Risk-Need-Responsivity model. Moreover, key goals, assumptions and general approach in *parkour/freerunning* are naturally in line with those in the Good Lives Model of offender rehabilitation. The major overlaps of *parkour/freerunning* with both frameworks suggest that the practice can increase the individual's capacity to live a healthy and prosocial life, and reduce the risk of reoffending. Particularly when applied within the GLM, *parkour/freerunning* offers a pathway to identity formation and transformation. Although this claim is in need of further exploration, I propose that *parkour/freerunning* can be utilised to enhance the practice of offender rehabilitation as an engaging and easily accessible tool for prosocial change.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	iii
Abstract	v
Table of Contents	vi
List of Tables.....	viii
List of Figures	viii
1 Introduction	1
2 Toward an Understanding of <i>Parkour/Freerunning</i>: A Historical Overview	5
2.1 The Origins of Parkour/Freerunning: Historical and Personal Roots.....	7
2.2 The Beginnings of ‘Le parcours’	8
2.3 ‘L’art du déplacement’, ‘Parkour’, and ‘Freerunning’	11
2.4 Global Dissemination and Current Trends	14
2.5 Academic Literature	18
3 What Is <i>Parkour/Freerunning</i>? – A Conceptual Analysis of the Practice	21
3.1 Analytical Tools	21
3.2 Parkour/Freerunning as an Evolving Practice: Analysing Historical Developments.....	26
3.2.1 Establishing Values and Assumptions in the Early Beginnings	27
3.2.2 Evolution of Key Values	31
3.2.3 Skills Development in Parkour/Freerunning.....	37
3.2.4 What Is Parkour/Freerunning, and How Does It Impact on the Practitioner?	39
4 Contemporary Frameworks of Offender Rehabilitation.....	42
4.1 Overview	42
4.2 The Risk-Need-Responsivity (RNR) Model	43
4.3 The Good Lives Model (GLM)	47

5 Offender Rehabilitation and <i>Parkour/Freerunning</i>: A Comparative Analysis	52
5.1 How Does Parkour/Freerunning Relate to the RNR Model?	52
5.1.1 Assumptions, Aims, and Values	52
5.1.2 Etiological Assumptions	54
5.1.3 Practice Implications	55
5.2 How Does Parkour/Freerunning Relate to the GLM?	60
5.2.1 Assumptions, Aims, and Values	60
5.2.2 Etiological Assumptions	62
5.2.3 Practice Implications	63
5.3 Which Framework Is Parkour/Freerunning Best Situated Within?	65
6 Future Directions and Conclusion	69
6.1 How Can Parkour/Freerunning Support Prosocial Change?	69
6.2 Boundary Conditions and Challenges	70
6.3 Future Directions in Research and Application	71
References	74
Appendix	90
A Academic Literature on Parkour/Freerunning	90
A1.1 Literature Search	90
A1.2 Thematic Overview	91
A1.3 Methodological Overview	92
B Summary of the Comparative Analysis	108

List of Tables

Table 1	<i>Accumulation of Values and Underlying Assumptions in the Origins and Early Establishing Phase of Parkour/Freerunning</i>	29
Table 2	<i>List of Skills Promoted in Parkour/Freerunning</i>	38
Table 3	<i>Matrix of Major Components Constituting Parkour/Freerunning</i>	39
Table 4	<i>List of the “Central Eight” Risk Factors</i>	45
Table 5	<i>List of Primary Human Goods and Possible Means to Their Achievement</i>	49
Table 6	<i>Central Criminogenic Needs and Their Coverage in Parkour/Freerunning</i>	57
Table 7	<i>List of Primary Human Goods and Their Reflection in Parkour/Freerunning</i>	61
Table 8	<i>Major Components of Parkour/Freerunning, and Their Alignment with RNR Model and GLM</i>	66
Table 9	<i>Parkour/Freerunning as a Tool for Prosocial Change – Three Perspectives</i>	70
Table A1	<i>List of Non-Empirical Academic Literature on Parkour/Freerunning</i>	99
Table A2	<i>List of Empirical Research on Parkour/Freerunning</i>	102
Table B1	<i>Comparison Between RNR Model/GLM and Parkour/Freerunning</i>	108

List of Figures

<i>Figure 1</i>	<i>Schematic overview of the history of parkour/freerunning</i>	6
<i>Figure 2</i>	<i>Analytical framework to describe a practice</i>	24
<i>Figure 3</i>	<i>Evolution of key values from le parcours to parkour/freerunning</i>	34

Chapter 1

Introduction

As one of the chief challenges in correctional rehabilitation, practitioners commonly face difficulty engaging offenders in the treatment and change process (Polaschek, 2012). In particular, young people who display antisocial and criminal behaviour often struggle with traditional learning environments and attention, self-control, cultural barriers, and mental health (Dahlberg & Potter, 2001; Day, Howells, & Rickwood, 2004). These issues make individuals less likely to commence, complete, or benefit from treatment which poses a serious problem to the rehabilitation process, and is associated with higher chances of reoffending (see Olver, Stockdale, & Wormith, 2011 for a review). In order to make lasting changes to their behaviour, offenders need a personally meaningful and attractive alternative to antisocial lifestyles (Laws & Ward, 2011). Thus, a range of innovative programmes have started to utilise engaging activities such as sport, wilderness therapy, and – more recently – *parkour/freerunning* (Coalter, 2012; Edwardes, 2010; Nichols, 2007; Wilson & Lipsey, 2000).

This idea may seem outrageous to the average citizen who has seen *parkour/freerunning* represented in the media as a risky sport of adrenaline junkies jumping between rooftops and doing backflips. This focus on the spectacular movement of advanced practitioners has led to a distraction from what the training discipline and philosophy is really about. Furthermore, the terms *parkour* and *freerunning* are inconsistently employed in the media and literature. The resulting confusion of concepts has contributed to terminological chaos and ongoing debates about what *parkour/freerunning* is (Angel, 2011).

Parkour/freerunning was developed as a physical and mental training method for overcoming obstacles while moving through one's environment efficiently, fluidly and with control (Atkinson, 2009). This practice is based on a philosophy of responsibility, autonomous action, and self-improvement (Edwardes, 2010). Practitioners have started to utilise the new and engaging discipline of *parkour/freerunning* for programmes aimed at youth at risk of antisocial behaviour including drug abuse and offending (Gauch09vvc, 2012; London Councils, n.d.; ParkourONE, 2012). Although the idea of helping young people overcome obstacles to prosocial development through *parkour/freerunning* is intuitively sound, it is insufficiently grounded in theory and research. No empirical study evaluating the effects of these programmes has been published to date, and academic literature on *parkour/freerunning* is still in its infancy.

In this thesis, I aim to analyse the concepts of *parkour/freerunning* and unpack their relationship to contemporary models of correctional rehabilitation. As an essential part of the intended analysis, I explore what impact the practice can have on the individual development and change process. These aims will be addressed in a theoretical investigation of three major research questions which build upon each other and which provide the basic structure for the thesis.

(1) *What is parkour/freerunning, and how does it impact on the practitioner?*

To start, we need to develop a comprehensive and in-depth understanding of what *parkour/freerunning* is, and how it can affect individual development. The answer to this seemingly simple question has been complicated by inaccurate media portrayal and a conceptual confusion between *parkour* and *freerunning*. These issues have introduced some degree of tension between different values underpinning the practice, and have led to ongoing debates among practitioners about what *parkour/freerunning* is, and how it should be taught and practiced.

In order to comprehend how these tensions have come about and may be resolved, I argue that the concept of *parkour/freerunning* needs to be understood within its historical context. Therefore, chapter 2 is dedicated to an overview of the history and evolution of *parkour/freerunning*. Based on this overview, my goal is to gain a better understanding of *parkour/freerunning*, the actions that can be observed in the practice, and how they are grounded in underlying values, assumptions and skills. In chapter 3, I start by developing a general framework for conceptualising a practice according to these components. Subsequently, I attempt to identify the relevant components in the origins of *parkour/freerunning*, and track their development throughout the history. This approach will provide a better idea of how and why *parkour/freerunning* is practiced, how it may benefit the practitioner, and how it may combine with other relevant practices such as correctional rehabilitation.

(2) *How does parkour/freerunning relate to contemporary frameworks of offender rehabilitation?*

In order to address the second research question, it is necessary to comprehend the nature of *parkour/freerunning* and offender rehabilitation. While an in-depth understanding of

parkour/freerunning is sought in the first chapters, chapter 4 will provide an outline of the two major frameworks currently used to guide rehabilitation in correctional settings: the Risk-Need-Responsivity (RNR) Model (Andrews & Bonta, 2010), and the Good Lives Model (GLM; Ward & Maruna, 2007) of offender rehabilitation. This review will form the basis for an analysis of convergence and divergence between *parkour/freerunning* and key aspects of each rehabilitation framework in chapter 5. The comparative analysis will help to determine how *parkour/freerunning* aligns with the assumptions, values, goals and practice recommendations present in offender rehabilitation, and whether *parkour/freerunning* is better situated within RNR or the GLM.

(3) *How can parkour/freerunning support prosocial change?*

Drawing together the results from my analyses, I conclude with a discussion of implications for the enhancement of the change process through *parkour/freerunning*. While the comprehensive answer to my third research question lies in the argument of the entire thesis, I will highlight key benefits in chapter 6. Finally, I consider future directions in research and application of *parkour/freerunning* to the rehabilitation of offenders in practice, including its boundary conditions, challenges, as well as remarkable opportunities.

While my analyses are theoretical in nature, I am also an active practitioner and instructor of *parkour/freerunning* at the time of submitting this thesis, with more than three years of training experience across multiple countries. This experience allows for a level of insight that is unlikely to be achieved from an outside perspective, and naturally includes various elements of ethnographic field research. My personal engagement with the practice and interactions with a wide range of practitioners shares features with the research strategies described in some of the early qualitative studies on *parkour/freerunning*: active participation, participant observation, and unstructured or open-ended interviews (e.g., Lamb, 2014a, 2014b, Mould, 2009; Saville, 2008). The value of such an in-depth understanding through self-reflected participation has been recognised and described in a qualitative research approach termed “Epistemology of doing” (Rybas, & Gajjala, 2007). However, my personal involvement also increases the susceptibility to bias and a favourable interpretation of evidence. To minimise potential bias and ensure best practice in academic enquiry, I strive for a balanced perspective based on a comprehensive literature research and transparent line of argument. In addressing the outlined research questions, I aim to make a contribution to the

theoretical understanding of the practice of *parkour/freerunning*, and its potential for application in the rehabilitation of offenders.

Chapter 2

Toward an Understanding of *Parkour/Freerunning*: A Historical Overview

Although *parkour/freerunning* only started to receive international attention in the early 2000s, its historical roots date back to the last century, and have undergone rapid developments since. Originally, the terms *le parcours* (French for ‘course’ or ‘route’), and *l’art du déplacement* (‘the art of displacement’/‘art of movement’) were used to refer to the discipline that has more recently become known as *parkour/freerunning* (Witfeld, Gerling, & Pach, 2011). On its way to becoming a globally distributed practice, the discipline has faced high levels of enthusiasm, controversy, and change. In this chapter, I aim to give an overview of the influences relevant to the creation and development of *parkour/freerunning*. An accurate synopsis is of particular importance to restore the misinformed image of the practice created in the media and to understand what *parkour/freerunning* is.

Yet, this task has been complicated by the lack of a comprehensive historical overview to date¹. Reconstructing the history of *parkour/freerunning* has been challenging, because relevant information is documented in different media including interviews, websites, internet forums, books and documentaries, and the sources vary with regard to their credibility. Selective journalistic attention has resulted in a misrepresentation and omission of important details in the media coverage. Even the accounts provided by different members of the founding group diverge with regard to some aspects, which may be explained by a strong connection between their memories, personal stories, and investments (Angel, 2011). Thus, credible and coherent resources are scarce, and the historical overview presented below is bound to draw heavily from a limited number of accounts².

The review of the development of *parkour/freerunning* is (somewhat artificially) organised into four phases (see Figure 1 for a simplified presentation). First, I outline the historical roots of the training activities and philosophies in George Hébert’s *natural method* (*Méthode naturelle*) and in military obstacle course training (*le parcours du combattant*). The origins are intertwined with the personal life story of Raymond Belle. While David Belle is considered the founder of *parkour*, he credits the importance of the role his father Raymond Belle played as an innovator (Belle, 2009). The transfer of the training methods to an urban

¹ At the time of submission of this thesis, Dr Julie Angel is writing a book on “The History of Parkour: Motivations, Values and Effort, the Story of the Birth of an Art” (J. Angel, personal communication, December 6, 2014).

² Resources of particular relevance that are cited repeatedly include the accounts provided by Angel (2011), Belle (2009), and Witfeld et al. (2011).

environment by David Belle marked the beginning of the second phase. Together with a group of friends who later became known as the *Yamakasi* group, a training approach denoted as *le parcours* was formed in the early stages. The third phase is characterised by the *Yamakasi*'s sudden media attention, the group's break-up and subsequent division of their practices into *l'art du déplacement*, *parkour*, and *freerunning*. The increasing media reports were also the beginning of a rapid global dissemination and attempts to reintegrate the practices as *parkour/freerunning* in phase four. The description of these current trends in the international community will be followed by a brief overview of the emerging academic literature.

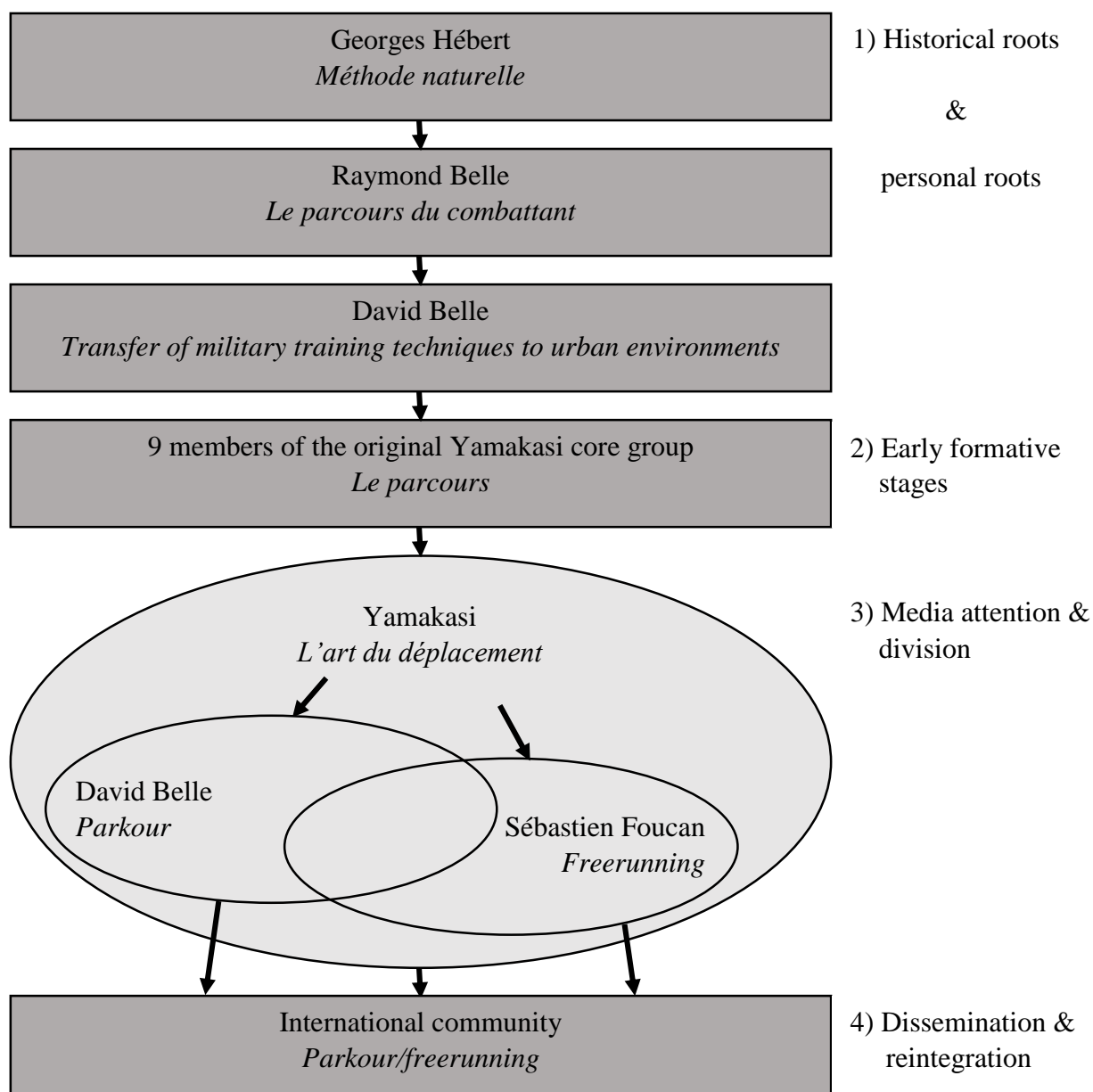


Figure 1. Schematic overview of the history of *parkour/freerunning*.

2.1 The Origins of Parkour/Freerunning: Historical and Personal Roots

As the life and philosophies of key individuals in the creation of *parkour/freerunning* were heavily influenced by military education and the *natural method*, these approaches are commonly cited as historical roots (Witfeld et al., 2011). The *natural method* is a training approach focussed on using the whole body to move in a natural and diverse way including walking, running, jumping, moving quadrupedally, climbing, balancing, swimming, throwing, lifting, and defending oneself (Pilou, 2009). It was inspired by George Hébert's observation that the way people from the African continent were living in and with nature helps shape a flexible, resilient and strong body and mind (Witfeld et al., 2011). As a French naval officer, Hébert developed a military training method in the early 1900s to build endurance, strength and speed that is applicable in any situation and environment.

Based on a holistic approach, he argued that a strong body needs to be accompanied by a strong, courageous mind, and firm moral standards (Tillmans, 1971). "To be strong to be useful" was emphasised as a training philosophy, and has been linked to reports of a volcanic eruption in 1902 where Hébert was recognised as the only person to evacuate almost 700 victims (Ghelala, 1971). Following this incident, he advocated exposure to challenging training situations in order to build the mental fortitude necessary to be helpful in real-life situations such as hunting, chasing and escaping in an emergency or war (Pilou, 2009). According to Hébert, altruism or the non-selfish concern for the needs of others should be cultivated, whereas competition was seen as a distraction. The *natural method* has become known for promoting life-long physical training with the goal of being agile and useful to the community (Witfeld et al., 2011). It has become the predominant method of training in the French military system, and first introduced obstacle courses to physical education outside the military (Ghelala, 1971).

As part of his military education, the training principles of the *natural method* were passed on to Raymond Belle who was born in 1939 in Vietnam and trained as a soldier from the age of seven (Belle, 2009). At the start of the First Indochina War, he became separated from his parents and siblings while visiting his uncle. Raymond Belle continued to stay with his uncle's family where he experienced rejection and child abuse before he was sent to an orphanage camp and French military school (Angel, 2011).

As described by David Belle (2009), Raymond Belle learned that he needed to rely on himself at a very young age, and engaged in extensive training beyond the school's requirements: He developed various *courses* or *parcours* to improve his endurance, agility,

and resilience. Spatial awareness, balance, as well as precise, controlled and silent movement became basic requirements to him. To be functional in war, Raymond Belle trained his body and mind to be fast, efficient, and able to adapt to his surroundings. Attributes of mental strength such as persistence, discipline, and determination, as well as control of fear and other emotions were increasingly required and developed through the additional self-imposed physical challenges. Following the principle “always give your best”, Raymond Belle created a culture of effort and mastery (Thibault, 2013). Despite the lack of other resources for cross-validation of these anecdotes, they have shaped the training activities and values of the subsequently developed practice of *parkour/freerunning*.

After the First Indochina War ended in 1954, Raymond Belle was sent to France. Influenced by the *natural method*, he incorporated the philosophies of usefulness and altruism in his life, put his physical abilities into service in the French military education system, and became a fire fighter from 1958 onwards (Angel, 2011). Raymond Belle was decorated numerous times for spectacular rescues and his athletic skills. Yet, Belle (2009) described him as humble and honest, reliable and respectful to others. Raymond Belle was seen as a hero, an important role model and teacher within the family who encouraged the children to climb, run and explore new possibilities, although he lived by himself and was socially withdrawn (Angel, 2011). According to David Belle (2009), the principle “to be strong to be useful” was at the core of his father’s teachings. After becoming increasingly physically and mentally unwell, Raymond Belle ended his own life in 1999 stating that “he would do more harm than good if he stayed and suffered among his loved ones” (Belle, 2009, p. 81).

2.2 The Beginnings of ‘Le parcours’

David Belle has been widely recognised as the founder of modern *parkour* (Witfeld et al., 2011). While some argue that this view omits important contributions of other founding individuals, the beginnings of the practice and its precursor *le parcours* are tied to his personal history (Angel, 2011). David Belle was born in 1973 in Fécamp, France. He was raised by his maternal grandfather who was a fire fighter and passed on important social and moral values such as respect, honesty and responsibility (Belle, 2009). Although Belle reported difficulties with adapting to the rigid learning environment at school, he credits his grandfather for teaching him self-determination, and agency: “Thanks to him, I understood that we always have a choice in life, a choice that can take you on the right or the wrong path. ‘With a knife, you can choose to become a serial killer or a sculptor.’” (Belle, 2009, p. 16).

Living apart from his father, Belle only gradually discovered who Raymond Belle was and what role *parcours* had played for him as a child facing a great amount of adversity. David Belle (2009) recounted a desire to comprehend and emulate his father but struggling to find his own purpose. Under the pressure of high expectations, his training of overcoming obstacles was entangled with a search for his family identity and self-discovery.

At the age of 15, David Belle moved to Lisses, an economically deprived suburb about 35 miles from Paris. The relocation meant moving from a rural area and natural surroundings to an urban environment that was associated with a hostile and adverse social climate. The suburbs of Paris had a reputation for aggression and violence, enhanced crime and drug dealing, gang activity, as well as social tensions between the cultural and religious viewpoints that arose from a clash of many nationalities (Angel, 2011). Moving between those two sharply contrasting contexts, Belle transferred his training methods of overcoming obstacles from nature to the urban architecture.

David Belle's practice of military reach and escape techniques in an urban environment attracted the interest of the young people around him. As part of their leisure time games and play, Belle started mentoring his friends and cousins in the training methods his father had passed on. A smaller core group started increasing their challenges, and took their exercises to a higher level of risk adopting the name *le parcours* for their activities. The nine core members had previously been physically active, and involved in athletics, martial arts, and other sports. As their training continued, the emphasis on the usefulness and applicability of their skills in real-life situations grew, whereas the aesthetic aspect played a minor role.

What were the training activities like? Given that *le parcours* was part of the adolescent's self-directed leisure time and play, the training was characterised by little structure and openness to a variety of different activities. With its roots in military obstacle course, a main goal of the training was to overcome any obstacle in one's path, and to build a strong body and mind. Therefore, the members of the core group subjected themselves to gradually increasing challenges. In order to build the necessary endurance, control and determination, their workout discipline often included hundreds of repetitions (Belle, 2009). Other examples of challenges were quadrupedal movement on the fists in the snow, only jumping on one leg from dawn to dusk, and training without food or water (Witfeld et al., 2011). While no serious injuries occurred at any stage, an intensification of the level of challenge and risk involved allowed the group members to explore their limits and potential,

confront their weaknesses, and improve consistently. The exposure to high-risk situations, e.g., jumping between rooftops, provided the adolescents with opportunities to manage risk and be mindful of the moment. As many of the challenges were taken together as a group, sharing these intense experiences contributed to strong social bonds and mutual trust (Angel, 2011).

At other times, each group member focussed on different aspects in their training (Angel, 2011). Coming from various movement backgrounds, one member would work on handstands while another was climbing or creating new routes; when one member was acquiring the ability to take height drops, another would concentrate on smoothly connecting movements that were less violent to the body. There was an exchange of ideas and skills enhancing mutual inspiration and support. As the method evolved, the group started developing specific techniques which were tested for efficiency or applied more creatively (Belle, 2009). The practitioners sought to compose new routes, and developed their personal training styles. According to the training ethics of “Find your way”, *le parcours* became a method of self-exploration as well as self-expression (Witfeld, 2011).

What were the key goals and motivations of the group members? As evident in the section above, group members shared the desire to overcome physical and mental obstacles, become stronger and improve. The management of high-risk situations offered a sense of freedom and opportunities to explore the self, personal limits and capabilities. In the context of the suburb’s adverse social and political climate, all group members reported searching for meaning, an escape from the culture of criminality, and possibilities to make a change (Angel, 2011). In other words, the youth were looking for ways to make a positive social impact and live a happy, healthy and prosocial life.

In a situation of dissatisfaction with their current circumstances, *le parcours* provided an alternative to the criminal lifestyle, and a different way of looking at the environment: mundane concrete environments were reinterpreted as obstacles and appreciated as opportunities for training, learning and improvement, as well as for enjoyment and play (Bavinton, 2007). In addition, the group activities provided satisfaction of a range of desires, or what Angel (2011) describes as “multiple pleasures inherent in the training such as friendship, teamwork, physical contact with each other (carrying each other), as well as the environment, the development and displays of skills, fitness, adaptability and creativity” (p. 21).

2.3 'L'art du déplacement', 'Parkour', and 'Freerunning'

*Media attention and the group Yamakasi*³. For about 10 years, the training method developed locally in Lisses, Sarcalles, and Évry, the suburbs of Paris that were home to the core group members. In 1997, they first received wide attention from the public and media when asked to demonstrate their skills at a firefighters show in Paris, followed by various television show and media reports. For this occasion, the friends chose *Yamakasi* as the name for the core group of practitioners with originally nine members⁴. The term yamakasi (Ya makási in the Lingala language spoken in the Republic of the Congo and the Democratic Republic of the Congo) means "strong body, strong spirit, strong person", reflecting the aims and values central to the group members and their training. To denote their practice, the Yamakasi group chose the name *l'art du déplacement* (the art of displacement). This new term was initially used as a synonym for *le parcours* encompassing the training activities and philosophies which had been developed by the various group members to that stage.

While *the art of displacement* was developed as a training tool for body and mind, media attention was drawn to the spectacle, the demonstration of athletic skills, and the risk involved. Although the initial media coverage was positive, the selective focus disregarded important aspects of the training philosophy, history and values connected to the practice. Subsequently, negative stereotyping of the multicultural Yamakasi group and their residential background in a socio-economically deprived neighbourhood contributed to a social devaluation of the practice as ill-intended (Higgins, 2009). The following media reports created a daredevil image associated with criminality which was in sharp contrast to the statement that *the art of displacement* had served the founders of the discipline as an alternative to involvement in deviant activities (Angel, 2011).

The negative media portrayal introduced some degree of tension among the group members while the public attention grew and the Yamakasi were invited to perform in the musical *Notre Dame de Paris*. Some group members rejected the idea of an acrobatic show that portrayed an incorrect picture of the practice. The original Yamakasi group broke up shortly afterwards, when two members, David Belle and Sébastien Foucan, decided "to concentrate on their own projects and responsibilities" (Angel, 2011, p. 29). Belle started

³ This subsection draws heavily from Angel (2011). In order to avoid repetition, references are included infrequently only where the primary source of information was different from Angel (2011).

⁴ The members of the original Yamakasi group included Châu Belle-Dinh, Williams Belle, David Belle, Yann Hnautra, Sébastien Foucan, Guylain N'Guba-Boyeke, Malik Diouf, Charles Perriere, and Laurent Piemontesi.

working towards a career as an actor, and filmed the showcase project *Speed Air Man* (Michellehsien, 2006). Foucan set out to help disseminate the discipline by teaching and making it more accessible. The remaining seven Yamakasi accepted the offer to perform in the musical, and subsequently gained fame and popularity with the movie “Yamakasi – The Samurai of the Modern Age” (Silla & Zeitoun, 2001). They continued to refer to the discipline as *l’art du déplacement*, whereas Belle decided to change the name to *parkour*, and Foucan established the term *freerunning*.

L’art du déplacement. The Yamakasi continued to train and develop *the art of displacement* after Belle and Foucan had left the group. In particular, Yann Hnautra, Châu Belle-Dinh, Laurent Pietmonetsi and Williams Belle worked on creating a more accessible and inclusive training method, and started teaching small groups of practitioners from 2001 onwards (Angel, 2011). Efficient techniques were combined with creative and acrobatic movements from a variety of other sports, and the aesthetic aspect of the movement gained increasing attention. Nevertheless, overcoming obstacles, exploring and pushing limits, as well as being strong to be useful remained major training principles and aims of the practice (Parkourpedia, 2012). According to Williams Belle, *the art of displacement* is an umbrella term that includes different styles (Angel, 2011). This approach allowed for increased accessibility and adaptation of the training to individual abilities and preferences, gender and different age groups.

Parkour. In 1997, David Belle introduced the term *parkour* to refer to his training (Angel, 2011) reflecting its roots in military obstacle course (*parcours du combattant*). According to Belle (2009), this terminology was selected in memory of his father, and the values that he had passed on. Yet, the minor change in spelling allowed Belle to adopt the practice as his own. *Parkour* can be defined as ‘the art of efficient movement’, and emphasises the usefulness of the techniques with origins in war and emergency situations (Witfeld et al., 2011). The *parkour* practitioner “chooses his own way through the natural or urban space and runs along a path he sets for himself, clearing any obstacles that may arise as quickly and efficiently as possible, focusing on a controlled execution of the movements and the flow of the movement combinations” (Witfeld et al., 2011, p. 26). For Belle (2009), usefulness to others, altruism, and a mind-set of modesty and honesty are also part of the spirit in *parkour*.

In contradiction to the emphasis on usefulness of movements and strength, Belle produced the showcase project *Speed Air Man* in 2003 which has been evaluated as a spectacular display of physical skills and acrobatics (Angel, 2011). The project was intended to foster his career as an actor, and did not include any focus on training ethics or philosophy. However, it served as a reference and inspiration for many of the first *parkour* practitioners across the globe. With the strong increase in TV appearances and media interest at the beginning of the 2000s, Belle's training method became internationally known as *parkour*. For the *parkour* practitioner, the term *traceur*⁵ was established based on the French word for a person who traces a path.

Freerunning. Sébastien Foucan appropriated the term *freerunning* (sometimes written as *free running*) after it had been used as a synonym and translation of *parkour* in the documentary *Jump London* (ExtremeSpeedDK, 2012). Subsequently, he formulated his own philosophy and approach to movement under the motto "follow your way". While Foucan continued to use the terms *parkour* and *freerunning* interchangeably, his more individualised training was increasingly referred to as *freerunning* (Angel, 2011).

Similar to the Yamakasi, Foucan's goal was to create a more inclusive training approach with a stronger emphasis on free, creative and acrobatic movement (Parkourpedia, 2012). *Freerunning* has been considered a derivative of *parkour* (Witfeld et al., 2011): The roots in *le parcours* are clearly visible, as the *freerunner* also chooses a path to clear with controlled and fluent movements, typically incorporating obstacles in an urban setting. Yet, *Parkour* techniques are complemented with a range of creative movements, such as flips and spins, elements from martial arts, gymnastics, capoeira, and breakdance. The free, improvised and artistic combination of *freerunning* techniques is not directly efficient in the sense of the *parkour* spirit. Instead, the *freerunner* aims to interact with the environment in a creative and individual way, using the physical movement as a means of self-expression and enjoyment (Witfeld et al., 2011).

Parkour/Freerunning. With the increasing popularity, the practice became more widely known as '*parkour and freerunning*' (denoted as *parkour/freerunning* throughout this thesis). David Belle and Sébastien Foucan were commonly acknowledged as the founders of

⁵ Note that the term for the *parkour* practitioner is not directly derived from the name of the practice as common in other activities, e.g., a person who climbs is a climber. The *parkour* practitioner is not called parkourer or parkourist but *traceur* instead. Some people employ the term *traceuse* for a female practitioner whereas others call a practitioner of either gender a *traceur*. In this thesis, I use *traceurs* to refer to both female and male *parkour* practitioners.

parkour and *freerunning*, respectively, but there was a lack of recognition for *the art of displacement* and the contributions from other core members of the Yamakasi group (Angel, 2011). The subtle differences between the disciplines appear to be tied to different personalities, motivations and value structures of the founding individuals. While I have attempted to delineate the three key terms clearly, the media has largely failed to make a distinction between the disciplines resulting in a terminological chaos. To date, *parkour/freerunning* is characterised by confusion, tensions, and debates about the nature of the practice (see below for further discussion).

2.4 Global Dissemination and Current Trends

Terminological Confusion and Debate. As highlighted in the section above, the challenges of the sudden media attention led to division into sub-disciplines and use of different terms for highly similar practices. The inconsistent use of terminology by the media and the founders themselves in the early 2000s has given rise to ongoing debates about what *parkour/freerunning* is, and what it is not.

The main debate is centred around the role of the usefulness aspect. In particular, there have been different opinions about the extent to which acrobatics and aesthetics are considered part of *parkour/freerunning*, and whether a philosophy of usefulness is a defining feature and necessary component of the practice. According to Angel (2011), the founding individuals regarded acrobatic *freerunning* movements, aesthetics and performance as fun and optional. Although these aspects seem to contradict the focus on functionality and efficiency in *parkour*, the founders have participated in performances in an attempt to help popularise the practice which has unintentionally contributed to the confusion.

In response to the ambiguity, local groups of practitioners have adopted different training styles, and the extent to which each individual makes usefulness part of their personal *parkour/freerunning* practice varies (Baker, 2016). A large portion of *traceurs* are not concerned with a strict delineation between the disciplines. Many of the more casual practitioners are not even aware of the differences, whereas others have engaged in vivid discussions about the definitions, role of aesthetics, and acrobatic movements. While acrobatics appear to contradict the functional aspect of movement at the first glance, they are useful in building physical attributes like strength, body control, and coordination.

The exact stance of the founders regarding the debates remained unclear for several years, because some of the founding individuals retreated temporarily from the public and the

debates. In more recent years, they have resumed communication with and support of practitioners, sharing their philosophies through interviews, videos, instruction and collaboration with professional organisations for *parkour/freerunning* (e.g., StormFreerun, 2014). Given the lack of a clear distinction between *parkour* and *freerunning* in the international community, there have been efforts to reunite the disciplines as an integrated or hybrid practice and to transcend some of the above mentioned debates (see below).

Integrated Practice or Hybrid Discipline? Despite the split in the early 2000s, *parkour* and *freerunning* have largely been practiced together rather than separated explicitly, and the extent to which a distinction is made varies between local communities. Thus, it is unclear whether *parkour/freerunning* is an integrated practice, or essentially two separate disciplines that are trained together as a hybrid.

In line with the current trend in the international *parkour/freerunning* community, the founders are coming back together, advocating that there is no difference in the essence of the disciplines: “You do parkour, l’art du déplacement, motion art, freerunning, it’s the same thing, your heart, your ‘way’ is very important” (Slamcamspam, 2007). In addition, they have come to acknowledge that the priorities given to certain training ethics and values differ between individuals (StormFreerun, 2014); thus, they refrain from requesting practitioners to follow the exact same path as Belle, Foucan or any of the Yamakasi. In line with the principle to find and “follow your own way”, *traceurs* are encouraged to develop according to their own preferences, pace and ethical priorities, as long as they adhere to key training norms and values (see chapter 3). This openness to interpretation has created an inclusive approach but also led to difficulties in arriving at a clear definition of the practice.

Dissemination and application. With the increasing media attention from the start of the century, *parkour/freerunning* has spread rapidly across cultures and continents. Starting in France, *parkour/freerunning* quickly transcended its borders to Europe, America, Australasia, and Africa, including Western and Eastern cultures, Third World and Muslim countries (e.g., Iran), as well as war zones (e.g., Gaza; Edwardes, 2010; ParkourGenerations, 2015; Thorpe & Ahmad, 2013).

The practice began as a non-organised, self-directed leisure time activity, and quickly gained popularity among male youths (Angel, 2011). Although the community has remained strongly male-dominated to date, current trends show a growing involvement of female practitioners (Grosprêtre & Lepers, 2015). In addition, the training methods have increasingly

been adapted to different age groups ranging from pre-school children to the elderly (Parkour Dance Company, 2015). For many practitioners, the training activities are purely self-initiated, while there has been an increasing demand for classes and instruction in recent years. Within the local communities, *parkour/freerunning* has largely remained a non-organised, non-profit activity (Stapleton & Terrio, 2012). In parallel, some *traceurs/freerunners* have started to form professional teams, clothing brands, as well as local and national associations (e.g., the New Zealand Parkour Association – Tauhōkai Aotearoa, i.e. NZ Parkour) and professional international organisations (e.g., Parkour Generations). Many of these initiatives have helped to disseminate *parkour/freerunning* and to build a strong sense of community in various ways, including the arrangement of teaching opportunities as well as national and international events or gatherings (ParkourGenerations, 2015).

The rapid global diffusion has been aided by *parkour/freerunning*'s high profile in television, and the establishment of a strong internet media culture (e.g., Archer, 2010). As discussed by O'Brien (2011), its performance spectacle has been highlighted in advertisements and world-famous movies such as the James Bond film *Casino Royale* (featuring Sébastien Foucan), whereas efforts have been made to portray a more accurate picture of the everyday practice in documentaries (e.g., *Jump London*). In addition, the practice has inspired video games (e.g., Mirror's Edge), and many practitioners at all skill levels share their training experiences through internet video portals. For instance, YouTube has become a major platform for communication and mutual inspiration, as well as learning and teaching via online tutorials (O'Brien, 2011). Practitioners have been discussing techniques, training ethics and philosophies via online forums and websites (e.g., Parkourpedia). The establishment of a flourishing internet media culture has become a significant part of an active international exchange and community orientation (Stapleton & Terrio, 2012; Thorpe & Ahmad, 2013).

The success of the practice is further reflected by various initiatives in experiential education and the promotion of physical and mental health. For instance, Parkour Generations has applied *parkour/freerunning* in a number of school, recreational, and social inclusion projects (Edwardes, 2010). They have offered holiday *parkour/freerunning* programmes in socially disadvantaged areas to help reduce youth antisocial behaviour and crime rates (London Councils, n.d.). The UK-based project *Free Your Instinct* has recently been registered as a charity with the declared aim to use *parkour* philosophy and practice to support the management of mental health conditions and symptoms (FreeYourInstinct, 2015). In

addition, *parkour/freerunning* has been suggested as a useful tool to improve public health and reduce obesity (e.g., Witfeld et al., 2011). Since its potential as a recreational, mass and school sports is increasingly recognised, the practice has started to inform public policy and planning such as the opening of the first *parkour/freerunning* parks and gymnasiums (Gilchrist & Wheaton, 2011).

Controversial topics. The growing demand for purpose-built training spaces reflects the success of *parkour/freerunning* in engaging youth and the general public. Yet, the change of training environments has been discussed controversially, as it has been associated with a reconfiguration of the original practice and can take away from the freedom or mental challenge of self-directed training outside of dedicated areas (Lebreton, Routier, Héas, & Bodin, 2010).

Another recent development that appears contrary to the original training philosophy is the introduction of competition. While David Belle has taken the clear stance that *parkour* is an anti-competitive discipline in the past, there have been recent endeavours to make *parkour/freerunning* a discipline in the Olympic Games (StormFreerun, 2014). In addition, competitions have gained more popularity under the term *freerunning*. Given that *parkour* and *freerunning* are commonly practiced together, these trends have contributed to tensions within the hybrid or integrated discipline. This conflict is partially resolved by reinterpreting competition as competing against oneself or against the obstacle course rather than against another individual (O’Loughlin, 2012).

To ensure that training methods are passed on in line with the spirit and values considered essential by those who were involved in the creation of the practice, the need to establish standards for teaching and safety has been increasingly recognised. Within the larger community, philosophies and training ethics are informally passed on with specific catch phrases such as “Be strong to be useful”, “To be and to last”, “Find your way”, and “Once is never – repeat the movement at least three times in a row” (ADAPT, 2011). However, individuals who begin training by themselves may have limited exposure to these norms. In addition, school teachers have started introducing *parkour/freerunning* to their curricula as a sports activity. Due to limited resources, schools often lack the access to *parkour/freerunning* instructors, resulting in non-professional teaching based on YouTube tutorials that are more likely to miss aspects of philosophy and training ethics. As a result, guidelines for coaching and qualification of instructors have been developed by national and international associations (e.g., ADAPT, 2011; NZ Parkour, 2014).

The increasing levels of popularity, controversy and possible applications are indicators of the growing need to explicitly conceptualise the practice. If *parkour/freerunning* is to be utilised in areas like education, social inclusion, youth development, and mental health, it is necessary to provide a theoretical account of what *parkour/freerunning* is, and a coherent argument for how it will be beneficial in these areas of application. To answer these questions, *parkour/freerunning* has recently become the subject of emerging academic enquiries.

2.5 Academic Literature

Given that *parkour/freerunning* is a multidimensional phenomenon, academics have started to describe aspects of the practice from a variety of disciplines across sciences, social sciences and arts. Yet, the field has only had few years to develop with a total of 44 relevant scholarly texts located between 2006 (first publication) and 2015 when academic search engines are employed under the key terms *parkour* or *freerunning*. A complete review of the academic literature currently available on *parkour/freerunning* can support an accurate conceptualisation of the multifaceted practice, and is semi-relevant to this thesis. However, some aspects will have little direct relevance to discussing its potential as a tool for prosocial change. Thus, a comprehensive overview and full list of articles is provided in Appendix A, whereas I will focus on a selective summary of crucial themes in the following paragraphs.

As *parkour/freerunning* is growing and evolving rapidly, it has repeatedly been discussed as a useful tool for the promotion of physical and mental health, with high levels of accessibility, youth engagement, and social inclusion (e.g., Edwardes, 2010; Gilchrist & Wheaton, 2011). Amongst the benefits that have been described across investigations are the development of physical, mental, and emotional skills, experiences of flow, enjoyment and freedom, as well as an enhanced sense of individuality, community and belonging (Clegg & Butryn, 2012; Fernández-Río & Suarez, 2014; Grabowski & Thomsen, 2014). Furthermore, it seems reasonably well-established that *parkour/freerunning* can provide opportunities for enjoyment, play and creativity, as well as self-expression and identity formation (De Martini Ugolotti, 2015; Geyh, 2006; Kidder, 2013a; Lamb, 2014b; O'Loughlin, 2012; Wallace, 2013). Although these aspects suggest that *parkour/freerunning* may have a large potential for positive self-development, the current academic literature is completely devoid of a strategic

theoretical argument or empirical basis for its application to the rehabilitation of offenders, prisoners or youth with antisocial behaviour⁶.

As issues of risk and potential injury have been raised recurrently, multiple authors have argued that risk management and safety are an essential part of the practice (Kidder, 2013b; McLean, Houshian, & Pike, 2006; Merritt & Tharp, 2013; Puddle & Maulder, 2013). Importantly, *parkour/freerunning* has been evaluated as a safe, educational activity if practiced according to principles of the everyday practice (e.g., Fernández-Río & Suarez, 2014). Furthermore, *parkour/freerunning* has been theorised as a political arena for the negotiation of power relations embedded in the city, resistance, and critique on capitalism (Chow, 2010; Daskalaki, Stara, & Imas, 2008; Mould, 2009). While it is frequently argued that the reinterpretation of space by *traceurs* poses a challenge to the social order in a city, the practice lacks a specific political agenda of dissent (Bavinton, 2007; Thomson, 2008). Moreover, the unintended use of the city is often perceived as enhanced appreciation of mundane environments, and an addition to aesthetic, lifestyle and spatial value (Ameel & Tani, 2012a; Rawlinson & Guaralda, 2011).

The academic resources identified include descriptive and theoretical accounts as well as a growing number of empirical studies. Methodologies employed by the empirical research are primarily qualitative, but also include sporadic case studies and observational data, while quantitative analyses are rare. In addition, a range of methodological weaknesses and inconsistencies in the way *parkour/freerunning* is defined have contributed to severe limitations regarding the generalisability of the findings (see appendix A1.3 for a critical evaluation of research methodologies).

To date, the literature points to a large range of benefits of *parkour/freerunning* for those invested in the practice. However, due to the lack of quantitative and methodologically rigorous investigations, it is largely unknown to what extent these benefits can be generalised. The continued study of *parkour/freerunning* is essential to form a better understanding of the practice, its motivations, effects, and potential for application and utilisation across target areas of public policy.

⁶ A literature research was conducted in ProQuest, Web of Science and Google Scholar under the key terms (*parkour* OR *freerunning*) AND (offen* OR prison* OR incarc* OR antisocial). Two articles were found which mention that *parkour* has been incorrectly portrayed as antisocial, subversive practice (De Freitas, 2011; Petre, 2013). Yet, no academic article has discussed the application of *parkour/freerunning* in a forensic context to date.

Parkour/freerunning has become a global phenomenon within a relatively short period of time. With its origins in the *natural method* and military obstacle course, the practice is focussed on overcoming physical and mental obstacles, and finding healthy and adaptive ways of moving, thinking, and living. Starting off as leisure games and play, *parkour/freerunning* was formed by a culturally diverse group of young people and evolved in the context of their search for meaning, identity, and an alternative to the criminal lifestyle. Thus, the practice has been recognised as a potentially powerful tool for youth engagement, self-development and change. Yet, the multidimensionality of *parkour/freerunning* has led to a considerable amount of tension and misconception. In the following chapter, I aim to make a contribution to an enhanced understanding of these debates and the nature of the practice.

Chapter 3

What Is *Parkour/Freerunning*? – A Conceptual Analysis of the Practice

As illustrated by the historical overview, *parkour/freerunning* contains a complex and versatile set of activities contributing to substantial complication in defining the practice. However, a clear idea of its nature is essential if we want to understand how *parkour/freerunning* can affect individual development, and how it could be used to facilitate prosocial change. In order to provide such an in-depth understanding, this chapter is dedicated to an analysis and conceptualisation of *parkour/freerunning* as a practice. First, I will develop a general analytical framework which identifies the components of a practice. Second, these analytical tools will be applied to describe the practice of *parkour/freerunning* in terms of its components, and track their development throughout the history. Finally, I will draw on these insights for a brief discussion of how *parkour/freerunning* can impact on the practitioner and instigate change.

3.1 Analytical Tools

What is a practice? Human activities are typically performed with certain intentions in mind, and according to specific rules, norms and goals that are part of the activities. These systems of actions, norms and intentions can be described as practices, make up most of our everyday activities like cooking, driving and playing basketball, but also include professions such as surgery, human service, and offender rehabilitation (Wallace, 2009). For instance, playing basketball includes actions such as bouncing the ball and guarding the opponent, but also team work, and anticipation of a team mate's actions. While the immediate intention is to get the ball in the basket, to score, or to win the game, more distant goals may include enjoyment, workout, recreation, and socialising. These actions, intentions, and goals are typically regulated by norms such as the explicit rules of the game as well as implicit rules that guide behaviour without being overtly formulated, e.g., meeting at a basketball field.

Describing human activities as practices is a useful perspective for at least two reasons: First, human actions can only be understood and explained when considered in the context of intentions, norms, goals, values, and assumptions attached to the actions. Second, taking this context into account allows us to compare different practices with regard to their underlying values and assumptions, and to determine how well they may be combined or integrated. This approach helps to identify overlaps between activities, opportunities for

mutual benefit and reinforcement as well as to locate possible points of tension. In order to reach this depth of analysis and understanding, it is necessary to break a practice down into its constituent components and spell out in what ways it affects the individual (see below).

What are the constituent components of a practice? According to Wallace (2009), practices are activities, or complexes of actions, based on practical knowledge of how to perform these activities. As mentioned above, human actions comprise intentions and goals which fit into Wallace's concept of practical knowledge: "The knowledge is know-how, what we take to be good ways or right ways to do certain things. The knowledge is thus normative" (Wallace, 2009, p.1). In other words, the knowledge of how to perform well and correctly is contained in goals, such as scoring in a basketball game, and norms like the rules of the game; both are an intrinsic part of a practice based on shared values. In turn, norms determine what practitioners strive for within their practice, and what ways of thinking and behaving are valued. Taken together, the actions and activities displayed by practitioners are grounded in values, goals, and norms.

Wallace (2009) further specifies that complex practices naturally encompass practical norms as well as social and ethical norms. He argues that the practical knowledge of how to act well and correctly is based on the experiences of the community that engages in the practice, and is learned within this community. Hence, practices are necessarily performed in a social context; their acquisition and execution requires mutual aid and cooperation. To illustrate, a single player cannot win a basketball game unless he/she learns how to collaborate with team mates and play fairly. Social and ethical norms that regulate social interaction, including virtues of justice and benevolence, are therefore an intrinsic part of any practice we engage in rather than being imposed externally and separately.

The social embeddedness of norms appears to be commonly overlooked, as they are typically formulated as simple rules or instructions (Will, 1993), e.g., train hard to cultivate strength. This is what Will calls the *manifest* content of norms. However, a norm can only fully be understood when considered in context of its history, meaning, and interaction with other norms and values (the *latent* content of norms). To continue the example above and comprehend the high value placed on strength and hard work in *parkour/freerunning*, its historical background in war and emergency situations needs to be taken into consideration, as well as the interaction with the community norms of usefulness.

The latent content of a norm helps explain where goals and values evident in the practice are coming from. According to Johnson (2014), all values and goals can be traced

back to a set of basic human needs. Thus, at the most basic level, a practice is constituted by underlying assumptions about human nature, desires, and functioning. In sum, underlying assumptions build the foundation for values, goals and norms which guide the actions present in a practice (see below for a more detailed discussion of each component).

How does a practice affect the individual? Learning how to perform a practice correctly is associated with the acquisition of knowledge as well as a set of skills. If individuals learn how to drive a car, they do not only acquire knowledge about traffic rules, but also need to practice steering a car while changing gear. The latter is an example of physical skills; driving a car further requires the mental capacity to judge the distance from the side of the road, and the social competence to deny a friend a seat when the car is already full up. Thus, acquiring a practice means building practical knowledge and a set of skills on a physical, mental, and social level.

The individual development of skills and knowledge interact and partially overlap with the components that constitute a practice. As argued above, practical knowledge is an inherent part of actions, norms, and assumptions. Performing certain actions that are part of the practice requires skills, and skills are developed by practicing the corresponding actions. The knowledge of what skills are necessary for good practice is normative; thus, norms determine what the practitioner should be striving for in their individual skills development.

Assuming that an individual aims to perform a practice and its components well and correctly, norms inform a practitioner's general tendencies to act and think in accordance with its values, goals, and underlying assumptions. According to Wallace (2009), individuals who repeatedly engage in a practice adopt those general tendencies but do so in their own specific way based on previous experiences and ways of living. Through this process, the practice can become integrated with a person's traits, self-concept and identity. Individuals who have passed a driving test, possess a car, and regularly drive to work may refer to themselves as car drivers. Hence, actions, values, goals, norms, and underlying assumptions are not only principal components of a practice, but can also serve as a scaffold for identity construction.

Analytical framework. Based on the accounts provided by Johnson (2014) and Wallace (2009), I propose that four levels of analysis need to be taken into account in order to understand and describe a practice (presented in order from the most overt/explicit to the more basic/implicit components):

- 1) actions;
- 2) values (expressed in goals and norms);
- 3) general assumptions;
- 4) skills (on a physical, mental, and social dimension).

Levels 1 to 3 can be understood as hierarchically structured, whereby the different components build on each other (see Figure 2). That is, actions include observable behaviour and intentions; they are guided by more implicit values that are expressed in goals and norms, and underpinned by general assumptions on the most basic level. The development of skills (level 4) naturally occurs in interaction with the other three components of the practice.

Actions include behaviours that can be observed and described objectively, as well as the intentions inherent in the behaviour. The identification of intentions requires attention beyond a surface level of observation but is crucial to an accurate interpretation and portrayal of behaviours. For instance, a *traceur* may be observed running up a wall and climbing on top with the intention to improve his physical ability to overcome obstacles and build strength. However, the external observant can only see the wall-run, and may incorrectly assume that the *traceur* intends to enter the private property behind the wall. Intentions present in the actions can be regarded as the situational application of norms, goals, virtues and values. Therefore intentions and their underlying normative and value components largely overlap, and will be analysed in conjunction in the following sections.

Values, goals and norms are considered together at one level in the analytical framework, because they collectively serve to guide the way people act and think. Values can be understood as more general standards of living or behaving which provide abstract guidelines for what is considered right or wrong, and good or bad (Schwartz, 1992). They

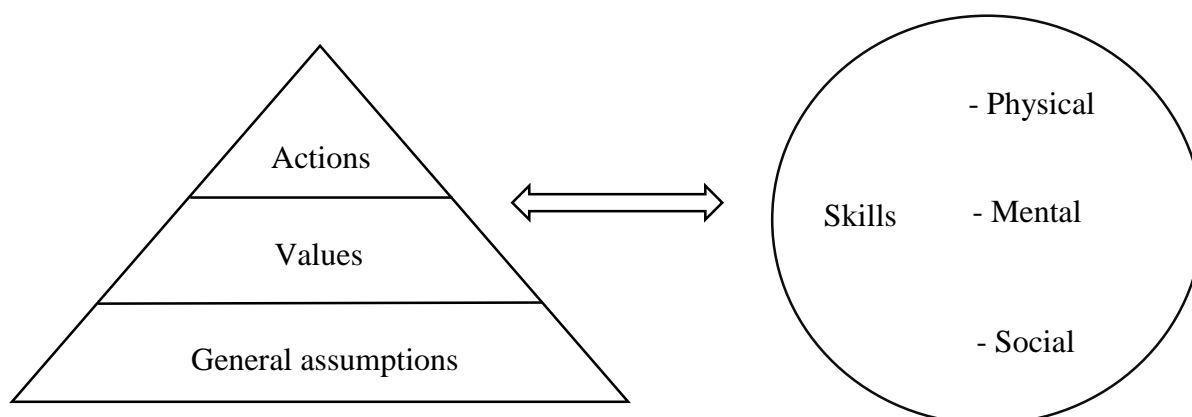


Figure 2. Analytical framework to describe a practice.

help identify what is worth pursuing and will be beneficial for the well-being of others (moral values) and/or the self (prudential values; see Johnson, 2014). Goals are aims and motivations that follow from personal values and priorities, providing a more proximate guidance for behaviour compared to values (Eccles & Wigfield, 2002; Rohan, 2000). For instance, the development of speed, endurance and discipline are goals that may follow from valuing the cultivation of strength. Norms can be defined as a set of informal rules that govern behaviours and attitudes commonly displayed by members of a community or group (Terry & Hogg, 1996). Group norms such as “find your way” are explicitly or implicitly passed on and defended within the community; they help identify what behaviours and attitudes can be expected within the group.

General metaphysical assumptions constitute our understanding of how the world around us functions, with assumptions about human nature and the nature of entities, processes, and properties (Einstadter & Henry, 2006). Important assumptions about human nature include the nature of learning processes, development and change, as well as the identification of basic human desires that are central to a well-functioning and personally meaningful life. For instance, Johnson (2014) suggests that human beings have a basic need for (a) physical functioning and mental well-being, (b) complex social interactions and institutions, (c) intimate interpersonal relations, as well as (d) a search for meaning, growth, and self-cultivation. According to this taxonomy, all values, goals and norms arise naturally from these four categories of underlying human needs which have their origins in evolutionary adaptations that have shaped human nature and functioning. Therefore, one focus area in the analysis below will be the identification of basic human desires and needs.

Since underlying assumptions are rarely stated explicitly, they need to be inferred from the actions, values, goals, and norms that can be observed within a practice. It should be noted that this identification process is partially circular: The actions and value components are used to identify general assumptions about human functioning which, in turn, help to explain the above. This constitutes a limitation of the analytical framework, because there is no independent way of testing whether the underlying assumptions are correct. However, their alignment with the more explicit components of the practice, as well as their necessity to explain values, goals, norms, and actions can be seen as identification criteria.

Skills can be understood as capacities acquired through training and experience (Gould & Carson, 2008). As argued above, physical, mental and social skills are important components of a practice. Social skills can be understood as capacities to regulate behaviour and important social outcomes in specific situations (Gresham & Elliott, 1987).

Correspondingly, physical and mental skills refer to the capacity to produce and regulate outcomes on a physical and mental level, respectively. While this distinction is useful to categorise a great variety of skills, all three components commonly interact to produce practical outcomes and adaptive behaviour. For instance, the physical act of jumping between two walls requires motor control and a certain amount of physical power, but the outcome is also determined by the mental capacity to overcome fear of jumping over a gap, and the social confidence needed to attempt the jump before the eyes of possible observers.

Taken together, a practice can be described in terms of actions, their constituent values/goals/norms, and underlying assumptions. These components show complex interactions with the individual's development of skills, knowledge and tendencies to think and act. Thus, a practice is a social and a psychological phenomenon which cannot fully be understood without an investigation of each of the components. An analysis of actions, values, and underlying assumptions can provide a comprehensive understanding of a practice and its suitability for integration with other practices.

3.2 Parkour/Freerunning as an Evolving Practice: Analysing Historical Developments

In order to clarify the nature of *parkour/freerunning*, I aim to analyse the practice according to the above framework. While the actions, norms and goals are extensively described in chapter 2, I will summarise and selectively recount those important to the identification of key values, underlying assumptions, and skills.

The analysis has four major focus points. First, the origins and early beginnings of the practice will be analysed to identify key values and underlying assumptions established in the early formative stages. Second, I aim to track how these values have developed throughout the following stages of division and reintegration. The identification of intersections and differences between *l'art du déplacement*, *parkour*, and *freerunning* is part of this second focus point. Angel (2011) argues that despite the change of names, the disciplines largely overlap and their essence is the same. This claim merits critical examination, as a change of terms is commonly associated with a change in the practice, its values, and/or underlying assumptions. Thus, I will consider to what extent a shift in the key components of the practice may be associated with the evolution and current trends in *parkour/freerunning*. Third, I will identify a set of skills that can be developed through the practice of *parkour/freerunning*. The final section will bring insights from the previous analysis together in an attempt to

summarise what *parkour/freerunning* is, how it can affect the practitioner and result in personal development and change.

3.2.1 *Establishing Values and Assumptions in the Early Beginnings*

Actions and values. To start the analysis in the origins of the practice, key actions in the *natural method* include exercising in ways that are natural to the human body, useful, and applicable across situations in real-life. The constant exposure to new and challenging situations was considered an important part of the training, with the intention to build aspects of physical strength and control as well as mental prowess and courage. The training approach shows evidence that usefulness, an exploratory spirit as well as strength of body and mind were key values in the *natural method*. In fact, the central role of strength was highlighted by the norm and manifest guideline “to be strong to be useful”. As this norm historically refers to useful service to others and the community including social responsibility and altruism, it illustrates that the value of strength additionally includes a socio-moral dimension. Moreover, Hébert’s training approach promoted a macro-focus on long-term benefits, consistent effort and life-long improvement, whereas competition was seen as a distraction from these values (Ghelala, 1971). Taken together, the key values present in the *natural method* include life-long learning and agility, exploration, individuality, and usefulness to the community. These values are centred around the core value of physical, mental, and socio-moral strength, and were adopted by Raymond Belle.

As Raymond Belle grew up in a military school during the First Indochina War, his actions were initially centred on extensive physical military training with a strict training mentality of discipline, persistence, and control on a physical, mental, and emotional level. In addition, he subjected himself to *parcours* training and extreme levels of challenge, with intentional focus on adaptability to the surroundings, functionality, and efficiency. The development of individual abilities, self-reliance, and personal excellence were associated with an increased chance to survive. In the context of war situations, the values of physical and mental strength, usefulness, and individuality were high in practical significance.

After the war, Raymond Belle applied his skills in the community as a fire fighter, and encouraged the next generation of soldiers and children in the broader family to move and explore, to learn about their fears, limits and capabilities, as well as to cultivate socio-moral standards like reliability, humility and respect for others (Belle, 2009). Thus, the values of selfless service to the community and exploration anchored in the *natural method* became

more prevalent after removal from the war context. However, the emphasis on altruism and community appears to be partially in contrast with the high regard for self-reliance and individuality.

David Belle incorporated the above-mentioned training principles, corresponding actions and key values into the early beginnings of *le parcours*. When Belle moved from a rural to an urban area, he transferred the techniques that would be useful and applicable in different environments to build a strong body and mind (Belle, 2009). The change of context was additionally associated with a search for identity and self-discovery in the face of struggles with traditional school learning environments, high self-imposed expectations, and an adverse social climate in the suburbs of Paris.

As Belle started training with a group of friends, the practice evolved to encompass a wide scope of exploratory activities ranging from leisure time games, creative movement and play to dedicated training with increasing levels of challenge, risk, and active confrontation of fears and weaknesses. The mindful and controlled exploration of physical and mental capacities as well as limits was a consistent part of the practice and allowed for gradual progression and continued long-term improvement. In addition, the group of friends displayed a strong social support with values of trust, group cohesion, empathy, and the acceptance of individual differences. The sharing of intense experiences and mutual inspiration became an important part of the social and community values of the practice. Embedded in the adolescents' search for meaning and identity, values related to the development of the individual (e.g., enjoyment, creativity, self-expression) as well as freedom and social autonomy became particularly prominent.

Taken together, a range of recurring key values is evident throughout the origins and the early beginnings of *le parcours* (see Table 1 for an overview), and may be summarised as: usefulness, strength, exploration, a long-term focus, individuality, and community⁷. The value of strength regarding body, mind and socio-moral standards has played a central role in the formation of the practice; it appears to unite the remaining key values which have largely complement each other, but also provide possible points of tension.

Underlying assumptions. The actions, values, goals, and norms described above are grounded in assumptions about human nature with a focus on healthy human functioning. The central role assigned to the value of strength is indicative of a strength-based general

⁷ Connecting the first letter from each of the key values forms the acronym USELIC. For the interested reader who enjoys memorising key concepts, this acronym may serve as a mnemonic device.

Table 1

Accumulation of Values and Underlying Assumptions in the Origins and Early Establishing Phase of Parkour/Freerunning

	Examples evident in the origins (<i>natural method, parcours du combattant</i>)	Additional emphasis in the beginnings of <i>le parcours</i>
Key values		
Usefulness	functionality, efficiency, applicability	adaptability to different environments
Strength - body - mind - socio-morality	- speed, endurance, control - courage, persistence, discipline, control - reliability, humility, honesty, respect	- pushing limits of physical possibilities, perfect control - high self-expectation, determination, mindfulness - trust, group cohesion, empathy, acceptance
Exploration	exploratory spirit	exploration and awareness of personal limits and potential, play, self-exploration and self-discovery
Long-term Focus	life-long agility and improvement, consistent effort	gradual progression, consideration of long-term consequences
Individuality	self-reliance, anti-competitiveness	enjoyment, freedom, social autonomy, creativity and self-expression
Community	social responsibility, altruism	positive social impact, mutual inspiration, sharing
Key assumptions		
Positive General Focus	- healthy human functioning - building strength - holistic approach	- positive youth development
Complex Learning & Development	- interaction between body, mind, and morality - learning processes are embodied - persistent effort leads to mastery (agency)	- transfer of skills between <i>parcours</i> and other domains of life - learning requires repetition - importance and potential of social learning/support
Basic Human Desires	- physical /mental agility - community	- relatedness, friendship, social bonds - personal meaning and growth

approach. In addition, the emphasis on the physical, mental, and socio-moral dimensions of strength reflects a holistic approach where the individual is regarded as a whole across different life domains. A positive general orientation was prevalent early within the historical roots of the *natural method*, and carried over into a focus on positive youth development in the beginnings of *le parcours*.

The holistic approach is further associated with important general assumptions about learning and development. In the *natural method*, it is assumed that learning processes are embodied; a strong connection and interaction between body, mind and morality is recognised. This idea was later expanded with the assumption that skills and experiences gained through *parcours* training can be transferred to other domains of life, and vice versa. As described by Belle,

[p]arcours, it's like in life, you have obstacles and you train to overcome them, you search for the best technique, you try all technique, you keep the best, you repeat it and then you get better" (Angel, 2011, p. 14)

This quote not only shows that *le parcours* training was seen as an analogy for life; it also characterises learning, improvement and change as long-lasting processes that require persistent effort and ultimately lead to mastery. That is, a person's current capabilities and resources are not fixed but subject to complex and dynamic learning processes which allows humans to improve and achieve what they work hard for. This growth mind-set is associated with a basic trust in the self, the world, and one's capabilities; it is an essential part of the motivation to set goals and to regulate challenging situations effectively (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Thus, the notions of self-efficacy and human agency played a central role in the early stages of *parkour/freerunning*. The major goals of overcoming obstacles and management of high-risk situations are based on the assumption that repeated encounters of these challenges can build an effective human agent. In addition, social competence was recognised as an important part of effective human agency. The increasing weight placed on values of social support and mutual inspiration in *le parcours* indicates that the significant role of social learning and influence was acknowledged.

The above assumptions about human learning and development are additionally entangled with assumptions about shared human desires. As an example, the motivation to improve constantly may be traced back to a basic desire for mastery experiences. The actions present in the origins of *parkour/freerunning* are typically justified by the importance

attributed to the training of body and mind, as well as the service to others and the community. Thus, they are based on the assumption that community as well as physical and mental agility have inherent value for human functioning, satisfaction, and well-being. To draw the link to the general analytical framework, these motivations fit largely into two of the four categories of basic human needs proposed by Johnson (2014), i.e. physical and mental well-being, and complex social interactions in a community.

Further assumptions about basic human needs are evident in the beginnings of *le parcours* where friendship and relatedness, enjoyment and creativity, as well as a search for identity and meaning were important motivators. In parallel to the analytical framework, these desires largely overlap with Johnson's (2014) ideas of basic human needs for intimate interpersonal relations, and the search for meaning, growth, and self-cultivation. Thus, all four categories of human desires proposed by Johnson's evolutionary perspective played an important part in the early development of *le parcours*. This finding shows that the practice was formed with a wider scope than simply sport and leisure.

At the time the global dissemination process of the practice started in the early 2000s a relatively stable set of underlying assumptions had been established by the founding group. In sum, the precursors of *parkour/freerunning* practice are characterised by a positive general focus, and contain important assumptions about the complex and dynamic nature of human learning processes, as well as about shared basic human desires (see Table 1). In conjunction, they underpin and guide the practice of *parkour/freerunning* to date, without major shifts in general approach and key assumptions. Thus, the following section will be focused on tracking the evolution of actions and values rather than the assumptions throughout the subsequent stages of the practice.

3.2.2 Evolution of Key Values

While *le parcours* had developed to encompass a broad scope, the following stage of evolution was characterised by an increasing focus on select aspects of the practice. With the growing public attention, the founders started establishing terminology to denote their group and training techniques in order to make their practice more accessible. Nine of the friends formed the Yamakasi core group for the purpose of devoted training, public representation, and performance. Despite these new developments, the central role of strength is apparent in the choice of the group name *Yamakasi* (Lingala for “strong body, strong spirit, strong person”). The original key values of usefulness, exploration, a long-term focus, individuality

and community were deeply anchored in the early development of the practice, and were incorporated in the group identity. In addition, accessibility became a value of interest with the emerging popularity and distribution. The development of body, mind and the self remained at the core of the practice, while the media selectively focussed on the celebration of the spectacle and physical skills. The public and media attention further introduced new performance-related values, with a focus on aesthetics of the movement rather than its usefulness. Although the key values established in *le parcours* were carried over, there was a growing demand for accessibility and performance accompanied by a highly reduced conceptualisation of the practice in the media.

According to Angel (2011), the depiction of the practice as spectacular, high-risk, and even criminal activity sharply contradicted the experiences and group norms of the Yamakasi members, and forced them to revisit their intentions, goals, and values. I argue that this process of reconsideration made existing contradictions and tensions within the practice more salient. Since *le parcours* was developed over the course of multiple years of interactive group processes, it is likely that all members shared the values and underlying assumptions associated with the practice. However, the order in which values were prioritised, or their specific interpretations, may have varied between individuals. As an example, David Belle may have considered useful and efficient movements as aesthetic, whereas the flow between consecutive movements and their creativity may have taken precedence in the evaluation of aesthetics for Sébastien Foucan. In my view, this difference in prioritisation of values is an important contributor to the split of the original practice into three sub-disciplines. In the following sub-sections, I will elaborate on this argument by outlining each of the sub-disciplines and tracking the development of associated values, tensions and debates.

L'art du déplacement. Originally used as a synonym for *le parcours*, *the art of displacement* served as an umbrella term for the actions, values, and underlying assumptions contained in the beginnings of the practice (see Table 1). After the split, the actions were expanded to encompass an even greater variety of movement styles, skill levels, and intensity, allowing to adapt the training to individual differences, age, and gender. These adaptations were in line with the intention to create a more accessible and inclusive training approach in order to teach and spread the practice. In addition, performance-related values were introduced as the Yamakasi sought to popularise the art of movement through shows and film.

This development shows that values of accessibility as well as appreciation for aesthetics and diversity gained in importance. The contributions from various group members

to the creation of the practice ensured a high level of openness and broad scope, but also made it prone to contain ostensibly competing values. For instance, focussing the training on useful and efficient movement may restrict the scope for creativity or self-expression. While these ostensible contradictions have led to ongoing discussions, they can partially be resolved through the increased emphasis on acceptance of individual differences. Underlying this idea are the assumptions that human beings differ in their individual value structure and predispositions, and the usefulness of a practice is largely influenced by its ability to meet those individual differences and needs. Another way of resolving the contradiction is offered by a focus on the larger context and interaction between values rather than a micro-focus on single values. To illustrate, finding creative ways of moving is likely to contribute towards building strength, coordination, and the ability to adapt to different circumstances which, in turn, are useful skills and add to efficiency.

Thus, *the art of displacement* is a practice that accommodates the same key values present in the beginnings of *le parcours*, while performance-related values and an additional emphasis on accessibility were introduced (see Figure 3). The corresponding opening and increased inclusivity has offered avenues to bring ostensibly contradicting values into alignment but also contributed to unclear boundaries of the practice.

Parkour. With the emphasis on its roots in *le parcours du combattant*, the actions in *parkour* were focussed on efficient and useful movement. Again, the values, norms, and assumptions were carried over from the beginnings of *le parcours*. However, Belle's refocus on the origins in war and emergency situations highlighted the values of usefulness and efficiency as well as altruism and responsiveness to the needs of the community.

These values may seem at odds with the role of play, enjoyment and creative movement in *parkour* practice. A possible solution to this conflict can be found in the historical development of the discipline as a form of play that offered a means of self-exploration. The resulting knowledge of the self can arguably be used to reduce personal weaknesses, build strengths, and to ultimately put one's capabilities into service to others. Yet, the emphasis on usefulness strongly contrasted with the performance and spectacle portrayed in the media including David Belle's showcase project. Thus, the attempt to make the practice more accessible through modern media and performance while simultaneously taking a step back towards the roots of the practice introduced a certain amount of contradiction within *parkour*.

Freerunning. Initially introduced as a translation and synonym for *le parcours* practice, *freerunning* is based upon the same actions, values, and assumptions as its precursor. The main goal of the translation was to make the practice popular and globally accessible to a wider audience, e.g., through the representation in English documentaries as well as a certain level of performance. In parallel, Sébastien Foucan emphasised individuality and freedom in the norm “Follow your way”. The training activities increasingly combined efficient *parkour* techniques with movements from acrobatics, dance, and martial arts indicating an emphasis on openness and enjoyment, creativity and self-expression.

While building strength and usefulness remained important training principles overall, the immediate usefulness of a technique moved out of focus. This trend was in contrast to the strong community and utility focus in *parkour*. Nevertheless, having a positive social impact was also an important part of Foucan’s philosophy, and I have argued above that creative movement can be used to build physical, mental and socio-moral strength. Although the values emphasised in *freerunning* seem to be contrasting those in *parkour* at first, a consideration of the historical context demonstrates large overlaps in the value structure of both sub-disciplines, and deviation seems to be a matter of priority (see Figure 3).

Parkour/Freerunning. Although different sub-disciplines were introduced and associated with varying value priorities, the failure to clearly communicate these differences has resulted in terminological confusion and joint dissemination as a hybrid practice. This trend has led to a considerable amount of debate and contradiction within *parkour/freerunning* in the first place, followed by efforts to reintegrate the sub-disciplines. As illustrated in the analysis below, the current trends have been concerned with how to delineate, negotiate or reunite the values present in *parkour/freerunning*. Given that the debates around reintegration are currently in process, it is unclear at present whether *parkour/freerunning* is a hybrid or integrated practice.

A major challenge to the value structure underlying the practice was introduced by the selective media attention, which mainly recognised David Belle as the founder of the discipline while simultaneously focussing on the performance spectacle and acrobatic movement. This reductionist reporting not only omitted reference to the other founding individuals, it also misrepresented Belle’s training approach which emphasises the values of functionality and efficiency. As a consequence, the actions of early *parkour/freerunning* practitioners included debates about the correct approach to training as well as the establishment of different local training styles and philosophies. In reaction, some of the

founders retreated temporarily, counter to their goal to spread the practice. Thus, the first phase of the dissemination process was characterised by increased tensions and contradictions within *parkour/freerunning*.

As the sub-disciplines continued to be practiced together, increasing efforts to realign the actions, goals, and values became evident. The founders resumed contact with the *parkour/freerunning* community, and affiliated with organisations to strategically further the dissemination of the practice. In service of increased accessibility, individual differences in the way the practice is adopted were also acknowledged by Belle (StormFreerun, 2014) resolving some of the previous tension. Thus, the values of accessibility, openness and respect gained importance and momentum with the rapid global dissemination across cultures and continents.

The dissemination process offered both new challenges to the values underlying *parkour/freerunning* and new opportunities to realise them. For instance, the introduction of purpose-built and indoor training facilities was discussed controversially as a distraction from the immediate usefulness of the movements and real-life applicability. Nevertheless, the new facilities can decrease inhibition levels especially for beginners and enhance the accessibility to a wider audience (Gilchrist & Wheaton, 2011). Similarly, the emergence of structured classes supported the dissemination and accessibility but diverted from the non-organised, self-directed activity that is highly self-motivated, self-driven, and therefore a means of self-exploration. The values of anti-competitiveness, and usefulness have further been challenged by the increasing commercialisation (e.g., clothing, advertisement) and the emergence of competitions. These trends focus on marketability, spectacle, and aesthetics as opposed to the self-development in the everyday practice, and are seen as a distraction from its core values (Thibault, 2013). Although the accumulated challenges have led to a considerable amount of tension, the debates are indicative of an active and self-reflective community that values engagement with the practice and personal intentions.

In addition, the rapid spread of *parkour/freerunning* has opened new avenues to realise the values of usefulness and strength across physical, mental, and socio-moral domains of life. A range of emerging projects to support public health and reduction of obesity, experiential education, mental health, social inclusion, and youth development in socially disadvantaged areas reflect how the iconic values have been maintained and projected to new areas of application. These diverse initiatives further illustrate that *parkour/freerunning* is arguably a multipurpose tool which can be used to satisfy a variety of basic human needs that underpin its values.

Overall, I propose that key values and underlying assumptions are shared between *l'art du déplacement*, *parkour*, and *freerunning*. Yet, the different foci and prioritisation of values in each of the sub-disciplines have led to tensions and ostensible contradictions within and between them. The large overlaps in their essence together with the lack of clearly communicated differences has resulted in frequent synonymous use of terms, and dissemination of the practice as *parkour/freerunning*. From its origins in *le parcours* to the current practice, *parkour/freerunning* has become increasingly dynamic and versatile in its nature⁸ based on the original key values and assumptions.

3.2.3 Skills Development in Parkour/Freerunning

As argued in the analytical tools section, skill development occurs naturally when pursuing the values, goals and actions of a practice. Based on these key components, I aim to compile a list of skills that are specifically developed through *parkour/freerunning* (see Table 2 for a summary). The academic literature supports the idea that a wide range of physical, mental, social, and cognitive skills are associated with engagement in the practice (e.g., Fernández-Río & Suarez, 2014; Gilchrist & Wheaton, 2011; Grabowski & Thomsen, 2014; O'Grady, 2012; Thorpe & Ahmad, 2013; Wallace, 2013). To follow the strategic argument in this thesis, I use the goals and values identified above to determine *what* skills are promoted in *parkour/freerunning*. A general discussion of *how* actions, values, and underlying assumptions interact to build skills can be found in section 3.1.

As values and goals guide what people strive for, they also direct which skills are developed by the individual. In many cases, achieving a goal or value requires specific skills, and the capacity to realise a certain value can be understood as a skill. For instance, control is a value that requires the capacities to effectively engage the body, direct mental processes or attention, and regulate fears or other emotions. These capacities can be summarised as the skill to control body, mind, and emotions. This example illustrates that a set of skills can directly be derived from the values and goals present in *parkour/freerunning*.

In direct correspondence to the values associated with strength, *parkour/freerunning* is argued to develop a range of physical and practical skills, as well as mental, emotional, and socio-moral skills. As an example, bodily strength, speed, efficient use of energy, endurance and body control are promoted in the physical domain. The range of mental skills developed

⁸ The evolution of the practice from *le parcours* to *parkour/freerunning* is most prominent in the shift of emphasis on accessibility, performance and exploration. The acronym APE can be used to remember the key values most relevant to the transformation of the practice.

Table 2

List of Skills Promoted in Parkour/Freerunning

Skills domain	Specific skills
Physical / practical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - strength - speed & efficiency - endurance - body control
Mental / emotional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - discipline - self-control - emotion regulation - regulation of thoughts & behaviour - goal-setting and regulation - persistence - long-term consideration - self-reflection - mindfulness
Socio-moral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - reliability - respect - trust - acceptance - empathy
Cognitive-behavioural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - adaptability & flexibility - problem-solving - perspective taking - alternative and critical thinking - risk management - self-evaluation - self-confidence - autonomy - self-determination - self-efficacy

in parallel to the values in *parkour/freerunning* include discipline, persistence, mindfulness and self-control. The values of courage and determination imply the capacity to regulate thoughts, goals, behaviour and emotions in challenging situations. Moreover, a long-term focus on learning and consistent improvement furthers the ability to consider long-term consequences, set long-term goals, and reflect on them. Examples of skills built through corresponding values and goals in the socio-moral domain include reliability and respect for others as well as the ability to trust, accept individual differences, and to be empathetic.

In addition, a range of cognitive-behavioural skills are associated with key goals in *parkour/freerunning*. The goal of overcoming any obstacle in the environment requires the practitioner to be adaptable, consider alternatives, and thereby build a flexible approach. During training, practitioners encounter a variety of problems such as clearing obstacles of different height efficiently, or traversing a terrain without touching the ground. Finding solutions to these problems utilises and enhances problem-solving skills. In addition, practitioners reinterpret their physical surroundings and are constantly looking for new routes or ways to move while challenging the normative use of space (Bavinton, 2007; Thomson, 2008). It has been argued that this way of looking for alternatives and questioning the norms of society does not only apply to the physical practice, but also generalises to skills like

alternative perspective-taking, reframing, and critical thinking (Wallace, 2013). Training further includes repeated exposure to a certain amount of challenge and calculated risk providing opportunities to practice risk management skills (Kidder, 2013b).

As *traceurs/freerunners* seek active encounters with adversity, they explore their personal limits and potential: practitioners get to know their strengths and weaknesses, fears and capacities for growth (Wallace, 2013). This approach allows for enhanced self-knowledge and a more accurate evaluation of one's capabilities which is likely to result in increased self-confidence. In interaction with the general assumption that persistent effort leads to mastery, these experiences can reinforce autonomy and self-determination. Together, this suggests that practitioners cannot only build a wide range of skills through *parkour/freerunning*, but also gain an increased sense of control over their lives that encourages human agency.

3.2.4 What Is Parkour/Freerunning, and How Does It Impact on the Practitioner?

According to the above analysis, *parkour/freerunning* is a highly complex and versatile practice which contains activities that are based upon a positive general approach and specific set of underlying assumptions, values, and goals. The content of these constituent components has been described in more detail in the previous sections, and their key aspects are summarised in the matrix provided in Table 3. As the key components interact to develop a

Table 3

Matrix of Major Components Constituting Parkour/Freerunning

General approach	Key assumptions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Healthy human functioning - Strength-based - Holistic approach - Positive psychology perspective 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shared basic human desires - Central role of agency - Complex learning and development - Interaction between body, mind, morality, and skills
Key values	Key goals
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Usefulness - Strength - Exploration - Long-term focus - Individuality - Community + Accessibility (- Performance) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Overcoming obstacles - Building strength and skills - Exploration of the self, personal limits and potential - Management of high-risk situations - Promotion of healthy and prosocial ways of living - Finding individuality, meaning, and identity - Usefulness to the community

certain set of skills and affect change in the practitioner, *parkour/freerunning* can be considered a tool for skills development, self-development and change.

Due to its high versatility and complexity, an attempt to define *parkour/freerunning* in a single sentence is likely to result in a reductionist view, with a focus on selected aspects of the practice. For instance, *parkour/freerunning* has been defined as a physical cultural lifestyle of overcoming obstacles (Atkinson, 2009). Elsewhere, the practice has been described as “an art geared towards the individual, wherein one develops at one’s own pace and in one’s own unique manner” (Edwardes, 2010, p. 375). I argue that both of the above accounts are correct but represent selective definitions constructed around a major goal present in *parkour/freerunning*; yet, they fail to represent other aspects of the practice. While I have attempted to depict the multiple facets of the practice, I do not claim that my analysis delivers a complete picture of what *parkour/freerunning* can mean to each individual practitioner. However, I argue that the core ideas compiled in the matrix in Table 3 can provide a well-rounded representation of the major components of *parkour/freerunning*.

The more *traceurs/freerunners* become engaged in the practice, the more likely they are to adopt its goals, values, underlying assumptions and general approach. While an influence on the practitioner can be detected at each level, the components ultimately build onto each other and interact to affect change. To illustrate, the general positive and strength-based approach can contribute to more favourable expectations when facing difficulties in life, and may enhance individual agency. The focus on healthy and prosocial ways of living is associated with the promotion of a set of socio-moral standards and values such as usefulness, strength, and community. These values are complemented by a set of goals and skills that help build the capacity to translate the rather abstract concepts into actions. With the goals of self-exploration and self-improvement, *parkour/freerunning* has emerged as a possible tool for identity formation and transformation. Underpinned by assumptions about human learning and a basic human desire for personal meaning and growth, *parkour/freerunning* is geared towards personal development and change, and has provided the founders with an alternative to the criminal lifestyle.

Over and above the features that trigger change, *parkour/freerunning* entails a range of characteristics that facilitate the sustainability of change. These maintaining factors include its focus on long-term consequences, easy accessibility and adaptability to individual circumstances. The highly engaging nature of a practice that recognises enjoyment, play, and the satisfaction of a range of basic human needs as important elements can provide the intrinsic motivation necessary for continual improvement.

Thus, I propose that *parkour/freerunning* can enable change through the promotion of healthy human development, and has a large potential for application to existing practices in physical and mental health, education, prosocial youth development, and the rehabilitation of offenders. In the remaining chapters, I will review current frameworks of offender rehabilitation, compare their goals and assumptions to those present in *parkour/freerunning*, and discuss implications for a possible integration of both practices.

Chapter 4

Contemporary Frameworks of Offender Rehabilitation

The field of offender rehabilitation faces the challenge of developing practicable and effective ways to reduce reoffending and prepare offenders for reintegration into society. To provide practitioners with guidelines for how to approach these tasks, general theoretical models have been developed to help guide the rehabilitation process and ensure best practice. This chapter will give an overview and outline of the two frameworks that are currently dominating the practice of offender rehabilitation: the Risk-Need-Responsivity (RNR) model, and the Good Lives Model (GLM). The brief review forms the basis for the evaluation of how *parkour/freerunning* relates to each of the models in the subsequent chapter.

4.1 Overview

Arguably the most widely employed approach to the rehabilitation of offenders in Western societies is the RNR model (Andrews & Bonta, 2010). Its major principles have been derived from a large body of research evaluating which aspects of correctional interventions are effective at reducing the risk of reoffending. Therefore, the RNR model has often been referred to as a risk management perspective (Ward & Stewart, 2003). In contrast, the GLM is commonly cited as a strength-based approach to offender rehabilitation with an emphasis on human rights and building internal and external capacities (Ward & Maruna, 2007). The GLM emerged later in response to a range of problems perceived in the RNR-guided practice and theory of offender rehabilitation. It was designed to accommodate the strengths of evidence-based risk management while addressing its weaknesses, and is considered the only major alternative to the RNR model to date (Ward & Willis, in press).

The presentation of the GLM as a competing approach to RNR-directed rehabilitation of offenders was followed by mutual criticism from the authors on both sides, and significant refinement of both models over the last decade (for an example series of critical comments see Andrews, Bonta, & Wormith, 2011; Ward, Yates, & Willis, 2012; Wormith, Gendreau, & Bonta, 2012). While some have argued that the GLM is simply a restatement of the RNR (Andrews et al., 2011), others maintain that it is a more seamless rehabilitation framework embedded in a general perspective on human behaviour and functioning (Purvis, Ward, & Willis, 2014). In order to stay outside the intellectual war zone, I will attempt to provide an impartial summary of both GLM and RNR model. The aim is not to evaluate the models (see

Ward & Maruna, 2007, for a thorough evaluation) but rather to offer sufficient detail for the subsequent comparison to the practice of *parkour/freerunning*.

In order to enhance comparability and adopt a consistent format for the presentation of the rehabilitation theories, I will organise the review of both RNR model and GLM according to the three components of rehabilitation theories proposed by Ward and Maruna (2007). According to this framework, a rehabilitation theory comprises: a) general assumptions that determine the values and aims of rehabilitation; b) etiological assumptions that help explain offending and identify what needs to be targeted in treatment; and c) practical implications regarding how to approach the work with offenders⁹.

4.2 *The Risk-Need-Responsivity (RNR) Model*

The original formulation of the RNR model occurred in the context of a serious crisis in the field of offender rehabilitation following a range of exaggerated articles with the conclusion that “Nothing works” (e.g., Martinson, 1974). These publications led to three decades of rehabilitative pessimism and a shift towards punitive practices. Finally, a group of renowned Canadian researchers undertook immense efforts to investigate “What works” based on large-scale research initiatives, meta-analyses, and critical evaluations of the empirical evidence (Andrews & Dowden, 2005; Andrews, Zinger, Hoge, Bonta, Gendreau, & Cullen, 1990). A series of principles to guide assessment and effective treatment of offenders was derived from these analyses, including Risk, Need, and Responsivity which represent the main pillars of the RNR model (Andrews, Bonta, & Hoge, 1990).

In brief, the *risk* principle specifies that the intensity of treatment provided to individuals should match their level of risk (high, medium, or low) of reoffending. According to the *need* principle, interventions should target those factors or deficits that have been empirically linked to reduced recidivism (i.e., *criminogenic needs*). In order to meet the *responsivity* principle, treatment ought to be implemented in a way that maximises the clients’ ability and motivation to apply the programme content to their lives. In their book *The Psychology of Criminal Conduct*, Andrews and Bonta (2010) have presented three different

⁹ While the authors of the GLM have made each of these components explicit, the RNR model has typically been summarised as a list of practical principles to guide treatment, supplemented by three separate theories. In order to present the RNR model in its strongest form according to general principles, etiological assumptions, and practice implications, a certain amount of reconstruction has been provided (see Ward & Maruna, 2007; Ward, Melser, & Yates, 2007), and will be used to supplement the account delivered by its creators.

theories¹⁰ which underpin the core principles of the RNR model. While the core principles provide evidence-based practice guidelines to direct the limited resources available in offender management, the theoretical perspectives give insights into general and etiological assumptions. These components define the RNR model as a complete rehabilitation theory, and will be elaborated on below¹¹.

Assumptions, aims, and values. Within the RNR framework, the primary aim of offender rehabilitation has been summarised as the reduction of harm inflicted on members of the community (Ward, Melsner, & Yates, 2007). While the welfare of the offender is not the first priority, treatment and research process should be ethical and humane with respect for the offender's rights, responsivity, and individual motivation (Andrews et al., 2011). These aims are based on the assumption that offenders are human beings with the capacity to change.

Furthermore, individuals are assumed to vary with regard to the variables that predispose a person to commit a crime (Andrews & Bonta, 2010). These variables include biological, psychological, social, cultural, personal, interpersonal, and situational factors. The level of risk posed by these factors is seen as proportional to the number of criminogenic needs. Hence, a broad and systematic assessment of risk factors is considered an essential starting point for treatment and research. Given that risk factors and criminogenic needs have been identified from a large body of evidence, their detection is argued to be a value-free process, and a central role is assigned to empirical research. In order to use the limited resources available in offender rehabilitation effectively, treatment ought to be focussed on those factors that are empirically associated with a reduced likelihood of reoffending. Thus, the RNR approach seems to be underpinned by a general focus on risk management (Ward et al., 2007).

Etiological assumptions. With the emphasis on an evidence-based approach in the RNR model, the construction of an etiological theory is considered a bottom-up process led

¹⁰ First, the *Psychology of Criminal Conduct* (PCC) provides a general set of assumptions regarding the study of criminal behaviour through empirical investigation, its explanation, assessment, and modification through treatment. Second, the *General Personality and Social Psychological Perspective* (GPSPP) is an outline of a complex theory to explain criminal behaviour based on biological, cognitive, behavioural, and situational factors. It is a general, multifactorial approach centred around the risk factors with the strongest evidence base (the "Big Four") which recognises both personality and social-learning constructs. Finally, the *Personal Interpersonal Community-Reinforcement* (PIC-R) perspective details more specific mechanisms to explain and predict criminal behaviour with the key assumption that a combination of observational learning, rehearsal, and reinforcement provide the conditions in which criminal conduct is learned and maintained.

¹¹ Where no other reference is provided, the summary is based on the comprehensive work in Andrews and Bonta's (2010) seminal book.

by empirical findings. The “Central Eight” risk factors (see Table 4) that have been identified as strong (the “Big Four”) or moderate (the “Moderate Four”) predictors of reoffending are seen as causally related to criminal behaviour, or act as indicators of causes.

Specifically, these factors are assumed to interact in the immediate high-risk situation in which rewards for criminal behaviour (e.g., reinforcing effects of drug ingestion, approval from delinquent peers) outweigh its costs. The psychological mechanisms are not clear but may include self-efficacy expectations, intentions, perception of the density of rewards in interaction with activated crime-supportive attitudes, values and beliefs, deficits in self-regulation, and susceptibility to peer influence (Ward & Maruna, 2007). Examples for more distal causes include individual predispositions, developmental adversity (e.g., neglect, physical or sexual abuse), and a context in which antisocial attitudes and behaviour are modelled or prosocial alternatives are limited. As initial criminal acts get reinforced and repeated in response to certain cues that signal opportunities, offending behaviour becomes more likely to be maintained. Additionally, the broader political, economic and cultural context is acknowledged to influence offending but their effect is mediated through the more proximal factors discussed above. Taken together, the RNR model recognises the complexity of learning mechanisms and multidimensional nature of factors involved in the development and change process.

Practice implications. Based on the general and etiological assumptions, the three core principles of the RNR model provide practical guidelines for how resources should be used in offender management and treatment. According to the *Risk* principle, treatment intensity and

Table 4

List of the “Central Eight” Risk Factors

The “Big Four”	The “Moderate Four”
History of antisocial behaviour (e.g., number of past offences)	Difficulties in family and home environment
Antisocial cognitions (e.g., pro-offending attitudes, distorted core beliefs)	Problems at work or school
Antisocial personality pattern (e.g., low self-control, poor emotion regulation, poor problem-solving, lack of social skills)	Lack of prosocial leisure activities
Antisocial associates	Substance abuse

dosage should match an offender's level of risk of reoffending, or the risk of harm an individual poses to society (Andrews & Bonta, 2010). For high-risk individuals, at least 100 hours of cognitive-behavioural intervention is recommended, while individuals with medium risk receive less intensive services, and little or no intervention is required for low-risk offenders. The estimation of an offender's risk should be based on those variables that are empirically associated with reduced reoffending rates (i.e., the Central Eight, see Table 4). A comprehensive assessment of these risk factors is recommended to guide decisions about treatment intensity. While some of these risk factors cannot be modified (*static* risk factors such as the number of past offences), others are amenable to change (*dynamic* risk factors such as low self-control) and interpreted as indicators for *criminogenic needs*.

The *Need* principle is concerned with identifying important treatment targets. Within the RNR framework, needs are conceptualised as personal deficits some of which are related to offending (*criminogenic needs*), whereas others may not directly influence recidivism (*non-criminogenic needs*). Examples of criminogenic needs are low self-control, poor emotion regulation and problem-solving ability, high hostility and anger, callousness, negative emotionality, poor self-reflection, and a lack of social skills; these features can be regarded as manifestations of an antisocial personality pattern which has been listed as a risk factor above. In fact, all Central Eight risk factors except for history of antisocial behaviour are important correlates of crime that can be changed, and are therefore considered important treatment targets (Andrews & Bonta, 2010). In contrast, factors like low self-esteem, mental health problems and unresolved grief have shown, at best, a weak correlation with offending (Ogloff & Davis, 2004), and thus play a secondary role in interventions.

The *Responsivity* principle further specifies how to conduct interventions in a way that maximises the participants' ability and willingness to adopt the programme content into their lives to support change and desistance from further offending. As a guideline for *General Responsivity*, Andrews and Bonta (2010) recommend cognitive-behavioural therapy (CBT) using behavioural techniques and an active, participatory approach which have demonstrated the largest effect sizes in meta-analyses (Gendreau & Andrews, 1990; Gendreau, Little, & Goggin, 1996; Hollin, 1999). The principle of *Specific Responsivity* reminds practitioners to abandon a "one size fits all" approach and adjust programme delivery to an individual's learning style, motivation, as well as personal and interpersonal circumstances (e.g., age, cognitive ability and attention, cultural context and language skills, interpersonal skills, personality, and mental health issues such as anxiety or depression). Although responsivity issues have recently received increasing attention (e.g., Ogloff & Davis, 2004), it is a

challenge to balance specific attention to the individual's circumstances with a large-scale implementation of RNR programmes in practice, especially when the call for programme integrity requires adherence to highly structured sessions and treatment manuals (Marshall, 2009; Polaschek, 2012). Overall, Ward and Maruna (2007) concluded that Responsivity is an underexplored area compared to the principles of Risk and Need.

The practical application of the three core principles of Risk, Need, and Responsivity by correctional institutions has led to outstanding achievements in reducing reoffending and making communities safer (McGuire, 2002). Given the RNR model is committed to ongoing enhancement through continued research, particularly the area of Responsivity appears to have scope for further examination.

4.3 The Good Lives Model (GLM)

The GLM was first created by Tony Ward (2002a, 2002b) as a naturalistic, humanistic and holistic approach to offender rehabilitation. In essence, it is a model of healthy human functioning aimed at empowering clients to create a happy, healthy, and socially responsible life accompanied by a long-term reduction in risk. This strength-based approach arose from the perception of a range of problems with the implementation of the RNR in practice, as well as its theoretical grounding (Ward & Brown, 2004). Over the past decade, the GLM has become increasingly applied in correctional interventions, providing practitioners with a theoretically more refined framework with renewed attention to basic human rights, context-dependency, and strengths of offenders (Purvis et al., 2014). However, the GLM has frequently been criticised for a lack of empirical support as its construction has been driven from a theoretical perspective. Given that correctional interventions have only recently started to incorporate GLM principles, it is too early to accurately evaluate their impact on rates of reoffending despite the growing number of studies with promising results (see Ward & Willis, in press).

Assumptions, aims, and values. First and foremost, the GLM framework considers offenders as human beings who naturally seek a range of basic human desires or *primary human goods* (PHGs) such as *relatedness* to others, or *excellence in work* (Ward, 2010). PHGs are defined as actions or states that are sought for their own sake, and are intrinsically beneficial to human functioning and well-being. These universal and ultimate ends of human behaviour are implicit in more specific goals and can be accomplished via different *means*

(also called *secondary human goods*). As an example, the PHG of relatedness may be achieved through the means of forming close friendships, intimate family relationships, or a romantic partnership.

Empirical research and theories spanning across cultures and disciplines have consistently identified a number of recurring, universal human goods (Arnhart, 1998; Becker, 1992; Cummins, 1996; Murphy 2001). While there is some variation in the exact number of goods and labels employed, Purvis and colleagues (2014) have specified 11 PHGs in one of the most recently published summaries of the GLM (see Table 5 for a full list of PHGs and examples of means to achieve each good). In addition, the authors argue that an overarching happiness and life contentment comes from the fulfilment of all 11 PHGs. This so-called “arch-good” comprises a broad and durable sense of life satisfaction, flourishing and mental health, and is seen as the true reward of finding prosocial and personally meaningful ways of living. Thus, an individual’s *life plan* (i.e., the way a person intends to live life) should accommodate all 11 PHGs to some extent in order to result in a *good life*.

Furthermore, it is acknowledged that there are individual differences regarding the priorities assigned to the various human goods and what is considered a personally meaningful way to their fulfilment (Ward & Stewart, 2003). Thus, the consideration of the individual’s values, goals and strengths is considered highly relevant to sound intervention. The enhancement of offenders’ skills and capacities to live a healthy life and achieve their goals through prosocial means is assumed to provide the best way to minimise potential harm to the community (Purvis et al., 2014).

Etiological assumptions. From a GLM perspective, offending behaviours are seen as the result of difficulties in achieving the PHGs in a sustainable and prosocial way (Ward & Marshall, 2004). That is, the actions of offenders are directed towards the same basic human desires as those of the non-offending population but a series of personal and environmental deficits or weaknesses results in diversion to inappropriate and damaging means (i.e., antisocial and harmful behaviour).

More specifically, Ward and Fisher (2006) have identified four major areas in which an individual’s life plan may be deficient and cause problems: (1) scope, (2) capacity, (3) means, and (4) coherence/conflict. First, a failure to strive for or secure a minimum of each of the PHGs is considered a lack of *scope*. This problem is frequently related to deficits in internal and external *capacity*, that is, the balance of strengths and weaknesses within the individual (e.g., skills, mental health) or the environment (e.g., access to education or social

Table 5

List of Primary Human Goods (PHGs) and Possible Means to their Achievement

PHG	Explanation	Example means
Life	physical health and well-being including food, water, shelter, and a physically healthy body	diet consciousness; physical exercise
Knowledge	desire to be well-informed in areas of personal interest	participation in training; lessons to acquire a new skill
Excellence in play	desire to engage in leisure activities that provide experiences of both enjoyment and mastery (pride, achievement, or skill development)	involvement in team sports; other hobbies
Excellence in work	desire to engage in work that is personally meaningful and provides experiences of mastery	paid or volunteer work; participation in a professional development course
Excellence in agency	desire to set personal goals and self-directed ways to achieve them; includes the need for personal power, control, mastery, and autonomy	self-reflection; achieving financial independence
Inner peace	capacity to achieve emotional balance; includes activities that serve emotional self-regulation and stress reduction	building positive relationships; learning emotional control and self-regulation skills; physical exercise
Relatedness	desire to establish affectionate relationships with others	close friendships; intimate family/partner relationships
Community	desire to be part of a larger group of people with overlapping values, goals, and interest	being part of a special-interest group (club), school or neighbourhood group
Spirituality	desire for meaning and purpose in life	religious activities; living in line with ethical values
Creativity	desire for self-expression, novelty and individuality in a broad sense	pursuing any form of art; new ways of solving a problem
States of happiness & pleasure	experience of joy, delight and gratification in the moment (\neq arch-good of life contentment)	eating enjoyable food; sexual activity; thrill-seeking actions

support). For instance, a weakness in interpersonal skills might lead to difficulties in forming friendships and relating to a community which creates a lack of scope in the socially oriented PHGs. Third, *means* are considered inappropriate if they are inefficient at securing the sought

good, or if they cause *conflict* in other PHGs. For instance, engaging in substance abuse to reach freedom from emotional turmoil is insufficient to achieve inner peace in the longer term, and may cause difficulties in healthy living, control and autonomy.

Following from these assumptions about causes of offending, the aim of rehabilitation is to identify flaws in the offender's personal life plan and overcome them in a way that matches individual preferences, values, personality, skills, and opportunities (Ward & Fisher, 2006). In the GLM, criminogenic needs are conceptualised as such flaws, constituting obstacles to fulfilment of the 11 PHGs. Thus, individuals should be equipped with the internal and external resources needed to secure PHGs and achieve their life goals in functional, prosocial ways. It is argued that this approach to correctional intervention naturally addresses risk factors in a way that is personally meaningful, motivating, and maximising responsibility of the individual (Ward, 2002b).

Practice implications. The key implications of the GLM approach to the practice of offender rehabilitation have been summarised in the following six practice commitments by Purvis and colleagues (2014, p. 209):

1. Manage the balance between promoting PHGs and reducing risk.
2. View offenders as fellow travellers, not moral strangers.
3. Use future-oriented, optimistic, and approach-goal-focused language.
4. View offenders as whole individuals who are more than the sum of their criminal records.
5. Make full use of the risk-need-responsivity principles that should be nested or embedded within a GLM framework.
6. Take into account offenders' strengths, primary goods, and relevant environments, and specify exactly what competencies and resources are required to achieve these goods.

That is, the GLM emphasises the importance of both risk management and the promotion of PHGs in the rehabilitation process. In order to achieve sustainable change in behaviour and risk, interventions should help offenders construct a more adaptive Good Life Plan and identity (Maruna, 2001; Ward & Marshall, 2007). Additionally, the GLM provides practitioners with a general way of viewing offenders as fellow human beings and holistic individuals with basic human desires as well as strengths and weaknesses. This general view facilitates a positive outlook and treatment alliance between service providers and the

offender which is likely to increase responsivity and motivation while addressing criminogenic needs (Purvis et al., 2014).

In recent texts, the authors of the GLM have emphasised that positive behaviour change and risk management are the shared goals of correctional treatment and case management of ex-offenders in the community (see Purvis, Ward, & Shaw, 2013). That is, the GLM proposes a framework that encourages practitioners from different support services to work together in providing interventions across different settings and at different levels of intensity. While offender treatment programmes have increasingly moved towards the utilisation of strengths, approach goals, and other concepts central to the GLM, the role of case management is still largely seen as a narrow supervision and risk management task (Purvis, Ward, & Willis, 2011). According to Purvis and colleagues (2013), both services should provide offenders with opportunities to explore personally valued goals in life as well as existing obstacles (weaknesses) to achieving them in a prosocial way; building the capabilities (strengths) to overcome these obstacles, to find prosocial alternatives and to pursue the offender's goods are considered the primary aims of interventions.

In sum, the two major tasks in the rehabilitation of offenders are the promotion of the offender's capacity to live a prosocial life, and the management of risk. While these aims are evident in both of the frameworks currently employed to guide offender rehabilitation, the RNR model has emerged from a risk management perspective whereas the GLM emphasises a more strength-based and holistic approach. The RNR model distinguishes itself through a strong evidence base underpinning its effectiveness, and comprises clear and tangible practice implications that are formulated as the three core principles of risk, need, and responsivity. In comparison, the GLM is more thoroughly spelt out in terms of underlying assumptions, aims, and values, and is embedded within a general and coherent framework to explain offending. The provided review can be used to examine how other practices relate to offender rehabilitation. As an example of a practice of interest, *parkour/freerunning* has recently been applied in rehabilitation work, and will be explored in context of RNR and GLM in the following chapter.

Chapter 5

Offender Rehabilitation and *Parkour/Freerunning*: A Comparative Analysis

Based on the above analysis, *parkour/freerunning* has arguably much to offer to the individual's development of the self, skills, identity, and adaptive behaviour. These areas of development are not only an essential part of healthy youth development but also a main focus of correctional rehabilitation models. Thus, *parkour/freerunning* may be a useful tool to facilitate the practice of offender rehabilitation.

In order to explore this idea, I will discuss how *parkour/freerunning* relates to the Risk-Need-Responsivity (RNR) model, and the Good Lives Model (GLM) of offender rehabilitation. The review provided in chapter 4 will be used to analyse where the components of *parkour/freerunning* overlap with or differ from a) general assumptions, aims and values; b) etiological assumptions about causes of offending; and c) practice implications in each rehabilitation framework. A table that summarises the findings from this analysis can be found in appendix B. Finally, these insights will be used to make a decision about which framework *parkour/freerunning* is best situated within.

5.1 How Does Parkour/Freerunning Relate to the RNR Model?

While the RNR model has been developed to explain the nature of offending and guide the rehabilitation process, *parkour/freerunning* is a practice that is concerned with general physical and mental training. However, the essence of both practices revolves around the personal and interpersonal development of human beings. Thus, their general assumptions, aims and values can be compared and contrasted to form the basis for the following discussion of their potential for integration.

5.1.1 Assumptions, Aims, and Values

According to the RNR model, the primary aim of offender rehabilitation is to minimise harm done to members of the community. In comparison, “to be strong to be useful” has been referred to as a key goal in *parkour/freerunning*. This usefulness to the community emphasised by the founders of the practice is incongruent with inflicting harm on others; it is

thus in line with the rehabilitation aim to reduce harm but also extends beyond the avoidance of a negative impact.

Another core assumption of the RNR model purports that offenders are human beings with the capacity to change. This assumption overlaps with the general view of humans as adaptable and changeable beings in *parkour/freerunning*. That is, rather than defining individuals by their past or current actions, characteristics and skills, they are seen as malleable and capable of lifelong self-improvement. This notion is central to the encouragement of learning, development and change in both *parkour/freerunning* and offender rehabilitation.

Furthermore, the existence of individually different predispositions, strengths and weaknesses is acknowledged in both practices but is associated with a more positive connotation in *parkour/freerunning* compared to the RNR framework. While individual differences are seen as an important issue to recognise and address in order to ensure responsibility of offenders, *traceurs/freerunners* appreciate and capitalise on variability. The RNR guidelines further recommend a systematic assessment of individual differences in risk factors in order to identify treatment targets. Similarly, critical self-reflection and the identification of personal weaknesses has been a declared goal for dedicated *traceurs/freerunners* from the early stages in order to eliminate areas of deficiency; yet, their ways of assessing deficits may be less structured than in a forensic setting.

As a shared task in both practices, risk management is concerned with the risk of reoffending in RNR-guided offender rehabilitation, and with risk of physical injury in *parkour/freerunning*. From a psychological point of view, both are essentially self-regulation tasks to minimise potential harm to the self (primary focus in *parkour/freerunning*) or to other members of the community (primary focus in RNR model). As a point of difference in the way risk management is approached, there is an emphasis on avoidance of high-risk situations and risk factors according to the RNR model, whereas risk situations are actively engaged with in *parkour/freerunning*. That is, *traceurs/freerunners* assume that risky situations cannot always be avoided and the best way to deal with them is to learn how to take control by exposing themselves to situations with gradually increasing risk, building confidence with progression steps and getting to know their personal limits.

Finally, the central role of research evidence in the RNR model may provide a point of tension regarding the integration of *parkour/freerunning* into the practice of offender rehabilitation. Although critical evaluation and effectiveness are important concepts in *parkour/freerunning*, research into potential benefits is at an early stage (see appendix A).

Therefore, the current evidence base is insufficient to draw conclusions about its effects as an intervention (see chapter 6 for further discussion).

5.1.2 Etiological Assumptions

Although the explanation of offending behaviour is not a specific focus in *parkour/freerunning*, the etiological models associated with the RNR framework draw on a general perspective of human behaviour and learning processes. These general assumptions can be used for a comparison to those evident in *parkour/freerunning*.

Key learning mechanisms that are assumed to contribute to the acquisition and maintenance of criminal behaviour are modelling and observational learning, reinforcement, rehearsal, and automatization of learned patterns. The same mechanisms are employed in *parkour/freerunning*: The community, mutual exchange and inspiration in *parkour/freerunning* provides opportunities for modelling and observational learning through which skills as well as important values, goals, norms, and assumptions are passed on. Additionally, training in a group and community offers social acceptance and approval from peers as a reward that reinforces mastery experiences. Further rewards may include positive feelings of excitement and situational happiness that have been linked to the release of hormones such as adrenaline and neurotransmitters (e.g., dopamine) in response to exercise and challenging situations (Farhud, Malmir, & Khanahmadi, 2014). The different kinds of rewards illustrate that *parkour/freerunning* affects the individual on various levels which translates to the psychological, social, and biological mechanisms pointed out in the theories underpinning the RNR model. The acknowledgement of hard work, repeated trial and error, and persistent effort in the values and assumptions of *parkour/freerunning* illustrate that repetition and rehearsal are considered essential to build adaptive automatic response patterns to new and challenging situations.

While the discussed mechanisms aim to give a general explanation of *how* behaviour is learned, the RNR framework proposes that the Big Eight risk factors are *what* is causally linked to offending. Risk factors that can be changed have therefore been identified as important treatment targets, and the capacity of *parkour/freerunning* to address some of these factors would make the practice an effective tool for intervention (see below for further discussion). As pointed out in chapter 4, the RNR framework is not clear about the psychological mechanisms that mediate the relationship between criminogenic needs and offending behaviour in the immediate situation. However, crime-supportive attitudes, values

and beliefs, susceptibility to peer influence, and deficits in self-efficacy and self-regulation have been proposed as possible examples (Ward & Maruna, 2007). In accordance, it has been argued that *parkour/freerunning* can convey prosocial values supportive of the community, promotes self-reliance and self-efficacy, and provides opportunities for practicing self-regulation skills (Edwardes, 2010; Merritt & Tharp, 2013; Thibault, 2013). To address more distal and contextual factors contributing to offending, *parkour/freerunning* offers prosocial models, an alternative to antisocial lifestyle and leisure activities, as well as opportunities for profound self-development that can challenge difficult individual predispositions.

5.1.3 Practice Implications

For the consideration of implications regarding forensic psychology in practice, *parkour/freerunning* will be discussed as a potential tool for intervention in the correctional context. Given that Risk, Need, and Responsivity provide the major practice implications of the RNR model, I will evaluate how *parkour/freerunning* fits with each of the three core principles.

Risk. According to the Risk principle, little intervention is recommended for offenders with estimated risk in the lower spectrum while more intensive treatment is considered appropriate for those with higher risk. If *parkour/freerunning* demonstrates the capacity to reduce risk factors, appropriate instruction can arguably provide a useful minimal intervention for low to medium-risk offenders. Given that high-risk individuals are recommended to receive at least 100 hours of intensive, cognitive-behavioural intervention, *parkour/freerunning* lessons in isolation may not be sufficient to reduce high risk of reoffending. However, in combination with other treatment methods, *parkour/freerunning* has the potential to enhance treatment effects as a highly accessible tool that facilitates engagement and implementation of prosocial change inside and outside the traditional treatment context (see below for an elaboration).

The Risk principle generally aims to ensure that the limited resources available in offender rehabilitation are distributed cost-efficiently. Given that *parkour/freerunning* is a low-cost activity that does not require any specialist equipment, its utilisation in interventions is likely to meet the criterion of cost-efficiency.

Need. The Need principle adds that correctional interventions should target criminogenic needs in order to be effective. Within this premise, treatment can be considered effective to the extent to which it addresses the major risk factors that have also been identified as criminogenic needs¹². Thus, a brief discussion of how *parkour/freerunning* maps onto each major category of criminogenic needs is provided in the following paragraphs (see Table 6 for a summary).

First, a range of specific antisocial cognitions seems to be implicitly addressed in *parkour/freerunning* whereas others are not. As an example, beliefs about the world as a dangerous place are a common core belief that has been related to a disproportionate perception of threats and insecurity which can set the scene for violent or sexual offending (Ward, 2000). In contrast, I have argued that *parkour/freerunning* fosters self-confidence, autonomy and increased trust in the world, in others and in one's abilities. This confidence can assist in challenging threatening core beliefs, whereas other distorted beliefs are not specifically targeted through *parkour/freerunning*, e.g., sexual offenders seeing children or women as sexual objects (Drake, Ward, Nathan, & Lee, 2001). On a more general level, pro-offending attitudes provide justifications for antisocial actions and often serve to negate the harm inflicted on victims (Helmus, Hanson, Babchishin, & Mann, 2013). However, *parkour/freerunning* promotes perspective-taking, and critical self-reflection which may help offenders recognise harm done to others. The general norm of being strong to be useful in *parkour/freerunning* is inconsistent with pro-offending attitudes. Even if an individual considers their past offending as a justified response to provocation, any harm done to another person is at odds with the values of respect and usefulness to others.

Second, the antisocial personality pattern is characterised by a range of traits and skills deficits that may be amended through appropriate training in *parkour/freerunning*. As argued in chapter 3, *parkour/freerunning* requires self-control, discipline, and emotion regulation which are naturally practiced in training and can help address corresponding deficits. It further provides a medium for releasing stress and negative emotions in a non-destructive, prosocial way. In line with the values of persistence and life-long progression, *parkour/freerunning* teaches how to find strategic progression steps, set appropriate goals, and consider long-term consequences which are skills commonly deficient in antisocial

¹² Note that this claim is currently under debate. Dynamic risk factors have been derived as predictors of reoffending but have limited scope for the explanation and treatment of offending behaviour (Ward & Beech, 2015). While risk factors contain some causal information, they have been criticised for being poorly defined composite constructs that fail to specify the underlying mechanisms of offending (Ward & Fortune, 2016). Nevertheless, I will attempt to assess how *parkour/freerunning* can help target dynamic risk factors because they are currently widely employed to direct and evaluate interventions in offender rehabilitation.

Table 6

Central Criminogenic Needs and Their Coverage in Parkour/Freerunning

Central risk factors/ criminogenic needs	<i>Parkour/Freerunning ...</i>
Antisocial cognitions	Addresses specific core beliefs selectively; pro-offending attitudes generally inconsistent with respect and usefulness to others, critical self-reflection and perspective-taking
Antisocial personality pattern	Helps amend patterns by building mental skills (e.g., self-control, discipline, emotion regulation, persistence, goal-setting, consideration of long-term consequences) and socio-moral skills (e.g., perspective-taking, honesty, respect, acceptance)
Antisocial associates	Provides prosocial community, friends and role models
Difficulties in family and home	Addresses difficulties indirectly depending on the underlying mechanisms; e.g., through prosocial environment
Problems at work or school	Addresses problems indirectly depending on the underlying mechanisms; e.g., stimulates positive social interactions
Lack of prosocial leisure activities	Offers an easily accessible and prosocial form of recreation
Substance abuse	Promotes a healthy lifestyle; misuse of substances incongruent with values of strength and full control of body and mind

personalities. Furthermore, the advancement of perspective-taking, honesty, respect, and acceptance in *parkour/freerunning* can reduce deficits in social skills. Moreover, *parkour/freerunning* provides access to a community, friendships and role models with a generally prosocial mind-set, offering an alternative to antisocial associates as a third major category of criminogenic needs.

Difficulties in family and home environment as well as problems at work or school may be indirectly addressed depending on the underlying mechanisms of the problems. For instance, important contributors to the difficulties in both contexts may be a lack of social skills which can be addressed through *parkour/freerunning* as discussed above. While training cannot directly change the home environment, the skill building and prosocial role models may positively affect inter-personal contact across contexts. However, given that the underlying mechanisms are not specified within the RNR framework, the discussion of a potential role for *parkour/freerunning* in family/home and work/school is limited to a speculative level.

Finally, *parkour/freerunning* can provide a prosocial alternative to antisocial leisure activities and substance abuse. As the training does not require specialised equipment and can be adapted to any urban or natural environment, it is an easily accessible and meaningful way of using spare time for recreation. In addition, substance abuse is incongruent with the values of full control of body and mind, and generally interferes with building endurance, body strength, and mastery of the physical demands of the practice at a more advanced level. Thus, *parkour/freerunning* does not only promote a healthy lifestyle but also challenges the misuse of substances.

Moreover, it has been argued that *parkour/freerunning* can enhance self-confidence (see chapter 3), or serve as a coping strategy for mental disorders such as depression and anxiety (FreeYourInstinct, 2015). These factors have demonstrated only a weak correlation to reoffending, and are regarded as non-criminogenic needs within the RNR framework. Given that the Need principle encompasses some caution that targeting non-criminogenic needs cannot be expected to reduce reoffending (see Ogloff & Davis, 2004), *parkour/freerunning* goes beyond the mere focus on criminogenic needs.

Responsivity. As discussed in the previous chapter, the Responsivity principle reminds practitioners to adopt a mode of intervention that maximises the offender's ability to engage but has remained underexplored to date. In its most inappropriate format, treatment has been criticised for resembling traditional classroom arrangements (e.g., Ward & Maruna, 2007) – a constellation that is deemed to fail among an offender population where problems at school have been identified as one of the major criminogenic needs. Research underscores the severity of this problem showing generally high non-commencement and drop-out rates for offender treatment programmes (McGuire et al., 2008; Olver et al., 2011). Consequently, the current practice of offender rehabilitation appears to be characterised by a lack of tools to engage offenders in therapy and change processes. Given that *parkour/freerunning* is largely perceived as a highly attractive and intrinsically motivating activity (e.g., Grabowski & Thomsen, 2014), I argue that it can provide such a tool for engagement in prosocial change.

To elaborate, the use of active, participatory methods and cognitive-behavioural techniques is recommended under the General Responsivity principle. In line with this principle, *parkour/freerunning* is an active, inclusive, and participatory training method which can affect thinking and acting (Wallace, 2013), and may be classified as cognitive-behavioural if used as an intervention. For dedicated practitioners, *parkour/freerunning* has

additionally been associated with a certain lifestyle (Gilchrist & Wheaton, 2011) which can provide offenders with an opportunity to facilitate durable lifestyle changes.

According to the Specific Responsivity principle, interventions are most effective when tailored to the individual's characteristics and circumstances. Similarly, *parkour/freerunning* emphasises the appreciation of individual differences, and provides a flexible training approach that is adjustable to different levels of skill, motivation, readiness for change, and other features. As an example, this flexible approach has opened the practice up for different age groups ranging from toddlers to the elderly, although male youth appear to be the primary demographic attracted to *parkour/freerunning* (Kidder, 2013a). As offenders are also predominantly male youth (Moffitt, 1993), *parkour/freerunning* is likely to appeal to this population and facilitate their engagement in the intervention process.

Among the specific responsivity factors typically mentioned in the work with offenders are learning style, cognitive ability and poor attention, cultural and language barriers, as well as emotional stability and mental health issues (Hubbard & Pealer, 2009). As guidelines and instructions in *parkour/freerunning* have immediate consequences in the training and embodied interaction with the environment that engages all senses, the practice seems suitable to a wide range of learning styles, cognitive abilities, and capacity for attention. The practical nature of *parkour/freerunning* training minimises potential language barriers. Its historical background in a multicultural group combined with the success across countries and cultures means that *parkour/freerunning* is not a culturally selective discipline but rather an inclusive practice. Finally, *parkour/freerunning* can help address individual difficulties that have been discussed as non-criminogenic needs above but can significantly impair the ability of an offender to engage in interventions, e.g., deficits in emotion regulation, and mental health issues like anxiety or depression.

Taken together, *parkour/freerunning* and RNR-guided offender rehabilitation show overlaps in their general assumptions and goals such as the minimisation of harm, risk management, self-development and change, as well as the identification of individual differences and weaknesses. The values and skills promoted in *parkour/freerunning* have the capacity to address each of the central categories of criminogenic needs which are considered the most important treatment targets within the RNR model. However, some differences are evident in the way these tasks are approached. While the RNR framework focuses on criminogenic needs as explicit treatment targets, *parkour/freerunning* goes beyond the

elimination of weaknesses, addresses them rather implicitly, and emphasises the importance of building strengths including non-criminogenic needs.

5.2 How Does Parkour/Freerunning Relate to the GLM?

The GLM is widely known to approach offender rehabilitation from a positive psychology perspective embedded in a general model of healthy human functioning (Ward & Willis, in press). These features facilitate its integration with other practices focussed on healthy physical and mental development, including *parkour/freerunning*. On a general level, the major emphasis on building strength in *parkour/freerunning* aligns with the strength-based and holistic approach of the GLM aimed at the creation of a happy, healthy, and socially responsible life. In the remainder of this chapter, I will provide a more specific evaluation of how well *parkour/freerunning* may integrate with the three components of the GLM.

5.2.1 Assumptions, Aims, and Values

As a fundamental assumption, the GLM emphasises that offenders are human beings with human rights, motivations, and desires (i.e., PHGs). The comparative list in Table 7 demonstrates that an equivalent for each PHG can be found in the basic human desires identified in *parkour/freerunning* (see chapter 3). Some of these underlying motivations are directly congruent (e.g., inner peace, community), while others are represented in a more nuanced fashion in the GLM (e.g., the PHGs of knowledge, excellence in play and excellence in work may be summarised as one desire for mastery and skills development in *parkour/freerunning*).

According to the GLM framework, the 11 PHGs are the ultimate ends of all human behaviour, and can be sought through different means. Given that a similar set of basic human desires is pursued in *parkour/freerunning*, it can provide the means to fulfilling a wide range of PHGs (see Table 7). For instance, the PHG of life including physical and mental health can be achieved through physical and mental training, exercise, and healthy eating which are part of the healthy lifestyle promoted in *parkour/freerunning*. For dedicated practitioners, I argue that most of the example means provided in the table are naturally part of their *parkour/freerunning* practice. Excellence in work may be an exception because the practice offers limited job opportunities, and possible effects may be better explained through

Table 7

List of Primary Human Goods (PHGs) and Their Reflection in Parkour/Freerunning

<i>GLM</i>	<i>Parkour/Freerunning</i>	
PHG	Basic human desire	Example means
Life	Physical/mental health and agility	Promotion of a healthy lifestyle and physical/mental fitness
Knowledge	Mastery and skills development	Participation in lessons, searching online tutorials, learning about the human body
Excellence in play	Mastery and skills development	Participation in training sessions, achieving mental/physical challenges; play
Excellence in work	Mastery and skills development	Paid or voluntary work for advanced practitioners (e.g., instructors, sponsored athletes; limited opportunities)
Excellence in agency	Autonomy, control, and freedom	Autonomous and self-driven action, taking mental and physical control, self-reliance and self-reflection
Inner peace	Inner peace	Stress reduction through physical exercise, management of fears and risk, building self-regulation skills
Relatedness	Friendship and social bonds	Peers, collaborative relationships, close friendships, and group cohesion
Community	Community	Being part of the local and larger <i>parkour/freerunning</i> community
Spirituality	Search for identity and meaning	Socio-moral values provide a sense of spirituality and purpose (e.g., “Be strong to be useful”)
Creativity	Creativity	Self-expression through movement, new ways of overcoming obstacles
States of happiness & pleasure	Enjoyment	Training and play as inherently enjoyable activity, thrill and adventure

enhanced work-life balance, knowledge, or the general emphasis on cultivating mastery, agency and skills development.

Nevertheless, the GLM emphasises that individuals differ in their values, goals and strengths. This assumption aligns with the appreciation for individual differences evident in *parkour/freerunning* where training can be used to fulfil different purposes or PHGs for different practitioners, comparable to a multipurpose tool. Consequently, it has a large potential to contribute to a sense of life satisfaction that, according to the GLM, results from

the fulfilment of all 11 PHGs and is associated with a good life characterised by healthy, personally meaningful, and prosocial ways of living. Correspondingly, *parkour/freerunning* was developed by a group of young people on their search for a good life, purpose and identity (see chapter 2), and fits neatly into the general framework provided by the underlying assumptions of the GLM.

5.2.2 Etiological Assumptions

According to the GLM, antisocial behaviour commonly results from four major problems in an individual's conception of a good life which need to be addressed for sound intervention. First, a lack of scope in an individual's Good Life Plan may be amended when an individual takes up activities that naturally incorporate a wide range of the PHGs. As argued in the previous section, *parkour/freerunning* is an activity that provides example means for each of the PHGs. Second, offending behaviour may result from a lack of internal capacity such as skills or mental health, and external capacity in the environment. In comparison, *parkour/freerunning* has been argued to further development of a wide range of skills, and anecdotal evidence suggests that it can help practitioners cope with mental health issues (FreeYourInstinct, 2015). The general mind-set of overcoming obstacles conveyed in *parkour/freerunning* can help individuals to gain confidence and break barriers to accessing external resources. Yet, the physical and mental training does not directly make education or governmental support systems more available, and is limited to indirectly increasing the capacity to use external resources through internal empowerment.

Third, for problems resulting from inappropriate means employed to achieve the PHGs, *parkour/freerunning* can provide a generally prosocial alternative. Fourth, conflict between the PHGs introduced by antisocial means and behaviour may be resolved when employing prosocial means instead such as advocated by *parkour/freerunning*. For instance, instead of using substances to achieve inner peace, an individual may engage in physical exercise for stress reduction or deliberate exposure to fear as a practice in emotion regulation. The latter two strategies provide a more functional alternative that is not inconsistent with other PHGs like healthy living, control or autonomy, and are typical example means employed in *parkour/freerunning*. Nevertheless, no single activity is likely to resolve all possible conflict between PHGs without thorough self-reflection. Thus, the emphasis on self-exploration and critical self-evaluation in *parkour/freerunning* plays an important role in resolving tensions between PHGs, and in preventing new problems regarding coherence from

emerging. For instance, there might be competing goals even within the practice of *parkour/freerunning* if a person attempts to excel in play by pushing physical boundaries to an excessive level that is in conflict with safe progression and health. This example illustrates the significance of viewing and teaching the practice as a whole including values such as self-reflection and consideration for long-term consequences. Provided that *parkour/freerunning* is practiced in line with its values and principles, it seems to be a useful tool to identify and overcome weaknesses in a person's Good Life Plan.

5.2.3 Practice Implications

As a primary aim in the practice of offender rehabilitation, the GLM is committed to managing the balance between promoting PHGs and reducing risk. Similarly, I have argued that corresponding basic human desires and risk management are naturally promoted in *parkour/freerunning*. However, the immediate focus of its risk management is on physical injury rather than risk of reoffending. When applied to the management of challenging behaviour common among youth, *parkour/freerunning* may provide an attractive alternative sufficient for prosocial change. For more entrenched criminal behaviour and resistant problems in Good Life Plans, *parkour/freerunning* may be used as a facilitating tool rather than a replacement of other rehabilitation strategies.

Furthermore, an orientation towards the future rather than the past, and building strengths rather than eliminating deficits is evident in both GLM-based practice recommendations and *parkour/freerunning*. In line with the focus on approach-goals over avoidance, obstacles are approached as a challenge to be overcome in one's own way rather than avoided as an insurmountable problem. The GLM view of offenders as whole individuals and fellow travellers is paralleled by the holistic approach taken in *parkour/freerunning* and the transmission of socio-moral values as part of the practice.

Given that the GLM recommends utilising the Risk-Need-Responsivity principles within its practice framework, the evaluation of *parkour/freerunning* as generally compatible with these principles is noteworthy (cf. section 5.1.3). Within the GLM, dynamic risk factors or criminogenic needs are conceptualised as obstacles to fulfilling PHGs in a prosocial way (Purvis et al., 2014). The metaphor compares easily to *parkour/freerunning* where finding one's own way to overcome obstacles is a major goal. Correspondingly, the GLM encourages moving beyond barriers to PHGs in a way that matches individual preferences, values, personality, skills, and opportunities in order to maximise responsivity. These guidelines are

further reflective of the central role of individual agency in both GLM and *parkour/freerunning*.

Although I have argued that individual differences are capitalised on, they may also pose a limitation to the wide applicability of *parkour/freerunning*. That is, if *parkour/freerunning* is not considered personally meaningful by the individual, it has limited scope for increasing this person's motivation and responsibility. However, *parkour/freerunning* has been evaluated as a practice that is highly engaging and adaptable to individual needs (see chapter 3), and therefore has arguably a large potential to be considered personally meaningful.

The GLM further reminds the practitioner to take offenders' strengths and relevant environments into account and specify exactly how those resources can be used to achieve PHGs. A similar approach is evident in *parkour/freerunning* where dedicated work with individual strengths and weaknesses is encouraged, and adaptability to different environments is emphasised. More specifically, I have argued that the systematic identification of weaknesses and their elimination, as well as building physical, mental, and socio-moral strength are goals in *parkour/freerunning*. The GLM further recommends to make life goals, strengths, and PHGs explicit. Although explicit formulation is not necessarily required in *parkour/freerunning*, this task readily aligns with the self-reflection and self-exploration identified as a part of the practice.

In a similarly implicit manner, *parkour/freerunning* generally draws attention to using the environment and its resources but does not directly involve the family, community, or other contextual support systems of the individual. However, in contrast to other interventions that might remove offenders from their everyday context, *parkour/freerunning* is applicable to a variety of environments. For instance, the physical, mental, and socio-moral training itself may be particularly suitable as a strength-building low-intensity intervention in the community. If integrated into case management, *parkour/freerunning* may provide a unique opportunity to make the supervision and support service more engaging. When employed as part of a higher intensity programme in a prison or residential setting, the training can easily be continued individually in the local community after completion. Although empirical investigations into specific benefits of applying *parkour/freerunning* as well as GLM are limited to date, their theoretical underpinnings show large overlaps.

On a general level, GLM-based offender rehabilitation and *parkour/freerunning* are mainly concerned with the construction of physically, mentally and socially healthy ways of

living a fulfilling life. Both practices take a positive and strength-focussed approach, and have largely overlapping assumptions about basic human motivations and desires. According to the etiological assumptions of the GLM, problems that are assumed to play a causal role in offending can arguably be reduced through *parkour/freerunning*. In addition, specific practice recommendations that have been made explicit in the GLM framework are implicitly represented in *parkour/freerunning*. The major congruence and minimal tension between *parkour/freerunning* and GLM-based offender rehabilitation provides a strong basis for a possible integration of both practices.

5.3 Which Framework Is Parkour/Freerunning Best Situated Within?

As a main result from the comparative analysis between *parkour/freerunning* and offender rehabilitation, their major tasks show substantial overlaps. This suggests that *parkour/freerunning* may generally be a useful tool to facilitate the practice of offender rehabilitation. Due to its versatility, *parkour/freerunning* can readily be brought into alignment with the major assumptions, principles and implications in each of the two frameworks of offender rehabilitation (see appendix B). However, the separate comparisons are insufficient to decide whether *parkour/freerunning* is best situated within the RNR model or the GLM. In order to answer this question, it is necessary to refocus on *parkour/freerunning* as the pivot point, recapitulate the key components of the practice, and evaluate to what extent each aspect is represented within RNR model and GLM. Thus, the following discussion is based on the general approach, key assumptions and key goals listed in the matrix of *parkour/freerunning*'s constituent components (see Table 8 for a reiteration and comparison).

The general approach evident in *parkour/freerunning* is a strength-based and holistic one embedded in a general model of healthy human functioning. These aspects are also key features of the GLM, whereas the RNR model has been classified as a more deficit-based approach with a focus on criminogenic needs, and a general and social psychology perspective employed to explain functioning and malfunctioning. This suggests that *parkour/freerunning* is more naturally in line with the positive psychology perspective taken by the GLM as opposed to a focus on the psychology of criminal conduct in the RNR model.

A similar picture is portrayed when considering underlying assumptions. As a key assumption in *parkour/freerunning*, actions are driven by a set of basic human desires that is highly similar to the primary human goods described in the GLM but not represented in the

RNR model. Moreover, the promotion of agency has received special attention in *parkour/freerunning* and in the GLM whereas the lack thereof has been a criticism of RNR practice models (Heffernan & Ward, 2015). Furthermore, the acknowledgement of complex learning and developmental processes central to self-development in *parkour/freerunning* is represented in both rehabilitation frameworks. The assumption that body, mind, morality, and skills development are entangled plays an important part in *parkour/freerunning* and the GLM-based notion of a Good Life. That is, the idea that a physically and mentally healthy life is associated with prosocial and moral ways of living is made explicit in the GLM, whereas this interaction is only partially or implicitly recognised in the theories underscoring the RNR model.

While the comparison of general approach and key assumptions seems to convey that *parkour/freerunning* shows little convergence with RNR-guided offender rehabilitation, more overlaps are evident in the goals of both practices. Key tasks in *parkour/freerunning* that are

Table 8

Major Components of Parkour/Freerunning, and Their Alignment with RNR Model and GLM

<i>Parkour/Freerunning</i>	RNR	GLM
<i>General approach</i>		
- Healthy human functioning	(✓/✗)	✓
- Strength-based	✗	✓
- Holistic approach	(✓/✗)	✓
- Positive psychology perspective	✗	✓
<i>Key assumptions</i>		
- Shared basic human desires	✗	✓
- Central role of agency	✗	✓
- Complex learning and development	✓	✓
- Interaction between body, mind, morality, and skills	(✓/✗)	✓
<i>Key goals</i>		
- Promotion of healthy and prosocial ways of living	✓	✓
- Management of high-risk situations	✓	✓
- Usefulness to the community	✓	✓
- Building strength and skills	(✓/✗)	✓
- Finding individuality, meaning, and identity	(✓/✗)	✓
- Overcoming obstacles (approach over avoidance)	✗	✓
- Exploration of the self, personal limits and potential	(✓/✗)	✓

Note. RNR = Risk-Need-Responsivity model; GLM = Good Lives Model of offender rehabilitation.

also represented in both frameworks of offender rehabilitation include the promotion of healthy and prosocial ways of living, risk management, as well as concern about the impact on the community. Other aims essential to *parkour/freerunning* are reflected fully in the GLM, and at least partially in the RNR. For instance, the importance of building strength is stressed in both *parkour/freerunning* as well as the GLM, and although the RNR principle of Need suggests that reducing deficits (i.e., criminogenic needs) should be the main focus of rehabilitation, the role of strengths and protective factors is increasingly recognised (e.g., Turner, Hartman, Exum, & Cullen, 2007). In addition, there has been an emphasis on the individual in more recent developments of *parkour/freerunning*, and a central role is assigned to the development of personal meaning and identity. The same aspects are emphasised in the GLM, and seem to be partially addressed in the RNR principle of Responsivity.

As evident in another key goal, *parkour/freerunning* has been defined as a training method of overcoming obstacles, and building the capacity and mind-set to do so can be considered the essence of the practice. In other words, *parkour/freerunning* encourages the approach rather than avoidance of difficult situations in a very real and tangible sense, as well as on a more abstract, conceptual level (e.g., obstacles to a prosocial lifestyle). In parallel, the focus on approach over avoidance is a key feature of the GLM within which dynamic risk factors are conceptualised as obstacles to prosocial fulfilment of PHGs. By contrast, the concept of obstacles is not represented in the RNR model, and its focus on avoidance of risk factors or challenging situations has been criticised (Ward & Brown, 2004). Finally, *parkour/freerunning* has emerged as a tool for self-development and self-exploration. The development of an understanding for the own actions, thoughts and beliefs may be achieved through cognitive-behavioural therapy as recommended according to RNR. However, the broader notion of exploring the self, personal limits and potential employed in *parkour/freerunning* is more closely resembled by the GLM-based idea of creating a personally meaningful Good Life Plan that takes individual weaknesses and strengths into account.

Taken together, the results from the comparative analysis show minimal divergence in the general approach, key assumptions and goals of *parkour/freerunning* and GLM-based offender rehabilitation, whereas rehabilitation practice according to RNR seems to tick only some of the boxes (see Table 8). This result suggests that *parkour/freerunning* is best situated within the GLM. Although the major convergence does not mean that a potential *parkour/freerunning*-based intervention would address all aspects important to offender

rehabilitation, it suggests that *parkour/freerunning* can naturally support the processes considered relevant to desistance and change within the GLM.

Despite the more natural fit of *parkour/freerunning* with a strength-based approach, the previous analyses have also demonstrated the versatility of the practice and its capacity to meet RNR standards. Hence, *parkour/freerunning* can also provide a useful intervention when framed according to the RNR model. However, when used in interventions with the main purpose of targeting deficits, *parkour/freerunning* runs the risk of becoming reduced to a method for targeting problems. While I argue that *parkour/freerunning* does have the capacity to address problems, its main focus is on positive self-development and constructing healthy ways of living. Thus, a *parkour/freerunning*-based intervention that is situated within the GLM may provide the best chance for making full use of its potential for rehabilitation and for maximising the benefits to an individual offender.

Chapter 6

Future Directions and Conclusion

As indicated by the key messages from my analysis, *parkour/freerunning* can be considered a highly versatile tool for self-exploration, change, and the development of skills and values. These features predispose the practice for application in youth development, and prosocial change. When applied to the management of antisocial behaviour, I argue that it can provide an attractive prosocial alternative and minimal intervention that is in line with contemporary frameworks of offender rehabilitation. While I do not suggest that *parkour/freerunning* by itself is a sufficient approach to managing more severe criminal behaviour, the practice may be used to complement and facilitate existing rehabilitation programmes.

6.1 How Can Parkour/Freerunning Support Prosocial Change?

With its focus on happy, healthy, and prosocial ways of living, I propose that *parkour/freerunning* can provide a useful tool to facilitate change. The question “How does it work?” can be approached from different perspectives. From a historical point of view, *parkour/freerunning* evolved in the context of self-development, identity formation and transformation. From the perspective of contemporary frameworks of offender rehabilitation, I have argued that *parkour/freerunning* meets the principles of Risk, Need and Responsivity which have been identified as indicators of effective interventions in the RNR model. Moreover, the practice has demonstrated the capacity to naturally support the creation of a Good Life associated with healthy physical, mental and social functioning according to the GLM. For a concise overview, the major arguments under each of these perspectives are summarised in Table 9. This summary illustrates that the practice of *parkour/freerunning* opens up a variety of pathways to prosocial change.

In addition, one of the most discernible benefits of *parkour/freerunning* lies in its large potential to engage offenders in the rehabilitation process and lasting change. Due to its versatility and adaptability to the individual, *parkour/freerunning* can satisfy a wide range of needs and has been described as highly attractive to a broad demographic. If *parkour/freerunning* is considered a personally meaningful or simply fun activity by an individual, its utilisation in the rehabilitation process has the capacity to reduce responsivity issues and to positively affect motivation, therapeutic alliance as well as readiness to change.

Table 9

*Parkour/Freerunning as a Tool for Prosocial Change – Three Perspectives***Historically anchored in self-development and change**

- Alternative to a criminal lifestyle
- Tool for self-exploration, identity formation and transformation
- Building agency to overcome obstacles
- Promoting a set of prosocial values and moral standards
- Developing skills
(physical/practical, mental/emotional, socio-moral, cognitive-behavioural)

Meeting Risk, Need and Responsivity principles

- Responsivity: engagement and accessibility, active participatory method, cognitive-behavioural techniques, large potential to address responsivity issues
- Need: capacity to address a range of criminogenic needs
- Risk: adaptable to different levels of risk as a minimal intervention or facilitating tool that complements higher-intensity programmes

Promoting Good Lives

- Fulfilling basic human desires (primary human goods)
- Focus on healthy and prosocial ways of living
- Building strengths and agency
- Potential to address problems in a person's Good Life Plan
- Holistic approach
- Utilising the environment and its resources
- Emphasis on the individual, personal meaning, purpose and identity

Another key benefit is the accessibility of *parkour/freerunning* as a low-cost activity that is commonly practiced in urban outdoor areas and adaptable to different environments without any specialised equipment. The combination of engagement and accessibility means that self-directed *parkour/freerunning* training can easily be continued after programme completion making offenders more likely to incorporate the changes made during the intervention into their lives.

6.2 Boundary Conditions and Challenges

While I have argued that *parkour/freerunning* can provide a highly versatile tool for self-exploration and change, these ends may not be adopted by every practitioner. That is, although *parkour/freerunning* offers multiple pathways to healthy personal and social development, to what extent the practice is used for prosocial change is up to the individual.

Thus, I do not propose that *parkour/freerunning*-based interventions will effectively reduce antisocial behaviour in every offender. As any other rehabilitation programme, it is limited by the extent to which individuals decide to incorporate parts of the practice into their lives. However, the threshold for doing so may be particularly low in *parkour/freerunning*, due to its capacity to engage the individual. As a prerequisite, the activity needs to be considered personally meaningful, requiring at least a minimum of interest in physical activity or healthy and happy living.

Furthermore, *parkour/freerunning* is not a panacea which purports to eliminate the wide range of possible problems that contribute to offending behaviour. As an example, reoffending is commonly associated with antisocial peers and difficulties at work or school (Andrews & Bonta, 2010); yet, *parkour/freerunning* cannot easily remove the individual from these contexts. However, *parkour/freerunning* can provide individuals with tools such as self-confidence, self-determination and agency that build the internal capacity to remove themselves or actively approach problems within these contexts.

While the aim of my thesis is to provide a thorough theoretical analysis and basis for the above propositions, my argument is in need of empirical support. Although practitioners have started to apply *parkour/freerunning* in youth development and forensic settings, no empirical evaluation of such programmes has been published in a peer-reviewed journal to date. Research regarding potential benefits and applications of *parkour/freerunning* is scarce, and the theoretical arguments need to be underpinned by empirical evidence to evaluate their validity and generalisability.

The research process has been complicated by tensions and debates, conceptual confusion, and problems in defining *parkour/freerunning*. Due to the high versatility and constant changes in the practice, it has been and will continue to be difficult to establish clarity of the concept of *parkour/freerunning*. The comprehensive analysis provided above is an essential step towards a thorough conceptualisation of the practice. Nevertheless, I may have missed some aspects considered relevant by other practitioners. Given that the way in which the practice is adopted is highly individual, my personal involvement is likely to have an influence on its presentation in this thesis.

6.3 Future Directions in Research and Application

As pointed out above, further research is required in order to establish an empirical and theoretical basis for the arguments brought forward in this thesis. In particular, I have

proposed a general concept and benefits of *parkour/freerunning*, as well as made a case for its application in youth development and offender rehabilitation. Both of these areas require critical evaluation and testing in future.

Given that practitioners have started to utilise *parkour/freerunning* in programmes aimed at youth at risk of antisocial behaviour, it is crucial to evaluate their effectiveness. For a thorough evaluation, quantitative research is required to assess whether *parkour/freerunning*-based interventions are effective, and needs to be complemented by qualitative and theoretical explorations of possible mechanisms of change to determine why, when and how the interventions work (see Pawson & Tilley, 1997). In light of the challenges involved in applied research, this task is likely to be a long-term undertaking. Evidence from other programmes with features, content, or change mechanisms similar to those proposed in *parkour/freerunning* can give an indication of potential effects, e.g., cognitive skills programmes, wilderness and adventure therapy, or programmes based on martial arts, sports and exercise (Draper, Errington, Omar, & Makhita, 2013; McGuire et al., 2008; Nichols, 2007; Norton et al., 2014). However, I argue that *parkour/freerunning* offers a unique constellation of possible pathways to change that may not be paralleled by existing programmes. Thus, preliminary evidence from related programmes needs to be interpreted with caution accompanied by a critical evaluation of overlaps and differences.

Another aspect that warrants further exploration in future is the applicability of *parkour/freerunning* to different groups of individuals and contexts. Given that male youth show the largest involvement in antisocial behaviour and crime, and also make up the majority of *traceurs/freerunners* (Kidder, 2013a; Moffitt, 1993), there seems to be a natural fit in the primary demographic. Yet, the currently increasing involvement of females and adults at various stages of their lives suggests scope for further discussion with regard to gender and different age groups (Grosprêtre & Lepers, 2015). In addition, the extent to which *parkour/freerunning* can be considered an appropriate tool for intervention may vary between different types of offenders. For instance, property offenders may be more likely to misuse the physical skills gained through *parkour/freerunning* and have demonstrated less benefits from cognitive skills programmes than individuals who were committed for violent, sexual or drug offences (Travers, Mann, & Hollin, 2014). Due to the adaptability of *parkour/freerunning* to different contexts, it may be incorporated at various stages of the rehabilitation process in residential and community settings. In prison, the practice may offer unique potential to give a sense of freedom (e.g., Lamb, 2014b) in a confined space but needs to be complemented by an increased attention to matters of security.

Potential complications associated with the application of *parkour/freerunning* to offender rehabilitation need to be considered including mental health issues and personality traits common in offenders, such as risk-taking and sensation-seeking. While *parkour/freerunning* can provide a prosocial alternative and coping strategy to meet those needs, some members of the public may misperceive the intentions of a *parkour/freerunning*-based intervention. Due to common errors in the media representation, misinformed members of the public may be likely to reject *parkour/freerunning* as a dangerous and deviant activity with effects opposite to those proposed in this thesis.

Thus, the application of *parkour/freerunning* to the rehabilitation of offenders is likely to face a variety of challenges. However, I argue that *parkour/freerunning* is a highly versatile practice that has a large potential to engage disengaged young people. The combination of engagement and focus on self-development in *parkour/freerunning* offers new avenues to enhance the practice of offender rehabilitation, particularly when utilised in accordance with the Good Lives Model. As *parkour/freerunning* provides a wide range of opportunities for personal growth, the practice can lead onto multiple pathways to prosocial change.

References

- ADAPT. (2011). *A.D.A.P.T. Level 1: Lerner pack assistant coach*. London: ADAPT Qualifications Ltd.
- Ameel, L., & Tani, S. (2012a). Everyday aesthetics in action: Parkour eyes and the beauty of concrete walls. *Emotion, Space and Society*, 5(3), 164-173.
doi:10.1016/j.emospa.2011.09.003
- Ameel, L., & Tani, S. (2012b). Parkour: Creating loose spaces? *Geografiska Annaler: Series B, Human Geography*, 94(1), 17-30. doi:10.1111/j.1468-0467.2012.00393.x
- Andrews, D. A., & Bonta, J. (2010). *The psychology of criminal conduct* (5th ed.). Albany, NY: Anderson Publishing.
- Andrews, D. A., Bonta, J., & Hoge, R. D. (1990). Classification for effective rehabilitation: Rediscovering psychology. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 17(1), 19-52.
doi:10.1177/0093854890017001004
- Andrews, D. A., Bonta, J., & Wormith, J. S. (2011). The Risk-Need-Responsivity (RNR) model: Does adding the Good Lives Model contribute to effective crime prevention? *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 38(7), 735-755. doi:10.1177/0093854811406356
- Andrews, D. A., & Dowden, C. (2005). Managing correctional treatment for reduced recidivism: A meta-analytic review of programme integrity. *Legal and Criminological Psychology*, 10(2), 173-187. doi:10.1348/135532505X36723
- Andrews, D. A., Zinger, I., Hoge, R. D., Bonta, J., Gendreau, P., & Cullen, F. T. (1990). Does correctional treatment work? A clinically relevant and psychologically informed meta-analysis. *Criminology*, 28(3), 369-404. doi:10.1111/j.1745-9125.1990.tb01330.x
- Angel, J. M. (2011). *Ciné parkour: A cinematic and theoretical contribution to the understanding of the practice of parkour* (Doctoral dissertation). Available from

ProQuest Dissertations and Theses Full Text database. URI:

<http://bura.brunel.ac.uk/handle/2438/6119>

- Archer, N. (2010). Virtual poaching and altered space: Reading parkour in French visual culture. *Modern & Contemporary France*, 18(1), 93-107.
doi:10.1080/09639480903504284
- Arnhart, L. (1998). *Darwinian natural rights: The biological ethics of human nature*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
- Atkinson, M. (2009). Parkour, anarcho-environmentalism, and poiesis. *Journal of Sport and Social Issues*, 33(2), 169-194. doi:10.1177/0193723509332582
- Baker, D. (Producer). (2016, February). *Parkour vs. freerunning: Why the distinction matters and how it effects our future* [Audio podcast]. Retrieved from <https://soundcloud.com/parkour-doj/parkour-vs-freerunning>
- Bavinton, N. (2007). From obstacle to opportunity: Parkour, leisure, and the reinterpretation of constraints. *Annals of Leisure Research*, 10(3-4), 391-412.
doi:10.1080/11745398.2007.9686773
- Becker, L. C. (1992). Good Lives: Prolegomena. *Social Philosophy and Policy*, 9(2), 15-37.
doi:10.1017/S0265052500001382
- Belle, D. (2009). *Parkour: Interview with the founder of the discipline*. Paris: Editions Intervista.
- Brunner, C. (2011). Nice-looking obstacles: Parkour as urban practice of deterritorialization. *AI & Society*, 26(2), 143-152. doi:10.1007/s00146-010-0294-2
- Chow, B. D. V. (2010). Parkour and the critique of ideology: Turn-vaulting the fortresses of the city. *Journal of Dance and Somatic Practices*, 2(2), 143-154. doi: 10.1386/jdsp.2.2.143_1

- Chu, C. M., Koh, L. L., Zeng, G., & Teoh, J. (2015). Youth who sexual offended: Primary human goods and offense pathways. *Sexual Abuse: A Journal of Research and Treatment*, 27(2), 151-172. doi:10.1177/1079063213499188
- Clegg, J. L., & Butryn, T. M. (2012). An existential phenomenological examination of parkour and freerunning. *Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise and Health*, 4(3), 320-340. doi: 10.1080/2159676X.2012.693527
- Coalter, F. (2012). 'There is loads of relationships here': Developing a programme theory for sport-for-change programmes. *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, 48(5) 594–612. doi:10.1177/1012690212446143.
- Cummins, R. (1996). The domains of life satisfaction: An attempt to order chaos. *Social Indicators Research*, 38(3), 303-328. doi:10.1007/BF00292050
- Dahlberg, L. L., & Potter, L. B. (2001). Youth Violence: Developmental Pathways and Prevention Challenges. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 20(Supplement 1), 3-14. doi:10.1016/S0749-3797(00)00268-3
- Day, A., Howells, K., & Rickwood, D. (2004). *Current trends in the rehabilitation of juvenile offenders*. Canberra, Australia: Australian Institute of Criminology. Retrieved from http://aic.gov.au/media_library/publications/tandi_pdf/tandi284.pdf
- Daskalaki, M., Stara, A., & Imas, M. (2008). The 'Parkour Organisation': Inhabitation of corporate spaces. *Culture and Organization*, 14(1), 49-64. doi:10.1080/14759550701659029
- DeMartini, A. L. (2014). Is parkour a problem? College and university liability for extreme sport activities. *Recreational Sports Journal*, 38(2), 175-187. doi:10.1123/rsj.2014-0039

- De Martini Ugolotti, N. (2015). Climbing walls, making bridges: children of immigrants' identity negotiations through capoeira and parkour in Turin. *Leisure Studies*, 34(1), 19-33. doi:10.1080/02614367.2014.966746
- Derakhshan, N., Zarei, M. R., Malekmohammady, Z., & Rahimi-Movaghar, V. (2014). Spinal cord injury in Parkour sport (free running): A rare case report. *Chinese Journal of Traumatology*, 17(3), 178-179. doi:10.3760/cma.j.issn.1008-1275.2014.03.012
- Drake, C. R., Ward, T., Nathan, P., & Lee, J. K. (2001). Challenging the cognitive distortions of child molesters: An implicit theory approach. *Journal of Sexual Aggression*, 7(2), 25-40. doi:10.1080/13552600108416165
- Draper, C. E., Errington, S., Omar, S., & Makhita, S. (2013). The therapeutic benefits of sport in the rehabilitation of young sexual offenders: A qualitative evaluation of the Fight with Insight programme. *Psychology of Sport and Exercise*, 14(4), 519-530. doi:10.1016/j.psychsport.2013.02.004
- Eccles, J. S., & Wigfield, A. (2002). Motivational beliefs, values, and goals. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 53(1), 109-132. doi:10.1146/annurev.psych.53.100901.135153
- Edwardes, D. (2010). Encouraging physical activity through parkour. *British Journal of School Nursing*, 5(8), 375-376. doi:10.12968/bjsn.2010.5.8.78906
- Einstadter, W., & Henry, S. (2006). *Criminological theory: An analysis of its underlying assumptions* (2nd ed.). Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.
- ExtremeSpeedDK. (2012, September 2). *Jump London 2003 FULL Video* [Video file]. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l8fSXGP9wvQ>
- Farhud, D. D., Malmir, M., & Khanahmadi, M. (2014). Happiness and health: The biological factors - systematic review article. *Iranian Journal of Public Health*, 43(11), 1468–1477. Retrieved from <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4449495/>

- Fernández-Río, J., & Suarez, C. (2014). Feasibility and students' preliminary views on parkour in a group of primary school children. *Physical Education and Sport Pedagogy*, 1-14. doi: 10.1080/17408989.2014.946008
- FreeYourInstinct. (2015). *Free Your Instinct: About*. Retrieved from <http://freeyourinstinct.org.uk/About.html>
- Fuggle, S. (2008). Discourses of subversion: The ethics and aesthetics of capoeira and parkour. *Dance Research*, 26(2), 204-222. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40264000>
- Gaicho09vvc (2012, Jan 11). *Generation Yamakasi (Full)* [Video file]. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fOYpHLHg6io>
- Gendreau, P., & Andrews, D. A. (1990). Tertiary prevention: What a meta-analysis of the offender treatment literature tells us about 'what works'. *Canadian Journal of Criminology*, 32, 173 –184. Retrieved from <http://heinonline.org/HOL/LandingPage?handle=hein.journals/cjccj32&div=15&id=&page=>
- Gendreau, P., Little, T., & Goggin, C. (1996). A meta-analysis of the predictors of adult offender recidivism: What works! *Criminology*, 34(4), 575-608. doi:10.1111/j.1745-9125.1996.tb01220.x
- Geyh, P. (2006). Urban free flow: a poetics of parkour. *Media-Culture Journal*, 9(3). Retrieved from <http://journal.media-culture.org.au/0607/06-geyh.php>
- Ghelala, S. (1971). *Die natürliche Methode von Georges Hébert* [The natural method by Georges Hébert] (Dissertation). Deutsche Sporthochschule Köln, Cologne, Germany.
- Gilchrist, P., & Wheaton, B. (2011). Lifestyle sport, public policy and youth engagement: Examining the emergence of parkour. *International Journal of Sport Policy*, 3(1), 109-131. doi:10.1080/19406940.2010.547866

- Gould, D., & Carson, S. (2008). Life skills development through sport: Current status and future directions. *International Review of Sport and Exercise Psychology*, *1*(1), 58-78. doi:10.1080/17509840701834573
- Grabowski, D., & Thomsen, S. D. (2014). Parkour as health promotion in schools: A qualitative study focusing on aspects of participation. *International Journal of Education*, *6*(4), 46-61. doi:10.5296/ije.v6i4.63
- Gresham, F. M., & Elliott, S. N. (1987). The relationship between adaptive behavior and social skills: Issues in definition and assessment. *The Journal of Special Education*, *21*(1), 167-181. doi: 10.1177/002246698702100115
- Grosprêtre, S., & Lepers, R. (2015). Performance characteristics of Parkour practitioners: Who are the traceurs? *European Journal of Sport Science*. Advance online publication. doi:10.1080/17461391.2015.1060263
- Guo, S. (2015). Shaping social work science: What should quantitative researchers do? *Research on Social Work Practice*, *25*(3), 370-381. doi:10.1177/1049731514527517
- Guss, N. (2011). Parkour and the multitude: Politics of a dangerous art. *French Cultural Studies*, *22*(1), 73-85. doi:10.1177/0957155810386675
- Hammond, M., & Wellington, J. J. (2012). *Research methods: The key concepts*. London, UK: Routledge.
- Harrison, J. F., Vega, R. A., Machinis, T. G., & Reavey-Cantwell, J. F. (2015). Multiple unilateral traumatic carotid-cavernous sphenoid sinus fistulas with associated massive epistaxis: A consequence of parkour. *The Ochsner Journal*, *15*(1), 92-96. Retrieved from <http://www.ochsnerjournal.org/doi/pdf/10.1043/TOJ-14-0005>
- Heffernan, R., & Ward, T. (2015). The conceptualization of dynamic risk factors in child sex offenders: An agency model. *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, *24*, 250-260. doi:10.1016/j.avb.2015.07.001

- Helmus, L., Hanson, R. K., Babchishin, K. M., & Mann, R. E. (2013). Attitudes supportive of sexual offending predict recidivism: A meta-analysis. *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse, 14*(1), 34-53. doi:10.1177/1524838012462244
- Higgins, J. (2009). The revitalization of space: Freestyle parkour and its audiences. *Theatre Symposium, 17*(1), 113-123. doi:10.1353/tsy.2009.0003
- Hollin, C. R. (1999). Treatment programs for offenders: Meta-analysis, "what works," and beyond. *International Journal of Law and Psychiatry, 22*(3), 361-372. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Clive_Hollin/publication/256979458_Treatment_Programs_for_Offenders_Meta-Analysis_What_Works_and_Beyond/links/0c96052529937465a0000000.pdf
- Hubbard, D. J., & Pealer, J. (2009). The importance of responsivity factors in predicting reductions in antisocial attitudes and cognitive distortions among adult male offenders. *The Prison Journal, 89*(1), 79-98. doi:10.1177/0032885508329987
- Jick, T. D. (1979). Mixing qualitative and quantitative methods: Triangulation in action. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 24*(4) 602-611. doi:10.2307/2392366
- Johnson, M. (2014). *Morality for humans*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Kidder, J. L. (2012). Parkour, the affective appropriation of urban space, and the real/virtual dialectic. *City & Community, 11*(3), 229-253. doi: 10.1111/j.1540-6040.2012.01406.x
- Kidder, J. L. (2013a). Parkour, masculinity, and the city. *Sociology of Sport Journal, 30*, 1-23. Retrieved from http://www.fitnessforlife.org/AcuCustom/Sitenam/Documents/DocumentItem/01_kidder_SJ_20120018_1-23-ej.pdf
- Kidder, J. L. (2013b). Parkour: Adventure, Risk, and Safety in the Urban Environment. *Qualitative Sociology, 36*(3), 231-250. doi:10.1007/s11133-013-9254-8
- Lamb, M. D. (2014a). Misuse of the monument: The art of parkour and the discursive limits of a disciplinary architecture. *Journal of Urban Cultural Studies, 1*(1), 107-126. doi:10.1386/jucs.1.1.107_1

- Lamb, M. D. (2014b). Self and the city: Parkour, architecture, and the interstices of the 'knowable' city. *Liminalities: A Journal of Performance Studies*, 10(2), 1-20.
Retrieved from <http://liminalities.net/10-2/parkour.pdf>
- Laws, D. R., & Ward, T. (2011). *Desistance from sex offending: Alternatives to throwing away the keys*. New York, NY: Guilford Press.
- Lebreton, F., Routier, G., Héas, S., & Bodin, D. (2010). Urban culture and physical and sports activities: The "sportification" of parkour and street golf as cultural mediation. *Revue Canadienne de Sociologie/Canadian Review of Sociology*, 47(3), 293-317.
doi:10.1111/j.1755-618X.2010.01239.x
- London Councils (n.d.). *Cultural services and youth offending*. Retrieved from http://www.google.co.nz/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=2&ved=0CCMQFjAB&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.londoncouncils.gov.uk%2FLondon%2520Councils%2FWWCs%2Fyouthoffending.pdf&ei=idNQVNTKNs_M8gWEnYKIBA&usg=AFQjCNG_Is8CKsWoU0sGSO95tth5vXv-HQ&sig2=W2o3k8ihndedKI6QuLbiYQ
- Marshall, B. (2010). Running across the rooves of empire: Parkour and the postcolonial city. *Modern & Contemporary France*, 18(2), 157-173. doi:10.1080/09639481003714872
- Marshall, W. L. (2009). Manualization: A blessing or a curse? *Journal of Sexual Aggression*, 15(2), 109-120. doi:10.1080/13552600902907320
- Martinson, R. (1974). What works? Questions and answers about prison reform. *The Public Interest*, 35(2), 22-54. Retrieved from <http://search.proquest.com/openview/a4b7e0c5910d8450128999e56bff9dbc/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=1817076>
- Maruna, S. (2001). *Making good: How ex-convicts reform and rebuild their lives*. Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association.
- McGuire, J. (2002). Criminal sanctions versus psychologically-based interventions with offenders: A Comparative empirical analysis. *Psychology, Crime & Law*, 8(2), 183-208. doi:10.1080/10683160208415005

- McGuire, J., Bilby, C. A., Hatcher, R. M., Hollin, C. R., Hounsome, J., & Palmer, E. J. (2008). Evaluation of structured cognitive-behavioural treatment programmes in reducing criminal recidivism. *Journal of Experimental Criminology*, *4*(1), 21-40. doi:10.1007/s11292-007-9047-8
- McLean, C. R., Houshian, S., & Pike, J. (2006). Paediatric fractures sustained in parkour (free running). *Injury*, *37*(8), 795-797. doi:10.1016/j.injury.2006.04.119
- McNeill, P. (1990). *Research methods* (2nd ed.). London: New York: Routledge.
- Merritt, C. J., & Tharp, I. J. (2013). Personality, self-efficacy and risk-taking in parkour (free-running). *Psychology of Sport and Exercise*, *14*(5), 608-611. doi:10.1016/j.psychsport.2013.03.001
- Michellehsien. (2006, July 23). *Speed Air Man--David Belle* [Video file]. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ippMPPu6gh4>
- Miller, J. R., & Demoiny, S. G. (2008). Parkour: A new extreme sport and a case study. *The Journal of Foot and Ankle Surgery*, *47*(1), 63-65. doi:10.1053/j.jfas.2007.10.011
- Moffitt, T. E. (1993). Adolescence-limited and life-course-persistent antisocial behavior: A developmental taxonomy. *Psychological Review*, *100*(4), 674-701. doi:10.1037/0033-295X.100.4.674
- Mould, O. (2009). Parkour, the city, the event. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, *27*(4), 738-750. doi:10.1068/d111108
- Murphy, M. C. (2001). *Natural law and practical rationality*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Nichols, G. (2007). *Sport and crime reduction*. New York: Routledge.
- Norton, C. L., Tucker, A., Russell, K. C., Bettmann, J. E., Gass, M. A., Gillis, H. L., & Behrens, E. (2014). Adventure therapy with youth. *Journal of Experiential Education*, *37*(1), 46-59. doi:10.1177/1053825913518895

- NZ Parkour. (2014). Strategic Plan 2014 – 2020. Retrieved from <http://nzparkour.co.nz/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/NZ-Parkour-Strategic-Plan-2014-2020.pdf>
- O'Brien, S. (2011). *Jump cutting: tracing parkour as invisible spectacle through the filmic city* (Master's dissertation, The University of Canterbury, Christchurch, NZ). Retrieved from http://ir.canterbury.ac.nz/xmlui/bitstream/handle/10092/6205/thesis_fulltext.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y
- O'Grady, A. (2012). Tracing the city: Parkour training, play and the practice of collaborative learning. *Theatre, Dance and Performance Training*, 3(2), 145-162. doi:10.1080/19443927.2012.686450
- O'Loughlin, A. (2012). A door for creativity: Art and competition in parkour. *Theatre, Dance and Performance Training*, 3(2), 192-198. doi:10.1080/19443927.2012.689131
- Olver, M. E., Stockdale, K. C., & Wormith, J. S. (2011). A meta-analysis of predictors of offender treatment attrition and its relationship to recidivism. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 79(1), 6-21. doi:10.1037/a0022200
- Ogloff, J. R. P., & Davis, M. R. (2004). Advances in offender assessment and rehabilitation: Contributions of the risk–needs–responsivity approach. *Psychology, Crime & Law*, 10(3), 229-242. doi:10.1080/10683160410001662735
- Ortuzar, J. (2009). Parkour or l'art du déplacement: A kinetic urban utopia. *The Drama Review*, 53(3), 54-66. doi:10.1162/dram.2009.53.3.54
- Parkour Dance Company. (2015, September 1). *Forever Young (Parkour Dance for Seniors)* [Video file]. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rDHcWsJSYcY>
- ParkourGenerations. (2015). *ParkourGenerations*. Retrieved from <http://parkourgenerations.com/>
- ParkourONE (2012, Mar 7). *Parkour - Der Weg ist das Ziel - Reportage über ParkourONE Berlin Teil 1* [Video file]. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-bYFIMrbZL4>

- Parkourpedia. (2012). *Other movement arts*. Retrieved from <http://parkourpedia.com/about/other-movement-arts>
- Pawson, R., & Tilley, N. (1997). An introduction to scientific realist evaluation. In E. Chelmsky & W. R. Shadish (Eds), *Evaluation for the 21st century: A handbook* (pp. 405-418). Thousand Oaks, CA, US: Sage Publications.
- Pettersen, D. (2014). American genre film in the French Banlieue: Luc Besson and Parkour. *Cinema Journal*, 53(3), 26-51. doi:10.1353/cj.2014.0024
- Pilou. (2009). *Practical guide of physical education (1912 edition) by Georges Hébert*. Retrieved from <http://parkour.gr/books/physed-guide-hebert-nov09.pdf>
- Polaschek, D. L. (2012). An appraisal of the risk–need–responsivity (RNR) model of offender rehabilitation and its application in correctional treatment. *Legal and Criminological Psychology*, 17(1), 1-17. doi:10.1111/j.2044-8333.2011.02038.x
- Puddle, D. L., & Maulder, P. S. (2013). Ground reaction forces and loading rates associated with parkour and traditional drop landing techniques. *Journal of Sports Science & Medicine*, 12(1), 122-129. Retrieved from <http://www.jssm.org/research.php?id=jssm-12-122.xml>
- Purvis, M., Ward, T., & Shaw, S. (2013). *Applying the good lives model to the case management of sexual offenders: A practical guide for probation officers, parole officers, and case workers*. Brandon, VT: Safer Society Press.
- Purvis, M., Ward, T., & Willis, G. (2011). The Good Lives Model in practice: Offence pathways and case management. *European Journal of Probation*, 3(2), 4-28. doi:10.1177/206622031100300202
- Purvis, M., Ward, T., & Willis, G. M. (2014). The Good Lives Model of offender rehabilitation. In M. S. Carich & S. E. Mussack (Eds.), *Handbook of sexual abuser assessment and treatment* (pp. 193-220). Vermont, Brandon: The Safer Society Press.

- Rawlinson, C., & Guaralda, M. (2011, April). *Play in the city: Parkour and architecture*. Paper presented at the First International Postgraduate Conference on Engineering, Designing and Developing the Built Environment for Sustainable Wellbeing, Brisbane. Retrieved from http://eprints.qut.edu.au/42506/1/2011009216_Rawlinson_ePrints.pdf
- Rohan, M. J. (2000). A rose by any name? The values construct. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 4(3), 255-277. doi:10.1207/S15327957PSPR0403_4
- Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2000). Self-determination theory and the facilitation of intrinsic motivation, social development, and well-being. *American Psychologist*, 55(1), 68-78. doi:10.1037/0003-066X.55.1.68
- Rybas, N., & Gajjala, R. (2007, September). Developing cyberethnographic research methods for understanding digitally mediated identities. *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 8(3). Retrieved from <http://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs/article/view/282/619>
- Saville, S. J. (2008). Playing with fear: parkour and the mobility of emotion. *Social & Cultural Geography*, 9(8), 891-914. doi:10.1080/14649360802441440
- Scheufele, D. A. (2013). Communicating science in social settings. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 110(Supplement 3), 14040-14047. Retrieved from http://www.pnas.org/content/110/Supplement_3/14040.full?cited-by=yes&legid=pnas:110/Supplement_3/14040#cited-by
- Schwartz, S. H. (1992). Universals in the content and structure of values: Theoretical advances and empirical tests in 20 countries. *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, 25(1), 1-65. Retrieved from <http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.220.3674&rep=rep1&type=pdf>
- Silla, V. (Producer), & Zeitoun, A. (Director). (2001). *Yamakasi: The samurai of the modern age* [Motion picture]. France: Europa Corp.

- Slamcamspam. (2007, December 14). *Yamakasi Q&A Rendezvous II pt.1* [Video file]. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cfm_xUV2xkI
- Stapleton, S., & Terrio, S. (2012). Le parkour: Urban street culture and the commoditization of male youth expression. *International Migration*, 50(6), 18-27. doi:10.1111/j.1468-2435.2010.00616.x
- StormFreerun. (2014, July 27). *FULL David Belle Interview - The founder of Parkour and star of District B13* [Video file]. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZXVvjtG2H8c&list=PL265C23843984371D>
- Taylor, J. E. T., Witt, J., & Sugovic, M. (2011). When walls are no longer barriers: Perception of wall height in parkour. *Perception*, 40(6), 757-760. doi:10.1068/p6855
- Terry, D. J., & Hogg, M. A. (1996). Group norms and the attitude-behavior relationship: A role for group identification. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 22(8), 776-793. doi:10.1177/0146167296228002
- Thibault, V. (2013). *Parkour and the Art du déplacement: Strength, dignity, community*. Montréal: Baraka Books.
- Thomson, D. (2008). Jump city: Parkour and the traces. *South Atlantic Quarterly*, 107(2), 251-263. doi:10.1215/00382876-2007-065
- Thorpe, H., & Ahmad, N. (2013). Youth, action sports and political agency in the Middle East: Lessons from a grassroots parkour group in Gaza. *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*. doi:10.1177/1012690213490521
- Tillmans, B. (1956). *Die "natürlichen" Formen in der Leibeserziehung, vornehmlich dargestellt an der "Méthode Naturelle" von Georges Hébert* [The "natural" forms in physical education, primarily presented through the "natural method" of Georges Hébert] (Dissertation). Deutsche Sporthochschule Köln, Cologne, Germany.

- Travers, R., Mann, R. E., & Hollin, C. R. (2014). Who benefits from cognitive skills programs? Differential impact by risk and offense type. *Criminal Justice and Behavior, 41*(9), 1103-1129. doi:10.1177/0093854814543826
- Turner, M. G., Hartman, J. L., Exum, M. L., & Cullen, F. T. (2007). Examining the cumulative effects of protective factors: Resiliency among a national sample of high-risk youths. *Journal of Offender Rehabilitation, 46*(1-2), 81-111.
doi:10.1080/10509670802071535
- Wallace, J. D. (2009). *Norms and practices*. New York: Cornell University Press.
- Wallace, M. B. P. (2013). *Determining the social and psychological reasons for the emergence of parkour and free running: An interpretive phenomenological analysis* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Salford, Salford, Manchester, UK). Retrieved from: http://usir.salford.ac.uk/30813/1/determining_the_social_and_psychological.pdf
- Wanke, E. M., Thiel, N., Groneberg, D. A., & Fischer, A. (2013). Parkour: "Art of movement" and its injury risk. *Sportverletzung-Sportschaden, 27*(3), 169-176.
doi:10.1055/s-0033-1350183
- Ward, T. (2000). Sexual offenders' cognitive distortions as implicit theories. *Aggression and Violent Behavior, 5*(5), 491-507. doi:10.1016/S1359-1789(98)00036-6
- Ward, T. (2002a). Good lives and the rehabilitation of offenders: Promises and problems. *Aggression and Violent Behavior, 7*(5), 513-528. doi:10.1016/S1359-1789(01)00076-3
- Ward, T. (2002b). The management of risk and the design of good lives. *Australian Psychologist, 37*(3), 172-179. doi:10.1080/00050060210001706846
- Ward, T. (2010). The Good Lives Model of offender rehabilitation: Basic assumptions, aetiological commitments, and practice implications. In F. McNeill, P. Raynor & C. Trotter (Eds.), *Offender supervision: New directions in theory, research and practice*. Cullompton, UK: Willan Publishing.

- Ward, T., & Beech, A. R. (2015). Dynamic risk factors: A theoretical dead-end? *Psychology, Crime & Law*, *21*(2), 100-113. doi:10.1080/1068316X.2014.917854
- Ward, T., & Brown, M. (2004). The good lives model and conceptual issues in offender rehabilitation. *Psychology, Crime & Law*, *10*(3), 243-257.
doi:10.1080/10683160410001662744
- Ward, T., & Fisher, D. (2006). New ideas in the treatment of sexual offenders. In W. L. Marshall, Y. M. Fernandez, L. E. Marshall, & G. A. Serran (Eds.), *Sexual offender treatment: Issues and controversies* (pp. 143-158). Chichester, UK: John Wiley & Sons.
- Ward, T., & Fortune, C. A. (2016). From dynamic risk factors to causal processes: A methodological framework. *Psychology, Crime & Law*, *22*, 190-202.
doi:10.1080/1068316X.2015.1117080
- Ward, T., & Marshall, W. L. (2004). Good lives, aetiology and the rehabilitation of sex offenders: A bridging theory. *Journal of Sexual Aggression*, *10*(2), 153-169.
doi:10.1080/13552600412331290102
- Ward, T., & Marshall, B. (2007). Narrative identity and offender rehabilitation. *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*, *51*(3), 279-297.
doi:10.1177/0306624X06291461
- Ward, T. M., & Maruna, S. (2007). *Rehabilitation: Beyond the risk paradigm*. New York; London: Routledge.
- Ward, T., Melsner, J., & Yates, P. M. (2007). Reconstructing the Risk–Need–Responsivity model: A theoretical elaboration and evaluation. *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, *12*(2), 208-228. doi:10.1016/j.avb.2006.07.001
- Ward, T., & Stewart, C. A. (2003). The treatment of sex offenders: Risk management and good lives. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, *34*(4), 353-360.
doi:10.1037/0735-7028.34.4.353

- Ward, T., & Willis, G. M. (in press). The rehabilitation of offenders: Good lives and risk reduction. In G. Davis & A. Beech (Eds.), *Forensic psychology* (3rd ed.). Oxford: Wiley Blackwell.
- Ward, T., Yates, P. M., & Willis, G. M. (2012). The good lives model and the risk need responsivity model: A critical response to Andrews, Bonta, and Wormith (2011). *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 39(1), 94-110. doi:10.1177/0093854811426085
- Will, F. L. (1993). Philosophic governance of norms. *Jahrbuch für Recht und Ethik / Annual Review of Law and Ethics*, 1, 329–361. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/43579299>
- Willis, G. M., & Grace, R. C. (2008). The quality of community reintegration planning for child molesters: Effects on sexual recidivism. *Sexual Abuse: A Journal of Research and Treatment*, 20(2), 218-240. doi:10.1177/1079063208318005
- Willis, G. M., & Ward, T. (2013). The good lives model: Evidence that it works. In L. Craig, L. Dixon & T. A. Gannon (Eds.), *What works in offender rehabilitation: An evidence based approach to assessment and treatment* (pp. 305-318). West Sussex, UK: John Wiley & Sons.
- Wilson, S. J., & Lipsey, M. W. (2000). Wilderness challenge programs for delinquent youth: a meta-analysis of outcome evaluations. *Evaluation and Program Planning*, 23(1), 1-12. doi:10.1016/S0149-7189(99)00040-3
- Witfeld, J., Gerling, I. E., & Pach, A. (2011). *The ultimate parkour & freerunning book: Discover your possibilities*. Aachen: Meyer & Meyer Verlag.
- Wormith, J. S., Gendreau, P., & Bonta, J. (2012). Deferring to clarity, parsimony, and evidence in reply to Ward, Yates, and Willis. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 39(1), 111-120. doi:10.1177/0093854811426087

Appendix A

Academic Literature on Parkour/Freerunning

With the growing popularity of *parkour/freerunning*, researchers from different academic disciplines have started to investigate various aspects of the practice. In my view, this is an essential step towards conceptualising the practice because academic enquiry has the potential to provide insights to the mechanisms promoting psychological and social changes in practitioners. Therefore, a broad literature search was conducted to identify relevant academic work on *parkour/freerunning* to date.

A1.1 Literature Search

In order to get a comprehensive overview of the academic literature currently available, three academic search engines were employed: Web of Science, ProQuest, and Google Scholar. The search identified 42 subject-specific scholarly articles and two doctoral theses that contained the key terms *parkour* or *freerunning* in the title, and that were available in English language before 1 June 2015. With the first publications in 2006, the field has only had a few years to develop, and has predominantly focussed on describing the practice and experiences of *traceurs/freerunners*.

A wide range of cross-disciplinary publications in academic journals demonstrates that *parkour/freerunning* has become a topic of interest in sports science, physiology and medicine, ethnography and cultural studies, sociology and psychology, performance, theatre and movement arts, urban, social and cultural geography, and public policy. Amongst the recurring topics addressed by these publications are enquiries into aspects of the historical development (e.g., Angel, 2011; Marshall, 2010), as well as descriptions of the training and practice, its meanings and motivations (e.g., Clegg & Butryn, 2012; Wallace, 2013). In the following sections, I will give an overview of common themes and methodologies, complemented by a selection of important findings and conclusions¹³. A comprehensive list of topics and ideas addressed in the non-empirical academic literature is provided in Table A1 at the end of appendix A. For specific information regarding topic, method, major findings and conclusions of each empirical article, see Table A2.

¹³ Note that most of the identified academic literature employs the term *parkour* to refer to the integrated or hybrid practice (conceptualised as *parkour/freerunning* in this thesis). When describing the studies in the subsequent sections, I attempt to reflect the authors' original ideas as accurately as possible and will adopt their diction. Thus, *parkour* and *freerunning* might be used synonymously in some instances for the remainder of chapter 2.

A1.2 Thematic Overview

Although the academic literature on *parkour/freerunning* identified above is limited to less than 50 scholarly manuscripts, the practice has been approached from a great range of perspectives. In this section, I aim to provide a broad overview of the major topics and themes discussed in the current literature. In brief, the most common research topics in *parkour/freerunning* include: art and creativity; the interplay between individuality and the collective; learning and self-development; the globalisation and dissemination of the practice via media, internet and sport performance; play and youth engagement; physical health including health promotion and injury, risk and safety; the relationship between self, environment and personal development; as well as autonomy, freedom and empowerment.

Parkour/freerunning has been explored as a collectively developed **art** form providing room for **creativity, individuality, community**, as well as collaborative **learning and self-development** (Geyh, 2006; Guss, 2011; Higgins, 2009; O'Grady, 2012). Some authors have drawn links to other forms of movement such as skateboarding, capoeira, dance, and extreme sports (e.g., Fuggle, 2008; Higgins, 2009; Wallace, 2013). Others have attempted to track recent developments and influences of modern society on the evolution of *parkour/freerunning*, such as its commoditisation and commercialisation as a **sport, globalisation**, as well as the utilisation and effect of internet and **media** representation (Archer, 2010; Kidder, 2012; Stapleton & Terrio, 2012).

Furthermore, *parkour/freerunning* has been conceptualised as **playful activity** which can generate social and spatial value through reinterpretation of tight concrete landscapes and mundane environments (Ameel & Tani, 2012b; Rawlinson & Guaralda, 2011). Due to the playful and inclusive nature of the practice paired with its high accessibility, *parkour/freerunning* has been discussed as a tool for **youth engagement** and **health** promotion (Ameel & Tani, 2012b; Fernández-Río & Suarez, 2014; Gilchrist & Wheaton, 2011; Grabowski & Thomsen, 2014; Rawlinson & Guaralda, 2011). Further discussions of the health aspect have included both critical reports of injury (e.g., McLean et al., 2006; Miller & Demoiny, 2008), and positive evaluations of reduced impact on the body, beneficial effects for fitness and general well-being (Edwardes, 2010; Puddle & Maulder, 2013). In addition, **risk**-taking and adventurism among *parkour/freerunning* practitioners have been explored in relation to other personality traits, their interplay with rituals of safety, and the capacity to manage risk (Kidder, 2013b; Merritt & Tharp, 2013).

Multiple authors have noted that the way in which *traceurs* interact with places influences the **relationship between self and environment**. Through the use of architecture in novel and unintended ways, *parkour/freerunning* practitioners are considered to actively reinterpret space, and emotionally engage with places including encounters of personal fears (Ameel & Tani, 2012a; Brunner, 2011; Saville, 2008). This way of interacting with the environment has demonstrated measurable effects on the individual's perception of obstacle height and the usability of the built environment often referred to as *parkour vision* (Taylor, Witt, & Sugovic, 2011; Thomson, 2008). Furthermore, some authors have argued that the reinterpretation of and emotional engagement with space provides a means of **self-expression, self-exploration and self-development** (e.g., Lamb, 2014b). This idea is complemented by examinations of how the practice may offer a pathway to expression of individual and social identity, their formation, and transformation (Angel, 2011; De Martini Ugolotti, 2015; Fuggle, 2008; Kidder, 2013a).

Complementing the discussions on transforming the self, researchers have explored elements of **empowerment, freedom and autonomy** in *parkour/freerunning* (e.g., Ortuzar, 2009). According to Lamb (2014a), the use of urban and public spaces in unintended ways challenges social norms and power relations embedded in the architectural design of the city. Taken together with the rejection of competition, equipment, elitist approaches and strict rules common in traditional sports, the practice has been interpreted as a form of resistance and ideological critique of capitalistic structures (Atkinson, 2009; Bavinton, 2007; Mould, 2009). By calling social and cultural norms into question and challenging physical, psychological and economic limits, *parkour/freerunning* has been proposed to further autonomous thinking as well as political agency (Chow, 2010; Mould, 2009; Thorpe & Ahmad, 2013).

A1.3 Methodological Overview

While the thematic overview has provided insights into the multiple facets of *parkour/freerunning*, a focus on methodology helps to critically evaluate the nature, quality and scope of the research identified above. In order to separate articles involving some form of empirical data collection from those that did not, each article was categorised as either empirical or non-empirical. The non-empirical category contains commentaries and conceptualisations of *parkour* practice in terms of existing theoretical frameworks, as well as reviews based on previous literature or media content (17 non-empirical articles, see Table A1). The empirical label was broadly used to categorise research based on established

methods of observation, even if the article did not follow the recommended structure for a scientific report (i.e., introduction, method, results, discussion). According to this classification, 27 empirical research papers were identified including published journal articles and two doctoral theses (see Table A2). Empirical studies to date have primarily employed qualitative methods and observational data (denoted as QL in the tables; 19 studies including the doctoral theses). Fewer studies have analysed single cases (CS; 4 medical case studies), or quantitative data (QN; 4 studies).

The remainder of this chapter aims to provide a brief methodological overview of the studies in each category. This overview is focussed on the critical evaluation of research methodologies rather than findings and conclusions of the specific studies. Before reviewing non-empirical articles and empirical research methods, I will consider issues that are relevant across categories but specific to the subject of *parkour/freerunning*.

Parkour/freerunning-specific considerations. As evident in the previous chapters, *parkour/freerunning* is a multidimensional practice that is not easily defined (also see Angel, 2011; Fuggle, 2008). While some authors have chosen to use a simple definition focussed on the physical activity, others emphasise the importance of mental and social aspects, as well as the wider scope for personal meaning (see Edwardes, 2010). The general difficulty of defining *parkour/freerunning* is likely to lead to inconsistencies in meaning and employment of the term by different articles. However, ostensible contradictions may be due to a focus on different aspects of the practice, and may be clarified through further research that explicitly explores these inconsistencies (e.g., Angel, 2011; Higgins, 2009; Stapleton & Terrio, 2012) and the multidimensionality of the practice (e.g., Clegg & Butryn, 2012; Wallace, 2013).

Another methodological issue worth mentioning in *parkour/freerunning*-related research is the utilisation of online and media content as a resource. The credibility of web-based information is frequently unknown and should be evaluated critically. However, online resources and social media have played a significant role in the history of *parkour/freerunning*, its dissemination, international communication between practitioners, and shaping of their practice (e.g., O'Brien, 2011). For a considerable amount of information about *parkour/freerunning*, the internet is the only source available, and scholarly articles to date draw heavily from online resources like reports, blog posts, social media, and video content. Thus, the analysis of media content may be an ecologically valid method of observation in the case of *parkour/freerunning*. Nevertheless, the reliability of the content

should be considered with caution and many of the studies categorised as non-empirical do not meet scientific standards of research.

Non-empirical literature. The growing body of theoretical conceptualisations, commentaries and reviews provides a valuable starting point to develop an understanding of the practice from various perspectives. However, non-empirical articles are particularly prone to bias, because they reflect the theoretical assumptions, selective analyses, and subjective interpretations of the authors without empirical data base. Thus, the theoretical perspectives outlined in this literature need to be discussed critically and ultimately supported by empirical evidence.

In particular, the validity of the arguments show major variations depending on the quality and nature of the manuscript. In their most inappropriate format, single articles resemble a poetical rather than a scientific text using metaphorical or decorative language (e.g., Geyh, 2006; Thomson, 2008). While these analyses can offer in-depth insights into specific aspects of the practice, the extent to which a balanced perspective is presented needs to be considered with caution, especially when paired with inadequate citation practices. For instance, Edwardes (2010) advocates that *parkour* is a useful tool for healthy physical and mental growth, pointing to a range of potential benefits. Although Edwardes is the founder of Parkour Generations and a leading expert in the field, this article was written in a commentary style without referencing relevant empirical research.

Empirical research standards. To meet the standards of scientific research, empirical studies need to demonstrate integrity, transparency, accuracy, and the avoidance of bias (Hammond & Wellington, 2012). In order to achieve integrity and completeness, it is generally recommended that authors include the following information: an introduction to the research topic that reviews relevant theoretical background, research, and purpose of the current study; specific detail about the research methodology; an objective presentation of data analyses and results; followed by a well-balanced discussion of the findings that explores alternative explanations; and a complete list of references (McNeill, 1990). This recommendation provides a basic structure for the scientific research report that helps the reader understand the studies' rationale, execution and implications.

In addition to these general recommendations, the research methodology needs to meet a certain standard of scientific rigor. A transparent and sufficiently complete account of the method used may be achieved when enough detail is provided to enable independent

researchers to replicate the study based on the description (Hammond & Wellington, 2012). Such an account should include details on design and variables investigated, participants, materials used and procedure of the investigation. The highest standard of reliability and validity can be achieved through a multi-method approach that uses a variety of measures and multiple sources for data collection (Jick, 1979). Another way to ensure the investigation meets the required standards is to draw on well-established research methodologies. In quantitative research, an experiment is considered the gold standard of empirical investigation that avoids bias in the selection of participants through randomisation (Guo, 2015). However, other research designs can be rationally justified, and practically or ethically more appropriate to answer a specific research question (Scheufele, 2013).

In combination, the aforementioned choices in methodology affect the generalisability of the data which is considered an important factor affecting the practical value of the investigation. Since the level to which the findings may be applicable to a larger population tends to increase with the number of participants, it is crucial to secure a sufficient number of participants appropriate to the methodology (McNeill, 1990). For a general evaluation of the identified research studies across a wide range of subjects and methodologies, this selection of important research standards was used as a set of evaluation criteria.

Qualitative research. The non-empirical literature on *parkour/freerunning* mentioned above is complemented by a growing body of qualitative research of varying quality. While some studies have employed an elaborate multi-method approach (e.g., Angel, 2011; Bavinton, 2007), others lack a dedicated methodology section, and provide only a minimum amount of information about their data collection methods (e.g., Atkinson, 2009; O'Grady, 2012). For instance, Atkinson (2009) used open-ended interviews with 12 *traceurs* conducted over the course of two years; however, no further detail was provided concerning the nature of the participants, interview material, or the procedure employed to collect data.

In addition, most qualitative interview and observational data is prone to selection bias. The majority of interviews were conducted with dedicated practitioners who may display particularly high levels of motivation, whereas only very few studies included participants who were not self-selected *parkour* practitioners (e.g., an entire school class was surveyed by Grabowski & Thomsen, 2014). Together with mainly small sample sizes, this limitation suggests a need for caution when generalising the qualitative findings.

In particular, the case studies often suffer from the problem of restricted generalisability of the findings as they present single cases of injury and selectively focus on

the physical aspects of “parkour sport” (e.g., Harrison, Vega, Machinis, & Reavey-Cantwell, 2015). Moreover, some reports show poor quality of background research and contain information that is clearly incorrect (e.g., Derakhshan, Zarei, Malekmohammady, & Rahimi-Movaghar, 2014, equate *parkour* with a double front flip; Miller & Demoigny, 2008, refer to *parkour* practitioners as “parkouristes” instead of “traceurs”). Moreover, these studies portray *parkour* as a dangerous sport that is likely to cause severe injury. In contrast, the only quantitative study examining acute injury among 266 *traceurs* via an online questionnaire concluded that injuries from *parkour* practice are neither common nor severe, with an average of 1.9 injuries per sport career/year and the most common injury being skin abrasions (Wanke, Thiel, Groneberg, & Fischer, 2013)¹⁴. Although the need for more detailed injury data is indicated, this study demonstrates the potential dangers of focussing on single cases without taking base rates into consideration. Hence, the phenomena discovered through qualitative research also need to be explored quantitatively in order to make inferences about their general applicability to larger populations.

Quantitative research. Only four quantitative studies on *parkour/freerunning* were identified in the literature. Compared to many of the qualitative studies, these articles generally display a more complete reporting style that follows the recommended sections of a scientific report (i.e., introduction, method, results, discussion, references). Due to the small amount of quantitative research articles, each of them will briefly be reviewed to provide a basis for critical evaluation.

DeMartini (2014) conducted an online survey to explore the reactions of recreation administrators to *parkour* activity at American college and university campuses. The survey assessed familiarity with *parkour*, campus policies, and attitudes towards *parkour* activities. Contrary to anecdotal evidence, the administrators in charge reported little worry about injury and legal liability; *parkour* practice was rarely sanctioned. Taken together with the results from a legal analysis, the authors concluded that higher education institutions are unlikely to be liable for injuries that might occur on campus. Although the methodology employed in this study was appropriate to answer the specific research question, it was limited by using merely descriptive data analyses and self-report providing a single-sided perspective from those recreation administrators who chose to respond to the survey.

¹⁴ Note that this German study is not included in the list of English academic literature on *parkour/freerunning*. Yet, it is considered essential to the argument in the methodological overview because it represents the only quantitative study on *parkour/freerunning* injuries identified in the current scholarly literature search.

Another online self-report study assessed the relationship between personality traits, self-efficacy, and risk-taking among *traceurs* using a correlational design (Merritt & Tharp, 2013). The 277 participants completed a 10-item Parkour Self-Efficacy Scale, a 3-item scale on perceived risk-taking during *parkour* training, and the 30-item IPIP-NEO questionnaire to assess the Big Five personality traits. The results showed that higher risk-taking was related to higher levels of neuroticism and lower conscientiousness, while self-efficacy was negatively associated with risk-taking and mediated the above relationships. There was no significant association of extraversion, openness, or agreeableness with risk-taking. In addition, a highly significant correlation between years of experience and self-efficacy suggested that practitioners' belief in their capabilities increased with *parkour* training. However, the generalisability of this finding should be interpreted with caution, because correlations are insufficient to establish causation, the study did not include a comparison group, and a *parkour*-related rather than a general measure of self-efficacy was used.

The only *parkour*-related study that has employed an experimental design to date compared landing force and loading rates between two *parkour* landing techniques (Parkour precision and Parkour roll) and traditional drop landings (Puddle & Maulder, 2013). Ground reaction forces and loading rates were measured with the help of a force plate. Results showed significantly reduced maximal vertical landing force and loading rates for both of the *parkour* techniques suggesting that they are more appropriate for absorbing impact than traditional landings. While the measures demonstrated a high degree of objectivity, this study was restricted to a small sample of 10 male *traceurs* which points to limited generalisability.

The remaining quantitative study used a quasi-experimental design to compare the perception of obstacle height between *traceurs* and untrained novices who were matched with regard to age, sex, and height (Taylor et al., 2011). Participants were asked to estimate the height of three different walls, and rate their confidence in being able to climb these walls. Overall, *traceurs* perceived the obstacles as shorter than novices did, and reported a higher anticipated ability to climb the walls. The authors interpreted these findings as evidence for the conclusion that human perception is scaled by the anticipated ability to act. However, from a methodological point of view, this study may be criticised for its small and unequal sample sizes, which varied for walls of different heights. The quasi-experimental design can further be critiqued for their reduced internal validity compared to a randomised experiment but using self-selected *traceurs* as a comparison to novices has practical and ethical advantages.

To date, the literature points to a large range of benefits *parkour/freerunning* has for those invested in the practice. However, due to the lack of quantitative and methodologically rigorous investigations, it is largely unknown to what extent these benefits can be generalised.

Future research should aim for transparency with regard to the definition of *parkour/freerunning* and research methodology. While academics have started to tread the path to a better understanding of the practice with theoretical conceptualisations and the qualitative explorations, I have emphasised the urgent need for more quantitative studies and high-quality research and theory. The rapidly growing public attention and increasing number of participants evident in the current trends (see chapter 2) is likely to be accompanied by an ongoing interest from researchers. A thorough understanding of *parkour/freerunning* is essential to generate effective research and application in future. Thus, I aim to conceptualise the practice in chapter 3, and explore its applicability to the practice of offender rehabilitation in chapter 5.

Table A1

List of Non-Empirical Academic Literature on Parkour/Freerunning

Author (Year)	Title/ Topic of theoretical analysis	Major Conclusions
1. Archer (2010)	“Virtual poaching and altered space: reading parkour in French visual culture”	- association of <i>parkour</i> and the <i>banlieue</i> (socially deprived suburb) in the media - no clear boundaries between amateur and professional in <i>parkour</i> media (internet film)
2. Brunner (2011)	“Nice-looking obstacles: parkour as urban practice of deterritorialization”	- movement in <i>parkour</i> allows to “make” places through reinterpretation and reshaping of space beyond material boundaries
3. Chow (2010)	“Parkour and the critique of ideology: turn-vaulting the fortresses of the city”	- participatory practice as an ideological critique on capitalism, whereas the spectacular practice is at risk of being absorbed in the machine of capitalist production - capacity of <i>parkour</i> to build a greater sense of political agency
4. Daskalaki et al. (2008)	“Parkour organisation: inhabitation of corporate spaces” - <i>parkour</i> as a challenge to the corporate city	- the city embodies power relationships preserving hegemonic discourses such as globalisation/consumerism, and lacks richness of civic space, activity, and experience - <i>parkour</i> offers a form of urban activism that inspires possibility, urban identity, possibility, and human agency through creative interactions with the city’s “non-places”
5. Edwardes (2010)	“Encouraging physical activity through parkour” - introductory description of <i>parkour</i> practice and some potential benefits	- <i>parkour</i> is a useful tool for healthy physical and mental growth - <i>parkour</i> is accessible to anyone, and has demonstrated usefulness in social inclusion programmes, youth engagement, and decreasing crime
6. Fuggle (2008)	“Discourses of subversion: the ethics and aesthetics of capoeira and parkour” - aspects of subversive discourse evident in capoeira and <i>parkour</i>	- capoeira and <i>parkour</i> both elude easy definition due to their multidimensional nature - they challenge rules and limits of physical capabilities, self and environment, providing a form of resistance, freedom, agency, and a vehicle for identity formation
7. Geyh (2006)	“Urban free flow: A poetics of parkour” - portrayal of <i>parkour</i> ’s origins, meanings, and early media content	- <i>parkour</i> as a poetic form of interacting with the environment - potential to create harmony between body and obstacle, a state of flow, originality, enjoyment and freedom against conformity, regulation and confinement

8. Guss (2011)	<p>“Parkour and the multitude: Politics of a dangerous art”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - fear and danger in <i>parkour</i>, and their role in forming a special type of community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>parkour</i> allows for individuality while forging a group identity - leads to a heterogeneous but integrated collective (“multitude”) which can form a powerful democratic political force - fear usually limits the power of the multitude, but is reinterpreted positively in <i>parkour</i>
9. Higgins (2009)	<p>“The revitalization of space: Freestyle parkour and its audiences”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - representation in media and internet forums 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - distinction between everyday practice focussed on community and self-development, and media representation associated with spectatorship, lawlessness, and subversion - <i>parkour</i> has the potential to revitalize waste spaces of the city and attract attention as a form of theatrical performance
10. Marshall (2010)	<p>“Running across the rooves of empire: Parkour and the postcolonial city”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - emergence of <i>parkour</i> in the historical context of relations between city design and power 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>parkour</i> as an industrial-cinematic and political phenomenon and subculture characterised by a myriad of possibilities and ambiguities - a global judgement of <i>parkour</i> would be inappropriate; its multiple manifestations must be understood in context of the historical and personal development of practitioners
11. O’Loughlin (2012)	<p>“A door for creativity: art and competition in parkour”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the impact of increasing sportisation on <i>parkour</i>’s development as an artistic practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - competition has been associated with increased injury and diverts attention away from the aim of safe, fluid and efficient movement - a sporting approach to <i>parkour</i> may limit the advancement of its creative aspects focused on play, creativity and expressivity
12. Ortuzar (2009)	<p>“Parkour or l’art du déplacement: A kinetic urban utopia”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - physical movement and its evident motives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - desire for mobility, freedom and autonomy are reflected in the way <i>traceurs</i> move through the (urban) environment
13. Pettersen (2014)	<p>“American genre film in the French Banlieue: Luc Besson and parkour”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cinematic review of three <i>parkour</i> films 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - in Luc Besson’s films, successful and commercially feasible cinema is produced through the fusion of French <i>banlieue</i> culture with American genre formulas

14. Rawlinson & Guaralda (2011)	<p>“Play in the city: Parkour and architecture”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - urban play throughout history, with <i>parkour</i> as a modern case study 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - play in the city generate social and spatial value, but also disrupts social and spatial order as it reveals desires for freedom and fears of subversion - <i>parkour</i> has the potential to reduce isolation of play in the city, create positive connections with place, and enhance urban well-being
15. Stapleton & Terrio (2012)	<p>“Le parkour: Urban street culture and the commoditization of male youth expression”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>parkour</i> and its changing faces throughout globalisation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>parkour</i>'s global distribution was accompanied by commoditization - transformation from a localised subversive practice of using public space into a dynamic cultural phenomenon with a high profile in media, internet, and streets - media construction has led to different, hybridised forms of <i>parkour</i> identity
16. Thomson (2008)	<p>“Jump city: parkour and traces”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>parkour</i> as a challenge to different conceptualisations of the city 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - although <i>parkour</i> is lacking particular politics of dissent, it offers alternative ways of seeing, and interacting with the city and other constructions of modern society
17. Thorpe & Ahmad (2013)	<p>“Youth, action sports and political agency in the Middle East: Lessons from a grassroots parkour group in Gaza.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - development of <i>parkour</i> in Gaza, and transnational exchange via social media 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - globalisation, accessibility, and growing popularity of <i>parkour</i> in the Middle East despite a range of social, cultural, economic, physical, and psychological obstacles - proactive approach of <i>traceurs</i>, dedication to skills development, and peer support - benefits for political agency, resilience and coping with emotional strains for refugees

Note. Title indicated by quotation marks.

Table A2

List of Empirical Research on Parkour/Freerunning

Author (Year)	Title/Research Topic	Method	Major Findings/Conclusions
1. Ameel & Tani (2012a)	“Everyday aesthetics in action: Parkour eyes and the beauty of concrete walls”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - QL - interviews with <i>traceurs</i> (N = 18) - analysis focussed on the views of and feelings about everyday environments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>parkour vision</i> offers alternative interpretations of space - appreciation for environments typically considered as mundane through emotional engagement with places
2. Ameel & Tani (2012b)	“Parkour: creating loose spaces?” - loose spaces = open to unexpected use, associated with life and vitality in a city)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - QL - interviews with <i>traceurs</i> (N = 18) - analysis with regard to 3 focus points: playful activity, regulatory practice, and institutionalised spaces (<i>parkour</i> park) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>parkour</i> as a playful, confrontational , and unintended way of moving has the potential to loosen urban spatial structure - can cause confusion and strong reactions amongst observers - <i>traceurs</i> use a combination of legal and moral arguments to negotiate their right to public space, or they simply move on
3. Angel (2011)	“Ciné parkour: a cinematic and theoretical contribution to the understanding of the practice of parkour” - <i>parkour</i> ’s history, documentation and theorisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - QL – audio visual field research - participant observation and documentary filmmaking - self-reflected participation - interviews with key individuals in the development of <i>parkour</i> - discursive analysis of emotional, spatial, physical, political and social experiences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>parkour</i> as a multidimensional, dynamic practice with complexities and contradictions - <i>traceurs</i> are a heterogeneous group - divergence between everyday practice and media spectacle - <i>parkour</i> is experienced as pain and pleasure, play, a flow state, freedom, and a particular way of thinking and socialising - challenging fears, the self and society provides a tool for self-understanding, autonomy, and identity construction
4. Atkinson (2009)	“Parkour, anarcho-environmentalism, and poiesis”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - QL – ethnographic field research - open-ended interviews with <i>traceurs</i> (N = 12) over the course of 2 years - theoretical analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>parkour</i> as anarchic way of using the environment - contains critique on the political economic prescriptions embedded in the capitalist city environment - promotes an aesthetic-spiritual self through artistic, emotional self-expression and reflection

5. Bavinton (2007)	“From obstacle to opportunity: parkour, leisure, and the reinterpretation of constraints”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - QL – multi-method triangulation - 3 data sources: website content; media articles; semi-structured interviews with <i>traceurs</i> ($N = 14$) - textual and discourse analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>traceurs</i> reinterpret constraints embedded in public places as opportunities for leisure and creative play - this form of resistance empowers the individual temporarily to take control over spatial power relations
6. Clegg & Butryn (2012)	“An existential phenomenological examination of parkour and freerunning”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - QL – phenomenological approach (Merleau-Ponty) - interviews with <i>traceurs</i> ($N = 11$) at intermediate-to-advanced level - thematic analysis of experiences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - emerging themes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> play, movement, and risk (bodily experience); community, public, and world (interactive experience) - <i>parkour</i> offers a unique set of bodily and interactive experiences and meaning for practitioners
7. DeMartini (2014)	“Is parkour a problem? College and university liability for extreme sport activities”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - QN – descriptive statistics + legal CS - online survey among American campus recreation administrators ($N = 129$) - legal analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - overall, recreation administrators display little worry - <i>parkour</i> practice on campus is rarely sanctioned - contrary to common concerns, higher education institutions are unlikely to be legally liable for potential injury
8. De Martini Ugolotti (2015)	“Climbing walls, making bridges: children of immigrants’ identity negotiations through capoeira and parkour in Turin”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - QL - ethnographic field research - participant observation, informal interviews, and reflective participation - interviews with: <i>capoeiristas</i> & <i>traceurs</i> ($N = 12$; all children of immigrants aged 12-20), street educators ($N = 8$) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - bodily practices like <i>capoeira</i> and <i>parkour</i> are used to negotiate narratives of self-worth, belonging, and recognition - social identifications for migrants are created through marginalising and excluding urban environments - ambivalent and fluid use of body and space helps redefine social identity and dynamics of inclusion/exclusion
9. Derakhshan et al. (2014)	“Spinal cord injury in Parkour sport (free running): a rare case report”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CS - single medical case study of injury (spinal cord) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>parkour</i> sport can result in irreversible and potentially fatal injury if practiced without taking safety standards into account

10. Fernández-Río & Suarez (2014)	“Feasibility and students' preliminary views on parkour in a group of primary school children.”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - QL - evaluation of a 12 lesson <i>parkour</i> programme in a physical education class - sixth grade students ($N = 26$) - described thoughts about the programme - thematic analysis/constant comparison 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - analysis revealed five major categories that were promoted through <i>parkour</i>: enjoyment, coping with fear, social skills, problem-solving skills, integration - <i>parkour</i> as a safe and valuable educational content with a variety of positive outcomes
11. Gilchrist & Wheaton (2011)	“Lifestyle sport, public policy and youth engagement: Examining the emergence of parkour”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - QL – interviews ($N = 18$) with <i>traceurs</i> and stakeholders in constructing a <i>parkour</i> training area (e.g., police, teachers, community officers) - supplemented by web-based research - thematic analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - training mentality and culture are more inclusive, anti-competitive, and less rule bound than most traditional sports - unique potential for youth engagement, health promotion, and opportunity for managed risk-taking - multidimensional nature of <i>parkour</i> fits with different policy agendas across sport, arts, education, health
12. Grabowski & Thomsen (2014)	“Parkour as health promotion at schools: A qualitative study focusing on aspects of participation”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - QL – investigation of participation in <i>parkour</i> 3 contexts of (regular classes, one-off workshops, physical education at school) - semi-structured interviews with: small groups of children/ adolescents ($N = 90$, 25 groups), school teachers ($N = 6$, individual interviews) - iterative content analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>parkour</i> has potential for school-based health promotion, and for engaging those with high barriers to physical activity - identification of 4 themes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> flexibility (for differentiated teaching); inclusive and engaging approach to training; accessible to a variety of physical capabilities; non-competitive nature/focus on personal development - significant loss in benefits when using briefly trained school teachers instead of professional <i>parkour</i> instructors
13. Harrison et al. (2015)	“Multiple unilateral traumatic carotid-cavernous sphenoid sinus fistulas with associated massive epistaxis: A consequence of parkour.”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CS - single medical case study of injury - description of injury, diagnosis, and treatment intervention 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - first case reported on this specific type of traumatic head injury - early diagnosis and intervention critically important - successful treatment with transarterial and transvenous coil embolization

14. Kidder (2012)	“Parkour, the affective appropriation of urban space, and the real/virtual dialectic”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - QL - blending of extended case method and semi-regular participant observation - formal interviews with <i>traceurs</i> ($N = 22$) - thematic analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - interaction between <i>parkour</i> practitioners and their physical environments is very real and emotionally engaging - images created by media and internet are put into practice - virtual worlds and imagination can affect the way individuals perceive and use their physical surroundings in the real world
15. Kidder (2013a)	“Parkour, masculinity, and the city”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - QL – field research (over 1.5 years) - semi-regular participant observation - formal interviews with <i>traceurs</i> ($N = 22$) - thematic analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - using public spaces in unintended ways is a demonstration of power and control, risk-taking, creativity, and masculinity - construction and maintenance of gender identity through performance in public
16. Kidder (2013b)	“Parkour: Adventure, risk, and safety in the urban environment”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - QL – field research (over 2 years) - semi-regular participant observation - initial active participation + formal interviews with <i>traceurs</i> ($N = 22$) - theoretically driven analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>parkour</i> as a form of urban adventurism that allows to test individual limits and courage - involves interplay between rites of risk and rituals of safety - these challenges provide opportunity to develop character and the capacity to handle risk
17. Lamb (2014a)	“Misuse of the monument: the art of parkour and the discursive limits of a disciplinary architecture”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - QL – field research - ‘epistemology of doing’ = self-reflected participation to gain situated in-depth knowledge - theoretical analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - prescriptions and power relations are implicated in the way public spaces and the city are designed - <i>parkour</i> (mis-)uses public space in novel ways, challenges the embedded power relations and empowers the individual - <i>parkour</i> leaves the city intact while simultaneously transforming it
18. Lamb (2014b)	“Self and the city: parkour, architecture, and the interstices of the ‘knowable’ city”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - QL - mixed methods field research - participation (epistemology of doing) - observation + informal interviews - formal interviews with <i>traceurs</i> ($N = 17$) - thematic analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a city’s architecture contains historical and social context - This context includes self-knowledge and norms that regulate people’s practices and social actions - through unconventional interactions with architecture, <i>traceurs</i> develop new ways of understanding and expressing themselves, as well as personal connections to space and others

19. McLean, et al. (2006)	“Paeadiatric fractures sustained in parkour (freerunning)”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CS - two medical case studies of injury (paediatric fractures) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - first report of injury through <i>parkour</i> - traumatologists should familiarise themselves with <i>parkour</i>, the risks involved, and possible suggestions to reduce risk for patients
20. Merritt & Tharp (2013)	“Personality, self-efficacy and risk-taking in parkour (free-running)”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - QN - correlational design - online survey assessing Big Five, self-efficacy, and perceived risk-taking - among <i>traceurs/freerunners</i> ($N = 277$) - correlational and mediation analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - higher risk-taking is associated with higher neuroticism and lower conscientiousness - this relationship is mediated by self-efficacy (negatively associated with risk-taking) - correlation between experience and (<i>parkour</i>-related) self-efficacy suggesting that belief in one’s capabilities grows with years of training
21. Miller & Demoigny (2008)	“Parkour: A new extreme sport and a case study”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CS - single medical case study of injury (sustained multiple fracture/dislocations of the left foot) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>parkour</i> conceptualised as a dangerous extreme sport - high potential for injury if children and adolescents imitate stunts presented in the media without appropriate instruction
22. Mould (2009)	“Parkour, the city, the event”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - QL – field research - participant observation, active participation, unstructured interviews with <i>traceurs</i> ($N = n.a.$) - supplemented by online resources - content analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>parkour</i> as a subject of debate and a serene form of urban rediscovery - alternative use of the city is often seen as subversive practice and critique of capitalism - however, <i>traceurs</i> perceive the city as a site for exploration rather than a system to rebel against
23. O’Grady (2012)	“Tracing the city: parkour training, play and the practice of collaborative learning”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - QL – theoretical analysis of training and learning processes supported by empirical data - semi-structured interviews with <i>traceurs/freerunners</i> ($N = n.a.$), supplemented by online resources, academic literature, and media content 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - group training as collaborative learning through peer interaction rather than regulated classes - play as an active and effective training approach - repeated actions help to handle physical, mental, and emotional challenges resulting in automatic, embodied knowledge

24. Puddle & Maulder (2013)	“Ground reaction forces and loading rates associated with parkour and traditional drop landing techniques”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - QN - experimental design - (within-subjects) comparison of three drop landing techniques (<i>parkour</i> precision, <i>parkour</i> roll, and traditional) - measure: ground reaction forces, loading - participants: male <i>traceurs</i> ($N = 10$) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - significantly less maximal vertical landing force and loading rate for <i>parkour</i> techniques compared to traditional drop landing - no significant difference between <i>parkour</i> precision and roll - <i>parkour</i> landing techniques are more appropriate for absorbing impact than traditional techniques
25. Saville (2008)	“Playing with fear: Parkour and the mobility of emotion”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - QL – ethnographic field research - self-reflected participation - supplemented by the author’s personal journal entries - theoretical analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>parkour</i> is conceptualised as play, experimenting, and gradual ever-lasting process of learning/self-improvement - <i>traceurs</i> are not fearless but actively seek encounters with and regulation of their emotions - fear is considered a playmate, removing its negative polarity
26. Taylor et al. (2011)	“When walls are no longer barriers: Perception of obstacle height in parkour”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - QN – quasi-experimental design - (between subjects) estimation of <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) the height of 3 different walls b) anticipated ability to climb the wall - novices ($N = 18$) vs. <i>traceurs</i> ($N = 17$ for high wall, $N = 5$ for shorter walls) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>traceurs</i> perceived walls as shorter than untrained novices did, and had higher anticipated ability to climb the wall - suggests that perception is scaled by skill level/ anticipated ability to act
27. Wallace (2013)	“Determining the social and psychological reasons for the emergence of parkour and free running: an interpretive phenomenological analysis”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - QL – interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA) - IPA interviews with <i>parkour/freerunning</i> practitioners ($N = 8$) - thematic analysis of participants’ experiences and motivations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - initial participation is often motivated by enjoyment, thrill seeking, risk, health benefits - practitioners commonly experience: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a sense of mastery, individuality, and belonging; emotional, physical and psychological skills development; authenticity and opportunities for identity (trans-)formation - regular practice provides a sense of spirituality, being in the present and personal meaning

Note. CS = Case study; QL = qualitative interview or observational data; QN = quantitative data. Title indicated by quotation marks.

Appendix B
Summary of the Comparative Analysis

Table B1

Comparison between RNR Model/GLM and Parkour/Freerunning (PK/FR)

Risk-Need-Responsivity (RNR) Model	PK/FR	Good Lives Model (GLM)	PK/FR
<i>Assumptions, aims, and values</i>			
- Human capacity to change	✓	- Shared basic human desires (PHG)	✓
- Individual differences are acknowledged	✓	- Individual differences are acknowledged and capitalised on	✓
- Minimising harm to the community	✓	- Promotion of healthy, prosocial ways of living as a major task	✓
- Management of high-risk situations as a major task	✓	- Central role of personal meaning, purpose and identity	✓
- Central role of empirical evidence	✗		
<i>Etiological assumptions</i>			
- Key learning mechanisms: modelling/observation, reinforcement, rehearsal and automatization	✓	- Problems in Good Life Plans that need to be addressed	
- Factors that need to be addressed:		▪ Scope	✓
▪ Risk factors	✓	▪ Capacity (internal and external)	(✓/✗)
▪ Possible mechanisms	✓	▪ Means	✓
▪ More distal/contextual factors	✓	▪ Coherence/conflict	(✓/✗)
<i>Practice implications</i>			
- Risk principle		- Promotion of PHGs (while managing risk)	✓
▪ Adapt treatment intensity	✓	- Focus on future and strengths (over past and weaknesses)	✓
▪ Cost-efficient	✓	- Approach (over avoidance)	✓
▪ Avoid adverse treatment effects	✓	- Holistic approach	✓
- Need		- Alignment with RNR principles	✓
▪ Target criminogenic needs	✓	- Overcoming obstacles to a prosocial lifestyle	✓
▪ Do not target non-criminogenic needs	✗	- Capitalise on individual differences	✓
▪ Criminogenic needs as explicit treatment targets	(✓/✗)	- Role of personal meaningfulness	✓
- Responsivity		- Role of agency	✓
▪ Engagement	✓	- Utilise environmental resources	✓
▪ Active, participatory methods	✓	- Support the desistance process	✓
▪ Cognitive-behavioural techniques	✓	- Creating a Good Life Plan	(✓/✗)
▪ Easy accessibility	✓		
▪ Individually adjustable	✓		
▪ Circumvent responsivity issues (e.g. poor attention)	✓		

<i>General approach</i>			
- Risk management approach	(✓/✗)	- Strength-based approach	✓
- Embedded in a general and social psychology perspective	(✓/✗)	- Embedded in a general model of healthy human functioning	✓
- Psychology of criminal conduct	(✓/✗)	- Positive psychology perspective	✓