

JUMPING THE BOARDS:
MAKING DECISIONS ABOUT PLAYING
FEMALE HOCKEY

CENTRE FOR NEWFOUNDLAND STUDIES

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**JUMPING THE BOARDS:
MAKING DECISIONS ABOUT PLAYING FEMALE HOCKEY**

by

LeAnne Petherick

**A thesis submitted to the
School of Graduate Studies
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ABSTRACT

This research study explored the social and personal dynamics of adolescent female involvement in hockey in Newfoundland. An interactionist perspective was used to address the process that guided young females' decisions to engage in hockey.

Grounded in an interpretative, qualitative framework, focus group interviews were conducted with 31 young women, 12 –17 years of age. In order to qualify as eligible participants in this study, athletes had to be registered with the Newfoundland and Labrador Hockey Association as members of a female hockey team. Interviews focused on the athletes' initial interest in the sport of hockey, their integration into the game, and their reasons for maintaining their involvement in this pursuit. The study provided these athletes with a forum to discuss the gender factors that facilitate and constrain their participation in female hockey, and, in some cases, male hockey. Information collected from focus groups was continuously analyzed and compared to ensure a rich description and interpretation of participants' experiences.

The findings reported on the socializing agents and significant events that encouraged female participation. From the perspective of the interviewees, female hockey was described as a challenging sport with fulfilling interpersonal relationships and opportunities for increasing confidence and self-esteem that attracted and retained their enthusiasm and commitment to the game. As well, hockey gave them a chance to broaden their socialization patterns as they defied traditional gender role expectations. Thus, recommendations were made to foster the growth of female hockey in Newfoundland as an option for young women interested in engaging in a very rewarding athletic opportunity.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

The 1998 Canadian National Women's hockey team may not have won gold in the Olympics, in Nagano, Japan but they inspired thousands of young women dreaming of hockey stardom. By gaining world class recognition as talented, competitive athletes, female hockey players have commenced the legitimization of the female hockey game. The opportunities available to female hockey players are rapidly expanding. Now, as young women participate in hockey, their dreams of national and international competition may become a reality.

The number of Canadian female hockey players has increased 300% over the last ten years (Canadian Hockey Association, 1998). The current study focuses specifically on female hockey participation in the province of Newfoundland and Labrador. Female hockey in the province is a budding sport and the pattern for participation is consistent with national trends. Females playing hockey in Newfoundland and Labrador constitute 5% of the total provincial hockey participants, which is comparable to the national ratios of female to male hockey participants (Canadian Hockey Association, 1998). Although female hockey players still represent a small percentage of the hockey registry, the number of female participants is increasing while male participation numbers are decreasing. Male participation numbers in the province, from 1988-1998, decreased 19% from 10,672 to 8,702, while female participation rose from 182 to 526 (189%) over the same time period (Canadian Hockey Association, 1998). This statistical 'picture' provides evidence of the exponential growth in female hockey participation.

The present research into young females' experiences in hockey provided insight into the culture of female hockey in Newfoundland. As Glynis Peters, the manager of Women's Programs for the Canadian Hockey Association, states: "It is clear that the decisions we make now will determine the face of women's hockey in the next millennium" (Avery & Stevens, 1997, p. 215).

Statement of the Problem

Women's participation in sport is continuously advancing and is being accompanied by a growing body of research investigating this female experience (Avery & Stevens, 1997; Boutilier & SanGiovanni, 1983; Cahn, 1994; Etue & Williams, 1996; Griffin, 1992; Griffin, 1998; Hall, 1988; Henderson, Bialeschki, Shaw & Freysinger, 1996; Higginson, 1985; Holland & Andre, 1994; Kane, 1988; Kleiber & Kane, 1984; Lenskyj, 1987; Lirgg, 1992; Markula, 1995; McDermott, 1996; Messner, 1994; Messner & Sabo, 1990; Robinson, 1997; Ryckman & Hamel, 1992; Sabo, 1988; Shaw, 1994; Theberge, 1987; Theberge, 1995a; Theberge, 1995b; Theberge, 1997; Vanfossan & Sabo, 1988; Varpalotai, 1987; Wearing, 1992; Willis, 1994). The literature regarding female sport participation has largely focused on comparing gender differences. Investigating the female / male dichotomy in sport by equating their involvement reaffirms the gender distinctions that guide sport culture (Theberge, 1994). This avenue of researching becomes cyclical and contributes minimal information about the experience of sport participation (Coakley, 1998). Nonetheless, gender relations affect females' experiences in sport, yet specific knowledge about the female sport experience is inadequate. The

current study was designed to address the problem of insufficient literature concerning women's sport participation.

The broad field of sport participation research raises many issues and questions that are relevant when applied to the sport of female hockey. An overview of the issues confronting female athletes' sports participation will lead to an examination of the concerns germane to females' involvement in hockey. Sport participation is affected by a number of extraneous pressures; family members and peers can promote or deter sport participation, performance expectations can inhibit or inspire participation and social expectations attached to various sporting events can selectively recruit particular participants. This melange of factors affects individual choices for engaging in sport participation (Anderssen, & Wold, 1992; Synder & Spreitzer, 1973; Wood & Abernethy, 1989).

During adolescence, sport participation provides a forum for self-expression and self-development. During this stage of social development adolescents engaging in physical activities begin to realize that others are evaluating their performance. This notion can lead to feelings of either apprehension or anticipation about involvement in sport. Regardless, the concern about others' judgments affects adolescent participation (Coleman, 1961; Holland & Andre, 1994; Kane, 1988; Shaw, Kleiber & Caldwell, 1995; Thirer & Wright, 1985; Williams & Andersen, 1987). Peer evaluation during adolescence can discourage potential participants from engaging in sport because of the scrutiny of players' abilities and bodies which are revealed when involved in physical activities. However, sport participation for some youth can be used as an exhibition

ground to convey their self-confidence and prowess. Also, within the adolescent sport participation literature, there are studies investigating the relationship between adolescent involvement in athletics and its association to personal goals and social status among peers (Coakley, 1993; Holland & Andre, 1994; Thirer & Wright, 1985; Woolger & Power, 1993; Williams & White, 1983). However, only a limited amount of literature has focused specifically on adolescent females' participation in sport and its relation to their personal expectations and social standing (Kane, 1988; Synder & Spreitzer, 1983; Vanfossen & Sabo, 1988). By examining female hockey participants' experiences in this sport, the current research made a small contribution to the deficiencies in sport literature that have overlooked young women's involvement in sport.

As females explore the context of various sports, they become aware of the gender relations that exist within this social institution. According to Hall (1991) and Theberge (1994; 1997), the nature of female sport participation highlights issues of gender. Male power and physical prowess in sport are confirmed by their ability to maintain ascendancy over females which perpetuates masculine hegemony; otherwise defined as, the unequal power relationship that separates and maintains the gender order for male and female sport participants. For example, Theberge (1997) has investigated women's hockey participation and the gender divisions in the sport. Women's hockey faces a battle to gain legitimacy as a sport because it deviates from the traditional male game. Although individual women in her study gained a sense of empowerment, they believed the perception of women's hockey was inferior since it is not modeled after the male game. The current study sought corroboration of these views towards gender

differences in hockey as related through the experiences of the female players playing hockey in Newfoundland.

Although society is beginning to accept females' participation in sport, many traditional assumptions remain that limit women's development as athletes. These views are based on outdated notions of femininity that restrict athletic participation (Whitson, 1990). Therefore, engaging in sports that develop physical strength, speed, and skill creates difficulties for the female athlete because femininity and heterosexual attraction are not defined by the acquisition of these qualities (Griffin, 1998). The contradictions between athleticism and femininity have functioned to prohibit women from experiencing the physical capabilities of their bodies. The experiences of young female hockey players in a physically aggressive sport were collected to explore the difficulties encountered as they challenge traditional definitions of femininity.

As well, the stereotypical view of females in aggressive, contact sports provokes images of mannish, unattractive women. The diversion from traditional ideals of female behaviour calls women's sexuality into question (Boutilier & SanGiovanni, 1983; Cahn, 1994; Griffin, 1998; Hall, 1988; Henderson, Bialeschki, Shaw & Freysinger, 1996). Society assumes these 'manly' women are lesbians since they do not display traditional feminine characteristics (Bennett, Whitaker, Woolley Smith & Sablove, 1987). In some cases, the lesbian suspicion of the female athlete parallels her skill level (Boutilier & SanGiovanni, 1983; Cahn, 1994). In fact, as women begin to challenge men in sport, the literature has disclosed that the lesbian stigma functions to deflate women's accomplishments and is used to further suppress women's challenging behaviours

(Bennett, Whitaker, Woolley-Smith & Sablove, 1987; Griffin, 1998; Hall, 1988; Messner, 1994). Gathering young female hockey players' testimony about their experiences in hockey explored the stigmatizing factors that influence their participation decisions.

According to McGuire Jr. and Cook (1984), the best possible means of understanding athletes' experiences is by allowing them to describe and explain their interpretation of their participation in sport. Allowing young female hockey players the opportunity to discuss their involvement in hockey provides them with a chance to define themselves and to draw conclusions about their development as female hockey players.

To summarize, there was a need for the current research study to give adolescent female hockey players in Newfoundland a voice to describe the socializing factors influencing their participation and their understanding of hockey's contribution to their identity formation. Attempting to address the deficiency in literature surrounding female adolescent sport participation, the current investigation of female hockey contributed to the body of knowledge about gender relations in sport. As young Newfoundland women confront and challenge gender role expectations, individual experiences deserved to be heard.

The Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study was to describe females' participation choices for playing hockey. Primarily, the study focused on females' negotiation of the facilitating and constraining factors that influenced and maintained their involvement in the game. By exploring young females' participation in hockey, the study attempted to understand

young women's development as it related to their involvement in this game. Taken from the participants' perspective the study determined how female hockey and its athletes are received within the larger hockey community in Newfoundland.

The Research Question

The current research focused on understanding females' socialization into the game of hockey and the factors maintaining their participation. The primary research question which guided the study was:

What was the experience of young females as they continued and commenced hockey participation during adolescence?

Definition of Key Terms

Adolescence

Adolescence is a time for identity formation and rapid developmental change; males and females become aware of the social roles that ascribe certain behaviours and characteristics to each sex (Shaw, Kleiber & Cladwell, 1995). The adolescent period defined in the current study was 12 to 17 years old.

Gender

Gender is a social-theoretical construct used to differentiate the male and female sex; it constitutes masculinity and femininity (Hall, 1988; Shaw, 1995; Theberge & Birrell, 1994).

Participation Levels in Female Hockey

There are three levels of female hockey participation discussed in this study. One division of play is a recreation level. Within the study, participants from three locations

included in the study play in a 5-team Metro-league (house league) and subjects from the one other location compete in a 3-team house league. The second division of play is the provincial level. Hockey participation at this level involves being a member of a regional team vying for the all-Newfoundland tournament. All participants in this study played at both the recreational and provincial level. The third division of participation referenced in this study is elite or national level competition. Only two participants in the study were members of the Newfoundland Canada Games team that competed in 1999 Canada Games.

Body Checking

Women's hockey prohibits intentional body contact defined as body checking. Players are not permitted to use their body as a force to intentionally remove an opponent from the play. Partial body contact is permitted in women's hockey; the body can be used to disrupt a player's possession of the puck.

Delimitations

Participation in the present study was restricted to females participating in hockey within the Avalon Peninsula of Newfoundland. Eligible participants had to be 12 to 17 years old and have been registered on a female hockey team after-1994.

Limitations

A list of females registered during the 1994-1998 seasons was requested from the Newfoundland and Labrador Hockey Association. The information provided by the official governing body of hockey in the province was limited. Nonetheless, information

was collected via regional representatives but, given that these officials change regularly, the initial sample of eligible participants may not have been comprehensive.

In this study, females had to be registered with a female hockey team within the last four years; however a participant's address at the time of registration had to coincide with her current address in order to receive a notice requesting her participation in the current study.

Researcher bias is a possibility when conducting qualitative research. As well the honesty and integrity of participants can be a concern. In this study, because the researcher was a teammate of some participants the potential for influencing their honesty and integrity existed. However, these limitations were reduced through the use of an observer-moderator during focus group interviewing and preliminary data analysis (Krueger, 1994).

Contact with participants in various locations was facilitated by the researcher's personal involvement in female hockey. As a participant in female hockey, the researcher familiarized herself with the game and gained insight into the context of female hockey that she used to illuminate the comments of the study's participants.

Heightening others' awareness of the female hockey experience in Newfoundland though valuable in itself, cannot be generalized to the larger female hockey population. The reason for this statement emanates from the specific context of the study and its in-depth probe into hockey within the Avalon Peninsula. The nature of this study, in its interactionist orientation, does not claim to offer generalizations that are applicable to larger social settings.

Significance of Study

The present study contributed to the scholarly knowledge that is beginning to emerge regarding women's sport participation. As women increase their involvement in sport, academics need to generate studies and document events to capture the essence of sport in the lives of active women. The scholastic information concerning Newfoundland women and sport participation is virtually nonexistent; thus, this study was an imperative first step to gain insight into the significance of women's sport participation in the province. Additionally, the findings unearthed from this current research allowed for the development of constructive recommendations for the advancement of female hockey in the province.

CHAPTER 2

Review of Related Literature

The literature review is an elucidation of previous research that correlates female adolescent experiences with female participation in physical activity. Female participation in sport and physical activity is both influenced and inhibited by the general socialization of women. Literature related to the development of the female gender provides a framework for understanding adolescent involvement in sport and physical activity. The topics discussed within the review of literature create the foundation for the study.

Much literature exists surrounding sport socialization. However, most studies are based on the male model of sport and have neglected to include female athletes or female sport. Women's sport participation is no longer a social anomaly; their accomplishments in physical activities are catapulting ahead of traditional expectations for the weaker sex. Section I of the review will focus on social behaviours of women and sport. A summary of the evolution of female hockey provides a context for females' current involvement in the game. Although limited, the literature regarding women in hockey in Newfoundland will also be discussed. Section II of the review outlines social perceptions that direct and influence female sport participation. Female adolescent sport involvement, the socializing influences, and sport participation ideologies are examined in Section III. In Section IV, the researcher discusses the theoretical grounding of the research study. Previous sport research, using the interactionist perspective, will be presented to validate this method of inquiry for researching young females and sport participation.

Section I

Women and Sport

The sanctioning of women's involvement in sport has been restricted to activities that maintain or display feminine characteristics of a woman. Sport traditionally has been an environment where men can overtly develop their masculine credibility and emphasize their manhood (Whitson, 1994). In particular, males' involvement in confrontational sport or body contact games increases the importance of masculinity and the male identity (Whitson, 1994). The female identity in sport is more of an ambiguous endeavour. Grounded in feminine ideals women's sport participation does not coincide with the importance of developing feminine characteristics (Boutilier & SanGiovanni, 1983). According to Theberge (1994) sport is a male preserve and an important cultural practice that contributes to gender inequalities.

Initially, women's involvement in physical pursuits was limited and resisted because of men's fear of the possibility of women damaging their reproductive abilities. A woman's primary responsibility was to reproduce; hence participation in events that jeopardized her commitments to the male sex was forbidden (Bouchier, February 27, 1995). The dominant social view intimidated women into believing that their bodies were physiologically and biologically weak thus inhibiting them from pursuing any demanding or sustaining physical activity (Boutilier & SanGiovanni, 1983). The female body has been used as a vice to constrain and exclude women from physically challenging their bodies (Theberge & Birrell, 1994).

Reluctant to succumb to social views that were highly male influenced, some women have relentlessly and passionately pursued physical activity. The female body, according to Whitson (1994), needs to be exercised and developed to permit females to embody a sense of power. Women are learning to enjoy the physicality of their bodies which creates an empowering understanding of their physical capacities (McDermott, 1996).

Although women's physical participation in sport is advancing today, society has not always favoured the physically active woman. Expanding the social limitations of females' physical activity began with the acceptance of women's participation in more traditionally defined, aesthetic, feminine sports such as gymnastics, swimming, and golf (Boutilier & SanGiovanni, 1983). Building on the initial acceptance of women in sport, participation for females expanded to include team sports where more traditional male values create the guidelines for participating (Boutilier & SanGiovanni, 1983). As 'deviant' women enter contested terrain, their social approval is not always guaranteed, and, often, they are stigmatized as possessing male physical and personality characteristics which move them beyond the traditional feminine role (Messner, 1994).

Women in Hockey

Women have been playing hockey since the late nineteenth century. The man who donated the everlasting symbol of hockey supremacy, the Stanley Cup, also contributed to the female game. Lord Stanley enjoyed the game immensely; therefore, it was played by his ten children including his two daughters (McFarlane, 1994). On

numerous occasions, Lord Stanley hosted parties on his flooded courtyard so males and females could enjoy the game together (McFarlane, 1994).

Similar to the men's game, a discrepancy surrounds the official date of the first all-female competition in hockey (Avery & Stevens, 1997; Kidd, 1996; McFarlane, 1994). McFarlane (1994) suggests that the first all female hockey game took place in early 1889 on government grounds, between the Government House team and the Rideau Ladies. Kidd (1996) proposes 1891 as the year of the first female hockey game. Regardless of the exact date, there is evidence that females were playing organized hockey before the turn of the century. University teams in Ontario and Quebec began competitive play in 1900. Universities have traditionally been supportive of women's sport and when possible have provided females with the opportunity to develop their hockey skills (Avery & Stevens, 1997; McFarlane, 1994).

The Early Days of Women's Hockey

Hockey was not always played in indoor arenas; the first hockey rinks were flooded land surfaces (Gruneau & Whitson, 1993; McFarlane, 1994). With the construction of arenas, men's games moved inside. The women's games remained outside so as not to interfere with the men's schedules (Etue & Williams, 1996). The first documentation regarding women's teams playing on indoor surfaces occurred in Quebec. In 1900, in Montreal, women's teams were granted four hours a week on the indoor ice (McFarlane, 1994). When the women were playing on the indoor ice surface the doors were barred; spectators were not welcome. The only people permitted to observe the women's game were the referee and two goal judges (McFarlane, 1994).

Women's Hockey Equipment

Women's early equipment and uniforms reflected the conservative fashions of the day and did nothing to promote better play and skills. Women wore long wool skirts just inches from the ice surface (Avery & Stevens, 1997; McFarlane, 1994). On occasion, goalies had been known to sew pellets into their hemline to help prevent goals from being scored (McFarlane, 1994). Following World War I, females were permitted to wear bloomers. This transition required players to don protective shin pads (McFarlane, 1994). If proper equipment was not available, it was invented from material that was accessible (McFarlane, 1994). Newspapers, for example, substituted for traditional shin pads (McFarlane, 1994). In the late 1920's, hockey pants similar to modern ones, but with less protective padding, were used by female players (McFarlane, 1994). Women's ingenuity made them the first unofficial hockey players to wear face protection. In 1927, Elizabeth Graham, a goalie playing for Queen's University, wore a wire fencing mask to protect her face (McFarlane, 1994). This event in women's hockey occurred 32 years before the first male goalie, Jacques Plante, wore face protection in 1959 (McFarlane, 1994). Safety was always a concern. In the Maritimes, mothers, worried about their daughters' safety, made cotton padded chest protectors (Avery & Stevens, 1997; McFarlane, 1994).

Historical Developments in Women's Hockey

Similar to the progression of other women's sports, female ice hockey increased in popularity during the 1920's (Boutilier & SanGiovanni, 1983). One of the greatest Canadian athletes, Bobbie Rosenfeld, played hockey during the 20's and the 30's (Cahn,

1994). In 1933, women's teams began to compete for the *Dominion Title* (Etue & Williams, 1996). This inaugural national tournament alternated locations from east to west, equalizing transportation costs for all participating provinces. The Preston Rivulettes brought credibility, respect and admiration to the female game of hockey (McFarlane, 1994). This group of talented young women had an impressive history. Winning 350 games, losing only 2 and tying 3 throughout a 9 year period makes them one of the greatest athletic teams in this country (Etue & Williams, 1996; McFarlane, 1994). The *Dominion Title* dissolved in 1941, as did the Preston Rivulettes (McFarlane, 1994). Shifting priorities during war years forced many women to withdraw from hockey competitions; this led to the collapse of the most successful women's hockey team and the title for which they competed (McFarlane, 1994).

Repercussions of the war limited the time and resources that people contributed to amateur sport. The funneling of women into economic production and the initiation of professional sport which was designed to foster morale among the general public simultaneously contributed to the decline of women's involvement in hockey (Kidd, 1996; McFarlane, 1994). After the war, male participants resumed their participation in hockey and young male players rigorously devoted themselves to the game with aspirations of reaching professional status. Females remained on the sidelines, demoted to spectating, while their male counterparts dominated sports and physical activities. The minor hockey system became a feeder system for the professional leagues (Gruneau & Whitson, 1993).

Several relentless women continued to pursue hockey forcing the Canadian hockey association to address issues of opposite sex players playing on the same team and competing against one another. Often females would play on male teams because of the lack of opportunity for females to play in same sex environments. The Canadian hockey association's omission of and disregard for female hockey players lead to the birth of one of the most successful administrative organizations for women in sport. In 1975, the Ontario Women's Hockey Association was established to advocate for women's rights and access to hockey opportunities (Etue & Williams, 1996; McFarlane, 1994). In 1980, the association became an official member of the Ontario Hockey Association (McFarlane, 1994).

Following the debut of an organization fighting for female hockey players, the 1980's marked the resurrection of women's official participation in hockey. The *Dominion Title* was reinstated in 1982 as the Senior Women's National Championship (McFarlane, 1994). Women throughout the country began to fight privately and publicly for equal rights in hockey participation (Avery & Stevens, 1997). Discriminatory issues such as ice time and developmental opportunities have perpetually accompanied female hockey participation (Avery & Stevens, 1997; Etue & Williams, 1996; McFarlane, 1994).

The availability of ice time has plagued women's integration into the sport of hockey. In 1995, the Toronto Parks and Recreation Department was still trying to advocate for greater ice time for female hockey (Williams, 1995). The predominant notion of time slot ownership, which means that because one particular team practiced, for a number of years, during a specific time slot they owned that segment of ice time,

still lingers in arenas throughout the Toronto region (Williams, 1995). Issues of ice time are documented about the Toronto region, but Williams believes that the issue is not isolated to this area.

Aside from ice time, playing opportunities have been contested throughout the history of women's hockey participation. There have been cases where females were prohibited from playing after they had successfully joined a male team. Abby Hoffman, president and founder of the Canadian Association of Advancement of Women and Sport, was dismissed from a boys' all-star hockey team, in 1955, once the league officials realized their mistake in assuming 'Ab' was male (Gruneau & Whitson, 1993). In 1977, Gail Cummings was barred from playing goal on a boys' all-star team when no female team existed for her to join (Gruneau & Whitson, 1993). A traveling minor all-star team from Kitchener, Ontario refused to take the ice in Wisconsin when an American team had a female netminder (Avery & Stevens, 1997; McFarlane, 1994).

The debate about women's participation on male teams has been an ongoing battle. The Ontario Human Rights Code and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms have both facilitated and constrained women's participation. The Charter promotes equality in government agencies but does not include private sport organizations. Because of this disparity, in 1987, the Supreme Court became involved in an Ontario case where a female player, Justine Blainey, had legitimately made a Metropolitan Toronto Hockey League team but the league officials refused to permit her to play. Although this was not the first of this type of restrictive measure forced on female players, the Blainey family and the Canadian Association for the Advancement of

Women in Sport challenged the issue in the Divisional Court of Ontario. This court upheld the Ontario Human Rights Code that allowed athletic organizations to restrict activities to the same sex, but on appeal, to the Ontario Court of Appeal and eventually the Supreme Court of Canada this ruling overturned (Etue & Williams, 1996; Williams, 1995). Organizations are no longer permitted to perform any type of discriminatory act. Justine Blainey's struggle for young women's integration into the male game was the result of limited playing time and poor skill development opportunities available for her and other female athletes (Etue & Williams, 1996). Although women's hockey opportunities were increasing the literature indicates that some women still choose to play in the male hockey system.

Success in the world of professional male hockey has come to few females. One of these is Manon Rheume. Along with other young women seeking more ice time and better quality instruction in hockey, Manon joined the male game where she met with some success. The publicity of Rheume's success is attributed to her playing time, albeit limited, in a professional hockey league. For some, Rheume's success has led to the unveiling of women's hockey. Mary Ormsby, in April 1992, wrote: "Manon Rheume has given women's hockey a face" (1992, B3). Ormsby went on to explain how Rheume's celebrity status shaped her into a role model for younger aspiring female hockey players.

Theberge (1995b) surveyed female adolescent neophytes and senior elite female players' attitudes towards Rheume's success. Younger players admired Rheume's accomplishments and her role as someone worthy to promote the female game. Senior

players were more skeptical about Rheume's professional experiences; they felt her draft to the NHL was a publicity stunt. However, they acknowledged the recognition it has brought to women's hockey. The discrepancies between younger and older players' attitudes towards Rheume's accomplishments indicate the growth and change of the female game. Theberge's (1995b) findings state that "the fact that younger players are much more likely to emphasize the benefits of the publicity Rheume has generated may suggest they take for granted the advances that have occurred and failed to appreciate the ongoing struggle for the legitimacy of women's hockey" (p. 40). Regardless of the complex reasons for drafting Rheume into the men's professional game, this athlete can be credited with raising awareness of the evolving female game and challenging stereotypes about the capabilities of female athletes.

In 1987, the first unofficial Women's World Hockey Tournament was held in Toronto. Teams from Sweden, Switzerland, Holland, and the United States competed for the first time (Avery & Stevens, 1997). Following this event, the International Ice Hockey Federation (IIHF) became involved by sanctioning a biannual women's tournament. In 1990, the Women's World Championship occurred in Ottawa; TSN provided live coverage of the event and *Sports Illustrated* printed material about women and hockey (Avery & Stevens, 1997). The Canadian team, in their pink and white uniforms, won the event. The national publicity during the tournament had tremendous repercussions for female hockey. The Canadian Amateur Hockey Association's female registration for the following year increased by 75% (McFarlane, 1994).

Under the direction of the IIHF, in 1992, body checking was removed from the women's game. Differing from the men's game, it is now illegal in women's hockey to intentionally bodycheck an opponent. The rationale for removing bodychecking was to facilitate integrated play between players of different ages and sizes, thus contributing to the overall development of female hockey skills (Avery & Stevens, 1997).

The debut of the game at the 1998 Olympics in Nagano, Japan was a historical moment for women involved in hockey. The coach of the Canadian female hockey team, Shannon Miller, was disappointed that the Canadian contingent did not receive the gold medal, but was pleased to have women participating in Olympic hockey. Her own words reiterate this dilemma: "I was disappointed it wasn't us [receiving a gold medal], but I was so glad to see a woman being honoured for playing hockey here" (Perkins, 1998, D1). Support for the female game is incipient; Canadian female hockey players have worked to glorify and to legitimize a game that has inspired thousands of young women to strive for Olympic glory. Although the Canadian team did not win the gold medal at the Olympics in Nagano, they have planted a gold seed for the future of women's hockey. The continued success in Canadian women's hockey will depend upon the grass-root development of large numbers of young female hockey players who can rise to the elite level (Avery & Stevens, 1997). Figure 2.1 is an image of Newfoundland's elite hockey development.



Figure 2.1
1999 Newfoundland Canada Games Team

Women's Hockey in Newfoundland

Women have enjoyed the game of hockey in Newfoundland since the 1930's. The Roverines from Bay Roberts were the Newfoundland equivalent of the Preston Rivulettes (McFarlane, 1994). The Roverines were members of a 5-team league that traveled from town to town competing for an all-island championship (McFarlane, 1994). In 1938, the Roverines were the "finest women's team in the country" and won the All-Newfoundland Ladies Championship (McFarlane, 1994, p. 104). Figure 2.2 contains a photograph of the Newfoundland Roverines. According to McFarlane (1994), women's hockey in Newfoundland diminished after that season. The Prince's rink in St. John's burned down in 1941 and the rink in Bay Roberts closed; thus limiting access to facilities to play women's hockey as most buildings were accommodating the surplus of men's hockey (Poole, 1994).



Figure 2.2

The Newfoundland Roverines

Note. From *Proud past, bright future: One hundred years of women's hockey* (p.105), by B. McFarlane, 1994, Toronto: Stoddart Publishing Company. Reprinted with permission.

Women's hockey in Newfoundland emerged again in 1982. A senior women's team competed in the national tournament for the *Dominion Title*. The early 1990's marked a shift in women's hockey within the province. Junior hockey, which is targeted at females under the age of 19, emerged as the focal point for development of female hockey players. A provincial junior championship and a provincial representative team attracted younger players into the system (Fardy, 1998). Figures 2.3 and 2.4 are images of young Newfoundlanders displaying their passion for women's ice hockey.



Figure 2.3
The Challenge of the Face-Off

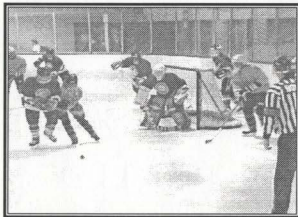


Figure 2.4
Action in Front of the Net

To recapitulate, women's acceptance in sport has been a long battle that has required the modification of medical and social opinions about the female body. However, despite these challenges, young Canadian women have been playing hockey for 100 years, creating innovative ways to protect themselves, gaining access to ice time

and establishing national and international tournaments. Arising out of issues concerning women's hockey participation and the attendant media attention, the legal community has been forced to address the inequalities that female hockey players encounter. Women's hockey in Newfoundland is currently fostering the growth of young players to contribute to the development of national level athletes.

Section II

Trivializing and Stigmatizing Women's Sports

Living in a male dominated society, some young women challenge traditional female roles through participation in non-traditional activities (Shaw, Kleiber & Caldwell, 1995). Sport can be one avenue chosen for exploring the capacities of the female body; for many women sport is a source of enjoyment that contributes to their identities and competencies (Bryson, 1987). As young women integrate themselves into sport, their display of physical competence begins to threaten male identity (Messner & Sabo, 1990; Whitson, 1994). Exclusionary mechanisms, such as intimidating and stereotyping female athletes, constrain women's participation in sport (Griffin, 1998). Opportunities for women in sport are steadily increasing; however, engagement in sport is accompanied by strict guidelines of appropriate feminine behaviour and feminine images (Griffin, 1998). The social stigma associated with female sport participation reinforces the distinction between men's and women's sport accomplishments. The following sections will elaborate on male dominance and control in sport. In an attempt to surmount the hegemonic barriers, or the inequities in social power that inhibit female sport participation, female athletes conform to male ideologies.

Power and Domination

Domination and subordination permeate the sport context. Similar to other social enclaves, sport is a patriarchal institution that functions to symbolically display men's privileges (Whitson, 1990). Exemplifying the dominant social constructs of the male body and masculinity, sport becomes an avenue which young men pursue to develop and

display their manliness, and, thus, their social superiority (Theberge, 1987; Whitson, 1990). The male image of strength, aggression and muscularity is widely represented in sport (Bennett, Whitaker, Wooley Smith & Sablove, 1987; Robinson, 1997; Theberge, 1987). Bennett, et al. (1987) indicate that: "sport serves as a training ground for maintaining the domination/submission relationships characteristic of patriarchy" (p. 78).

Exclusion and Inferiority of Women in Sport

Supporting patriarchy, the environment of sport excludes and makes women's participation in this male bastion an inferior accomplishment. By belittling women's physical achievements, men suppress the obvious progress women are making in sport (Bennett, et al., 1987; Theberge, 1997). According to Bryson (1987), women are prevented from competing against men in sports where their participation may encroach upon the male domain. The idea of a woman surpassing a man in a physical activity is incomprehensible in our culture. The maintenance of women's inferior sport capacity results from their inability to compete on equal terms and, therefore, they are unequally recognized for their accomplishments (Bryson, 1987; Theberge, 1998).

According to Harris (1981), female's participation in sport is viewed as an intrusion and mockery of male space. As previously mentioned, sport can be a rite of passage, an environment where young boys learn to be men. Bennett, et al. (1987) indicate that sport is a ritualized activity appropriate specifically for boys and men: "The female who aspires to participate in such rituals encounters a barrier, a distinct message that she is encroaching on someone else's quasi-sacred rite" (p. 372).

The integration of females into sport jeopardizes male dominance, but the possibility of excluding women is limited with the passage of equal opportunity legislation (Lenskyi, 1987). However, when females are given the opportunity to participate in sport they are judged as inferior and objectified (Bryson, 1987; Theberge, 1987). This stereotypical view of female athletes maintains the sexual domination of women (Theberge, 1987; 1998). As women challenge male perceptions of sport, men relish in the physical exhibition of female bodies (Messner, 1994). The female flesh attracts more attention than the sport itself: "Female athletic achievements are trivialized as the media devotes more attention to their appearance than to their skill" (Colley, 1986, p. 244). Willis (1994) states that the female athlete is a sex object; her body may excel in sport but essentially she is an object for the pleasure of men.

Apologetic Behaviour

Women's participation in sport challenges traditional standards of female behaviour; thus, female athletes frequently take excessive measures to ensure that their public presentation illustrates their feminine traits by what is termed 'apologetic behaviour.' By participating in certain physical activities ideologies of femininity are not supported, accomplishments are contested, and women's sexuality becomes questioned (Henderson, et al., 1996; Messner, 1994; Theberge, 1987). Females participating in sport do not exude characteristics of passivity, gentleness and weakness which have traditionally defined female behaviour (Harris, 1981; Theberge, 1987). Compensating for the possibility of developing masculine traits, females will emphasize other more traditional behaviours.

In search of social approval, young women who choose to participate in sport reinforce their feminine qualities through, as previously mentioned, an 'apologetic behaviour' (Boutilier & SanGiovanni, 1983; Henderson, et al., 1996; Sabo, 1988). The myth of 'apologetic behaviour' arose out of women's need to demonstrate their femininity to counterbalance and apologize for their participation in the male domain of sport (Boutilier & SanGiovanni, 1983; Sabo, 1988). Wearing make-up, jewelry, and sexy athletic apparel, female athletes attempt to emphasize their femininity (Boutilier & SanGiovanni, 1983; Griffin, 1998). A more liberal definition of the feminine ideal has begun to mesh the beautiful and the sexy with the athletic and the strong, which has functioned to increase the popularity of female sport (Markula, 1995). However, the popularity of female sport participation depends on the sport. Women's beach volleyball is a very popular sport, but are spectators watching the skill of the athletes or the sexy bodies of the athletes in their mandatory two piece uniforms (Silver, 1997)? The literature surrounding women and sport participation indicated that female athletes are overtly aware of the culture's stereotypical views of women and sport.

Empowerment

Whitson (1990) describes a sporting experience as a means of developing assertiveness and confidence, of learning how to relate to others, and of improving one's strength and skill through competition against opponents. Women have been restricted from participating in sport because the characteristic traits associated with participation are incongruous with women's behaviour.

According to Young's (1979) study, the historical rejection of women's participation in the sport has contributed to women's underdeveloped self-esteem and self-confidence (as cited in Messner and Sabo, 1990). Regular sport participation can develop physical competencies which liberate a woman by contributing to her sense of identity and her sense of self (Wearing, 1992). Self-concept can be defined as the "description or label one gives oneself concerning one's attributes, characteristics, or emotional qualities" (Lirgg, 1992, p. 160). Self-esteem is the evaluative component of self-concept; it is the value assigned to the understanding of self (Lirgg, 1992). In a 1991 study, Eccles and Harold examined gender differences in sport. The findings suggest that gender role socialization contributes to gender differences in perceived ability. Females were more likely to feel incompetent in sports that were traditionally defined as male events (Eccles & Harold, 1991). Other literature indicates that women participating in traditional 'male' sports are empowered and strengthened by their involvement in challenging activities. Theberge (1987) stresses the fundamental belief that liberating possibilities accompany sport. Women can experience bodily energy, power, and creativity, which in turn contribute to their collective female identity (Theberge, 1987; 1995a).

Shaw (1994) outlines women's leisure as a form of resistance to society's control of women's time. Rather than viewing leisure as oppressing or constraining, leisure can function as a method of resisting domination. "The argument for resistance through leisure is also based on a conceptualization of leisure which embodies notions of personal choice, control and self determination" (Shaw, 1994, p. 15). Although women may not

always participate in sport as a means of combating oppression, Kleiber and Kane's (1984) study of the containment of women in sport concluded that women who participated in an activity that was traditionally male had a greater sense of resistance to social pressures and developed positive personal beliefs. Wearing (1992) also indicates that sport, as a form of leisure, can be one social domain that women use to combat gender role expectations. Women with access to broader experiences, according to Wearing's findings, can embark on challenging traditional feminine and masculine ideals because of their knowledge and development of their sense of autonomy and individuality.

In summary, the literature indicated sport is a passageway for males to develop masculine traits; therefore, any woman choosing to engage in the male domain calls her femininity into question. As females challenge traditional social roles, their participation in sport has been trivialized and devalued in an attempt to discourage them from engaging in physical activities. Females who resist these dominant social guidelines and who become involved in sport are cognizant of the stereotypes including lesbian stigmatization that they must endure; thus, to counteract these pejorative perceptions, they emphasize their feminine image. However, whether in an attempt to resist cultural control or for sheer enjoyment, women's involvement in sport can increase their confidence and independence.

Section III

Adolescence

Wearing (1992) reports that adolescence is the "moratorium time" for young people to experiment and explore various identities (p. 328). Adolescence is an exceptionally difficult time for young women as they are inundated with physical, emotional, and social changes (Pipher, 1994). Young women that were once confident and assertive become withdrawn and apprehensive; they lose their autonomy sacrificing themselves to social conformities (De Beauvoir, 1993/1952; Pipher, 1994). According to Pipher (1994), adolescent females stop thinking about who they are and what they can be and start thinking about how they can please others, especially the opposite sex. Participation in sport can be a method females choose when attempting to construct meaning of the world and a definition for themselves.

Early Dichotomous Development in Sport

Physical development for the two sexes differs; young women receive less support and encouragement for motor skill development (Bennett, Whitaker, Wooley Smith & Sablove, 1987; Boutlier & SanGiovanni, 1983). Females are encouraged to pursue less demanding activities. Research by Rekers, Sanders, Rasbury, Strauss and Mead (1989) indicates that females prefer indoor activities such as writing in their diaries, reading romantic novels and becoming involved in more domestic chores. Young females are directed toward activities that require less body movement; hence females do not understand their physical bodies (Rekers, et al., 1989). If young women are allowed to participate in sport, most often they are directed towards activities that will assist in

creating an 'appropriate' feminine young woman (Boutilier & SanGiovanni, 1983). Channeling females into aesthetically pleasing activities confines women's self-understanding and misguides them into believing that image should take precedence over experimentation (Bennett, et al., 1987).

Female Sport Participation During Adolescence

Female sport participation can be a contentious area as females extend the social definitions of acceptable feminine behaviour. De Beauvoir (1993/1952) acknowledges the fact that females are able to participate in sport; however, they do not experience the same type of freedom males receive because female sport is only a marginal component of a woman's life. Varpalotai's (1987) study of adolescent ringette players indicated that adolescent females have a working knowledge of the social constraints confronting women inside and outside of sport. The conflicting messages about the female athlete create difficulties for young women when trying to form a sense of identity and autonomy (Varpalotai, 1987). Women are expected to ascribe to the traditional notion of female beauty; Wolfe (1990) defines this social illusion as the *beauty myth*. The traditional woman is devoted to maintaining an image for heterosexual attraction. Women who participate in events that deviate from traditional 'feminine' female sports risk being labelled a lesbian (Griffin, 1992). To combat unpleasant lesbian allegations most athletes will create an image that silences unwelcome stereotypes and minimizes homophobia (Griffin, 1992; 1998).

Socializing Agents

Common to every human interaction is the process of learning; individuals that create and maintain socialization can be defined as socializing agents. The family is the basic social unit that conveys information about cultural norms, values, and traditions (Greendorfer & Hasbrook, 1991; Volger & Schwartz, 1993). According to Boutilier and SanGiovanni (1983), the family teaches roles and appropriate guidelines for behaviour. As a result, research indicates that parents are instrumental in influencing children's sport socialization (Greendorfer, 1977; Greendorfer & Lewko, 1978; Griffin, 1998; Lewko & Ewing, 1980; Snyder & Spreitzer, 1973, 1983; Yang, Telama & Laakso, 1996). Additionally, peers, teachers, and coaches cannot be discarded or overlooked because each of these groups of people will contribute to a child's world (Leblanc & Dickson, 1997). Research indicates that a high degree of interest shown by family members, peers, coaches or teachers was influential for both male and female involvement in sport (Greendorfer, 1977; Greendorfer & Lewko, 1978; Snyder & Spreitzer, 1973, 1983). The socializing process becomes an eminently dynamic period during adolescence. The following section will review the significant literature pertaining to the socializing impacts of family and significant others on sport participation.

Snyder and Spreitzer (1973) conducted one of the initial studies of family influences and sport involvement. The study examined the manner in which the family socializes children into sport: "... the family was viewed as the most potent of socialization institutions" (Snyder & Spreitzer, 1973, p. 250). Parents' interest in sport contributed positively to male and female physical and cognitive involvement in sport

(Yang, et al., 1996). There was a tendency for same-sexed parents, rather than opposite-sexed parents, to influence children's active participation and passive (watching or listening) involvement in sport (Snyder & Spreitzer, 1973).

Greendorfer (1977) studied the process through which women became socialized into sport. The author indicated that peers and family provided the greatest source of influence for the childhood sport involvement of females. During adolescence, peer influence served as the main factor for sport socialization with coaches and teachers becoming significant during the later part of this period (Greendorfer, 1977). Peer influence began in adolescence and continued as the primary socializing agent into adulthood. Greendorfer offers two explanations for the change in family encouragement. First, sport may be viewed as an appropriate activity for young females but not for adult women; and second, sport may represent a less serious domain of social activity when more serious activities should be pursued during adult stages (Greendorfer, 1977).

As the social role of parents' declines during adolescence other family members play a significant role in sport socialization. Weiss and Knoppers (1982) studied a sample of intercollegiate female volleyball players to examine the role of significant others on sport socialization. The authors' study revealed that brothers had the most significant family member influence during childhood and adulthood. Support from sisters was perceived higher than parental support during childhood, adolescence, and adulthood. The results of Weiss and Knopper's study indicated a greater socializing influence was extracted from siblings than from parents. The literature regarding socializing agents and sport participation is inconsistent. For example, another study of

family member's role in sport socialization found parents, especially fathers, to be the most significant influence on children's sport participation (Greendorfer & Lewko, 1978).

In a 1985 study of female sport socialization, Higginson investigated sport participation at the Empire State Games in Syracuse, using three socializing agents (parents, peers, and coaches/teachers) throughout three life stages (childhood, adolescence and adulthood). Results of the study found that for females under the age of 13, the family was the primary source of influence accounting for 55% of total social influences (Higginson, 1985). The second most influential group during early life cycle socialization was coaches / teachers. However, when junior and senior high school females were studied a reversal of the trend was noticed. Teachers and coaches had a 47% influence on sport participation while parents had only a 28% influence (Higginson, 1985). Reasons for this shift in support are derived from this specific point in athletic development. In an attempt to excel and become part of an elite level of competition, an athlete begins to rely on her coach for guidance. Sport possibilities widen and athletes begin to develop a unique interpersonal relationship with their coach (Higginson, 1985). Results from the study also found that socializing agents were specifically related to various sport activities. Higginson indicated that future research should concentrate on specific sports and include aspects such as social class background, personality traits, and socializing situations, which could have a more profound affect on female athletes' socialization.

Weiss and Barbers (1985) found that during childhood, parents and peers contributed the greatest amount of support to sport socialization. Again, the most

significant influence during adolescence was the agent of coach or teacher (Weiss & Barbers, 1985). The results of the study concluded that socializing agents collectively contributed to early sport socialization, but diminished over adolescent and adult (college) years. The findings reported that as athletes mature they relied less on others for support (Weiss & Barbers, 1985).

The research surrounding socializing agents offers an inconclusive understanding of others' impacts on females' socialization in sport. Early studies (Greendorfer, 1977; Higginson, 1985; Snyder & Spreitzer, 1973; Weiss & Knoppers, 1982; Weiss & Barbers, 1985) focused on the male role in directing females' sport behaviour. Coaches and teachers were prominent socializing agents during adolescence and the role of siblings' influence augmented as well during this developmental stage.

Adolescent Attitudes towards Females in Athletics

Early studies concerning adolescents' perceptions of female athletes reveal the social attributes that have come to define the male and female sex (Colley, 1986). Identity formation is magnified during adolescence. Males and females develop awareness for the necessary masculine and feminine traits that contribute to social success (Varpalotai, 1987). During adolescence, young men seek to acquire independence and dominance, while females develop greater nurturing qualities and remain dependent and passive (Selby & Lewko, 1976).

An investigation into children's perceptions of females involved in sports by Selby and Lewko, in 1976, revealed disparate social attitudes. In general, young women in grades 3 to 9 indicated that they supported female involvement in sport; young men, on

the other hand, were divided in their support for female athletics. Responding positively to female involvement in sport were non-athletic males while athletic males offered less support. Possible explanations offered by the researchers for this variance were that male athletes diminish and devalue females' athletic capabilities (Selby & Lewko, 1976).

Athletics and Social Status

Research in the area of sport and social status is grounded in three studies: Coleman (1961), Eitzen (1975) and Feltz (1979). Coleman (1961) examined how students would like to be remembered after high school. Athletic status emerged as the most popular form of remembrance for males, while females valued being remembered as a leader in social activities. Coleman (1961) did not include athletics as an option for female respondents. Fourteen years later, Eitzen's (1975) work supported Coleman's findings. Finally, in 1979, Feltz included athletics as an option for females to select as a component in their legacy. Feltz (1979) reported that female students rated athletic star last, placing brilliant student, leader in activities and most popular as more prominent choices.

Thirer and Wright (1985) investigated the basis for female popularity in the high school environment. Being a member of the leading crowd emerged as the prominent factor influencing popularity while athletic status was not a major determinant for female popularity. In 1987, a study by Williams and Andersen revealed the waning of athletic participation and its relation to social status at the high school level. Athletic status declined as a remembrance factor for males and remained relatively insignificant for females.

Other studies have attempted to define the status of female athletes (Kane, 1988; Holland & Andre, 1994; Vanfossen & Sabo, 1988). Kane's (1988) understanding of the social status of the female athlete during high school was established through cohorts' attitudes towards females participating in gender appropriate and inappropriate sports. Based on Methany's (1967) classification of female sports, gender appropriate sports involve the athletes in, (a) projecting their bodies through space in an "aesthetically pleasing" manner; (b) overcoming light objects with light instruments; or (c) being separated by a barrier that prevents bodily contact. Gender inappropriate sports can be categorized as any activity that attempts the following: (a) subduing your opponent by physical force; (b) using a heavy object in any manner; and (c) engaging in face to face competition where bodily contact may occur (p.255). In Kane's (1988) findings increased social status was defined by the willingness of others to affiliate with female athletes and males preferred dating females who were involved in gender appropriate sports. The study also concluded that athletes participating in individual sports were more popular than those associated with team sports and females indicated they would be most likely to befriend a female in a gender appropriate activity (Kane, 1988).

A replication of the previous study, with the exception of a larger sample, Andre and Holland (1994) researched the social status of male and female athletes among high school and college students. Participants in the study were asked to indicate, when considering athletes' involvement in sex-appropriate and sex-inappropriate sports, who they would prefer to befriend and to date. Female athletes who engaged in sex-appropriate sports were more likely to be chosen as dating partners for male participants

and as friends by female participants. Regardless of their participation in sex-appropriate or sex-inappropriate sports and whether they were athletes or nonathletes, males preferred to date females who participated in sex-appropriate sports over those females who participated in sex-inappropriate sports. Compared to Kane's (1988) study, females were more accepting of females participating in sex-inappropriate sports; however over the period of 8 years from the date of Kane's study, there was merely a 13% increase in the acceptance of these athletes (Andre & Holland, 1994; Kane, 1988).

Vanfossen and Sabo (1988) studied the impact of athletic participation on the development of high school females. The authors concluded that female athletes perceived themselves as being more popular among the students. The exposure of athletics in the school environment was believed to increase the recognition and popularity of female athletes within the high school social system (Vanfossen & Sabo, 1988).

Youth Sport - Motives for Participation

The literature regarding youth sport participation primarily focuses on male involvement in sport. In more recent years there has been some investigation into females participation in sport. The following studies will reveal the underlying motives for youth sport participation and the stereotypical view of gender that athletes encounter.

In 1985, Gould, Feltz, and Weiss assessed participation motives for young competitive swimmers. The major motives for young athletes participating were to have fun, to improve their skills, and to be with or make new friends, to achieve arousal and to experience feelings of excitement. Examining the sex differences in the study revealed

that females from the ages of 8 to 19 place more emphasis on friendship and fun. Friendship formation and maintenance was a factor that influenced participation; however, it was dependent on the level of the young woman's involvement. Further analysis revealed that affiliation, competition and achievement influenced female adolescent involvement (Gould, et al., 1985). Females that were achievement-oriented were motivated to participate because of the personal growth associated with competitive opportunities. Encouragement and support from friendships within sport were less emphasized. Young women who participated in sport for competitive reasons were self-motivated to increase their athletic potential while less confident females emphasized their enjoyment of being affiliated with others (Gould, et al., 1985). Ryckman and Hamel (1992) reported similar findings in their study of female involvement in organized athletic teams. Females with extensive involvement in sports were achievement-oriented, enjoyed the challenging tasks associated with sport participation and had greater motivation for success (Ryckman & Hamel, 1992).

Reasons for participating in sport are also influenced by the assistance an athlete receives from their surrounding social network. Research by Anderssen and Wold (1992) outlines the social support required for adolescents involved in sport. The study reported that female athletes in general receive less support than boys do; thus, females who receive some form of support appear to be more responsive (Anderssen & Wold, 1992).

Discontinuing Sport Participation

Literature surrounding adolescent attrition from sport indicates that there are various reasons for declining participation during this segment of an athlete's life.

Kirshnit, Ham, and Richards (1989) found two explanations for withdrawing from sport. One reason focused on time conflicts and constraints. There was an array of opportunities and experiences available during adolescence; however, individuals had to be selective in choosing what they engaged in because of the limited time available for multiple activities. Kirshnit, et al. (1989) define this situation as an "economy of leisure" (p.599). As children develop there is a finite amount of time available, and during adolescence, individuals became aware of the need to manage their time. The second reason for withdrawing from sport participation was derived from the "negative and overly professionalized qualities of organized youth sport programs, including lack of playing time, lack of success, little skill improvement, high pressure to perform or win and dislike for the coach" (p. 602).

In 1986, Klint and Weiss investigated gymnasts' motives for attrition. Results were similar to the previous study. Reasons for withdrawing from gymnastics were as follows: (a) having other things to do; (b) not liking the pressure; (c) not having enough fun; and (d) not being as good as one wanted (Klint & Weiss, 1986). Individual perceptions and feelings, as well as, personal comparisons to others led to athletes withdrawal from sport. Motives for participating are either enhanced or diminished based on an individual's integration into the sport group (Wood & Abernethy, 1989). A sense of belonging is associated with team membership and if that social confirmation is not achieved many participants will discontinue their involvement (Wood & Abernethy, 1989).

To recap, multifarious socializing agents contribute to the female and male dichotomy in sport participation; parents, peers, teachers and coaches have a role in defining socially acceptable male and female behaviours. Studies have provided inconclusive evidence for identifying the primary socializing agents during adolescent female sport participation; however, it is clear that females do require encouragement for their involvement in sport. Young females' decisions to participate in sport are guided by their need to challenge themselves in a fun, supportive environment.

Section IV

Socialization

Socialization is the process whereby every social community integrates people into its social system (Greendorfer, Lewko & Rosengren, 1996; Kenyon & McPherson, 1974). Socialization is a dynamic process beginning at conception and continuing until death. Dominant social standards are created and maintained through society's ability to shape and direct a population's values and beliefs. Greendorfer and Hasbrook (1991) indicate that society preserves important cultural concepts through the teaching and learning of socially acceptable behaviours and mannerisms. According to Coakley (1993; 1998), socialization is a two-fold process. First, socialization through human interaction acts as a mirror to reflect how individuals see themselves in the social domain in which they live; and second, as a means for establishing familiarity. This social integrating process teaches people suitable individual and group behaviours that guide all social behaviours. Sport is often viewed as a conduit for cultural ideologies and as a vital component of society that functions to deliver appropriate socializing mechanisms so that individuals understand their place in the larger social system (Coakley, 1993).

Theoretical Perspective

Interpreting human behaviour is facilitated by the use of social theories that collectively attempt to explain the motives and meanings of human interaction (Coakley, 1993; Hall, 1991). Social theoretical perspectives outline the way individuals learn their social role and the structure of society (Hall, 1991). Studies in sport socialization have

focused on several theoretical perspectives including the following: social learning theory, social role-social system theory, role conflict theory and interactionism (Bandura, 1977; Coakley & White, 1992; Kenyon & McPherson, 1973; Sage & Loudermilk, 1979). The theoretical basis for the research conducted through this study will build on the interactionist approach to socialization.

Interactionism regards the individual as an active member of society holding a dynamic position that continually evolves relative to various situations (Henslin, 1998). Individuals are active agents, constantly choosing, understanding, and negotiating their social and personal relationships. Individuals, given the opportunity, can vividly and coherently explain their conscious understanding of the social interactions that have lead to their respective identity and integration into society (Henderson, 1990).

Applying the interactionist perspective to sport coincides with the identity formation that occurs when playing a particular sport. Stevenson (1990a; 1990b) studied elite international athletes to determine the development of their sport careers. Socialization as interactionism was the theoretical perspective applied to the study of international male waterpolo and rugby players and international female field hockey players. Social interactions influenced how and why these athletes became involved in competitive elite sport. Coakley and White (1992) used an interactionist approach to examine recreational pursuits of young Britons. The methodology for the study was chosen because the authors believed that young people become involved in sport through a series of negotiations derived from their personal understandings of their social world.

The study focused on the experiences of male and female youth in physical activities and their understanding of sport's role in their lives.

Based on the need for understanding individual interpretation, the current research was guided by the interactionist perspective. An understanding of adolescent decisions regarding hockey participation were best understood by allowing athletes the freedom and opportunity to describe and interpret their world. Issues of identity formation and peer evaluation create the adolescent society; thus, by allowing young females the opportunity to voice their views and opinions, a better understanding of the female hockey experience will emerge.

Chapter Summary

Society is not welcoming women into sport with open arms. The literature review illustrated women's historical and current positions in hockey and in sport. Although women have proven themselves as physically competent athletes, there is still disregard for their athletic ability. Emphasizing the recognizable advancements women have previously attained gives rise to the realization of what can emerge from hockey participation. Women's triumphs in the sport of hockey are extraordinary but the future challenges that young athletes encounter will be influenced by the greater social acceptance of females into non-traditional sports. The literature reveals our social dependence on a female/male dichotomy and our need to have socially defined variables separating femininity and masculinity.

An interactionist understanding of sport values human agency; sport participants are continuously drawing meaning from their involvement as both internal and external stimuli to create some conceptual understanding of their participation. As women engage in non-traditional sports, their interpretations and sensibilities of those experiences provide valuable knowledge about today's socializing practices. An integral understanding of the socialization processes during adolescent female hockey participation provides information about family, peer, and coaching influences, as well as personal motivations and possible attrition factors associated with female hockey participation. The female sport experience, as supported through the literature review, needs to be explored through the athlete's understanding.

CHAPTER 3

Methodology

Many females are embarking on a new avenue of development as they participate in the sport of hockey. In an attempt to understand the collective experience of playing hockey, individual female players provided valuable insight and gave young athletes' voices a forum for expression. A qualitative approach to researching the involvement of young females in hockey presented these athletes with the opportunity to discuss the factors that have influenced and constrained their hockey participation. Creswell (1994) defines a qualitative study as, "an inquiry process of understanding a social or human problem, based on building a complex, holistic picture, formed with words, reporting detailed views of informants, and conducted in a natural setting" (p. 1). Women's participation in sport is not a social problem; however, it is a social anomaly encased within the complex structure of gender relations.

Qualitative research provides rich descriptions of a subject's feelings and interpretations of the events occurring around her. The subjective meanings that participants associate with events and interactions with other people are unique to each individual's experience (Creswell, 1994). The physical, psychological and social shifts accompanying adolescence create a collage of experiences intricately linked by the game of hockey. Allowing young females to articulate the processes that contributed to their participation in hockey illustrated the context which guides the development of these adolescents.

The Research Approach

The rationale for the theoretical approach chosen for the research is based on the research question (Creswell, 1994; 1998). According to Morse (1994), a research question is inseparable from a method of inquiry. In seeking to understand the socialization process into and within sport, the researcher chose to study the phenomenon influencing adolescent female beliefs about the internal and external factors promoting and constraining their participation in hockey. Consistent with the notions of subjective reality and value-laden research, the inductive approach to exploration complements the unique decision-making processes linked to female athletes' participation in the sport of hockey.

The study permitted participants the opportunity to discuss their experiences in their own words which provided a valuable understanding of females' hockey participation. Discussing personal events in the presence of others, with similar backgrounds, provided a unique chance for these young women to reflect upon their personal histories as maturing young women. The social condition of female hockey is best described and explained by those who experience it: an emic understanding of experience formation. Patton (1990) indicates that there is more value and credibility in the individual explanation. Society cannot dictate all human emotion; therefore, every relationship or event has a singular connection to those who experience it (Kirshnit, Ham & Richards, 1989; Patton, 1990; Morgan, 1997; Creswell, 1998).

The Role of the Researcher

In designing a research study, the ambiguity of the project is minimized through the researcher's explanation for the choice of procedures. In qualitative research, information evolves and revolves through the relationship between researcher and subject (Patton, 1990). Qualitative research is rigorous and requires assiduous work on the part of the researcher (Creswell, 1998). Throughout the course of the study, the researcher became an active learner establishing temporary relationships with participants while learning about their experiences as female hockey players. As the interview process unfolded participants realized the similarity of their experiences as well as the commonalties they shared with the researcher. This relationship created an environment where the interviewees were capable of discussing their histories knowing that the researcher had some previous knowledge about women's hockey in Newfoundland. The unification of female hockey players created an environment voluntarily established out of interest which created a space of trust.

The topic chosen for investigation developed out of the researcher's inability, when she was younger, to become involved in a sport she thought she would love. This past year the researcher joined a female hockey team engaging in a game she had previously only dreamed of playing. Gaining access to participants in the study was facilitated by the researcher's involvement in female hockey. She was able to establish connections with coaches and administrators that helped to contact female hockey players and coordinate interview times. All females in the study were aware of the researcher's participation in hockey and this commonality helped establish a rapport with participants

that otherwise might not have occurred. As a neophyte in the sport, the researcher was able to associate with the difficulties of learning new skills and developing friendships among teammates. Although the study was based, of course, on the information collected from focus group interviews, the experience of personal immersion in the female hockey culture provided the researcher with insight into the structure of the leagues and the varying contextual formats of women's hockey in Newfoundland.

Focus Group Interviews

Aside from being a judicious way of extracting participants' interpretations, focus group interviews allow participants to communicate with each other which may provide greater insight into the context of female hockey. Brown, Collins, and Duguid (1989) indicate that group interviews can provide depth, detail, and meaning about personal experiences: "Groups are not just a convenient way to accumulate the individual knowledge of members. They give rise synergistically to insights and solutions that would not come without them" (p.40). Focus group interviewing may help unveil information that participants would be hesitant about sharing during one-on-one interviews (Krueger, 1994; Morgan, 1997; Creswell, 1998). As a homogeneous group, members were able to hear others' responses and to contribute additional information. Comparing and sharing experiences and attitudes provided an interesting format for learning about similarities and dissimilarities among participants. According to Patton (1990), "the object is to get high-quality data in a social context where people can consider their own views in the context of the views of others" (p. 335).

Focus group interviews were conducted with groups of females that had some familiarity with each other as members of the same hockey team or league. The spectrum of the focus group size varied from 4 to 10 participants and the length of the interviews ranged from 50 minutes to 90 minutes. Recording procedures were used in all interviews; an audiocassette recorder with a small, unintrusive microphone was placed in the center of all interviewees. Using Marshall and Rossman's (1995) recommendations, an observer-moderator was used to monitor the interview and to collect and comment on participants' verbal and physical communications during the context of the interviews.

The Interview Structure

As recommended by Krueger (1994), an interview guide, consisting of a sequential order of interview questions, was utilized during each focus group. The procedure for the interviews followed a consistent format, beginning with the researcher introducing herself and her study. Next, the researcher reviewed the formalities of the interview which included outlining the reason for recording the interview, ensuring participants of their anonymity and reminding participants of their voluntary association with the study. The participants were encouraged to respect the etiquette of courteous dialogue and to speak freely themselves so that they felt unconstrained in presenting their personal recollections and interpretations of their involvement in hockey. As an ice-breaking question, participants were asked to introduce themselves and to tell the researcher about the number of years they had been playing hockey and their current playing status. The interview questions then followed a sequential process to learn about players' histories, the socializing agents involved in their participation, the contexts in

which they played and how all of these elements contributed to the athletes' social and physical development. Appendix A contains the interview format followed during focus groups.

Data Collection

The sample for the study was taken from registered female hockey players born between 1982 and 1987. Females had to be registered with a female hockey team at some point during the 1994 to 1998 hockey seasons in order to be eligible to participate in the current study.

Each eligible participant received an information packet in the mail. The packet contained information describing the research project, a demographic questionnaire and a consent form to be completed and returned by the athlete and her parents. Appendix B contains the letter requesting athletes' participation, Appendix C contains a copy of the questionnaire and Appendix D contains the consent to participate form. If the player agreed to participate, she returned a questionnaire and consent form in a pre-paid stamped envelope addressed to the researcher. The packets for groups of females from specific locations were sent on the same day and the return packets were requested by a specified date. Once the researcher received the appropriate information, players were contacted by telephone to arrange convenient interview times and locations. Most interviews took place either before or after a hockey game or practice. The interviews were conducted between December 1998 and February 1999.

The Setting

In an attempt to understand females' involvement in various hockey communities, four sites were chosen for investigation. Two sites were major urban centers, the third site was a large municipal area, and the fourth location was a small rural area that encompassed participants from several local communities. All of the areas in the study were located on the Avalon Peninsula in Newfoundland.

The two urban centers had more females playing hockey and there was a greater array of opportunities available to integrate them into a hockey culture. Options available to the participants from the urban centers included a variety of female hockey leagues, male hockey leagues with or without contact, and high school competitions. The other two locations had two options: female hockey or male hockey with contact.

Throughout the hockey season, the two urban sites and the rural site under investigation competed against each other in a Metro-house league; the municipal location participated in a 3-team house league with teams from the surrounding area. Participation in women's hockey in areas outside the larger centers appears to be growing. The 1998-1999 hockey season was the first year for the municipal and rural locations to be incorporated into regular leagues of play. In contrast, within the more populated areas, the number of participants enrolled in female hockey has declined in comparison to previous years; therefore, the number of teams participating in the Metro-league has decreased. During the annual provincial tournament, all the areas included in the study competed for the junior All-Newfoundland title. All of the female players

participating in the study played in the provincial All-Newfoundland tournament held in March.

Sample Selection and Identification

The Newfoundland and Labrador Hockey Association (NLHA) was asked to provide the female registry for the past four years. The inconclusive list provided by the governing body forced the researcher to contact representative associations asking registrars and female hockey representatives to provide detailed information. Certain organizations recommended asking coaches for information; this route proved to be the most accessible method for developing a research sample.

Participants registered in female hockey during the last four years received an information packet explaining the study and requesting their participation. Fifty eligible female hockey players received packages and 37 returned the required information. Of the 37 interested participants, 31 were available to participate at the time of focus group interviewing. Previous commitments and responsibilities prevented the other six potential participants from becoming involved in the focus groups.

Information gathered from the returned questionnaires formed the foundation on which to arrange focus groups. General demographic information about each participant was useful when moderating the groups. The background information gathered from the questionnaire will be summarized in the following section. The average age of those participating in the study was 15; they were in grade 10 and had been playing hockey for approximately 4 years. Participants in the study were all currently involved in female

hockey and were born between 1982 and 1987. Table 3.1 summarizes players' ages and Table 3.2 provides information on players' grades.

Table 3.1
Age of Focus Group Participants

Age							
	12	13	14	15	16	17	Total
Number of Participants	3	3	6	4	8	7	31
Percentage of Participants	9.67%	9.67%	19.4%	12.9%	25.8%	22.6%	100.0%

Table 3.2
School Grade of Focus Group Participants

School Grade							
	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total
Number of Participants	4	2	6	5	7	7	31
Percentage of Participants	12.9%	6.5%	19.4%	16.1%	22.6%	22.6%	100.0%

Socializing agents and environments affect socialization, thus demographic information regarding the number of family members living at home, siblings and their gender, and which family members participate in hockey was collected to provide background data about participants' lives. The average family size was 4, with participants having 1.8 siblings, with 1.1 of those siblings being male. An overview of this information can be found in Tables 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, and 3.6. Information concerning

parents' employment indicated that most participants' parents are employed outside of the home. Parents' employment was in an array of sectors ranging from labourers, service and industrial workers to business owners, educators, and government employees.

Table 3.3
Demographic Information for Focus Group Participants

Number of Residents in Home							
	2	3	4	5	6+	Missing	Total
Number of Participants	1	9	12	6	2	1	31
Percentage of Participants	3.2%	29.0%	38.7%	19.4%	6.5%	3.2%	100.0%

Table 3.4
Number of Focus Group Participants with Siblings

Number of Siblings							
	0	1	2	3	4	5	Total
Number of Participants	2	14	9	2	2	2	31
Percentage of Participants	6.5%	45.2%	29.0%	6.5%	6.5%	6.5%	100.0%

Table 3.5
Number of Focus Group Participants with Brothers

Number of Brothers						
	0	1	2	3	4	Total
Number of Participants	9	14	5	2	1	31
Percentage of Participants	29.0%	45.2%	16.1%	6.5%	3.2%	100.0%

Table 3.6
Number of Focus Group Participants with Sisters

Number of Sisters					
	0	1	2	3	Total
Number of Participants	17	9	2	3	31
Percentage of Participants	54.8%	29.0%	6.5%	9.7%	100.0%

Data Analysis

As an exploratory study, the present research involved continual re-evaluation to ensure adequate data collection during focus group interviewing. Merriam (1988) states that the collection and analysis of data should occur simultaneously. Intimate association with qualitative data through immediate and consistent analysis allows the researcher to identify, categorize, contrast and compare issues that are common within and among groups (Creswell, 1994). Morgan (1997) identifies the need for continuous analysis of focus group data for "group-to-group validation" (p. 63). For any particular issue, group-to-group validation can occur when comparable enthusiasm, or lack thereof, exists during discussions. Upon completing interview sessions the researcher and observer moderator discussed and recorded relevant comments and issues that arose throughout the interview in a journal. Transcription of the interview occurred shortly after the session, and a process of reflection and reading the interviews helped the researcher dissect the young women's experiences. Because good practice dictates the need to commence data analysis expeditiously, the researcher began to code data immediately

following the completion of each focus group interview (Miles & Huberman, 1984). Once data saturation occurred, an in-depth deconstruction and reconstruction of ideas began.

Following each interview, the researcher began transcription. Individual focus group interviews were entered into a Microsoft Word file on a PC computer. Pseudonyms replaced the participants' real names during transcription. Early theme identification in the data followed the typology of the interview guide (Appendix A). Information concerning initial participation was related to family and friends' roles, the early years of playing were associated with greater personal reflections. Participants current playing status was associated mainly with topics related to their self-concept, their friends and others' images of female hockey players and their families' involvement in their hockey careers. The gendered segregation of hockey was a prominent theme throughout each stage of their hockey participation. The sequential process of initiation and integration into women's hockey exposed dominant socializing themes.

The software program, QSR NUD*IST 4, Qualitative Solutions and Research, Non-numerical Unstructured Data Indexing Searching and Theorizing, was used to combine and store material collected during the interview process. The program is designed for organizing qualitative data. In the present study, the program allowed the researcher to collect and organize transcribed information into systematic categories and themes that were predetermined by the researcher. Prior to using NUD*IST the researcher had identified themes by reflecting and re-reading transcriptions. The initial transcriptions compiled in Word were exported to NUD*IST. As an organization tool,

NUD*IST allowed the researcher to group similar information from each interview together. This grouped information was then searched to find subcategories which contributed to the breakdown of data. Original transcripts were referred to regularly to ascertain the context in which statements were given which maintained the clarity of the interview statements.

As themes began to emerge, they were compared throughout each set of raw data. Once this cross comparison was completed, themes were re-examined to create concise categories. Merriam (1988) described categories as comprehensive groups that can then be subdivided into sub-categories. Identification of sub-categories occurred based on the existence of substantial reports of information, or the absence of information, that helped to create the initial overlying category. The use of NUD*IST facilitated the deconstruction of data collected during focus groups.

Data collection ceased once focus groups no longer provided any new information and there was a distinct emergence and consolidation of the themes and categories being produced from the research analysis. This is known as data saturation (Patton, 1990).

The development of an interactionist perspective based on participants' experiences in hockey was established by maintaining a thick description of participants' experiences. Constant referencing to the original transcriptions ensured the transferability and confirmability of experiences between focus groups, while still considering the individuality of experiences. The credibility of participants' experiences was maintained throughout the course of study by ensuring the context of the event or the topic of discussion was not lost in the data analysis.

Although traditionally associated with the quantitative paradigm, numerical counting was used to illustrate the occurrences of particular phenomena. Morgan (1997) supports the use of numerical categorization since it enhances the understanding of the study; hence the descriptive counting provides segmental and holistic information about the participants in the study. Used in conjunction with participants' recollections and interpretative summaries, numeric descriptions increase the overall information related to participants' experiences in hockey.

The research method and process adhered to for the current study provided insightful, meaningful, and stimulating knowledge about female adolescents' involvement in hockey in Newfoundland. The following chapter will elaborate on the findings unearthed in this study.

CHAPTER 4

Results

The following chapter will bring to light the influential agents and events associated with females' participation in hockey. The researcher addresses females' integration and continued participation in the game of hockey as revealed through the information shared by the participants in this study. Section I will focus on the socializing agents and events that influence initial participation, while Section II elaborates on the elements that maintain females' involvement in the game. Section III examines hockey's social and competitive appeal, and Section IV illustrates personal and social expectations for female hockey players.

Section I

Attraction to the Game

The Desire to Participate

Given the context of youth sport, parental involvement and encouragement are necessary for participation. The females in the study relied on their parents for many things: to enroll them in hockey, to purchase the necessary equipment, and to support them throughout their participation in the sport. Various members of the family influenced young females' initial engagement in hockey. In this study, participants discussed their fathers, brothers, mothers, and sisters as contributors to their integration into the world of hockey. Outside of the family nucleus, female cousins, with experience playing hockey, influenced younger participants to join hockey and helped to positively sway these participants' parents to permit their daughters to take part in this sport.

By accompanying other family members to arenas, participants were able to witness the fun others were having while engaged in hockey. These young women primarily observed their fathers, brothers and male friends playing hockey; in fact 93.6% (n=29) of participants reported being influenced to participate in hockey as a result of watching males play. Female influences were only responsible for initiating 6.5% (n=2) of participants commitment to hockey; these participants enjoyed watching other young women play which inspired them to engage in the sport. Many participants had prior experience skating; 51.6% (n=16) of participants were involved in figure skating. The range of experience participants had in figure skating varied from one year to 10 years.

The competitive pressure associated with figure skating diminished females' enjoyment of the sport and many participants made comments similar to the following:

You get up so high and it's all competitive. You don't get to have any fun. . . . You don't get to meet people. . . . It's like you go out and do your own solo act and the only thing you get to do is precision. And most times you don't make the teams because all the older girls were on it. If you were a younger one all you do is stuff on your own. And when there's no contact and you're up by yourself on your own. It's no fun (Rachel).

However, these young women enjoyed skating and when the possibility of playing hockey in a fun, social environment presented itself, they were eager to try a new sport.

It's like I get out of bed on Saturday I'm like oh yes, only so many more hours until hockey. . . . I can't wait. Like with figure skating it was like, oh my god I've got to go to figure skating. I didn't like it at all (Shawna).

Certain participants were reluctant to get involved in male hockey and often parents would not permit their daughters to play that game. Once a female team became available, these young women's aspirations for playing hockey were realized. One participant explained her welcoming of female hockey:

I wanted to play hockey since I was little cause my brothers played. But since there was never any girls' teams or anything I didn't join until 3 years ago. I was in figure skating all the way up but I never really liked it. A couple of years ago when they started the girls team here I joined (Chris).

Within the sample 71% (n=22) of participants starting playing hockey on a female team while the remaining 29% (n=9) started playing hockey on male teams and subsequently joined female teams. All of the females who started playing female hockey are currently still involved with the female game; however, one of these players joined a male team after initially playing female hockey. She later withdrew from the male team and

continues to play female hockey. In addition, three players whose initial experience was with male hockey are currently playing both the male and female game. This brings the total percentage of participants currently playing both male and female hockey to 12.9% (n=4). Elite female hockey participation in the study was influenced by experience playing male hockey; 6.5% (n=2) of participants in the study were members of the Newfoundland Canada Games female hockey team. Both of these young women attributed the development of their athletic talent to their involvement and experience playing male hockey.

When asked specifically who influenced their participation in hockey, 81% (n=25) of participants indicated that fathers and brothers were most influential for triggering their interest in the game. Two participants (6.5%) engaged in the sport as a result of the encouragement received from male hockey players, and 12.9% (n=4) of participants in the study were influenced by sisters or female cousins who also participate in the game. In general, many participants identified themselves as members of "hockey families," where multiple family members participated in hockey or at least had a passion for the game.

Fathers' Influences for Hockey Socialization

Looking specifically at individual family members' roles for influencing participants to play the game of hockey, fathers were the predominant agents stimulating participants' interests. When asked how participants became involved in hockey, 48.3% (n=15) indicated that their fathers were the primary agents responsible for their involvement in the game. During the focus groups, many of the participants referenced

the importance of their fathers throughout their hockey participation. Ultimately fathers were the parental figure who granted participants permission to play; however it is unclear whether or not they actually performed the registration. One participant indicated that her father always wanted her to play:

My dad wanted me to play like all along, as soon as I was old enough to start. But I didn't want to. So he was delighted and immediately gave me permission when I wanted to play (Rosanna).

All females in the study required approval from their fathers before they commenced playing. Participants in all locations discussed the importance of their family's attendance at games and they stated that fathers, in particular, were crucial to developing players' skills. A dichotomous relationship existed between fathers and daughters. Fathers are unwelcome spectators because they tend to increase the pressure participants' experience, yet players continually look to them to provide feedback about their play. One participant explained her feelings about her father's presence at her games:

I don't like my Dad watching me. . . . I play better when my Dad is there. . . . Like when my Dad is there, like I know after the game he'll like tell me what I did wrong. . . . I play better when my Dad's there, I don't know why I just does (Jill).

Fathers did not necessarily require experience playing hockey to encourage their daughters to participate. During one focus group of five participants, two participants revealed that their fathers had never had the chance to play hockey when they were younger. These two men eagerly encouraged their daughters to participate. One father wished for one of his two children to join hockey, but when his son was reluctant and

disinterested in hockey, he encouraged his daughter to participate. A female league was just starting and he thought it was an advantageous opportunity she should seize. He simply wanted to experience the game vicariously through her participation. This young female stated:

My dad like lives through me in hockey and he loves to be the coach. He thinks he's so cool. He went in, like sometimes he'll wear like a trench coat and he's like NHL coaches wear trench coats (Nelly).

When she thought about withdrawing from the sport her father coerced her into continuing to play hockey. The other non-playing father did not formally initiate his daughter's interest in the game; he was actually surprised when she asked to join minor hockey. He supported her decision and wanted to ensure that she was able to experience something he never could when he was younger:

My Dad likes it. . . . My Dad never played when he was younger so he really likes being around the rink and stuff cause he really wanted to play but he never. Since me and my brother play Dad is really involved in the association and that. He really enjoys it and wants us to do well (Rebecca).

In some cases, females requested permission to participate in the boys' system because no female hockey teams existed, while other females waited until there was a female league before summoning parental support. When asked why they did not start playing male hockey when they were younger, the players' responses indicated that it was not something they thought of doing. The establishment of a female team encouraged this participant to join:

Although I wanted to play hockey forever, but there was no girls team in -- [town in Newfoundland] at the time, that's where I'm

from, so I didn't get in it. For different reasons. . . . My Dad didn't want to put me in at a young age. So I started figure skating and I liked figure skating so I never thought about hockey until I moved here with the girls (Tina).

Although they found the game interesting, they never really considered playing until there was an organized female league. Other participants had requested to play but their 'protective' fathers would not allow them to participate in male hockey. When asking players why their fathers did not enroll them earlier, one young woman commented:

I have always been. . . I have always wanted to play, but my Dad would never put me in. He was too afraid, cause I don't know why. He's just overprotective, I guess (Tara).

Other participants had similar comments; most often fathers were thought to have had their daughters' best interests at heart when they chose not to enroll them in male hockey.

All fathers in the study displayed enthusiasm about their daughters' participation in female hockey and many involved themselves in the game. The overwhelming interest in women's hockey, in one area included in the study, required that a father initiate a female team, which, in turn, served to stimulate growth of female hockey in the surrounding areas. Currently, there is a 3-team house league that competes in this area as a result of this man's initiatives.

Additionally fathers integrated themselves into their daughters' hockey as coaches. In 80% (n=4) of focus groups, participants referenced their fathers as coaches or assistant coaches for their team. Several players indicated that their father was a car coach, or an official "off-ice" coach. One participant recalls her instructional moments:

My father never coached me, just all the way, all the time, on the way home from hockey (Ann).

This player thought that following her games her father focused on the negative aspects of her play, and never supported the positive elements in the game. She expressed her frustration:

You did this wrong, you did that wrong. I'm like ohhhh . . . did I do anything good (Ann)?

Consequently, the young women in the study thought their fathers enjoyed and valued the competitive aspect of the game. Practices and power skating were activities in which fathers encouraged to help their daughters to develop better skating and stick handling skills. Overall, fathers' aspirations increased their daughters' abilities and permitted them to become better players. Two of the young women felt their hockey careers and their achievements were a result of their fathers' involvement. One participant describes the respect she has for her father's contributions to her hockey success:

My Dad, like if I play bad he always, always tells me. Like he shows me what I should be doing or shouldn't be doing. I think it sort of helps me though. It makes me better cause I don't think if he hadn't helped me and taught me when I was younger I won't have made the team [Canada Games team] and stuff, and like the 'A' teams. Like I think it helped me my whole life and stuff. I think it sort of paid off (Rebecca).

Currently, one young woman plays in a male league that permits body checking. Her father's expectations for her performance always equaled the standards he set for her brothers. He supported fair treatment of his daughter when she was competing and often he encouraged her to "hit him, punch him, get him back" (Jill).

Putting pressure on their daughters to compete was a common trend among all fathers. These men believed that acquiring the “competitive edge” in hockey was a characteristic that could be transferred and applied to everyday activities. Competition was important but participants also believed their fathers were proud of them and their ability to play hockey. Several participants had heard their fathers happily discussing their daughters’ involvement in hockey with family and friends. Fathers were also willing to defend their daughters’ rights to participate in male hockey. For example, a male coach in bantam level hockey was refusing to permit a female to play on his team, or change in “his boys’ dressing room” (Janet). The female’s father stepped in and defended his daughter’s ability and assured the coach that she would be playing on his team. The administrator of the minor hockey association had to be called in to verify the young woman’s registration on this house-league team. In this case, the father respected his daughter’s rights and supported her in her quest to play male hockey.

In summary, fathers were the socializing agents who influenced and granted their daughters the opportunity to participate in hockey. Participants described their fathers as protective when they denied their daughters permission to play male hockey. However, those few fathers who did support their daughters’ involvement in the male game, even when body checking was a part of the game, expected their daughter to be treated equally. Competition was an element of the game fathers promoted regardless of which version of the game their daughters participated. Many of these men became coaches to help integrate their daughters into the game. Fathers were actively involved in their daughters’ socialization within hockey.

The Influence of Brothers

Hockey has traditionally been a male sport, therefore females in the study were influenced to play hockey as a result of watching their brothers enjoying themselves on the ice. For example, one participant describes her initial attraction to the game:

Probably my brother influenced me. I was, like when I was younger, my parents would take me to the rink and I'd like watch and stuff and I like got right into it [hockey]. And I got them to sign me up, I was like seven I think (Jill).

Nine (29%) participants revealed that their brothers had either played or continue to play hockey which determines the amount of time the family spends at the rink, the responsibilities of their parents and the amount of attention given to their participation in hockey. Of these nine participants, eight (25%) described their brothers as supportive and encouraging. This positive sibling relationship helped participants learn more about the game and improve their hockey skills. One participant described the support she received:

... my brother is really into hockey and he wanted me to get into it, so he kept telling me what to do. And he encourages me to keep playing and stuff (Melanie).

The one participant whose brother was not interested in her hockey participation was ignorant of his sister's life:

... he can shoot and I can't and he won't help me ... cause he's too lazy. Cause I don't know he won't, he just won't. He don't find the time for me at all. He don't do anything with me he just acts like I'm not there. We don't get along (Carrie).

She was resentful about his lack of interest and wished he would share his athletic skills with her so she could improve her hockey game. Although her brother has disregarded

her, she still maintains her admiration for him and his hockey abilities as she went on to explain his accomplishments in hockey. In most cases reported in the study, brothers helped facilitate females' integration into hockey.

Approximately three participants (9.7%) interviewed indicated that their involvement in hockey contributed to their younger brother's participation in hockey. Two of these females were playing male hockey; in one case, the older sister played on her younger brother's team to facilitate his integration into the sport:

I guess when I was part of the team, well my little brother was kinda shy and stuff, so he's really didn't have any friends on the team. So like I was there so like he had a friend. So he really wanted me to play (Janet).

Younger brothers provided a substantial amount for support for their sister's hockey participation. Often attending their sisters' games and inquiring about their team's progress, these young males' interest in hockey filtered through to their sister's participation in the sport. In one report, a participant indicated that her brother admires her for playing hockey, so much so, that he even wanted her to wear his newer equipment during the high school tournament.

My brother comes up to me in my room the night of *Kentucky Cup* [female high school tournament] offered me to wear his helmet and shin pads. He wants me to look 'wicked' on the ice. He's like 'wear this helmet and my shin guards, you know, wear Dad's pants because you don't want a big bubble butt' (Tina).

Her interpretation of this comment stated that her brother was concerned about her looking like a hockey player with better equipment.

Female hockey participants appreciated their brothers' support and encouragement. Older and younger brothers generally appeared interested in female hockey and contributed to their sisters' integration into the sport. Either by helping with skill development or simply by inquiring and listening to their sisters' thoughts about the game, male siblings' concern for their sisters' involvement in hockey was respected by participants in this study.

The Influence of Male Friends

Also, male players have spearheaded females' entrance into a sport that has traditionally been restricted to males. Playing pond hockey and street hockey with neighbourhood males and floor hockey at school stimulated females' interest in ice hockey. Based on these experiences, 12.9% (n=4) of participants were encouraged by their male friends to join ice hockey. One participant played other sports with males:

I was, um, I played floor hockey with the by's [boys] and uh, they always told me that I should try and stuff (Nancy).

Another participant in the study directly joined a male league to play with her friends:

... before I moved here I lived in -- [town in Newfoundland]. And across the street from me there was like a couple of younger guys. I used to always play street hockey so I would go over with them. I used to go over with them like all winter and all summer. One day the guys said 'so Ann are you getting into hockey this year?' And I was like 'I don't know.' So I ran home and asked my Dad and my Dad's like 'I don't care, I suppose so.' From then on I played guys hockey and when I moved here I played girls (Ann).

These young females were welcomed into the male game because of previous experience playing sports with their male teammates. The other two females who were influenced by male friends also had experience playing pond hockey and floor hockey with males,

so when a female ice hockey team formed in the area these male friends encouraged these young women to play organized ice hockey.

The Influence of Female Relatives on Hockey Participation

Influences from female family members were limited. The only dominant association between mothers and their influence on their daughters' participation surrounds mothers' approval. Initially, some mothers were reluctant to allow their daughters' participation in hockey. As an example of a mother's concern for the welfare of her child, mothers of some participants in this study were disturbed when their daughters inquired about playing hockey. The overlying negativity that some mothers associated with hockey participation was the potential for their daughters to be hurt. The intensity of this burden increases for mothers who have daughters participating in male hockey, especially in leagues that permit body checking. One athlete described her mother's concern as hatred:

Mom hates, like hates for every time I go to a hockey game. She's like - be careful out there now (Jill).

This same mother was thought not to worry when her daughter played female hockey, due to the decreased level of physicality in the game. The mothers of daughters who play strictly female hockey were concerned for their daughters' safety, but once they became familiar with the female game they were less hesitant. Once participants' mothers become acquainted with the game they were described as offering positive reinforcement for female hockey participation. One participant alluded to mothers' concerns about their daughters playing female hockey:

I think a lot of Moms are scared, like scared and that. They think you're gonna get hurt, where guys hockey is so rough and they don't understand until they come watch (Chris).

On occasion, participants have experienced injuries and, as a result, their mothers' levels of anxiety has risen. For example, after a player sustained a severe injury her mother took additional precautions by sewing her child's hospital card onto the inside of her hockey pants:

I have my Janeway [children's hospital] card sown into the back of my hockey pants. I'm not kidding. My Mom is so afraid that I'm going to get hurt. It's like where the little padding thing is, it's put in there and Mom put velcro on the back of it. I got hurt once, once at hockey, and she's like that's it, your Janeway card is going in your pants (Janet).

Injuries alarm participants' mothers; thus, fathers and daughters have been known to deny injuries and their causes in an attempt to alleviate mothers' concerns. This deceptive strategy permits daughters to continue to play. One athlete recalled an incident when she was hit playing male hockey:

I got hit and got injured. Mom wasn't there, so Dad, like my Dad's like don't tell your Mom she won't let you play with the guys no more. So I went home and made up some excuse like I fell on it (Jill).

In her mother's absence, her father advised her to make up an excuse for the cause of her injury. This façade was created to prevent the player from being removed from the game by an alarmed mother.

Within the present study, participants noted that their mothers enjoyed watching and cheering when they played female hockey. As spectators, mothers tended to "sing out at ya," which participants defined as cheering. Mothers will yell encouraging phrases

such as “good try,” or “way to go,” but they will also voice instructional comments such as “keep your stick on the ice,” or “head for the net.” Generally, participants enjoyed hearing encouraging words, and, for beginning players, having their mothers instruct them from the sidelines reminded them of what they were suppose to be doing. However, this positive sentiment about mothers’ enthusiasm was not felt in all locations. In one location, the athletes felt that their mothers’ lack of knowledge should restrict their cheering. Participants also indicated that their mothers tended to repetitively cheer the same chants, which was believed to be a result of their lack of understanding for the game. Women’s hockey forbids body checking yet one mother continually cheers: “take her out, take her out Nelly” (Nelly).

Not all female players mocked their mother’s role as a spectator. Certain athletes looked favorably upon their mothers’ enthusiasm and felt it contributed to the unity of the team. These mothers validated their daughters’ progress and never critically compared their daughters with other players on the team. This athlete enjoyed her mother’s support:

Sometimes my mom yells ‘good try, try again.’ And she does that to me and if someone else does something wrong she’s like ‘good try, try again’ (Jenny).

This supportive rapport between mother and daughter transferred to other teammates as well. The positive reinforcement athletes received from all players’ mothers developed team solidarity and the idea of the team being a “family”: a notion that existed in 80% of the locations included in the study.

Unfortunately, some mothers' lack of knowledge prohibits them from having any insight about their daughters' games. Participants in the study listened to mother's instructional words but they did not attend to them. They had little respect for the value of their comments. Several participants reiterated comments similar to the following: "Mom don't know what's she's talking about" (Carrie). In one case, a mother's comments increased the pressure the young female was facing in the game. Another participant discussed her mother's enthusiasm towards her daughter's hockey career.

She just got to know what everything means like a couple of years ago. She's up in the stands froze to death, right. And when I gets off the ice if I, like if I did a good play, she's like 'Ann did you hear me cheering for you?' I'm like 'no Mom,' cause she's in the stands like going 'yeah' [whispering] (Ann).

The focus groups highlighted the fact that respect for mothers' involvement in their daughters' hockey participation is linked to age. Twelve, 13 and 14 year olds speak more positively of their mothers' involvement, whereas 15, 16 and 17 year olds are critical, and, at times, disrespectful towards their mothers. Younger, inexperienced female players genuinely cherished mothers' motivational words:

That's like our moms and parents, they tell us not to give up - that someday we'll be like them. And they were just like us when we started (Claire).

An older experienced player stated her disrespect for her mother's comments:

Mom always like, she's always like you're not trying hard enough, try harder. But like she doesn't really know what it's like to play a game of hockey herself, so, she doesn't know if you're playing good or if you're not (Rosanne).

Regardless of the outcome of games, this same participant described her mother as always having something to say about the game. Another player stated that her mother does not know how "to criticize her or say what's wrong," thus she attempts to ignore her mother's comments after games.

Mothers try to integrate themselves into their daughters' activities in hockey as much as possible. Several mothers help out on the bench, are involved in the administrative components of the hockey association, and contribute to preparing uniforms, coordinating travel when necessary, and organizing fundraising events and activities. Although mothers express their concern about the safety of their children, their involvement in hockey demonstrates the value and commitment they have for their daughters' development. Mothers find a multitude of ways to support and encourage their daughters' growth but yet remain in peripheral roles.

Older sisters played an influential role for 6.5% (n=2) of the participants in the study. Although limited in number in this study, these females were excellent role models; older sisters were instrumental in luring their siblings into hockey. One participant described her sister's influence:

My sister encouraged me to play cause she encouraged me to meet new people and get active and stuff like that (Barb).

As a result of one participant's sister's success in male hockey, their father advocated and developed the female team in their community. Realizing both the excitement and tumultuous moments his eldest daughter experienced, this man planned to provide for his younger daughter and other females an environment where all females could thoroughly enjoy the game of hockey. Currently, several players have younger siblings who show an

interest in the female game and anticipate joining female hockey once they are 10 years old and eligible to play. One participant proudly stated that:

She's [her sister] playing next year. She's only 9, she just turned 9. She's going to play next year (Julie).

Although the number of female players is limited, when young females know someone, or are related to a female player, their interest in the game magnifies and they are inspired to join a female hockey team. Family ties were instrumental in attracting females into the game; they provided other family members with an awareness of the game. This contributed to influencing parents to accommodate their children's wishes to participate in hockey. Through observation and association with other female players, younger relatives were enticed to join:

My cousin, Jay, over there she played. And I would come to practice with her, a couple of times, and she liked it. And after I watched her play a couple of times it looked like fun and I thought I'd try it (Tara).

Female hockey players often received support and encouragement from their mothers, sisters, and cousins. Mothers' support was tentative because of their concern for the safety of their daughters; however, once these women witnessed the satisfaction that their daughters' experience playing, they were quick to come on board and strongly encouraged their daughters' involvement in hockey. Nonetheless their role still remains secondary to the male influence. Female siblings and cousins acted as excellent recruiters who attracted younger females to the game.

Section II

Maintaining Involvement

The Allure that Maintains Females' Involvement in Hockey

Once females agree to become involved in hockey, they proceed to experience a series of events that reinforce their connection to the game. Many participants experienced similar integration patterns that familiarized them with the hockey milieu. In the study, all participants at some point in their careers referred to adapting to the sport. One participant described the context:

It's [female hockey] tough at first, but hockey is the best sport (Gwen).

It was necessary for all participants to adjust and to acquire hockey skills which, in turn, helped to improve their self-confidence. Also, participants established a social network of friends that helped to foster their hockey development and to create a vital link to the game. Depending on which route was taken during initial participation, skill acquisition varied for participants. Participants in one area described the 'playing' history of one of their teammates:

Our teammate [her name], she's a really good defenseman on our team. She switched over from this year [from male to female hockey]. And her Dad didn't really approve of it because he said the skill level is not there for women's hockey. And she's like really good, like she has a lot of potential. . . . Yeah she played boys' all-star. She's really good and her Dad didn't approve of it [female hockey] at all.

But one thing her Dad said halfway through this year, and it meant a lot to her and like the coaches, was that when [her name] comes home and she goes like 'yeah', or she comes home and she's like 'I can't wait to go back to hockey.' That's what changed her Dad's opinion you know, like of women's hockey. Like now she's looking forward to go to hockey because she knows she's got people

there that she can talk to. And she said like in like boys' it so competitive, she'd like go to the dressing room and she'd be like shoved out. You know, but everyone's accepted into our dressing room no matter what the age range or whatever. Like she, like her Dad approves of it now, he knows that she really likes it (Rachel).

Participating in male hockey increased participants' skill level yet, these players were not part of the social networks that female hockey participants experienced. In contrast and almost as a trade-off, females who initially started playing female hockey had less hockey talent but greater interaction among teammates.

Although all participants in the study were currently playing hockey, three have been unable to play continuously. One participant had to travel 45 minutes to participate and she described her decision to discontinue in hockey:

I gave up for a year. Cause I just, like well with the drive and all, it makes me have to leave early cause well down there I have to leave a lot earlier and stuff right. And it gets in the way of school, big time. And I just had other commitments and stuff so like it wasn't possible for me to do everything at once. I had to give up hockey. And sometimes I don't know, sometimes you feel like you're dragged out or whatever, if you go for a long time without having a game. Like the first part of this year, we went a long time without having a game or anything (Jay).

Other participants in the focus group began to talk about the initial limitations that female hockey players faced. The same player continued:

It gets kind of boring, its still fun though but you just got so much other stuff to do that you'll just say well okay you can leave hockey cause this has got to be done. And now like school's getting' really crucial now cause I'm in Grade 11 and everything just . . . you know (Jay).

When asked why she started again she replied:

I came and watched one game and then after that I said I got to get back in. That's what I said (Jay).

Factors Affecting Females' Development of the Necessary Skills Required for Hockey Participation

As an essential component of hockey, all participants emphasized the importance of developing solid skating skills. Females who possessed previous skating experience were a step ahead of those who needed to develop skating skills; however, regardless of skating ability, skating in male skates proved to be a challenge for those who previously figure skated. Developing the skill of skating was exciting and challenging for all. Being able to skate fast, or "flying like a bullet," as one participant described it, was a phenomenon that participants enjoyed until they were required to stop. Learning how to stop was one of the biggest challenges for participants in this study.

Skating and skill development required additional practice time which was often augmented by power skating sessions. Power skating involves developing skating ability, puck control, and shooting skills, all of which improved some participants' involvement in the game. Fourteen participants (45%) highlighted their involvement in power skating programs. Male and female athletes are grouped based on their ability and level of expertise during power skating sessions. One participant recognized the sex-integration of power skating:

Like in power skating we don't get set aside from the boys like we go and mix right in with all them (Stephanie).

All power skaters enjoyed the gender neutrality of this activity. Integrating with males having similar developmental needs was thought to improve the skill acquisition and confidence of beginning players.

Another component of hockey that increased participants skating and social relations was practice time. The encouragement new players received during practice from more experienced players was essential for the integration of younger and beginning players into the game of hockey in this study. One participant described her appreciation for the help of a veteran player:

Like the first time I came on the ice, [veteran player's name] stayed with me the first day, and showed me what to do with the puck, and showed me what to do with the stick. So like it helped me out a lot (Shawna).

Inexperienced players were unable to perform specific skills; thus, they referenced the need for positive reinforcement from their coaches, instructors, and teammates. Teammates demonstrating patience to teach less skilled players how to skate and perform drills properly were components of practice time that beginning players valued.

In the study, participants felt that the practice time for female hockey was improving substantially. Previously, three female teams practiced on Saturday mornings which meant that they frequently missed their practice time during male tournaments. All of the female teams that initially practiced Saturday mornings now practice in the middle of the week. One athlete summarizes the transition to more equitable conditions:

We had to fight for ice time. Like first startin' out they wouldn't give an equal amount of ice time, like the boys teams always got more than us. But now we're finding that we get as much time as guys. Like we get like two practices a week, like on weeknights,

rather than early Saturday morning practice. They are beginning to accept the fact that we are playing (Barb).

The availability of ice time for female hockey primarily appears to be increasing in the two areas outside of the urban center. Females in these areas were encouraged to develop their skating skills and participate in weekly practices that help develop specific hockey skills. Females playing hockey in three of the four locations receive a practice and a game per week. Since ice time was not a problem in these three locations, the greatest limitation that participants from the metropolitan and rural areas experienced was the geographical isolation of their teams and the lack of development of female hockey in the surrounding areas.

Travel time is also a limitation that affects all female hockey. The wide spread distribution of teams limits the possibility of regular play among the four locations included in this study. For example, one location included in the study is forced to travel at least an hour to play their nearest competitor. Although ice time for female hockey appears to be increasing in some locations, there is a general lack of development of competitive play for female hockey. There are no regular tournaments and this year playoff schedules were shortened, therefore play among female hockey teams was limited.

With the 1999 Canada Games being held in Cornerbrook, Newfoundland, elite level female hockey players were given privileges that go far beyond those afforded to recreational female hockey players. The training for the national competition provided greater opportunities for female players; however, participation at this level only includes

a select few. Provided with this opportunity for elite level play, participants realized the dedication and commitment required to achieve this elite level status. Accompanying the privileges of having an increase in training, a greater number of games, and opportunities to travel outside the province young females became aware of an array of possibilities for improving their level of participation in hockey.

Aside from the physical requirements of hockey, organized participation requires the presence of a coach. A key element in determining the commitment of athletes was the coach. One of the prime catalysts for maintaining female's involvement in hockey was the role of the coach. One participant felt that during the first year of involvement, it is the coach's responsibility to create an environment that maintains the participants' interest in the game:

I think the first year, I think the big difference it makes, like whether or not you stay with it is your coach (Carrie).

Other athletes had similar views; 81% (n=25) of players spoke highly of their coaches. In retrospect, one participant felt that the positive treatment she received from her coach during her first year helped integrate her into hockey. Thirty participants (96.8%) discussed being coached solely by males and four participants (13.7%) referenced being coached by their fathers.

The only player to indicate an experience with a female coach played on a male team that was coached by a woman:

My last coach, my last year that I was in [name of town in Newfoundland], it was a girl, and, she was really good. Her son helped out too. She was always telling me this stuff like 'I was really good,' and all that. And before I moved the last thing she said to me was, 'I'll see you in the Olympics.' I was like 'wow' (Ann).

The encouragement this athlete received has made a lasting impression and she hopes to fulfill the coach's expectations. Those remarks were something that this participant said she would never forget.

Although common to all participants, it was the prevailing sentiment during the interviews that younger inexperienced players require assurance and encouragement from the coach. Older experienced players have different expectations from their coach. These athletes expect to be challenged and treated as hockey players, not female hockey players. It is essential that the coach create an instructional setting that must be positive and constructive to promote females' involvement in hockey.

To recapitulate, female integration into hockey required that players develop the fundamental skills of the game. Skating is the component most inexperienced players devoted greater time and commitment to expanding; power skating and practice helped these young women gain skills and confidence. The availability of ice time given to female hockey provided an environment that positively supports and encourages females integration into hockey. The females who competed at elite levels were continuously adapting to the changing and demanding environment of competitive hockey. The coach was an essential part of female hockey, especially in regards to supporting and encouraging inexperienced players. Older participants sought challenging practices and respect from their coaches while younger players again needed support.

Social Aspects Associated with Integration

Since hockey is not played in a vacuum the need to interact with others establishes one of the most credible aspects of the female game. The female hockey players in the study shared a common passion for the game of hockey and valued their friendships created in this culture. The bonding between athletes, regardless of age and ability, creates a support system that willingly accepts and attracts other females. The 71% of participants (n=22) who started playing female hockey initially perceived female hockey as fun. However, once females joined hockey their expectations were magnified. Friendships were established and unifying events such as team parties strengthened relationships and allowed females to get to know one another which contributed to the positive aspects of female hockey. By engaging in the female game, players are provided with opportunities to meet a variety of people whom participants would otherwise not have encountered.

In this study the support within female hockey appeared to be a recurrent event. Participants recalled what it felt like when they joined. Therefore, their compassion for others invited them to extend themselves to facilitate inexperienced players integration into the sport. This also promoted team membership. The older players eased younger players into the hockey community by talking to them in the dressing room and on the ice. Inexperienced participants willingly accept and recognize older player's efforts. This reciprocity that occurs, between experienced and inexperienced players, during the initial stages of hockey participation manifests itself in cyclical tradition. For example, a ten-year-old female player was called up from the minor boys system to play for a junior

female team during a championship game. The following season, that 10-year-old player joined the female league and the older players proposed that it was a result of the supportive, interactive environment that she experienced. An older veteran player developed a theory, shared among female players for integrating new players:

You remember when you first started playing hockey like how everybody treated you, so that kind of reflects how you treat people that are coming up. You want to treat people well and help them out and stuff (Rachel).

An inexperienced player expressed that:

Everyone helps out, like friends on your team and stuff like they all give you tips and stuff. So you can get better as you go (Shelly).

A conscientious effort to build a community among female hockey players is one of the special attributes of the female game.

Female team members state that there is a minimal amount of negative competition among them which directs and shapes their team relationships. Participants in the study highlighted females' great capacity for making distinctions between on-ice and off-ice behaviour; several participants made similar comments, "you can leave everything on the ice in girls' hockey" (Chris). Participants supported civilized aggression, which could be defined as the use of physical force without any lasting repercussions, a combat that transpires and remains isolated to the ice surface. As a group advocating for their game, female players' ability to distinguish between on-ice and off-ice behaviours, strengthens and promotes female hockey. Within the current study, the lack of interpersonal hostility honours the female game.

All participants, 100% (n=31), spoke passionately of friendships they formed through their participation in hockey. The social interaction and support that occur, in the dressing room and on the ice, provided athletes with opportunities for bonding. Most of the relationships formed in hockey extend beyond the game; participants in the study indicated that teammates would engage in communal activities, such as sleeping over at someone else's house, going shopping, and attending the movies together. Within the study hockey provided an environment for females to meet new people and form new friendships. Several females stated that the friendships they made through hockey are the strongest they have. They feel they have made friends who they will cherish for life.

Within the study, all of the locations drew players from surrounding communities and different school systems; thus, these participants enjoyed attending hockey, as it is one of the few places these females can interact with their teammates from diverse areas. One participant explained:

I look forward to it, it's kind of when you see all your friends.
Usually you only see the people at hockey when you're at hockey so
I like it (Martha).

In the study, participants thought hockey allowed them to generate new friends from different environments which helped them to learn more about themselves and others.

The value of the social interaction associated with female hockey participation rests in the group cohesion and sisterhood that is established through play. Having the opportunity to integrate and to socialize with others possessing similar interests, and associating with a range of players aged 10 – 33 years provided a spectrum of women's experiences to strengthen the development of each member of the group. In making the

transition from male hockey to female hockey, one interviewee expressed her pleasure in being surrounded by the same sex:

When I had to go to girls, I was scared to death, I didn't know anybody, and then I found it a lot better. Guys is this big . . . I don't know...you knew all the guys but it wasn't like you could sit down and chat (Sally).

Additionally, most participants discussed the pleasantries associated with the dressing room. Shyness and feelings of intimidation are characteristics that females soon shed in this environment. Initially, participants described how they confined themselves into a small space, chose not to engage in conversations and changed as quickly as possible. As players gained more experience, they increased their interaction with teammates and extended the amount of time they spent in the dressing room. Prior to the game, the room was filled with anticipation and boisterous chatter. The post-game atmosphere was quite similar, with perhaps more emphasis on life outside hockey. Although winning may augment the jubilation of the room, having fun was a priority. The dressing room provided a setting to develop team unity; one interviewee described the importance of the dressing room:

If you don't get along in the dressing room you don't get along on the ice and you won't work as a team (Tina).

In contrast, the dressing room provided different experiences for females playing male hockey. In this study the number of females involved in male hockey was limited. For example all of the females in the study who choose to play male hockey were the only female player on their respective male team. Females playing male hockey in this study changed with their male counterparts in the same dressing room. The female

players were comfortable with this part of the male dressing room because no one gets completely naked; however the social atmosphere of the dressing room created uneasiness for these young women.

All four females in the study who were currently playing male hockey described the male dressing room in a fashion similar to the following participant's description:

It's like totally different than the girls' [dressing room] though (Rebecca).

The difference lies in the conversations, one participant said:

What they [males] talk about is totally different [than females]. . . . And then one guy will say 'do you know what they're doing?' They're just like 'don't forget about Jill now. Like have some respect for her.' And like they're talking about the worst things ever (Jill).

When asked if the conversations made them feel awkward, participants responded that it depends on how 'far' the conversations go:

It depends. Sometimes they go too far. Like once they [discussions] go too far to a point, then they'll stop and one of them [male players] will always say 'don't forget she's here, like stop.' Then they're [male players] like 'do you mind?' And I'm like I don't care. I'm not gonna say anything (Jill).

One participant indicated her method for dealing with the awkwardness of male conversations:

Half the time I don't even listen to them like I don't tune in. And there's always one guy on the team who's like totally different. Like I can always talk to someone (Rebecca).

To avoid the uncomfortable encounters in the dressing room, most females spend minimal amounts of time changing, thus losing the opportunity to experience the camaraderie of this environment. One participant indicated that other girls ask her about

her male teammates. This female hockey player's reply indicated her efforts to avoid the unpleasantness of the male dressing room:

I'm like, actually I'm like the first one out of the dressing room, like I strip off my gear and run out (Janet).

The participants in this study playing male hockey devised methods for dealing with the atmosphere of the male dressing room. As a result, females were generally excluded from the social interactions that occur in male dressing rooms.

In summary, females' social integration into hockey is guided by the fun and excitement of playing hockey with a union of friends. The possibility of meeting new people and making lasting friendships highlighted participants' attachment to the game. In the study, encouragement for participating in female hockey occurred in a cyclical pattern whereby experienced players befriended and helped inexperienced players. Another important component associated with social integration was the dressing room. This environment facilitated interaction in female hockey. In contrast, male hockey excluded females and made them feel uncomfortable; therefore, inhibiting their social interaction.

Section III

Social Interactions in Hockey

Social Attraction to and Competition within Hockey

Females participating in the study delivered endless accolades for the game of hockey. All participants, 100% (n=31) expressed a love for the game, and spoke of the tremendous amount of fun they experienced. Hockey appears to attract and bring together female players. In each of the five focus groups, multiple participants stated that: "it's [hockey] a laugh"; playing hockey was a gregarious experience unlike that in any other sport. Several participants described hockey as an addiction; "once you start, you either love it or you hate it" (Kelly).

The game of hockey allows females to keep active and stay in shape in a manner unlike any other sport they had experience playing. Both recreation and elite hockey creates a community of friends. The young females felt they were being taught how to interact with people, developing a "social sense," as one participant described it. The social aspect of hockey sustains itself and reinforces other components of the game such as skill acquisition and development. Being able to enjoy the game, regardless of skill level, and not having to worry about the repercussions of their actions contributed to the establishment of friends. These zealous young women created strong social networks that help to maintain their participation in hockey.

Female hockey participation was not merely a social attraction. All participants valued the competitive spirit of sport participation; hence hockey was also a competitive outlet. Participants in the study valued competitive play but did not want to eliminate the

element of fun from their hockey participation. If all participants could create a hockey balance, they would combine having fun with a reputable winning record. The following statement reveals players' ideas about the competition level of female hockey:

Everyone plays to win but it's no good being out there if you're not having fun. It's better to win but it doesn't make a difference we're having fun; we do go out to have fun but we also go out to play good and to play our best and like win and stuff (Claire).

Participants in the study competed at two levels. The first level of play is house league, which involves rotating play between local teams, and the second level of play is junior all-star. To play all-star players must be under 19 years old; therefore, everyone participating in the present study was eligible to play in the all-Newfoundland tournament. As a weekend tournament, participants eagerly awaited the annual event. The prestige linked to the all-Newfoundland title produced greater competitive emotions among participants in the study. The pride of being all-Newfoundland champions establishes a legacy and all female players aspired to be a member of a winning team. However, regardless of the final outcome of the event, the participants discussed the jubilation and exhilaration that occurs from playing competitive hockey.

Although all participants currently enjoy their level in hockey, they are aware of the increase in opportunities available to young talented players. Several participants recognized the potential for combining hockey participation with educational opportunities. One participant in the study has accepted a four-year university scholarship to an American school. She participated in both female and male hockey. When asked to discuss her accomplishment, she spoke with trepidation and revealed her

anxiety about moving so far from home. To alleviate her nervousness and apprehension she stated:

It's scary though, all by myself and everything. I don't know no one.
I don't care as long as I get to play hockey (Jill).

Older participants in the study, in grades 11 and 12, expressed their interest in university hockey and stated their disappointment in Memorial University's inability to offer a team in a sport that has now been given Canadian Intercollegiate Athletics Union (CIAU) status.

In general, participants' future hockey aspirations varied. Playing in the Olympics is a dream only one participant mentioned. Other participants in the study want to play recreational level hockey for as long as they can, some want to become referees, and some hope to someday help their children become involved in the game.

To recap, female hockey players are addicted to the game of hockey for personal, social, and competitive reasons. The competitive spirit that is required for the all Newfoundland title was eagerly accepted and anticipated by participants in the study. With the realization of the increasing opportunities available to female hockey, the soon-to-be university and college bound participants are eagerly anticipating combining their love for hockey with their educational goals. Other participants simply want to continue to enjoy the game as long as they can.

Team Affiliation and Friendship

In a quest to define themselves, some adolescent females indicated that by being a member of a female hockey team they felt secure and confident. By being part of a collective group of young women, participation in female hockey satisfied adolescent

females' need for affiliation. Team membership was indicated as being an extremely important component of female hockey. Being praised at school for winning the *Kentucky Tournament*, the Avalon female hockey high school title, and receiving acknowledgment from their peers for their participation in the sport strengthened participants' affinity for each other and for hockey. During 80% of focus groups, participants referred to teammates as "family." Overall, there was a global sense of support and belonging on teams; hence team members, parents, and coaches created a single unit that helped ease the turmoil of adolescence.

On the other hand, team affiliation was not a strong component participants playing male hockey discussed. When describing their participation on male teams females referred to their male teammates as 'them', instead of the 'we' used when referring to female teammates. This linguistic usage illustrates females' lack of inclusion in male hockey. Females verbally dissociated themselves from male players yet they indicated that they were treated as members of the team. One player recalled an event where she was walking with a male friend at school, and they encountered her male hockey teammates who greeted her with punches on her arm. Her friend expressed his disgust with this treatment and she admitted that this is how they treat her because she is part of the team. Gender boundaries force an unconventional bonding for females participating in male hockey.

In the study, females enjoy the game of hockey and feel a particular attraction to the social network that players create. The strong interpersonal relationships among female hockey players were one of the attractions of female hockey that all participants

valued. The team membership aspect of male hockey does not incorporate the same bonding for male and female players. Although female participants are members of the team, their sex difference excluded them from becoming a full team member.

Section IV

The Looking Glass

Personal Revelations

The attraction to the game of hockey could not be sustained if participants were not receiving some type of personal satisfaction. When asked how playing hockey had contributed to developing and revealing their character, participants responded by indicating that it has helped them overcome many fears. Involvement in hockey helped many participants surmount feelings of shyness or self-doubt. Prior to playing hockey, feelings of social intimidation would frequently prevent young females from behaving and speaking in a particular manner. Since participating in hockey, several young women have become more expressive. Positive experiences have created positive thoughts:

It [hockey] makes you feel stronger and more independent cause like you feel like you can do something. You're good at something (Rebecca).

Other females talked about their feelings of pride and others' recognition of their accomplishments. "A lot of people respect you for it [playing hockey] so eventually you begin to respect yourself," was a comment from a veteran player (Tina). Younger players thought that playing with older females improved their self-esteem and self-confidence. One 13 year old player referred to the ambitiousness of her actions, "You're out playing with 18 and 19 year olds, and you're trying to keep up with them" (Stephanie).

As previously mentioned, two of the participants in the study were members of the Newfoundland Canada Games team. These young women experienced a learning

opportunity that required continuous devotion and commitment, unlike any of their previous hockey experiences. Suddenly the focus of these young women's lives changed. Confronted with the demands of elite hockey, practice time and training schedules became the primary components of life aside from school. Setting higher goals exposed these young women to success and to failure as similar caliber athletes surrounded them. Participating on the provincial team provided a window into the commitment required to achieve in sport at the elite level, but it also exposed selected individuals to a sample of the opportunities available to women in hockey.

Although every participant in the study spoke highly of their involvement in female hockey, the differences between male hockey and female hockey were identified. When asked about their experience in hockey, several players in all locations under investigation indicated that they play '*just*' female hockey or '*only*' female hockey. Both athletes who play '*only*' female hockey and those who had experience playing male hockey referred to their participation in the female game as less of an achievement than that of males playing male hockey.

Females who had experience playing male hockey said they had fun. Most athletes chose to leave the male game once body checking became a component of play. These players miss male hockey; one participant was speaking from experience to a player who currently plays both games, "You'll miss it if you quit. If you quit the guys you'll miss it" (Sally). When asked what they would miss, the participant indicated that she loved female hockey, but male hockey is different, and this inexplicable difference is what others will miss.

In summary, hockey participation has created positive experiences for participants in the study to develop self- confidence, self-competence, and self-esteem. These young women are becoming autonomous individuals achieving their goals and vivaciously tackling life.

Social Views

Playing a traditional male sport carries with it dominant cultural expectations based on issues of masculinity. People have a preconceived image of the female hockey player. Participants in the study revealed how others perceive them because of their participation in hockey. "They think you're a brut," or "you should have been born a guy," or "you're a butch," were common answers when participants were asked explicitly to state how they thought others' viewed female hockey players. Whether playing a 'male' sport, or playing with males, athletic females in this domain were labeled as masculine. The association of masculinity also carries with it a lesbian stigma. Females' sexual orientation has been questioned: "I've been asked if I'm a lesbian because I play hockey" (Nelly). Players indicated that males who played hockey boldly asked them if there were any lesbians on their teams, or if there was any "girl on girl" action. Another participant indicated that people ask her, "is there a bunch of lesbians on your team" (Sally)? Several participants support the idea that females do not hold the same stereotypical viewpoint:

Oh I get that question 'is there any lesbians on your team?' I'm like 'does it matter?' A girl has never asked me that question though (Janet).

Participants in the study reported that their female acquaintances who did not participate in hockey were envious of them; most of these females longed to join female hockey but expressed the fear of being intimidated as the deterring factor affecting their decision not to participate. Participants in this study indicated that:

Girls are like, 'oh man, I'd love to play hockey,' that's what all the girls say (Sally).

The dichotomy between the male and female peer groups illustrates stereotypical ideals that perpetuate male and female insecurities.

Social and physical ideals surround women and their bodies. Several participants felt that because of their athletic behaviour, others' expected them to conform to certain images:

It changes people's perception of you because they expect you to come in with like, army boots and like you know, with all this stuff. And like you're not, like you wear jeans not joggers (Janet).

Also, physical appearance is important for females playing male hockey. Thirty-five percent (n=11) of participants blamed their physical appearance for determining their treatment in male hockey, especially when they cut their hair short. Females playing male hockey realized the degree of body contact changed when they were not as easily identified as females. Three participants (9.6%) who engaged in male hockey remember being involved in more physical contact when their ponytails were cut off. One participant recalled:

When you cut your hair off they think you're a guy. When my hair was short I got like killed. . . . They thought I was the shortest guy on the team and kept giving it to me (Sally).

The players felt that females playing male hockey were treated differently based on their physical appearance and gender.

Being recognized as a female who participates on a male team creates a multitude of situations for both the female and male team members. In games that involved body checking, female players tended to receive less violence and were not expected to deliver the same type of check as their male counterparts. One participant stated that she received body checks, but she also acknowledged that the boys knew she was a girl; therefore, “they wouldn’t flatten her” (Rebecca). Another female indicated that she does not want or expect the guys to “lay off her” because she goes to the games to play hockey, and she sees herself as part of the team; therefore, she demands to be treated as one of the males (Jill).

Female players also understand the stigma attached to teams because of their presence. The awkwardness their male teammates encounter by having a girl as part of their team does not go unnoticed. Parents in particular, downgrade specific teams’ overall abilities if they had a female player. One participant acknowledged the overall difficulties of being a female on a male team:

There’s always someone who has to say something. Like ‘oh my God, look they got a girl on their team, they suck.’ I can remember playing all-star and I always used to hear it. And guys, I think, were sort of like getting really frustrated with it. And they didn’t know what to say and I thought they really used to get depressed and stuff when people would say that (Rebecca).

Participants sensed this hostility and used this negativity as a motivating force to demonstrate their athletic abilities. The same athlete went on and described her drive to establish her worthiness as a member of the team:

It didn't make me feel very good. But when I got on the ice, it just made me, like work a lot harder and show them that even though I'm a girl I can still play just as good or better than them. So I guess it gave me sort of a boost to try harder (Rebecca).

To conclude, on a personal level, participants' involvement in hockey has contributed to developing a positive self-concept. Social stereotypes and expectations for young women continue to hinder their progression in hockey. This negativity intrudes into the female game and distinctly impedes females' participation on male teams.

Chapter Summary

All participants in the study were presently playing hockey. When these young women recalled who and what had influenced them to participate, primarily fathers and brothers were identified as the ones who guided these young women to begin playing hockey. The difficulties of first playing a novel sport required that participants engage in extra practice through activities such as power skating to improve their technical skills. The social aspect of hockey presented itself to participants through the welcoming atmosphere and positive support given by members of the female hockey culture. Friendship and fun were important components linked with participation that lured females to the game; in combination with strong team bonds, the game and the inviting atmosphere maintained females' hockey involvement. The spirit of competition also

existed among participants; competitive play reinforces self-improvement and achievement which all participants anticipated, in some form, through their participation in hockey. Females are committed to the female game but the male game still attracts their attention and causes them to devalue their participation in the female game. However, participating in hockey has facilitated the development of autonomy, confidence, and independence in these young women. The acquisition of positive self-concepts helped these young females to recognize social stereotypes and their inhibiting potential. Overall, the participants in the present study expressed a love for the game of hockey that has contributed to and expanded their personal development.

CHAPTER 5

Discussion, Analysis, and Recommendations

This chapter links the information collected in the study to the factors affecting females' decisions to commence and to continue their involvement in hockey. The literature review provides a framework for the current discussion. Socialization patterns, gender role expectations, and social issues surrounding females' participation in hockey are issues which will be discussed. A model is developed to conceptualize young females' perceptions of the game of hockey and by way of conclusion, recommendations for the future are made to prompt further analysis and monitoring of females' hockey participation.

Section I

Factors Influencing Females' Hockey Participation

Research focusing on athletes' socialization into sport outlines the importance of parental support during the initial years of participation (Greendorfer, 1977; Higginson, 1985; Snyder & Sprietzer, 1973; Weiss & Barbers, 1985). Past research reveals that parents' interest in sport positively contributed to both male and female involvement in physical activities (Yang, Telma, & Laakso, 1996).

The current research supports these previous findings. Family's interest in hockey spurs their daughters' attraction to the game. Specifically, young women's desires to play hockey were inspired by their fathers' participation in and passion for the game. Whether or not fathers actually participate in hockey is irrelevant; by merely having an interest in the sport, fathers were able to prompt, and in some cases, coerce their daughters into playing. Snyder and Sprietzer (1973) found same-sexed parents to be the influential socializing agent for encouraging sport participation. The present study does not support Snyder and Sprietzer's same-sex link for the parent-child relationship and encouragement to play sport. A possible explanation for the variation in parental support could be associated with the fact that only males have traditionally played hockey, therefore they possess the expertise necessary to promote the game. As well, the constraint of the fear of injury may be negatively influencing the mothers.

In the past, sport socialization research has described the influential role of the family for influencing childhood participation; but with continued involvement in sport athletes begin to rely less on family encouragement. More often sport participants seek

support from their peers. Studies by Greendorfer (1977), Higginson (1985), Synder and Sprietzer (1973), Weiss and Knopps (1982), and Weiss and Barbers (1985) support parents' instrumental role for their children's socialization into sport participation until adolescence, at which time, the impetus for participation becomes associated with peers. The present study does not totally concur with these findings. Although peers, specifically teammates, were extremely important for maintaining females' involvement in the game, the unwavering support of parents was a vital and continuing component. Again, the devotion of parents coincides with the fact that females are participating in a sport that differs from traditional expectations of female adolescents; therefore, the demand for strong family support helps these athletes step outside the norm to explore and to enjoy their participation in hockey.

Within the hockey environment the relationship between fathers and daughters is a unique struggle of attraction and rejection. Aware of their fathers' need to criticize their play, participants in the study voiced unclear and opposing sentiments about the necessity of their fathers' actions. Many players reported that the attendance of fathers at their games created feelings of animosity and apprehension in them. As the only family member valued to critically assess their abilities, athletes required his presence, yet, dreaded his evaluation. These ambivalent feelings about support from their fathers illustrate their fear of being judged as incompetent. Female players want their fathers to be proud of them; as women participating in a male domain, these athletes experience increased pressure to achieve male expectations. Although fathers' advice is not always appreciated, females attributed their skill development to the assistance they received

from their fathers. Males, in the present study, were honoured with the ability to deliver supreme knowledge of the game regardless of their playing experience. As more females become involved in hockey, some females may be awarded the same honour and may be seen and used as knowledgeable hockey critics.

As well, other male family members influenced females' decisions to play hockey. Observing brothers' games and hearing about the fun they had while playing was another important socializing mechanism that attracted females to the sport. Weiss and Knoppers (1982) found siblings were influential socializing agents during adolescence and early adulthood for female volleyball players. The role of siblings in the present study was important, yet secondary to parental support. Younger male siblings demonstrated the greatest amount of support for their sisters' hockey participation. Being inquisitive about the evolution of their sisters' progress, loaning equipment to their sisters and attending their games were methods younger brothers used to contribute to their sisters' hockey participation. Older male siblings were leaned upon to develop playing skills; generally, participants approached their older brothers to ask for help with their shooting. Older brothers rarely witnessed their younger sisters playing hockey. Female hockey players admired their older brothers and wished that their older brothers would contribute more to the development of their hockey careers. However, the sibling relationship between older brother and younger sister during adolescence is controversial as both young people seek independence; therefore these young men encouraged their sisters to play but provided only a minimal amount of support. In contrast, participants

with younger siblings greatly appreciated the enthusiasm offered by their younger brothers.

In the current study, the predominant female socializing agents were older sisters and cousins who had experience playing hockey. These women functioned as role models that stimulated athletes' interests and made hockey participation feasible. Following in another female's footsteps eased parents' concerns and facilitated younger females' integration into the game. As more females begin to play, they will be followed by an ever-increasing number of young players drawn to the game by these role models.

Initially, mothers were opposed to the idea of their daughters playing hockey. The socialized role of mother dictates that her primary role is to nurture her children's development. Although concerned about the welfare of their daughters, mothers eventually encouraged them to participate and proceeded to integrate themselves into the sport by learning more about the rules and becoming active members of their daughters' teams. As more generations of young women become involved in sport, there will be more inclusive mother-daughter relationships associated with females and sport socialization.

Outside the family nucleus, the hockey coach had an instrumental role in females' decisions to maintain their involvement in hockey. According to Higginson (1985), during adolescence, sport participants begin to rely on the coach for instruction and motivational support. In this study, females ardently discussed their relationship with their coaches and noted the importance of this relationship during their initial years of play. The coach was a catalyst for maintaining females' involvement in the sport.

Participants enthusiastically referenced their coaches' ability to create a fun, supportive and instructional environment which facilitated their assimilation into the game of hockey.

In summary, fathers and brothers were the primary supporters of the female players in the study. Mothers' enthusiasm increased as their knowledge of the game expanded and as they recognized the satisfaction their daughters experienced while playing hockey. Within the hockey setting, the coach is the instrumental figure for integrating female participants into the game. Aside from the positive support received from their parents and reassurance given by coaches, the friendship and encouragement provided by teammates combine to bolster the players' commitment to the game in a positive social context. The significant interplay between family support and positive coaching, coinciding with friendship among teammates allowed hockey to become a meaningful component of these athletes' lives.

Intrinsic Motives for Females Participation in Hockey

Youth sport participation occurs for various reasons and, based on an interactionist model, these reasons are continuously reviewed. The predominant objectives for the involvement of most youth are to have fun, to interact with others, and to develop physical skills (Coakley, 1998). These goals can be attained if participants freely choose to become involved in sport. A study examining sex differences and motives for participation indicated that female swimmers place more emphasis on fun and friendship formation than males, although team affiliation and competition are also important components of sport for them (Gould, Feltz, & Weiss, 1985). As well, there

are differing expectations among female sport participants. The distinction between the achievement-oriented female athlete and the recreational female athlete is, according to Ryckman and Hamel (1992), associated with confidence level. Self-motivated, confident females prefer and benefit from competitive sports, whereas less confident, modest females participate in sport for affiliation purposes.

When comparing the previous research regarding motives for youth sport participation with the current study, several similarities exist. Young female hockey players emphasized fun and friendship formation, especially in female hockey, as the main attractions of the game. For those females participating with males, fun was still a criterion of the game and friendships existed, but the personal relationships were not as intimate as those established in female hockey. Fun and friendship were critical attributes that maintained females' involvement in hockey. Team affiliation was also an important component of female hockey; belonging to a team and sharing mutual interests with other adolescent females provided companionship. All female hockey players embraced and appreciated their interpersonal relations with female teammates. Based on the findings of the study, the participants valued the social interaction hockey provided for them.

In this current study, the participants could also be defined as achievement-oriented; self-confident athletes who did not want female hockey to be viewed simply as a social gathering for females who challenged gender role expectations. All participants wanted female hockey to be seen as a competitive game not simply as a recreational pursuit and, thus, discussed the importance of playing to their own potential. Elite

players who faced tremendous levels of stress and pressure to perform continued to maintain their love for the game. Regardless of skill level and experience, hockey participation involved fun, friendship, and the spirit of competition. Two goals existed for female hockey players; first, to have fun playing a game that they love; and second, to gain the respect and legitimacy that male hockey receives. Increasing others' awareness that females are competitive hockey players who deserve to be treated as spirited, ambitious athletes was vital to all participants.

Theberge (1998) reported similar findings in her national study of elite female hockey players. These elite players were also striving to gain recognition as athletes. Even as skilled, national caliber athletes, these female hockey players are still struggling to legitimize their athletic prowess in a traditional male sport.

Although females in the present study were motivated to participate in hockey, continuous involvement was not always possible. Personal and social responsibilities were continually negotiated to determine participants' involvement in the game and during specific periods of time, the interaction of these two factors led to their withdrawal from the sport. Studies for the attrition patterns of female athletes are limited; however, Klint and Weiss (1986) studied female gymnasts' reasons for leaving the sport. In summary, the authors' identified multiple commitments, increases in competitive pressure, lack of fun, and feelings of incompetence as reasons responsible for athletes' discontinuance in gymnastics. All participants in the current study are presently playing hockey, but during their careers, three participants ceased competing for a short period of time. Similar to gymnasts' patterns of withdrawal, these hockey players stopped

competing due to multiple commitments and feelings of incompetence. However, at a later point in time, the participants re-negotiated their previous decision and began playing hockey again. In the present study, the decision to return to hockey was influenced by the young women's love for the game. Temporary negative feelings and superfluous activities were set aside once these females experienced a longing to play again.

To recap, females choosing to become involved with hockey exhibit characteristics of achievement-oriented adolescents. In the quest to gain legitimacy for female hockey, players are motivated to perform to their greatest potential. The magnetic appeal of the game inspired a great deal of fun and camaraderie between the athletes. The intermittent withdrawal chosen by some participants was abandoned when they realized their longing for the attributes of the female hockey culture. The fun and friendship of female hockey combined with competitive, goal-oriented play interact to make hockey an extremely meaningful component of these young women's identities.

Gender and Hockey

Challenging traditional beliefs, females have emerged from the male hockey system. Attempting to reap the benefits of more ice time, increased skill development, and quality coaching, female hockey players joined male hockey teams. This intrusion of females into a patriarchal institution threatens male privilege (Whitson, 1990). Aware of females' motives for playing male hockey, male hockey players manipulate and assert their control over the social environment. According to participants, males maintain their gender privileges by controlling the social interaction of females. This control manifests

itself in two fashions. First, female participants do not speak unless spoken to; and second, when males ask their opinions, females respond with generic comments, if any at all. Females are reluctant to voice their opinions and ideas because they oppose the dominant male views that circulate in the dressing rooms. In both scenarios, females are silenced, thus excluding them from the social networks that develop in male hockey.

Females playing a traditionally male dominated sport, such as hockey, threaten gender role expectations (Bennett et al., 1987; Harris, 1981; Lenskyj, 1987). This overt and covert silencing of female athletes illuminates the indoctrination of sport. Females who attempt to play a 'male' game are entering into male territory, a ground that has been designated as a male right of passage. These bold challenging females threaten the male superiority and domination that is commonly exemplified through male sport participation (Lenskyj, 1987; Whitson, 1990). With females' advancement in the physical aspect of the game, males maintain their masculine social codes by controlling conversations and governing the social integration of the two sexes. This symbolic interaction between the genders perpetuates the patriarchy that is embedded in sport.

Sex-integrated sport participation cannot escape society's sheltering of the female sex. The physical contact characteristic of male hockey participation is honoured, yet, when females seek to participate with males, there is oppressive concern for the safety of the female player. This concern for females engaging in traditionally male dominated sports strengthens beliefs regarding gender distinction. The appropriateness of specific activities reinforces the distinction between female and male socialization patterns. Integrating both sexes in hockey overrides the social barriers that function to distinguish

the genders. The idea of males and females competing with each other in physical combat is incomprehensible in our culture. Whether in good faith to protect women from physical harm or, in reality, as a form of oppression and limitation of women's freedoms, general disapproval of integrated hockey participation is widespread.

The general public's negative outlook towards females who engage in 'non-feminine' behaviours becomes apparent through the language used to describe these athletes in the study. Young females are aware of the labels others associate with female hockey players. People referred to them as "butches" and "bruts". This derogatory branding is not unfamiliar to female hockey players. Theberge's (1998) work indicated that these labels continue to follow even elite female hockey players.

Unintentionally, parents of participants in the study also contribute to the division and social acceptance of gendered behaviours. Parents' concern for their children's welfare is natural, yet, by discouraging their daughters' ambitions for self-exploration in a 'male' environment, parents reinforce gender role expectations. Once a structure accommodating females' involvement in hockey was created, parents encouraged their daughters to participate with other young women. Most parents would prefer their daughters to engage in female hockey only. By submitting to and following social guidelines, parents preserve gender ideologies; however within the 'safe enclave' of female hockey, parents respect and promote their daughters' efforts for excellence in hockey.

Additionally, the hockey culture is embedded with stereotypical beliefs about female athletes. For example, the allocation of ice time is a visible indication of the

reception of female hockey into society. Although female hockey is permeating the hockey system the inequality of ice time for female hockey is driven by the production of male hockey players. In this study, most locations have suddenly realized that females will not remain invisible; therefore, they are slowly and grudgingly increasing the availability of ice time for female hockey. The rationale, as it appears in this study, for distributing ice time is to provide only what is necessary for the young women and to maintain all that is essential for the young men.

Male hockey can be viewed as a production factory; males begin to play the game at a young age and hockey associations expect them to maintain their membership for many years. Males also aspire to greater goals in hockey and they are afforded more opportunities to attain these aspirations. The representation of Newfoundlanders on hockey teams or in tournaments off the island provides credibility and recognition for the province. Hockey associations generally believe that female hockey participation is based on social relations. The opportunities for competitive challenges are limited for female players; therefore, the female game is in a separate, inferior sphere requiring less commitment. A discrepancy based on age exists in the perception of how the hockey establishment has responded to the environmental needs of female players. The younger players have benefited from the slow progress that has been made in this area, while older players are more aware of the struggle required to reach this level of integration.

In sum, gender stereotypes surround females' participation in hockey. Male players attempt to control female social integration into the game, society stigmatizes young females as feminine anomalies, and parents prefer their daughters to participate in

female hockey. In addition, hockey associations are reluctant to accommodate the female game. As female players are confronted with this plethora of socializing stimuli, they consistently review this information and determine its meaning in relation to their development.

Stereotypical Views of Performance

Shaw, Kleiber, and Caldwell's (1995) work indicates that women's challenges to traditional feminine roles occurs through participating in non-traditional activities. Women's hockey participation is plagued by continual comparison of female and male hockey which is both trivializing and stigmatizing. The differences in the game construct a technical separation which produces ambivalent feelings among participants. Additionally, young females contribute to the ideal of male standards in sport; several participants suggested that they play '*just*' female hockey, in a sense devaluing the female game. Insults directed toward the female game, by female hockey players, are an example of the male control and superiority that entrenches females' socialization in sport. Females' recent emergence in the game, their style of play, and the rule variation of female hockey stigmatize the women's game. In general, women's sports are perpetually compared to males, but, because women's hockey differs from male hockey, the game and its participants are perceived as being inferior. The gender differences associated with the game subordinate women's abilities; the value and honour of the context of female hockey are diminished as the style of play veers from the traditional male model for sport.

According to Harris (1981) sport is a sacrificial rite available for males and the invasion of females into this institution makes it a mockery. As females within the study began to play male hockey, many obstacles needed to be overcome. For instance, coaches who wanted to maintain an all-male environment to protect "their boys" from women's 'corruption' were compelled to accept the presence of females on their team. As well, within the context of the team, the differential treatment of female athletes playing male hockey continues to separate the sexes in this sport. By way of example, several interviewees played hockey on a male team and their experience in sex-integrated sport participation did not permit gender meshing; the socialization 'baggage' of the two genders does not vanish in an environment where both genders are united for a single goal. In an attempt to surmount gendered barriers, participants in the study emphasized their increased effort to attain acceptance as a female hockey player. Many of these young females talked of proving themselves to others, and of the desire to show males how well females can play the game. Females do not want to be classified as mock hockey players. Within this study, there was a dichotomy in participants' attitudes towards male and female hockey. For several participants, being a hockey player was not enough; being a female participating in male hockey meant that they were reputable athletes. Herein lies the contradiction; females are trapped in the illusion that male hockey is the ultimate standard of sport. Many participants believed the conventional standard for hockey participation means playing the male game. On the other hand, some participants expressed loyalty to the female game and achieved satisfaction within its parameters.

Extending beyond general social subscriptions, participation in hockey allowed participants to experience a plethora of events that traditionally were limited to males. All participants in the study, in various ways, highlighted hockey's contribution to their self-esteem. Developing independence and a sense of autonomy by engaging in challenging activities contributed to the growth of these young women.

Hockey participation has given female athletes a sense of pride and greater respect for themselves. Most participants were reluctant to discuss their abilities which, according to Eccles and Harold (1991), is a result of gender socialization. Females when competing in traditional male sports tend to perceive themselves as less competent. Several participants discussed quitting the sport because of their inferior skill level when compared to males. Collectively, females overcome negative feelings about their abilities and skills through the encouragement and support received from family and teammates. Contributing to the removal of self-doubt are participants' realizations that others recognize, admire and respect their participation in hockey. A seasoned veteran summarizes the personal transformation, "a lot of people respect you for it [playing hockey] so eventually you begin to respect yourself" (Tina). Stepping outside of the gender boundaries initially generates fear and uncertainty for female hockey players, but once females establish a position inside the sport, they have solid, positive experiences. This finding supports Kleiber and Kane (1984), Shaw (1995), and Wearing's (1992) ideas that females' involvement in events outside traditional gender role expectations are forms of empowerment strengthening women's identities and personal commitments.

Although participants experience gender stereotypes, the outcome of engaging in hockey contributed to their growth as young athletes and as young women. The subscription of some players to male standards of hockey participation inhibits the coalition that should be forming to promote and encourage women's hockey.

The Newfoundland Perspective

Newfoundland, according to Porter (1992), is similar to other Maritime provinces in that the social context of families and communities is influenced by people's subscription to patriarchal beliefs. With that in mind, certain events that were uncovered in the study are specific to female sport participation but, are also related to the Newfoundland context of the study.

Within Newfoundland families, males are given supreme authority and family decisions are determined by them (Porter, 1992). This reinforces female participants' need to gain their fathers' approval for participating in hockey. Fathers were the most valuable socializing agents in the present study; athletes initially required and continued to need their fathers' support during their involvement in the game. Based on the descriptions unearthed in this study, the dynamics of family relations contribute to female athletes' socialization and hockey participation in Newfoundland.

Parents' actions, as described by athletes in the study, provide evidence for the ideologies of gender role expectations. Porter's (1992) study demonstrated that females in Newfoundland are given control over their involvement in what the author term's 'women's spheres'. Applying this concept to female sport participation in Newfoundland substantiates mothers' reluctance to support their daughters' involvement in hockey.

Although having females playing male hockey generates concerns among all parents, mothers in Newfoundland may be more hesitant about having their daughters step into the 'male sphere' of hockey. The development of female hockey, or a 'woman's sphere' was well received among mothers because this provided an appropriate 'sphere' for female involvement. Once hockey existed for females, participants in the study began to consider playing hockey. Prior to the female 'sphere,' many participants dreamed about playing hockey but never actually considered playing. Looking specifically at the social context of hockey, excluding the issue of physicality, the greater support offered by mothers for their daughters when participating in female hockey results from notions of 'gendered spheres.'

Although there appear to be specific gender roles within the Newfoundland families, participants' in the study indicated their appreciation of family support for their continued involvement in hockey even into late adolescence. Family identity is a strong component of Newfoundland culture; thus having members of the family contributing to female participation was a natural extension of the traditional support given to ensuring family contentment (Hanrahan, 1993; Porter, 1992). As these young females were actively developing themselves, a large part of their self-identity was grounded in family bonds; thus the devotion of family members positively supported adolescent development and hockey participation.

In sum, it appears that the social context of Newfoundland interacts with and contributes to young women's involvement in hockey. The patriarchal nature of the family and the ideals of gender relations influence the dynamics of females' participation

in hockey. Overall, the zealous attachment to family pervades Newfoundlanders' identity development and affects hockey participation for these young athletes.

Summary

Addressing females' initiation and integration into hockey has clearly produced several concrete examples of gender role expectations. Decisions to participate in a non-traditional female sport were facilitated by the establishment of a positive support network. The quality of parental support differed between parents but both father and mother contributed to females continued involvement in hockey participation. Reassurance derived from teammates and coaches was necessary to maintain athletes' involvement. The athletes were able to improve their self-esteem, gain physical and emotional strength, and were self-fulfilled through their participation in hockey. Primarily, the interaction of these three components facilitated female hockey players' socialization into and within hockey: supportive family members, players themselves through their increase in self-confidence and self-esteem, and the game itself. All participants experienced a passionate "addiction" to the game of hockey.

Constraining factors associated with females' decisions for playing hockey were related to the social milieu surrounding the game and the social context of Newfoundland. The masculine hegemony that supports hockey perpetuates gender role stereotypes. Female hockey players in the study were identified and embraced in the context of female hockey. However, when participants involve themselves in male hockey, they are confronted with social barriers that still require surmounting prior to their identification as a hockey player. The structure of the sport is the greatest

constraining factor facing female hockey players. Limited ice time, inadequate support from hockey associations and their reluctance to provide an adequate continuum of skill development for all ages of females were the negative concerns that athletes expressed about female hockey.

Section II

Analysis

Based on the participants' experiences in female hockey, a model was developed to conceptualize the interactions that occur during their participation (see Figure 5.1). The thick dark line represents the container for hockey participation with the first enlargement (bubble) representing female hockey. The second enlargement (bubble) with the dotted line represents male hockey. However, the thick black line represents most females integration in the male hockey sphere. The narrow openings leading into these enlarged areas are symbolic of the barriers that must be overcome before participants are granted entry. The line that travels through each hockey sphere symbolizes females cognitive interpretation of female hockey participation.

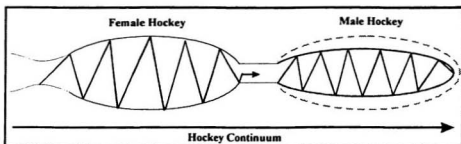


Figure 5.1
Aspirations of the Female Hockey Player

The majority of participants in this study commenced their hockey participation through the female game; thus, the model is based on the same format. Females who chose to commence female hockey encountered initial obstacles that required surmounting; developing the confidence to commence hockey was the first step in the decision making process. And next, learning the skills of the game and developing relationships with teammates permitted females' integration into female hockey.

Once inside the confines of female hockey, the interaction with parents, teammates, and peers contributed to athletes' admiration for the game. Many participants discussed the addictive power of female hockey which they attributed to their passionate enjoyment of playing, the friendship formation and team affiliation that accompanied the game, as well as their development of physical competencies leading to increased self-esteem. The athletes participating in female hockey indicated that they were committed to honouring the bonds and interactions that occur within the female game, yet their comments indicated that many aspired and longed to participate in male hockey.

These young women tended to compare male and female hockey, which led them to devalue their participation in the female game. Female hockey players are immersed in a culture that praises male participation in the game, so, although they are satisfied with the female game, they are also dissatisfied with the lack of recognition and attention female hockey players receive. Based on this premise, female athletes continued to envision their movement on the hockey continuum. By crossing the bridge between female and male hockey, the favourable attributes of female hockey were lost as females enter into the male game. Once inside this new environment gender barriers forbid

complete interaction; thus, females' involvement within male hockey is narrowed. They did not experience the broader interactions that exist for males within the male game. The lines in male hockey represent the male container of hockey and females are only participating and experiencing social interactions within the solid lined area. The male hockey container for female participants is restricted when compared to the female hockey container. Females in the study who participated in male hockey were unable to experience the social interactions that were so highly regarded in female hockey.

The satisfaction and dissatisfaction that females experience in hockey represent the dynamics of the sport. Females' shifting attitudes towards female hockey are the result of ideologies that surround hockey and the pragmatic benefits of playing the male game. Hockey has a rich tradition in Canadian culture; the mystic and romantic attraction of the traditional game seduces females. The credibility of the female game is not established in Newfoundland; therefore, females are dissatisfied with female hockey and are attracted to the male game. Also, the pragmatic benefits of playing with males cannot be overlooked. The recognition, attention, and opportunities afforded to male players are reasons that females stated for joining male hockey. The model represents the lack of symmetry that females experience playing male and female hockey.

Although not all participants had experience playing organized male hockey, most were misguided about the illusion of male hockey and aspire to experience this for themselves. The bridge between female and male hockey obviously affects the culture of hockey; therefore, hockey officials should concentrate on and become devoted to establishing the credibility of female hockey and providing what is necessary to develop

female hockey players in their own game. It is evident from the responses of females in this study that they longed for the recognition and opportunities afforded to male athletes. They want the game of male hockey but with the social atmosphere of female hockey.

The female game needs to develop for itself the components of the male game that females admire; rather than watching females switch to the male game in search of greater athletic satisfaction, and ultimately, being disappointed by the incompleteness of that experience. The provision of this 'whole package' is a tall order for the female game but by listening to the comments and yearnings of present day players, steps can be initiated to make progress towards this new vision. Females may not yet be afforded the opportunity to perform on *Hockey Night in Canada* because this would require a broad societal shift in perception, but by concentrating positive energy on those issues more relevant to the establishment of a vibrant female hockey culture, progress can be made to create a socially dynamic and athletically fulfilling opportunity for females.

Section III

Recommendations

The nature of this research has permitted an insight into the lives of young female hockey players. The design of the research limits the findings to the population studied, there are several recommendations that have emerged that are inherently linked to advancing female hockey in the province. Females' involvement in hockey will not be fully accepted in sport until social attitudes are modified to incorporate and to value the coexistence of hockey and female participation. Once the attitude towards female hockey changes, pragmatic actions have to occur to ensure that there is widespread acceptance of and value for the female game. Finally, the research regarding female involvement in sport, and specifically hockey, requires a commitment to investigate the ever-changing and progressive development of athletic women.

1. Attitude Revision

The results from this study permit one to gain an appreciation of the ways in which gender relations operate to restrict women in sport. In order to surmount stereotypical, traditional beliefs that exist within the hockey's subculture, officials need to re-evaluate their attitude towards the female game. Female hockey has established a niche within hockey organizations; however, to foster the development of the sport, female hockey requires diligent, committed individuals who will advocate for the validity of the female game. A competent diplomatic advocate can re-educate hockey officials about the significance of female hockey by emphasizing the qualities of one gender without diminishing the other. The manner of addressing the growth of female hockey is

to take the perspective of affording females the same privileges that male hockey players receive, not in an attempt to deprive males of their pleasures, but, quite simply, to offer these same opportunities to female participants. Changes will not occur immediately; however, temporary alterations with a vision for the future, accompanied by a strong advocacy for a long-term plan can be created and applied immediately. There needs to be a consolidated effort to promote female hockey in a professional manner at the board and administrative level which would educate and indoctrinate others regarding the value of female participation in hockey.

2. Pragmatic Changes

The male authority which controls hockey inadequately services female participants. To compensate for these deficiencies, the association needs to develop a long-term plan to incorporate the female game into the larger hockey system. Leadership development, player advancement opportunities and practical modifications to the female program are three ways to implement change.

Steps need to be taken to develop leadership within the female hockey community, starting with their coaches. In authoritative positions, coaches are given a certain amount of respect; therefore, these leaders have the status to enforce modifications within female hockey. By actively promoting the value of female hockey to their teams and by encouraging females to get involved in all aspects of the game, from time keeping, to refereeing, to instructing and even to coaching, these mentors can help to develop a broader base of female leadership. As well, the use of older female players as role models could also inspire young females to become involved in hockey.

As an additional method of promoting female hockey and providing opportunities for those females interested in playing at a more advanced level, an information network capable of marketing their talents and providing them with exposure must be put in place. Just like their male counterparts, female players should have access to a range of options to further their athletic aspirations. Links with educational institutions, other provincial associations, and even national training centers can provide this vital knowledge. With the development of quality leadership and player advancement opportunities, the female game will become respected within the hockey culture.

Exposing the public to the female game is necessary to attract additional participants. It is recommended that incremental activities be designed to provide females the opportunity to sample the sport. For example, pre-season open houses could be hosted. By providing a non-threatening instructional setting, requiring only minimal amounts of equipment and staffing, these events could provide a fun, organized orientation to the game. Female-only hockey camps would also be an excellent opportunity to provide quality skill training to develop hockey talent within the female game. If properly organized, this could bring a great deal of respect to female hockey from both its participants and others within the community. The template for establishing female hockey development already exists but needs implementation. Several participants in the present study recommended the development of a hockey program whereby females could participate in a progressive hockey continuum with initiation, junior, and senior level programs. Increases in tournament play, more opportunities for

practice, an all-star league of play similar to that of males could be developed for female hockey based on the existing structures operating in male hockey, but maintaining the uniqueness of the female philosophy. In summary, several pragmatic changes should occur to foster the growth of female hockey.

3. Research Opportunities

It is necessary to chart the development and transitions that occur in female hockey at the administrative and participant levels. To positively promote and advance the game, female hockey must be based on an athlete-centered model that values participation at both recreational and elite levels. As academics studying sport sociology, the concern for sport participation needs to be focused on athletes and their interactions within the sport culture. The fundamental method for ensuring the congruity between sport and athlete is to explore both levels of involvement and to foster communication opportunities. Female hockey is an excellent forum to research the interaction of organization and participant as together they challenge the male model for hockey participation.

The continuation of the current study would provide an excellent opportunity to track the changes occurring in female hockey. As a longitudinal study, the technical transitions in female hockey could be explored. As well, it would also be exciting to monitor the personal and social development of these young Newfoundland athletes. Engaging in a long-term commitment to this type of project would provide a window into the role of sport in females' lives over a period of time. Sport researchers have an

obligation to fill the void in existing literature about the role of sport in women's lives, and in particular the relation of sport and women's lives in Newfoundland.

In summary, the present study has provided a 'snapshot' of the socializing factors affecting young female hockey players' decision-making processes for playing hockey. Based on participants' voices, three recommendations emerged to augment females' love for the game: an attitude revision within hockey associations in a top-down manner to bring honour to the female game, greater pragmatic opportunities for the development of female hockey, and a committed effort to continued research and education of others about the value of female hockey participation. It is evident from the information provided in this study that hockey is a Canadian passion that has permeated the lives of young Newfoundland women.

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Appendix A
Interview Format

Interview Format

Introduction

Good evening. Welcome to our discussion about female hockey. I'm a graduate student in the School of Physical Education, Recreation and Athletics at MUN. As part of the requirements for my Master's degree I have to conduct research and I have chosen to study the factors influencing and constraining females decisions for participating in hockey. This is my friend and assistant, she will be taking notes throughout our interview.

Our discussion tonight will be tape-recorded, we will be on a first name basis, but in any reports hereafter no names will be attached to comments. If you would like to say something but wish the taperecorder to be turned off please indicate that and I will stop recording what you may say. I would also like to remind you that you are free to leave at any time.

There are no right or wrong answers and everyone is entitled to their own feelings and opinions. If you agree or disagree with someone else please feel free to express your thoughts. I welcome you to share your stories and history with us today. This is simply a time to talk about you.

Initial Question

Why don't we start by going around the table you can introduce yourself and tell us about your current involvement in hockey.

History Questions

How did you get started in hockey?

Why did you want to play?

Who did the encouragement come from?

Initial Years

Explain your initial years in hockey.

What were practices like?

What were games like?

What were dressing room situations like?

Explain how you initially felt about playing hockey.

Can you describe any moments when your feelings about your hockey participation changed in any way?

How do you feel about playing hockey today?

Why do you continue to play?

What do you think of the NLHA's program and development of female hockey players?

Can you describe what its' like to play on girls' teams?

What do you enjoy and what don't you enjoy?

What is your opinion of girls' involvement in hockey in Newfoundland?

What is it about hockey that make you want to play this sport as opposed to other sports, or if you play other sports what makes hockey different?

If you still participate on boys' teams, can you explain what that's like?

What influenced your decision to play on boys' teams?

What's it like playing with boys?

Describe the difference between boys hockey and female hockey, how does that make you feel?

Gender Related Questions/Personal

In your opinion, how has hockey shaped how you think about yourself?

How has it influenced others' perceptions of you? (parents)

How do your parents and peers react to your participating in hockey?

How does your hockey participation effect your relationship with your female friends and male friends?

Conclusion

How does hockey fit into your future?

Has your participation in the sport of hockey helped you in any way?

Do you have any additional comments or questions you would like to ask before we adjourn?

Thank you for taking the time to discuss your involvement in hockey participation with me. It may be necessary to contact you to clarify some of the information you provided, so you may hear from me in the future. Again thank you and best of luck in your future endeavours.

Appendix B

Letter Requesting Participation

LeAnne Petherick
School of Physical Education, Recreation and Athletics
Memorial University of Newfoundland
St. John's, NF
A1C 5S7

<< First Name>> << Surname>>

<<Address>>

<<City>> <<Province>>

<<Postal Code>>

<<Date>>

Dear <<First Name>>,

You are invited to participate in a research study investigating the factors that influence, or deter young women from playing hockey. LeAnne Petherick, a graduate student in the School of Physical Education, Recreation and Athletics at Memorial University, is conducting the study. LeAnne is exploring the factors effecting female hockey players' decisions for commencing, continuing or discontinuing participation in hockey. The development of female hockey is continually evolving and your thoughts about your association with hockey may help to improve the current female hockey programs.

If you decide to participate in the research study, you will be involved in a small group interview, consisting of 6-8 other female hockey players. The location of the interview will be at a convenient meeting point for those participating, possibly after a practice or a game, and will take approximately one hour. Your identity in the study will remain anonymous; however, the interview will be tape-recorded to enable the researcher to reflect on the issues that are discussed.

Participation in the study is completely voluntarily. If you are interested in participating in the study, I invite you and your parents to complete and return the enclosed consent form and questionnaire. Please return the information in the postage paid envelope provided by <<Specified Date>>. Focus groups will be conducted shortly hereafter. Specific information concerning interview dates, times and locations will be determined after <<Specified Date>>. If you are unable to complete the required information by the deadline, please mail it as soon as possible for potential consideration in future interviews.

As a means of thanking you for taking the time to share your experiences, pizza and pop will be available during the interview. Thank you for taking the time to consider participating in this research study.

If you have any questions or concerns about the study or the information package, please feel free to contact LeAnne Petherick at 709-579-6502 or 709-737-8675, or fax 709-579-6507. If you would like to correspond by email you can contact LeAnne at t77ldp@morgan.ucs.mun.ca. If you require additional information you may also contact my supervisor, Dr. T.A. Loeffler, at 709-737-8670 or fax 709-737-3979.

Sincerely,

LeAnne Petherick
Graduate Student Researcher

Appendix C
Questionnaire

Making Decisions about Playing Female Hockey

Background Questionnaire

The purpose of this questionnaire is to collect background information from the interviewees participating in the study. The information you provide in this questionnaire will be kept in confidence.

Please complete and return this questionnaire along with your signed consent form.

Please check the corresponding answer.

1. How old are you?

<input type="checkbox"/> 12	<input type="checkbox"/> 15
<input type="checkbox"/> 13	<input type="checkbox"/> 16
<input type="checkbox"/> 14	<input type="checkbox"/> 17
2. What grade are you currently enrolled in at school?

<input type="checkbox"/> Grade 8	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade 11
<input type="checkbox"/> Grade 9	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade 12
<input type="checkbox"/> Grade 10	
3. How many people live in your home?

<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 6 or more
<input type="checkbox"/> 4	
4. How many siblings do you have?

<input type="checkbox"/> 0	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 6 or more
<input type="checkbox"/> 3	

If you indicated 0, please move to question #7.

5. How many brothers do you have?

<input type="checkbox"/> 0	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 6 or more
<input type="checkbox"/> 3	

6. How many sisters do you have?

- ☐ 0
- ☐ 1
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3

- ☐ 4
- ☐ 5
- ☐ 6 or more

7. Does anyone else in your immediate family play hockey?

- ☐ Mother
- ☐ Brother(s)
- ☐ Father
- ☐ Sister(s)

8. Please list the occupations of the parent(s) or guardian(s) that you live with.

Understanding that family schedules vary week to week, please check in general, when you may be available to participate in the study.

Please check which evenings you may be available to participate in an interview.

- ☐ Monday
- ☐ Thursday
- ☐ Tuesday
- ☐ Friday
- ☐ Wednesday

Please check which weekend day you may be available to participate in an interview.

- ☐ Saturday
- ☐ Sunday

Thank you,

LeAnne Petherick

Appendix D
Consent to Participate

Jumping the Boards: Making Decisions about Playing Female Hockey**Consent to Participate**

I understand in consenting to participate in Ms. Petherick's research, I will be asked to discuss the decision-making processes I underwent when withdrawing from hockey. I realize that I will be participating in an interview. The interview will be tape-recorded and approximately one hour long. I understand that the information I provide will be held in confidence and that I will not be identified, in any way, in the final report. I understand that I can cease participating at any time.

Signature _____

Date _____

Telephone Number _____

Parent or guardian's signature _____

Date _____

