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UMI®
ON THE ICE AND OFF THE RINK: A QUALITATIVE STUDY OF HOCKEY PLAYERS’ AGGRESSION

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment for

The Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate School of The Ohio State University

By

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****

The Ohio State University
2002

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ABSTRACT

Male athletes often are identified in the media for their participation in deviant and aggressive tendencies in a variety of settings. The sport of hockey is unique from other sports in its acceptance of aggression and violence in the form of fighting within the athletic arena and this may be true in both on- and off-ice aggressive behaviors. Male hockey players, therefore, may be at risk for participation in deviant aggression both within and outside of their sports involvement because of their unique sports socialization.

Twenty-three former college or professional hockey players were interviewed to determine their perspectives on the frequency and nature of deviancy, aggression, and violence which exists outside of the athletic arena. Using qualitative, semi-structured interviews, which lasted between one and one-half hours and three and one-half hours, the participants were asked to provide information regarding deviancy and aggression toward other males and female intimates which occurred outside of the sports context. Social learning theory concepts of modeling and reinforcement guided many of the explanations and motivations for athletes' aggressive behaviors. Content analysis was used to identify salient themes which accounted for the athletes' aggressive behaviors and included such influences as substance abuse, family of origin violence, sports
socialization and masculinity influences, and negative attitudes toward women. This analysis included the participants' own experiences, observations, and explanations of aggression which is prevalent and unique to the culture of hockey. The study findings provide a greater understanding of the ways in which substance abuse, hockey socialization, and the athletes' notions about masculinity may combine to create a culture of aggression and violence which contributes to the frequency of in-sport violence and the exportation of aggression outside the athletic arena.
Dedicated to my advisor Patrick McKenry and my partner Cathy Grover
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Many people have contributed to my work over the past four years, and I am happy to take this opportunity to express my deep and sincere appreciation for all their time and effort. I would like to begin by thanking all of the athletes who participated in this study for taking their time to share their experiences and opening their lives to me.

Next I would like to greatly thank my advisor and friend, Professor Patrick C. McKenry for all of his unwavering support, time, and effort throughout these past four years. I have greatly appreciated all of his efforts which have continuously gone over and above the call of duty on this study as well as other projects. I would not be where I am today in terms of my intellectual development without Dr. McKenry's guidance and efforts.

I would also like to thank Professor Timothy Curry for all of his contributions to my intellectual development in the area of Sports Sociology which has been one of my most enjoyable areas of study. Furthermore, I want to particularly thank Dr. Curry for prompting me to pursue qualitative research because this has opened countless opportunities for future projects in which I eagerly await.

I would also like to acknowledge the significant contribution that Professor Jerelyn Schultz has made to my academic pursuits particularly in the area of sexual and relational issues. Dr. Schultz has provided me with learning that has been readily applied
applied to my studies on athlete aggression, and this has greatly enhanced my overall understanding of these issues. I have greatly appreciated all of her continuous support.

In addition, I would also like to recognize Professor Steven Gavazzi for all of his contributions and support as a both a class Professor and as a General Exam committee member who was always willing to assist me whenever necessary. I also want to recognize Dr. Christine Price for all of her time and consultations in the area of qualitative research.

Furthermore, I would like to recognize the substantial support that I have received from our Department Chair, Dr. Albert Davis. I have called upon Dr. Davis’ guidance and insights in numerous instances both academically and professionally, and I have enjoyed and appreciated both his time and wisdom.

I would also like to take this time to thank all of my family and all of my friends for their support and encouraging me to strive to do my best in whatever pursuits I have chosen.

Last, but most important, I would like to thank my special friend and partner Cathy for all of her love and assistance throughout this project and most of my time at Ohio State. Cathy has shared so much of herself in so many areas that this paragraph could easily become its own mini-dissertation. Thank you so much Cathy.
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FIELDS OF STUDY

Major Field: Human Ecology

Cognate Area: Sociology of Sport
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Demographic Profile of Sample

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Background

Athletes have appeared periodically on television and in news headlines because of their participation in situations involving aggression and violence. Although some of the documented violence occurs in the context of sports competition, not all athlete aggression is restricted to sports opponents. This past decade has revealed documentation of athlete aggression directed toward males outside of the sports arena, as well as aggression directed toward women in both intimate and non-intimate situations. What remains unclear, however, is whether athletic participation and in particular, the violent strategies learned in sports competition, are contributing to the likelihood that athletes will be violent in other interpersonal relationships (Coakley, 1998. Crosset, 1999).

Athletes as a group are thought to be at high risk for aggression (Curry, 1991). and there is a strong correlation between general aggression and aggression/violence in other relationships (Fagan & Browne, 1994; National Research Council, 1996). Not all athlete aggression is restricted to sports opponents or other males outside the sports arena: some of this aggression has been directed toward women in both intimate and non-intimate situations (Frintner & Rubinson, 1993). Athletes become a greater peril to
themselves and others when their aggression overlaps into situations and relationships outside the realm of sports competition (Benedict, 1997; Messner & Sabo, 1994). For many athletes, sports may offer a legitimate means for expressing aggressive impulses in a socially acceptable manner. Aggression in athletics may be acceptable as long as the aggression remains controlled and continues within the specific limits of competition. Cultural ideals of sport and masculinity combine to create a context in which violence in athletics is not only tolerated but often even taught and encouraged (Benedict, 1997; Messner & Sabo, 1994).

Although the subject of athletes and physical and sexual aggression regularly is addressed and featured in news and media coverage, athlete violence has not been systematically studied to any extent before the 1990s. Perhaps this dearth of study can be attributed to athletes' exclusive and celebrity status, which has provided a certain amount of shielding and concealment for athletes. Furthermore, it appears that journalistic coverage of athletes' physical and sexual assaults has focused more on the problem or the reporting of an incident, but such coverage has done little to expand or deepen our understanding of these issues (Benedict & Klein, 1997).

Public concern about the relationship between sports participation and interpersonal violence has spawned studies over this past decade which document athlete violence, especially in the area of sexual and physical aggression. Specifically, a number of studies have indicated that college athletes are over represented among those who are involved in aggressive and violent sexual behavior on college campuses (Berkowitz, 1992; Boeringer, 1996; Crosset, Benedict, and McDonald, 1995; Crosset, Ptacek, McDonald, & Benedict, 1996; Frintner & Rubinson, 1993; Nixon, 1997). For instance,
in a study of male undergraduates at a large southeastern university, Boeringer (1996) found that 60% of athletes reported at least one instance of using verbal coercion to obtain sexual favors, 28% reported using alcohol and drugs to obtain sexual favors, and 15% reported using physical force. Moreover, Boeringer found that athletes reported higher percentages than non-athletes in all such categories of aggressive behavior. Similarly, Frintner and Rubinson (1993) found that although the population of male athletes at a large Midwestern university was less than 2% of the male student population, 21% of the reported sexual assaults, 18% of the attempted sexual assaults, and 14% of the cases of sexual abuse were committed by members of sports teams or sports clubs on campus. Berkowitz (1992) also reported that in one review of alleged gang rapes by college students since 1980, 22 out of 24 documented cases were perpetuated by either members of fraternities or intercollegiate athletic teams. Finally, Crosset et al. (1995) reviewed police records at 20 colleges and universities as well as the records from judicial affairs offices and found that male athletes were over represented in reports of sexual assault. Although athletes accounted for 3% of the male student population, they perpetrated 35% of the physical battering reports and 19% of sexual assaults on the college campuses (Crosset et al., 1995; Crosset et al., 1996).

Young (1993) argued that the connection between sport and interpersonal violence parallels the problems of violence elsewhere in society. In fact, this notion is consistent with research that indicates that violence in one social domain is highly correlated with violence in other domains (Fagan & Browne, 1994; National Research Council, 1996). According to the Federal Bureau of Investigation's 1998 reports, it is estimated that 371 out of 100,000 women will become the victim of rape each year (FBI.
Koss (1988) discovered through surveying over 6,000 students from 32 institutions of higher education across the United States that over 50% of women responding to the survey had experienced some level of sexual victimization. Twenty-five percent of the women surveyed were the victims of rape or attempted rape since the age of 14 and often the victim, rapist, or both were under the influence of drugs or alcohol (Fisher, 1995).

**Negative Male Trends**

Equally alarming is the large number of men who have either engaged in, would engage in, or believe they have the privilege to engage in coercive sexual behaviors with women. One study involving male college students who averaged 21 years old found that 4.4% admitted to committing date rape, 3.3% admitted attempting date rape, and 25.1% admitted using some form of coercion to have sexual relations with an unwilling partner (Koss, Gidycz, and Wisniewski, 1987). Another study found that 26% of college men admitted to having made a forceful attempt at sexual intercourse which produced observable upset to the woman (e.g., screaming, fighting, pleading, or crying) (Check & Malamuth, 1983). Malamuth (1981) discovered that 20% of male college students admitted that they would commit rape if they were guaranteed immunity from detection or punishment. More recently, Pirog-Good and Stets (1989) discovered that 39% of male students surveyed indicated that it was “all right” to force sex if a woman was “stoned” or “drunk.” These studies show that harmful attitudes and behaviors regarding sexual coercion and violence are prevalent and frequent throughout college campuses and the mainstream population of American society.
The prevalence of physical abuse of women is also a common occurrence in American society and one which is thought to be often underreported as well (The National Research Council. 1996). O'Leary (1996) discovered in nationally representative surveys that physical aggression was reported by approximately 12% of both men and women. The percentages of American college men and women who revealed their participation in physically aggressive acts against their partners in at least one dating relationship ranged between 20% and 50% (White & Koss. 1991), and physical aggression occurred in more than 20% of students’ ongoing dating relationships (Riggs. O’Leary. & Breslin. 1990). Bennett (1995) found that severe physical assaults of women happened in 8% to 13% of all marriages, and the assaults reoccurred in two-thirds of these relationships. Finally, researchers estimated from the results of the 1985 National Family Violence survey that over six million women were assaulted by their husbands each year in the United States (Johnson. 1995).

An Inductive Approach

Although some studies have found athletes to be overrepresented in terms of physical and sexual assaults when compared to control groups (Benedict & Klein. 1997; Crosset. Benedict. & McDonald. 1995. Crosset. Ptacek. McDonald. & Benedict. 1996; Frintner & Rubinson. 1993), other studies have found weak associations (Koss & Gaines. 1993) or no significant association at all (Boeringer. 1996; Caron. Halteman. & Stacy. 1997). This lack of replication of findings has caused researchers to conclude that the variable of athletic participation is not a reliable and consistent predictor of participation in aggression. Researchers have also noted that the factors relating to the phenomenon of athlete sexual assault have been extremely difficult to identify and may relate to behavior
indirectly associated with being an athlete (Caron et al., 1997). Koss and Gaines (1993) found greater associations between sexual assault and nicotine and alcohol than athletic participation. The inability to produce consistent replication in studies suggests that researchers cannot merely identify athletes through their athletic participation or through randomly selected variables but must also look to examine athlete violence from historical, institutional, and interactional contexts if they are to understand the etiology of violence thoroughly (Dobash & Dobash, 1983).

Therefore, because the factors relating to athlete violence have been elusive and complex, and thus, very difficult to identify, an inductive approach using qualitative methods will be used for this study. This approach will allow the researcher to examine a variety of processes which may enhance the understanding of how violence is learned both through sports participation and through family of origin influences. The National Research Council (1996) has also recommended an inductive approach when studying male to female violence because qualitative methods are thought to be more useful in uncovering the convergence of numerous influences such as race, socioeconomic status, age, and how these components shape the context and experience of violence in women's lives. Moreover, the use of qualitative methods of observation, formal, and informal interviewing are able to discover and better explain the processes of violence as well as providing information on a variety of contextual issues (Fagan & Browne, 1994; The National Research Council, 1996). Information such as analyzing multiple acts of violence: uncovering the order of acts not obtained in surveys; discovering how the conflict began; noting the circumstances and events happening before, during, and after the conflict; and describing the types of violence and the extent of injury can be obtained.
in much greater detail from qualitative methods (Denzin, 1989, 1998; Fagan & Browne, 1994; The National Research Council, 1996). Straus (1990) discussed the fact that context was rarely viewed as a separate dimension of marital violence in his studies for reasons as simple as the difficulty of measuring it. Qualitative methods are especially useful for gathering information on contextual influences (Berg, 1998). Finally, because men are thought to vastly underreport their violent behavior, minimize its harm and its severity, and even deny the behavior altogether (O'Leary & Arias, 1988), using ethnographic methods could potentially help to establish greater rapport between researcher and respondent which could lead to more in-depth and descriptive disclosures (Berg, 1998).

Paper and pencil self-report instruments were once thought to be the preferable method for gathering sensitive information pertaining to issues like violence because they were thought to allow for strong anonymity. However, they have produced the lowest participation rates and the lowest prevalence estimates of adult sexual assault (Brickman & Briere, 1984: Hall & Flannery, 1984). Telephone interviews have been a substantial improvement over pencil and paper questionnaires because a certain amount of rapport between the interviewer and the respondent can be established and because more detailed and specific information can be collected. Face-to-face interviews are the most costly data collection method and are generally the preferred method when investigating sensitive topics such as violence within relationships because they produce the greatest interviewer and respondent rapport (The National Research Council, 1996). Sexual assault prevalence rates obtained through studies using in-person interviews are generally higher than rates obtained from telephone interviews, and those rates, in turn, are
generally higher than those obtained through paper and pencil surveys (Hall and Flannery, 1984; The National Research Council, 1996; Wyatt, 1992).

**Theoretical Perspective**

Social learning theory (SLT) provides the guiding framework. This theory proposes that violence like all other social behaviors is learned directly from observing the behaviors of influential models (e.g., parents or peers) when the behaviors are reinforced or perceived as useful to the observer (Bandura, 1979). Humans learn directly how to be violent by observing another's violent behavior which teaches the instrumental value of violence and its acceptance through direct experiences or observations. This modeled information becomes a major influence on the observer's behavior in childhood, adolescence, or adulthood. Learning is also transmitted by observing the consequences of another's behavior, forming ideas about which behaviors are appropriate, practicing or trying out those behaviors, and continuing to implement those behaviors if the results bring positive or fulfilling outcomes. Aggression and violence then is not inevitable nor biologically based but a social behavior that is learned, shaped by its consequences, and continued if it is reinforced or rewarded in some way (Lore & Schultz, 1993; Miller & Knudsen, 1999; The National Research Council, 1996; O'Leary, 1988).

Male violence and aggression against men or women is thought to endure in societies because it is modeled in both families and society in general. Humans engage in violence and aggression when modeled behaviors are reinforced and have positive results because aggression releases tension, leaves the perpetrator feeling better, achieves its goals by gaining compliance over victims and ending arguments, and is rarely associated with serious punishment for the perpetrators. People may learn how to perform certain
behaviors but would never do them if the behaviors had disastrous consequences for the model and potentially an observer who enacted the behaviors as well (Arias, 1984; Barnett, Miller-Perrin, & Perrin. 1997; The National Research Council. 1996; O’Leary, 1988). Failure to punish a person’s aggressive behavior further promotes the likelihood of adopting and practicing violent interpersonal behaviors and skills (Patterson, Reid, & Dishion, 1992).

Modeling can also affect the observer through teaching new responses or patterns of behavior, inhibiting or disinhibiting previously learned behaviors, and producing response facilitation which increases the probability that an observed or learned response from a model will reoccur. Although modeling has been often used in the study of violence because it is the most parsimonious description for explaining the intergenerational transmission of violence, modeled aggression can be learned outside of the family as well. Society has numerous influential models who can and do teach aggression. These models exist throughout the media, neighborhoods, peer groups, sports, schools, and workplaces (Arias, 1984; Barnett et al., 1997; The National Research Council, 1996; O’Leary, 1988).

Reinforcement is another social learning concept which describes a process whereby certain behaviors will occur at a subsequently higher rate because they produce a desired effect. The aggressor, who is positively reinforced for his use of aggression toward a victim, would increase the frequency of their behavior if it produced a desired outcome such as compliance or submission on the part of victim or partner. The victim or partner may be negatively reinforced for making appeasing gestures or taking the blame for an incident because these behaviors seemed to stop or terminate the attack.
Therefore, because certain behaviors and gestures by the victim ended the perpetrator's aversive attack or actions, the victim's behaviors are more likely to be repeated through this negative reinforcement of the victim during an episode of violence (Barnett et al., 1997; Pagelow, 1981).

Bandura (1973) found that children, who were used as subjects in a laboratory setting, remembered and then imitated aggressive actions which were modeled for them. Boys were found to imitate modeled behaviors more spontaneously than girls even when they were not directly told or encouraged to do so. Acts which were modeled by an adult male were more likely to be imitated than actions which were performed by a woman: this was especially true for male children who imitated the modeled behaviors. Furthermore, imitation was equally strong when the model was someone they knew well but did not like as well as when the observer had a nurturing relationship with the male model (Pagelow, 1984).

In general, males are encouraged to perpetuate dominant roles which can include making use of force or threats. Moreover, males are encouraged to often control their own circumstances, directly express anger, and not compromise or back down when faced with a loss of control. A loss of control can occur in numerous situations including adult relationships or simply through frustration in their efforts to remain dominant. Men, who had violence modeled for them at some point in their development and environment by influential people, are more likely to respond with violence if it was observed to be useful (Fagan & Browne, 1994; Herzberger, 1983). Finally, although an observer or victim may come to hate an abusive model, they still may learn that the most
violent person also seems to be the most powerful person, and therefore, they may be the least vulnerable to being attacked or humiliated by others (Browne, 1987).

Research Questions

Within this theoretical framework, violent behaviors are learned in one’s environment at some point in the person’s development if they have functional value. Through a variety of interrelated socialization factors, violent behaviors are either strengthened or inhibited during a person’s developmental stages. Influences such as the family’s power and authority, broader sociocultural reinforcers (e.g., perceptions of neighborhood or peer attitudes and behavioral norms toward violence), and the perceived deterrents are all factors which account for the continuation or extinction of a person’s aggressive behaviors (Bowker, 1983; Dutton, 1985; Fagan & Browne, 1994).

In this study, the researcher sought to identify emerging concepts arising from the data which Blumer (1969) referred to as sensitizing concepts. Sensitizing concepts are in contrast to definitive concepts which are identified before the study, linked to the data, and are most often used in quantitative research. Therefore, based on the qualitative data from interviews and the supporting literature on athletic interpersonal aggression, this study examined the culture of a contact sport, hockey, and how participation in this sport is related to athletes’ use of physical and sexual violence and aggression. A variety of influences, which place male athletes at greater risk for perpetrating aggression and violence both inside and outside the area of sports competition, also were explored. This study was guided by the following research questions.

1. To what extent do male ice hockey players participate in physical and sexual violence?
2. How does the sport of hockey foster a culture that promotes physical and sexual aggression and violence?

3. What are some factors which help to explain the phenomenon of athlete aggression and violence outside of the sports context?

Violence is defined as male-to-male, physical, sport-related violence; male-to-male physical, out-of-sport interpersonal violence; and male-to-female, physical, sexual, and emotional aggression and abuse. The following chapters will be used to explore, answer, and explain the data from these research questions. This study will begin with Chapter Two which is a review of the literature of the existing research on athlete violence. This review will focus on the frequency and prevalence of violence in addition to the factors and variables which relate to this phenomenon. Next, Chapter Three describes the research methodology which was used to conduct this study. Following the research methods, Chapter Four presents a description of the major themes which emerge from this study’s narrative data. Finally, Chapter Five will relate to a discussion of the patterns as well as the patterns’ theoretical significance. Limitations of the study and implications of this study for future research also will be discussed in Chapter Five.
CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

On-Ice Hockey Violence

Introduction

This chapter begins with a discussion of athlete violence which initially relates to on-ice aspects of hockey violence in terms of the intensity of and the prevalence for violence in this sport. Hockey violence accounts primarily are captured through journalistic reports acquired through sources such as magazines, the internet, or newspaper articles. Although a number of violent hockey-related incidents are described by researchers through refereed journals, this information is not often found in recent publications. A substantial dearth of research exists between the studies relating to the sport of hockey from the 1970s and early 1980s and the present time.

Other types of athlete violence were also reviewed, and this related to out-of-sport physical and sexual aggression against other men and women. A dearth of empirical research also exists relating to out-of-sport athlete violence in general. Therefore, the violence reported in this chapter, which occurs away from the sports arena, does not necessarily describe athletes who are only involved in hockey. Furthermore, empirical findings relating to out-of-sport athlete violence predominantly focused on college
athletes and these studies do not necessarily specify the type of sports in which the athletes are involved. Professional athletes' out-of-sport violence was described mainly through case studies from interviews involving victims in addition to court reports and records.

**Violence as an Inherent Aspect of Hockey**

The sport of hockey has a long history and tradition of being associated with violence which has, at times, lead to career ending and life-threatening injuries (Deacon, 1998; Smith, 1983; Weinstein, Smith, & Wiesenthal, 1995). These violent accounts have resulted from the accidental dangers and intensity of playing the game in addition to the inherent violence associated with the sport (Smith, 1983). The Canadian style of hockey, throughout its history and into the present time, has allowed its players to engage in a full range of verbal and physical aggression without the fear of societal sanctions being levied against them (Russell, 1974). These physically and verbally negative behaviors are allowed to occur because rule violation is both normative and institutionalized behavior: the players learn the rules of the game and how to violate them at the same time (Vaz, 1977, 1982).

Many coaches encourage aggressive play because it is perceived as a necessary component for winning games, and therefore, it is viewed as instrumental for both individual and team success (Smith, 1983). The results from survey research involving 1,906 Canadian youth ice hockey players between the ages of 10 and 18 revealed that approximately 44% of the youth perceived that coaches thought that “being aggressive all the time” was essential for winning games and making their all-star team (Vaz, 1982). Approximately 65% of tyke level players ages 7 to 9 years old and midget level players
ages 15 to 16 years old perceived that coaches thought that “being aggressive all the
time” was essential for making their all-star team (Vaz, 1982). The level of team
aggressiveness increased as the players advanced into higher-aged levels of youth hockey
(Vaz, 1982). Finally, youth hockey players felt the use of intimidation was an especially
important strategy if the other team they were playing against was more talented (Vaz.
1982). Similarly, Smith (unpublished data, cited in Smith, 1979a) asked older junior A
and B players ages 17 to 19 years old about their opinions on the usefulness of aggression
when it related to winning games. Smith discovered that approximately 74% of the
participants thought that aggressive play did indeed contribute to winning games.
Furthermore, approximately 80% of the junior players also felt that aggressive play
helped them to gain recognition from significant people such as coaches, players, and
fans (Smith, unpublished data, cited in Smith, 1979a).

Smith (1979a, 1979b, 1983) and Vaz (1982) presented detailed accounts of how
the social organization of hockey instills the value of aggressiveness in its players
through its key personnel such as coaches, parents, scouts, and administrators who
legitimize behaviors in sport which would be unacceptable in other domains. These
normative hockey behaviors cloud the perceptions of their members and make it
especially difficult for the players to realize the true impact of their aggressive behavior
(Smith, 1979a, 1979b, 1983; Vaz, 1982).

Smith (1983) developed a widely accepted typology of player violence and
divided it into four categories: the first two categories were fairly legitimate while the last
two are illegitimate in terms of sports organizations and the law. The first genre is called
brutal body contact and this includes the normal hits, tackles, blocks, and collisions
which are allowed and occur within the rules of the game. The second, called borderline violence, is prohibited by the rules although these acts occur routinely within the sport. Fist fights or wandering elbows are examples of these penalty-producing acts and have the potential to promote further episodes of violence because often the league’s sanctions are not harsh enough to discourage them. The third genre of quasi-criminal violence violates official rules and player norms because these acts result in injury and considerable official and media attention. Dirty plays and “cheap shots” are examples of violence that result in fines and suspensions. Finally, the genres of criminal violence relate to actions outside the realms of acceptability and are considered as criminal offenses. One example of this category would be the case involving Toronto hockey player Paul Smithers, who as a teenager in 1973, assaulted and killed an opponent in the parking lot after a local game (Smith, 1983).

**Hockey-Related Court Cases**

Hockey’s violence has produced a number of accounts of severe injuries which have appeared in the courts for legal proceedings (Smith, 1983). Watson and MacLellan (1986) found 66 cases of player to player physical assault charges relating to Canadian ice hockey. These cases included 60 criminal charges and 6 civil lawsuits, occurring between 1905 and 1982 (Watson & MacLellan, 1986). Because routine litigation is a post-war phenomenon in terms of sports assault cases in Canada (Young, 1993), 75% of the cases studied have occurred between 1972 and 1982 (Watson & MacLellan, 1986). This is one reason for the emergence of a “hockey crime wave” which was publicized in the 1970s (Reasons, 1992 as cited in Young, 2000). Overall, hockey’s violence and
injury represent a variety of behaviors which are diversely related to fist fights, stick fights, body contact, and the illegal use of the game’s primary tool, the stick.

Smith (1983) discussed one of the more serious and highly publicized incidences involving a violent stick fight which occurred in 1969 and eventually made its way into the courts. The Regina vs. Green case presented evidence that Boston defenseman Ted Green swiped his opponent Wayne Maki with the back of his glove, provoking a dangerous stick fight. Maki delivered a full swing with his stick to Green’s head causing Green to sustain a fractured skull with massive hemorrhaging. Although Green needed two operations and did make a comeback, he has never fully recovered. Charges were made against both players, and each was acquitted through the use of a self-defense argument (Smith, 1983). The judicial assessment contended that no player enters the NHL without consenting to the possibility that he is going to be hit in one of many ways when he is playing the game; this risk is a very real and ordinary part of the game (Horrow, 1980 as cited in Young, 1993).

Similarly, Smith (1983) discussed a 1976 serious assault in a World Hockey Association (WHA) playoff game between the Calgary Cowboys and the Quebec Nordiques. Calgary’s Rick Jodzio cross-checked Quebec’s leading scorer Marc Tardif in the face with his stick and then proceeded to punch Tardif even though Tardif was already unconscious. This attack on Tardif provoked an out-of-control brawl between the two teams. Tardif remained injured for the remainder of the season with a severe concussion, numerous missing teeth, and other injuries. Jodzio was charged in Quebec with bodily harm with the intent to wound; he plead guilty to a lesser charge which resulted in fines totaling $3,000 (Smith, 1983).
In contrast and more recently, Dino Ciccarelli was convicted on charges of common assault in 1988 in an Ontario court, spent one day in jail, and was fined $1,000 although his opponent was not seriously hurt (Young, 2000). Ciccarelli told the courts he was probably trying to intimidate by using his stick violently when he struck Toronto's Luke Richardson twice over the head and punched Richardson in the mouth after he was cross-checked by Richardson (Young, 1993). Marty McSorley was similarly convicted in 2000 on charges of assault with a weapon when he hit his victim, Donald Brashear, in the head with a stick causing Brashear to miss 20 games because of a head injury (Associated Press, 2000). McSorley was suspended from the NHL for the remainder of that season and given a conditional discharge, which means he will have no criminal record (Associated Press, 2000). Although courts are now beginning to recognize the fact that assaults do occur during games such as hockey, players are seldom given harsh consequences which would help to deter and reduce assaultive conduct in future games.

Hockey Injuries

Daly, Sim. and Simonet (1990) and Pashby (1979) have noted that the sport of hockey was particularly associated with injuries which were concentrated around the head, face, and eyes of the participating players. Researchers have suggested that the frequent occurrence of head, facial, and cervical spine injuries should stimulate greater documentation, investigation, and a no tolerance policy toward these injuries despite the frequency of these injuries to hockey (Pelletier, Montelpare, & Stark, 1993; Sim & Simonet, 1988). Devastating injuries to the head, face, and eyes have also prompted investigations which have influenced the development and use of protective facial and head equipment for players and goaltenders (Pashby, 1979).
Despite researchers' attempts to better protect the players from injury through scientific advances in equipment, some injuries will continue to occur because of the nature of the sport itself and the aggressive manner that participants have learned to play the game (Smith, 1983). Daly, Sim, and Simonet (1990) found that the six ounce vulcanized rubber puck can reach speeds of 120 miles per hour (mph) in professional games, 90 mph in recreational games, and 50 mph in pee wee hockey games. Sim, Simonet, Melton, and Lehn (1987) found that the force of impact generated by a hockey puck was approximately 1.250 pounds, and this by itself can cause significant injury. Collision forces between players and the rink boards have been linked to speeds of approximately 30 mph for professional players and more than 20 mph for pee wee players (Sim et al., 1987). Tator and Edmonds (1984) have noted that recent athletes' increase in size, speed, and strength has also been related to increased puck speeds and the potential to generate high bodily velocities and greater impact forces than players from previous times.

In addition to the normative dangers and injuries associated with the tools in the game of hockey, injuries can occur in other ways as well. Lorentzen, Werden, and Pietila (1988) discovered that 50% of all injuries in ice hockey were related to illegal behaviors. Illegal acts such as high-sticking, slashing, spearing, butt-ending, elbowing, cross-checking, and checking from behind often cause serious harm to one or both the aggressor and their recipient. According to a study by Sim and Simonet (1988), the players' sticks are the tools which are responsible for approximately 29% of all hockey-related injuries. Furthermore, some of the more debilitating injuries have occurred from the errant use of the stick. For instance, Pashby (1979) surveyed 75 members of the
Canadian Ophthalmologists Society along with 114 general ophthalmologists in Canada and found that 60% of blinding injuries in hockey were caused by a player’s hockey stick.

Although some eye injuries among players were the result of normal hockey participation, other eye injuries occurred from violence between players. Smith (1983) discussed one such incident involving a serious eye injury which occurred in 1975. The Forbes-Boucha Case resulted from a minor altercation between Boston Bruins Dave Forbes and Minnesota North Stars Henry Boucha which escalated into a serious eye injury for one of the combatants. While serving their penalties simultaneously, Forbes threatened and subsequently attacked Boucha with his stick and fists after the penalties had expired. Boucha was struck with the butt end of Forbes’ stick near the right eye and while Boucha was down on the ice holding his face. Forbes jumped on and pummeled Boucha until a teammate intervened. Boucha sustained 25 stitches and the first of several eye operations in an attempt to correct his blurred vision. Although Forbes was the first professional athlete case to be criminally prosecuted in the U.S., a hung jury resulted in the dismissal of the case (Smith, 1983).

The Forbes-Boucha incident is not the only situation involving serious eye injuries in hockey. Bernie Parent and Bob Nystrom are two other examples of NHL players whose careers were ended from eye injuries which occurred during normal hockey participation. Parent was a premier NHL goalie for the Philadelphia Flyers in the 1970s, who, despite wearing a goalie mask, was hit by a puck in the face, which blurred his vision permanently. Nystrom was hit in the eye with a stick while partaking in an informal game of keep away after practice with a teammate, which prematurely ended his
playing career in the 1980s. More recently, Toronto’s star rookie Brian Berard’s year ended in March of the 1999-2000 season and was accompanied by speculation that his career might be over when he was struck in the eye by errant follow-through of Ottawa Senators Marian Hossa’s stickblade (Kennedy, 2000). Although he has since returned to play after numerous operations, his eyesight has been permanently affected to the point where he must wear a special contact lens in order to have the minimum amount of sight required to participate in the NHL. This researcher similarly had a teammate, who lost vision in one eye and ended his career, when he was struck above and below his eye with a puck which hit him flat during a practice.

A number of violent and very serious injuries have occurred from dangerous bodychecks which have occurred during various levels of play. One serious checking-from-behind incident occurred in a 1996 playoff game between the Colorado Avalanche and the Detroit Red Wings (Lauer, 1998). The event occurred when Colorado’s Claude Lemieux checked Detroit’s Kris Draper from behind which caused Draper to hit the boards face first. Draper’s face had incurred a number of shattered bones causing profuse bleeding, and Lemieux was subsequently suspended for two playoff games (Lauer, 1998).

Another highly publicized and fairly recent career-ending injury occurred from a bodychecking accident which happened early in the 1995 college hockey season (Swift, 1995). On October 20, 1995 Travis Roy, a Boston University player, was left paralyzed and in a wheelchair after shattering his fourth cervical vertebra and severely damaging his spinal cord following a missed bodycheck which he threw at an opponent (Swift, 1995). The contact had occurred 11 seconds into his college career and caused Roy to fall awkwardly into the boards hitting his head and neck (Swift, 1995). Although Roy
has returned to B.U. to help as an assistant coach and has strengthened his right arm enough to feed himself and operate his wheelchair. He remains quadriplegic with virtually no feeling below his shoulders and no movement in his arms or legs. Body contact producing head-first falls into the boards can result in serious danger for both the recipient and the aggressor of the contact (Swift, 1995). Severe back and neck injuries have also prompted stricter enforcement of rules relating to hitting an opponent whose back is turned away from an on-coming opponent. One player, Bill Masterton, became the first professional hockey player to die on January 13, 1968 from head injuries that occurred from body contact in a game which had caused the player to hit his head on the ice (Eskenazi, 1971). This incident had occurred before the widespread and mandated use of helmets and the tragedy had caused league officials to wonder whether a rule mandating helmets would have prevented this death (Eskenazi, 1971).

Although injuries to the head, face and eyes have decreased over the years because of the current mandatory rules pertaining to helmet usage and youth hockey's requirement for facemasks (Pelletier et al., 1993), injuries requiring stitches are quite common among hockey professionals despite their use of helmets. Teams frequently stitch their players' wounds in the dressing room between periods of play and sometimes even during the game because cuts and lacerations are considered routine occurrences. Older longtime NHL players frequently discuss and recall the amount of stitches they received in their careers. Players such as Gordie Howe, Eddie Shore, and Bryan "Buggsy" Watson have claimed well over 400 facial stitches throughout their careers. This number does not seem difficult to fathom because this researcher himself has sustained over 120 stitches in the face from his five-year professional career. The sport
of hockey overall has not been lacking in terms of the amount or the extent of injuries which its participants have sustained from their participation in hockey.

**Hockey Fist Fights**

Potentially dangerous situations exist when athletes are pressured to conform to certain standards of conduct particularly when this involves the use of violence. Weinstein, Smith, and Wiesenthal (1995) found a relationship between athletes' perceptions of masculinity and increasing violence in hockey players at the preprofessional level of junior hockey in Canada. Players' aggression, demonstrated especially through fist fighting, produced greater teammate and coaches' perceptions of player competence than playing or skating skills. Players who backed away from fights by moving away from the trouble were often labeled as "chicken," and this was unquestionably a sign of personal failure and weak character. Players will often partake in hockey fights and violence to avoid demeaning labels, which are not easily removed. Once a player is labeled weak in character, he becomes a target for everyone in the league to intimidate (Faulkner, 1974) as cited in Weinstein, Smith, and Wiesenthal (1995). This manner of sport socialization can potentially encourage greater amounts of violence within hockey as well as outside of the sports realm.

Colburn (1985) discovered through qualitative data that fist fighting in hockey was a socially structured ritual that involved honor, respect, and a certain amount of etiquette among its participants. Moreover, fighting was also viewed as a form of social control for the sport because it was thought to moderate and prevent more serious stick assaults from occurring (Colburn, 1985). Most players did not even include fist fighting as a form of violence (Colburn, 1985). Violence for the players pertained to the use of
the term "stick-work" which was illegally using the stick to slash, crosscheck, butt-end, or spear an opponent. Smith (1979c) similarly found that through interviews with 60 NHL players that the majority of the athletes viewed what others called violence as merely a part of their job as hockey players. Violence was only used to describe the most heinous acts, which in many cases, involved the illegal use of the stick (Smith, 1979c).

In spite of players or coaches' definition of violence, a number of dangerous injuries have resulted from fistfights. Former Boston Bruins coach, Don Cherry, is noted for saying that fighting is not violent because he believes no one really gets hurt in a fight (Young, 1993); separated shoulders, broken knuckles, noses, teeth, and jaws do not count as injuries in a fight (Swift, 1986). In Cherry's opinion, the only real violence occurred through a player's dangerous use of their stick (Young, 1993). Despite Cherry's claim, a number of debilitating injuries sustained in hockey fights have obviously challenged an old hockey myth which suggests that no one ever gets hurt badly in hockey fight. For instance, Deacon (1998) discussed a situation when Toronto Maple Leaf's Nick Kyupreos sustained a severe concussion that led to his early retirement from hockey during the 1997-1998 season. The incident occurred during what appeared to be seemingly routine hockey fight. The injury resulted from a fight in which a single punch leveled Kyupreos rendering him unconscious and face-down in a pool of blood, and thus seriously challenged the myth that hockey fights do not involve serious nor career-ending injuries. Furthermore, all of Kyupreos' major injuries sustained while playing professionally, which included torn knee ligaments, a broken leg, and his career-ending concussion, all resulted from fights. The incident also raised additional questions regarding sanctioned fighting in hockey (Deacon, 1998).
Chicago’s Cam Russell also sustained a concussion during the 1997-98 season and had to be carried off the ice after a fight with Toronto’s tough guy Tie Domi. Russell had lost his helmet during the fight with Domi and fell backwards cracking his head on the ice which stunned and silenced the Toronto crowd. Afterward, doctors had mentioned that Russell was very lucky to have sustained only a concussion from the fight (Deacon, 1998). During the 1998-99 season, Los Angeles Kings’ Matt Johnson “sucker punched” the Rangers’ Jeff Beukeboom in the back of his head giving Beukeboom a concussion which was so severe that he had to retire from hockey (Kennedy, 2000). Beukeboom was still not able to skate with his young sons 18 months after the incident because he was too unsteady on skates after the concussion (Kennedy, 2000). Robinson (1998) also discovered another prominent example of on-ice violence which occurred during a tier II junior game 1997 in Cobourg, Ontario and prompted the Ontario Hockey Association (OHA) to implement a rule mandating that all referees be on the ice during team warm-ups. During the pre-game brawl, one player suffered a fractured skull, whereas one of the coaches had a tendon and nerves severed in his ankle. Police were investigating this situation despite the fact that no officials were on the ice during the fight (Robinson, 1998).

Not all injuries in hockey fights pertain merely to one’s physical self. Farber (1997) discussed some of the negative emotional and psychological effects that some fighters have suffered as a result of their job as NHL enforcers and fighters. For instance, Edmonton Oilers’ fighter, Louie DeBrusk, suffered from substance abuse problems which warranted two different treatments at the Betty Ford Clinic (Farber, 1997). DeBrusk felt that the extreme pressures to fight and to constantly win all his fights
coupled with guilt when he did not fight often produced a sense of worthlessness which lead to his increased substance abuse problems (Farber, 1997). John Kordic was another similar example of an NHL fighter who buckled under the extreme pressures of his job as an NHL fighter; Kordic actually died from his drug, alcohol, and steroid abuse ("Death of a goon," 1992).

Athlete Aggression Against Males Outside of Sport

Messner (1990b, 1992) found that male athletes were constantly rewarded for their use of violence and glorified by peers, coaches, and fans for their in-sport "animal-like" behaviors which promoted socialization for violence by allowing athletes to believe it was "ok" to hurt someone if the act was within the rules of the game. Eskenazi (1990) similarly noted that the most aggressive hockey players were often the most popular on the team. Melnick (1992) discussed sport as a male proving ground which promoted aggression and violence within the games because athletes were continually challenged to prove their toughness and masculinity by dominating opponents. In-sport aggression, which is constantly reinforced and promoted, can and often does carry over into situations involving out-of-sport aggression and violence (Benedict, 1997; Nixon 1997).

Curry (1998) discovered through employing case study-life history methods that athlete violence was obvious and prevalent in certain near-campus locations. Athlete aggression and assault were often encouraged within near-campus bars that gave special privileges to certain male athlete teams by allowing fighting and then siding with athletes who provoked fights with nonathletes. Because the athletes’ status and very presence brought sports patrons and supporters into the drinking establishment, the athletes were
not disciplined nor expelled from the bar. These bars were permissive to the point of allowing the male athletes to take advantage of situations where they could prey upon the physical inequalities of others.

Nixon (1997) found in a sample of nearly 200 male and female athletes from a medium-sized university that male athletes who held stronger beliefs about the value of toughness participated in greater amounts of aggression outside of their sport. Fifty-one percent of the male athletes having the strongest beliefs in the value of toughness had been involved in violence outside of their sport acting as the aggressor, compared to twenty-two percent of those athletes who had moderate or weak beliefs in the value of toughness. Moreover, 44% of team sport athletes participated in out-of-sport violence as compared to 9% of individual sport athletes. Forty-nine percent of contact sport athletes participated in out-of-sport violence as compared to 23% of non-contact sport athletes.

Attitudes such as the belief in the value of toughness in sport, accidentally or intentionally hurting other athletes in sport, and participating on a contact sport team were related to physical aggression outside of sport for male athletes.

Criminal justice Professor Smith contended that athletes are more involved in violent behavior than non athletes because they are physical people, who are expected to be physically aggressive in their chosen sport (Nixon, 1997). Athletes are socialized in their sports to act in aggressive ways which reinforce stereotypical gender role learning for males (Nixon, 1997). Men seem to be more prone to aggression through their sports socialization than women, and this aggression can carry and often does carry over into interactions and relationships outside of their sport (Nixon, 1997).
Robinson (1998) discovered one hockey coach who had an unusually high number of convictions - some of which involved violence. In 1997, Bryan Jacksie, a minor hockey coach from Lindsay, Ontario resigned from his job when the Ontario Hockey Federation launched an investigation into Jacksie's convictions which totaled 37 and included drunk driving, assault, and two assaults causing bodily harm. The Ontario Minor Hockey Association was alerted earlier to his criminal history but failed to check on this: one month later Jacksie was cleared to coach although the team did not renew his contract (Robinson, 1998).

Athlete Aggression Against Women

Athletes and Sexual Assault

In addition to reports of athletes' physical assaults against men, athletes have perpetrated sexual violence against women also. Recent and numerous sexual assault cases involving high profile college and professional athletes which have often appeared in the media have caused researchers to question whether athletes have a higher propensity toward committing rape (Benedict, 1997). The social learning perspective suggests that violence is learned directly from observing the behaviors of influential models (e.g., parents or peers) when the behaviors are reinforced or perceived as useful to the observer (Bandura, 1979). Because humans learn directly how to be violent by observing another's violent behavior, this teaches the instrumental value of violence and its acceptance through direct experiences or observations. Aggression and violence, therefore, is not inevitable nor biologically based but a social behavior that is learned.
shaped by its consequences, and continued if it is reinforced or rewarded in some manner (Lore & Schultz, 1993; Miller & Knudsen, 1999; The National Research Council, 1996; O’Leary, 1988).

A number of studies have produced findings which indicate that college athletes are over represented among those who are involved in aggressive and violent sexual behavior on college campuses. Crosset, Ptacek, McDonald, and Benedict (1996) compared rates of reported cases of sexual assaults for varsity athletes versus the general male student population. Ten Division I universities provided data for this study which documented incidents of battering and sexual assaults over a three-year period from 1991 through 1993. All 10 universities supplied usable data on sexual assaults; these universities represented a diverse representation of Division I programs including 5 perennial top-20 football or basketball teams and an Ivy League team as well. Each institution was allowed to maintain its own definition of what constituted battering and sexual assault, which varied among the programs somewhat. The three-year time span for this study revealed that although male student athletes accounted for a mere 3.3% of the total male population, the male student-athlete population accounted for 19% of the reported sexual assault perpetrators. This finding represents an association between collegiate athletic participation and reports of sexual assault to the judicial affairs committee.

In addition to the above mentioned limitation pertaining to each institution having its own definition of what constituted sexual assault, the number of sexual assault incidents examined in this current sample (n = 69) is small when compared to the sample size of nonathletes (236,911) and athletes (7,296) surveyed. These data only reflected assaults officially reported to judicial affairs and, therefore, any sample based on official
reports is not a representative sample of the violence that takes place against women on college campuses. Furthermore, the researchers emphasized that it is in no way clear whether the association between athletic participation and violence against women is causal or the result of behaviors only indirectly related to sport (e.g., hostile attitudes toward women, binge drinking, sex-segregated living arrangements, or peer support for violence) (Crosset et al., 1996).

Similarly, Frintner and Rubinson (1993) found through a sample of 925 undergraduate women at a large mid-western university that although the population of male athletes was less than 2% of the male student population, 22% of the reported sexual assaults, 18% of the attempted sexual assaults, and 14% of the cases involving acts of sexual abuse were committed by members of sports teams or clubs on campus. Male athletes were involved in 11% of the incidents involving battery, intimidation, and illegal restraint. A total of 251 women or 27% of the respondents reported being involved in at least one incident of sexual assault, attempted sexual assault, sexual abuse, battery, intimidation, or illegal restraint. Members of sports teams were undoubtedly over represented among the accused in this study.

One noted limitation of the study pertained to the extremely small amount of information given in the instrument section. Only one instrument was used (The Sexually Stressful Events Survey) and the questionnaire consisted of only several dichotomous questions to determine the extent of the sexual victimization of the women (O'Shaughnessey & Palmer, 1990). Open-ended questions coded by two different researchers were used to determine some of the other categories which were not defined or elaborated on at all. Furthermore, a university police officer was brought in to help
code the responses which were too difficult for the researchers to code. This lack of consistency among the two researchers and the police officer presented some serious concerns in terms of identifying reliable categories. A final concern is the lack of accurate percentages within the study itself which showed discrepancies between the tables, the results, and the discussion section at times.

Koss and Gaines (1993) attempted to study the influences of alcohol, athletic affiliation, and fraternities on sexual aggression using a sample of 530 undergraduate men which included 140 athletes representing all varsity sports and especially revenue producing sports. The athlete sample consisted of 62 varsity football players and 25 varsity basketball players. The data were compiled from self-reports from a Division I college which consistently ranked in the Top 20 programs in overall performance across 17 men’s and women’s sports programs.

The four variables of nicotine use (6%), drinking intensity (3%), hostility towards women (1%), and athletic affiliation (1%) were positively correlated with sexual aggression using stepwise multiple regression and accounted for 11% of the variance. The results confirmed previous reports of athletic participation contributing to the prediction of sexual aggression although nicotine use and drinking to get drunk were stronger predictors of sexual aggression than the variables of athletic participation and hostility towards women. Athletic involvement particularly in revenue-producing sports was associated with sexual aggression, whereas drug use was negatively correlated with athletic participation. This suggests that the contribution of athletic participation to the prediction of sexual aggression must be examined independently because this variable functions through a different path than through alcohol or nicotine use (Koss & Gaines, 31).
Finally, interaction terms were not included in the equation because the researchers had no theoretical reason to expect them, and any differences occurring would be expected in degrees rather than direction (Koss & Gaines, 1993).

Even though a high participation rate was achieved, the generalizability of the study was questionable in terms of both the university as a whole and the other institutions because only freshmen football players and introductory psychology students participated in the survey. Another limitation applies to issues pertaining to self-reported data which present validity issues (Koss & Gaines, 1993). Finally, additional information obtained through discriminant analysis revealed with 73% accuracy that the three variables of athletic involvement, alcohol use, and hostility toward women differentiated men who had reported being part of a group which had sex with one woman (n=17) from those who did not (n=340). The researchers did not give any further information about the lack of responses from the unaccounted 173 men who seemingly did not participate in this aspect of the study (Koss & Gaines, 1993).

Not all studies have found athletes to be over represented in terms of their involvement in sexual assault when compared to a control group. In fact, no study examining athletes’ self-reported violence toward women has found a statistically significant difference between the rates of violence in athletes verses nonathletes (Boeringer, 1996; Schwartz & Nograd, 1996). Boeringer (1996) discovered in a study of 477 male undergraduates which included 77 athletes at a large southeastern university that 60% of athletes reported at least one instance of using verbal coercion to obtain sexual favors, 28% reported using alcohol and drugs to obtain sexual favors, and 15% reported using physical force. Although athletes had reported higher percentages than
nonaffiliated students in all categories. The findings do not support the notion that varsity athletes are more likely to engage in sexual aggression because the differences were not statistically significant. Athletes did, however, significantly differ from nonathletes in terms of whether they would force sexual behaviors on a women if they were guaranteed immunity (Crosset, 1999). The athletes reported a disproportionately greater inclination and readiness to engage in sexual force to coerce a women into a sexual act than nonathletes (Crosset, 1999).

Because researchers have not examined the competitive aspect in athletes through a formal study, Caron, Halteman, and Stacy (1997) studied the effect of competitiveness, which is often associated with athletes, in an effort to determine whether the variable of competitiveness could predict sexual aggression and to help assess why rape is reportedly perpetrated significantly more by athletes than nonathletes. Scores for the variable of competitiveness were compiled for 104 college men and then correlated with reported sexual aggression and athletic participation. The findings implicated that there was no significant difference between athletes and nonathletes pertaining to aggressive sexual behaviors. When athletic participation was controlled, competitiveness scores were significantly correlated with hostility toward women and a measurement of aggression. This finding suggests that men who are very competitive and especially “win-oriented” were more sexually aggressive toward women because winning whether “in bed” or on the playing field is important to these types of men. The study further suggested that perhaps the personal characteristics of athletes rather than athletic participation alone must be further examined to determine the suspected connection between athletes and sexual assault.
Although this study had a noticeable limitation by the small sample of athletes (n=55) compared to nonathletes (n=49) and the response rate was only 52%, respondents who scored the highest on the competitive measure were athletes. The researchers noted that it would be interesting to examine how highly competitive athletes in a larger sample would score on sexually aggressive behavior. Although 47% of the respondents had reported no sexually aggressive behaviors, 29% indicated that they had engaged in “uninvited sexual advances” (cat calls, yelling, or whistling). 11% reported “unwanted sexual touching” (touching a women’s buttocks, breasts, or genitals against her wishes). 7% indicated engaging in sexual coercion (attempted or had intercourse with a woman through overwhelming her with arguments or pressure), and 6% reported that they had engaged in attempted or completed rape (attempting or having intercourse with a woman who did not wish to through using alcohol, drugs, threats, or force) (Caron et al., 1997).

According to Curry (1991, 1998), it is perhaps not surprising to see these documented reports of violence among college athletes. In his qualitative participant-observer study of locker room talk, Curry (1991) found that male intercollegiate athletes’ conversations often focused on sex, aggression, and sexist attitudes towards women. As Curry reports, women are viewed by the athletes as depersonalized objects that exist for men’s pleasure. In light of these attitudes, it can almost be expected that athletes may engage in sexual aggression against women. Messner (1990b, 1992) similarly found that athletes often viewed and treated women as objects of sexual conquest and these relationships were often characterized as conditional and emotionally distant. Messner (1994) further discussed the idea of “sexual schizophrenia” which meant that men were supposed to engage in aggressive sexist talk when referring to women while at the same
time they were to hold-in their emotional feelings toward women during their time in the lockerroom. Curry (1991) also found evidence of this specialized type of lockerroom talk, and the players seemingly participated in traditional masculine conversations in order to keep themselves from being verbally targeted by peers.

**Sexual Assault Conviction Rates**

Benedict and Klein (1997) examined arrest and conviction rates for collegiate and professional athletes accused of felony sexual assaults against women and compared these with national crime data to determine whether elite athletes were receiving preferential treatment by the criminal justice system. Data were obtained between the years of 1986 and 1995 through Nexus Lexus, which scanned the New York Times, USA Today, and the Boston Globe, and resulted in 217 felony complaints involving college and professional athletes.

The most recent national data for rape convictions is 1990. This data indicated 102,560 rapes reported to police with just 32% of these reports resulting in arrests. This 32% arrest rate is much lower when compared to the athletes' 79% arrest rate in this study. This higher arrest rate for athletes may be explained by the more aggressive manner employed by law enforcement officials when pursuing complaints against athletes because no law official wants to be accused of giving athletes preferential treatment (Benedict & Klein, 1997).

Conviction rates resulting from arrests involving athletes when compared to the national conviction rate present a striking difference in favor of the accused athlete. From the 217 complaints relating to athletes who were initially reported to police for felonious sex crimes, only 24% were successfully prosecuted by law enforcement.
officials. The national sample of 54% of arrests leading to a conviction for the general population depicts a striking difference from the conviction rate for athletes (Benedict & Klein. 1997). Based on the differences between arrest and conviction rates between the athlete data and the national sample data, athletes were not found to be treated with more leniency because they were more likely to be arrested for sex charges than men in the national sample. Athletes did manage to avoid conviction more readily than the national sample of men charged with sexual assault (Benedict & Klein. 1997).

**Gang Rape and Group Sex**

Determining the distinction between group sex which is consensual behavior and gang rape which is nonconsensual behavior is challenging during judicial proceedings (Benedict. 1997). Challenges often arise because sometimes the circumstances of the sexual encounter may lead to questioning of the consensual nature of the act (Benedict. 1997).

In a review of the literature, Berkowitz (1992) found that most gang rapes that occurred in college environments were perpetrated by distinctive male groups. In one review of alleged gang rapes by college students since 1980, 22 out of 24 documented cases were perpetrated by either members of fraternities or intercollegiate athletic teams. Ehrhart and Sandler (1985) documented 50 gang rapes submitted to university officials during a two-year time period showed that 30% involved athletes. 60% were perpetrated by fraternity members, and 10% were identified as men living in residents halls, off-campus apartments, or with their parents. Similarly, O'Sullivan studied 26 alleged gang rapes documented between 1980 and 1990 and discovered that most of the perpetrators belonged to either fraternities or varsity athletic teams (Neimark. 1991 as cited in
Revenue-producing sport athletes (i.e., football and basketball players) were specifically implicated in the athlete involvement of these sexual crimes which accounted for 38% of these cases (Neimark, 1991 as cited in Melnick, 1992).

Crosset et al. (1995) found that 33% of the alleged sexual assaults involving college and professional athletes between the years of 1986 and 1996 involved multiple perpetrators. Moreover, in an 18-month time period from January of 1995 to July of 1996, there were no fewer than 47 college and professional athletes who were reported to police for their alleged sex crimes involving multiple perpetrators against single victims (Crosset et al., 1995 as cited in Benedict, 1997). From this group of 47 athletes, 43 admitted to having group sex and insisted that it was consensual (Crosset, et al., 1995 as cited in Benedict, 1997). Over this same 18-month time frame, sex crimes involving multiple perpetrators accounted for more than 50% of the reported sex crimes which involved athletes (Crosset et al., 1995 as cited in Benedict, 1997). Koss and Gaines (1993) found information through discriminant analyses that the three variables of athletic involvement, alcohol use, and hostility toward women differentiated men who had reported being part of a group which had sex with one woman (n=17) from those who did not (n=340).

Benedict (1997) discussed a number of highly publicized court cases involving athletes’ group sex and gang rapes in both professional and college sports. Football teams such as the Cincinnati Bengals and the New Orleans Saints and basketball teams such as the Minnesota Gophers and Arizona State University were specifically cited for their involvement in group sexual encounters and gang rapes. Lefkowitz (1997) similarly presented an in-depth and detailed account of a high school gang rape by athletes in Glen...
Ridge, New Jersey. The rape, which was perpetrated against a mentally retarded female classmate through the use a baseball bat, is also examined for the preceding community, family, and perpetrator influences on how a gang rape is allowed to happen (Lefkowitz, 1997).

Some of the hypothetical "rewards" for the perpetrators may include the men's excitement and camaraderie of partaking in a shared and bonding experience. Membership in these groups may also serve to protect a perpetrator from any doubts about the propriety of his behavior especially if the group is associated with high status and special campus privileges. Participation in or observation of group sexual assaults may also serve to increase group cohesiveness and resolve doubts about heterosexuality created by close, intimate relationships with other men. It is further hypothesized that athletes have a stronger need to sustain their standing among peers through their participation than to satisfy sexual urges which is evident by the circumstances and characteristics of the victims. Besides being outnumbered and remarkably smaller physically than their perpetrators, victims tend to be vulnerable because of mental impairment caused by alcohol or drug consumption, their employment in the male entertainment business sometimes as prostitutes or exotic dancers, or their fascination with these high status personalities (Benedict, 1997; Berkowitz, 1992; Ehrhart & Sandler (1985; Melnick, 1992).

**Hockey Players and Sexual Assault**

Although coverage of athlete sexual assaults are reported periodically in the media (Benedict, 1997), sexual assaults involving hockey players are occurring and gaining more publicity. This lack of media coverage may have related to a dearth of
hockey's overall media attention in the United States because it is a Canadian sport. Another potential reason for hockey's lack of sexual assault media coverage may be related to the out-of-court settlements and plea bargaining which keep cases from going to trial and producing media coverage (Benedict & Klein, 1997). Ballou (2000) discussed one current National Hockey League Player, Billy Tibbetts, who has recently emerged from incarceration involving a sex crime which cost him four hockey seasons as well as significant time in his life. Tibbetts, who played in the minor leagues for Johnstown of the East Coast Hockey League during the 1995-96 season, pled guilty to raping a 15-year-old girl at a party in his hometown of Scituate, Massachusetts. Tibbetts was subsequently imprisoned following parole violations and must still register as a sex offender when his current NHL team, the Penguins, are on a road trip (Ballou, 2000).

Another publicized sexual assault incident occurred in 1993 when Jarret Reid, assistant captain of the Sault Ste. Marie Greyhounds major junior team, was charged with sexually assaulting his girlfriend after she had disclosed her assault to the police (Robinson, 1998). Six months later, 21 additional charges were produced after police interviewed another of Reid's girlfriends (Robinson, 1998). The charges resulting from Reid's second girlfriend's interview included five sexual assaults, in addition to nine physical assaults causing bodily harm, two breaking and entering incidents, one death threat, and two breaches of bail. Reid was acquitted of the first sexual assault charge and in 1995 plead guilty to another sexual assault charge, assault, assault causing bodily harm, and breaking and entering. Reid was sentenced to nine months in prison but served only three months (Robinson, 1998).
Athlete Physical Aggression Against Women

Not all athlete-related assaults against women are sexual assaults. Crosset et al. (1996) discovered in a study of 10 Division I universities over a three-year period of time from 1991 to 1993 that athletes were over represented for their participation in violence on college campuses. Researchers used official judicial affairs records to document and report the athletes’ violent crimes. Although athletes accounted for less than 3% of the male student population, they were discovered to have perpetrated 35% of the physical battering reports on the college campuses (n=20). Frintner and Rubinson (1993) found similar reports of athlete violence by studying 925 women’s self-reports at a large midwestern university. Although the population of male student-athletes was approximately 2%, the male athletes accounted for 11% of the reports for battery, intimidation, and illegal restraint on this particular college campus.

Benedict (1997) found that 150 cases of college and professional athlete domestic violence were reported between 1990 and 1996. Researchers monitored the associated press wire service, major newspapers, and college campus newspapers of major universities. A total of 77 reports alone were filed between 1995 and 1996 possibly because of the increased awareness of the phenomenon of athlete violence. All but seven of these reports were perpetrated by football or basketball players; seven of the victims were pregnant women at the time of the assault. Furthermore, from of these 150 reports of domestic violence, the athletes were convicted in only 28 of the cases, mainly through plea bargaining agreements. A mere 10 cases went to criminal trial and 6 of these resulted in guilty verdicts. Of these six cases, four of the cases involved situations where the victim was either killed or threatened with death.
Benedict (1997) discussed the tendency of coaches failing to hold their players accountable for antisocial behaviors which occur away from the sports arena. Coaches will often downplay an athlete’s unlawful behavior by explaining that the athlete had used poor judgment during his criminal activity. Because coaches are increasingly reluctant to confront, demand, and enforce discipline from star players with criminal records particularly if these athletes provide coaches with secured in-sport success, this failure strongly reinforces the message that athletes are “above the law” if they provide an invaluable service to their team. This ethical retreat from disciplining athletes’ antisocial behavior has become common among college and professional coaches whose careers and livelihood are dependent upon their in-sport success and offers one explanation for athletes’ continued antisocial behavior (Benedict, 1997).

Curry (1991) found in his participant-observation study of locker room talk that male intercollegiate athletes perpetuated discussions which often focused on themes of aggression, sex, and sexist attitudes towards women. Women were often viewed by the athletes as depersonalized objects that were to be used for men’s pleasure. Curry concluded it might be expected that athletes would become more inclined to engage in physical or sexual aggression against women when so much of their locker room talk is focused on aggression, sex, and women.

One journalistic example involving a hockey player who perpetrated a number of crimes including physical and sexual assault occurred in Canada in 1993. Jarret Reid, assistant captain of the Sault Stc. Marie Greyhounds major junior team, was charged with sexually assaulting his girlfriend after she had disclosed this information to the police (Robinson, 1998). Six months later, 21 additional charges were produced after police
interviewed another girlfriend. These charges included nine physical assaults causing bodily harm, two breaking and entering, one death threat, five sexual assaults, and two breeches of bail (Robinson, 1998). Reid was acquitted of the first sexual assault charge and in 1995 plead guilty to another sexual assault charge, assault, assault causing bodily harm, and breaking and entering (Robinson, 1998). Reid was sentenced to nine months in prison and served three. In April of 1997, Reid crossed the U.S. border to play illegally on an all-star team and during that same month was charged with three counts of assault and one count of breech of recognition; Reid was sentenced to five months in the Pictou County Correctional Centre (Robinson, 1998).

Another hockey player, future NHL Hall of Fame goaltender Patrick Roy, was arrested for domestic violence, and the charges were later changed from Domestic A and B to a simple domestic charge (Burke & Okun, 1991). Because he is a Canadian, a felony charge in the United States would have resulted in his work visa being revoked (Burke & Okun, 1991). This type of situation would undoubtedly cause a tremendous amount of pressure for his wife to reduce her claims or recant her statements because Roy had a tremendous value and impact on his team which translates into millions of dollars (Burke & Okun, 1991).

One hockey players' violence eventually lead to the death of his spouse. In 1997, Barclay MacFie, a former junior player living in Cold Lake, Alberta was charged with kidnapping, assault, sexual assault, assault causing bodily harm, and first degree murder after he had dragged his kicking and screaming wife from a relative's home; one week later she was found dead in MacFie's truck (Robinson, 1998). MacFie was also a frequent instigator of fights within his own team's locker room as well as on the ice.
during games which had earned him record penalty minutes throughout his junior career. MacFie was convicted of first degree murder charges in 1998 (Robinson, 1998).

**Sport Violence as Learned Behavior**

**The Social Learning Perspective**

The social learning theory perspective suggests that violence like all other social behavior is learned directly from observing the behaviors of influential models (e.g., parents or peers) when the behaviors are reinforced or perceived as useful to the observer (Bandura, 1979). Humans learn directly how to be violent by observing another's violent behavior which teaches the instrumental value of violence and its acceptance through direct experiences or observations. Aggression and violence, therefore, are not inevitable nor biologically based but a social behavior that is learned, shaped by its consequences, and continued if it is reinforced or rewarded in some manner (Lore & Schultz, 1993; Miller & Knudsen, 1999; National Research Council, 1996; O’Leary, 1988).

Young (1993) likened professional sports to a hazardous and violent workplace with its own unique form of “industrial disease.” Athlete violence is a part of this “industrial disease.” Male athletes are expected to be tough and to live up to cultural expectations of manliness, which often encourage, model, and reinforce the use of violence and performance enhancing drugs such as steroids. Many of these drugs have the potential for producing violent side effects in the athletes -- both on and off the field. Athletes constantly are encouraged to ignore their own pain and at the same time are encouraged to inflict pain on others in contact sports or they risk being belittled by their coaches and peers. Sports pressures to succeed, cultural expectations of manliness, and
the use of performance enhancing, violence producing drugs all add to athletes' susceptibility of using violence against both men and women (Young, 1993).

Seagrave, Moreau, and Hastad (1985) examined self-report data from 124 midget level Canadian hockey players and 46 nonathletes between the ages of 15 and 16 to determine differences between the two groups in terms of their delinquent behaviors such as drug abuse, theft, physical violence, and vandalism. Although the two groups did not significantly differ when the variables were all examined together, the ice hockey players did report significantly higher levels of physically violent delinquency than the nonathletes (Seagrave et al., 1985). The researchers attributed this finding to several possible explanations. The first is that ice hockey players may actually learn violent behavior from their sports participation and, therefore, may become accustomed to using aggressive, antisocial behavior (Seagrave et al., 1985). Second, these behaviors may occur because violence and physical aggression have become institutionalized in ice hockey especially at the higher levels where physical aggression and fighting are normative (Vaz, 1972 as cited in Seagrave et al., 1985). Alderman (1974) as cited in Seagrave et al. (1985) contended that athletes aggressiveness which is praised, rewarded, and reinforced will quite simply make them more, not less, aggressive. Finally, players who are not predisposed to violence, may quit or be terminated from teams, and this supports the argument that aggressive and potentially delinquent individuals are attracted to hockey because they are able to express their aggression within the sport (i.e., selection effect) (Seagrave et al., 1985).

Silva (1983) similarly suggested that because both rules and rule-breaking behaviors are learned in sports, participants who remain in sports over a long period of
time also learn that normative rule violations such as aggression are legitimate behaviors. Crosset (1999) thought that if athletes are in fact trained to be violent in their sport, this will undoubtedly affect their out-of-sport thinking and behavior. Coakley (1998) presented a number of athlete discourses in his sociology of sports textbook which related to how the players' violent in-sport training had affected their out-of-sport behavior.

Messner (1990b, 1992) found through qualitative interviews with his sample of 30 male athletes that the men were rewarded for their use of violence and glorified by peers, coaches, and fans for their in-sport "animal-like" behaviors. Messner also discovered that this type of sports socialization promoted violence by encouraging athletes to believe it was "ok" to hurt someone if the act was within the rules of the game. Eskenazi (1990) similarly noted that the most aggressive hockey players on the team were often the most popular in terms of fan appreciation and recognition. These powerful socialization messages and reinforcement can provide athletes with the needed incentive to perpetuate aggression in order to acquire respect and admiration from sports-related personnel (Messner, 1990b, 1992). In a review article, Melnick (1992) likened sports to a male proving ground which promoted aggression and violence within the confines of a game. Athletes, both young and older, are often pressured and reinforced by coaches, teammates, and peers to prove their toughness, aggression, manliness, and domination toward an opponent (Melnick, 1992; Messner, 1990a, 1990b, 1992). In-sport aggression which is constantly reinforced and promoted can and often does carry over into situations involving out-of-sport aggression and violence (Benedict, 1997; Nixon 1997). In addition, considerable pressures to abide in a sport team's normative rule behaviors

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always exist for athletes. McMurtry (1974) found that athletes who chose not to adhere to normative rules relating to aggressive behavior were both socially rejected and negatively labeled by the other players.

One study of Toronto hockey players tested the modeling hypothesis of Social Learning Theory in a very direct manner by asking the players if they had ever learned how to hit another player illegally in any way by watching professional hockey players do this (Smith, 1979b). From the 604 amateur hockey respondents, 56% had replied in a positive way with only slight variations occurring by level of competition and age (Smith, 1979b, 1983). Smith (1979b, 1983) then discussed some of the negative behaviors such as “tripping” that the players had mentioned they had learned from viewing professionals. Of the respondents that said they had hit a player in an illegal manner the way they had learned it from watching a professional, 222 players said it happened once or twice in a season and 90 players said it had occurred five or more times (Smith, 1979b, 1983). Official game records confirmed these verbal responses because the players, who had claimed to have performed such illegal tactics, had significantly more penalties than those who did not claim to use them (Smith, 1979b, 1983). Therefore, viewing aggressive professional models in hockey, and possibly throughout sports in general, appears to have a substantial impact on long-term behaviors of amateur players of various ages and caliber (Smith, 1979b, 1983). These modeling effects are further enhanced and legitimized when big league models are reinforced for their conduct through a variety of rewards (Young, 2000).

Similar studies by Nash and Lerner (1981) and Vaz (1977, 1982) also examined the impact of the professional model on violence in amateur hockey and discovered that
professional hockey players had a significant role in teaching aggression and violence to young hockey players. Specifically, Nash and Lerner (1981) used participant-observational methods to study a pee wee hockey team for a seven-month period of time in an effort to examine the meanings of violence from perspectives of NHL players and coaches. A comparison between the professional and pee wee models for violence revealed that the younger players relied on the professionals in order to help them interpret their own style of play (Nash & Lerner, 1981). The youth players actually simplified and accentuated the themes derived from the available adult models and subsequently used these themes as they were needed in their own social relationships (Nash & Lerner, 1981). The professional hockey model is, therefore, the model that amateur players imitate (Nash & Lerner, 1981).

Smith (1979b, 1983) likewise found that as the competitive level of play increased, the players' need to acquire sanctions for fighting from significant influences like coaches, parents, and teammates increased as well. Teammates were particularly cited as having a strong influence in encouraging violent behaviors (Smith, 1979b, 1983) because players who "backed down" from a fight received less respect from peers (Vaz, 1982). Clark, Vaz, Vetere, and Ward (1978) found through their 1970 survey research study of 1,915 amateur Canadian players ages 7 through 17 that teammates, father, coach, age, and indirectly social class influenced aggressive behavior. The variable of "teammates" was discovered to be the most salient variable in explaining illegal aggression (Clark et al., 1978). Finally, Smith (1979c) discovered through interviews with 60 NHL players that half of the players felt they would be looked down upon by teammates if they were challenged to a fight and refused to fight. The other half of the
participants felt that although fighting was not required, a player had to at least be willing
to help teammate in order to prevent another teammate from being “double-teamed”
(Smith. 1979c). Furthermore, a player had to be able to withstand opponents’ coercive
playing tactics in order to retain their honor and moral worth in the eyes of their
teammates and coaches (Smith. 1979c). Therefore, hockey peers do indeed have a salient
influence on their teammates’ aggressive or lack of aggressive tendencies.

Influences Relating to Athlete Violence

Introduction

The social learning concepts of modeling and reinforcement can be readily
applied to the influences which are discussed in this section, and these concepts help to
explain the phenomenon of athlete violence. These influences relating to violence are
prevalent in a variety of subcultures which emphasize a strong group component (e. g.,
athletic teams, fraternities) and include drug and alcohol abuse, male bonding and peer
pressure, sport and masculinity issues, fan involvement, and family of origin difficulties
(Schwartz & Dekeserdy. 1997). These influences which flourish within certain
subcultures also seem to involve some type of learned behavior which is usually acquired
through modeling or imitation when it is reinforced in some manner (Bandura. 1979;
Melnick. 1992). On the other hand, negative behaviors can also be reinforced and
promoted when they are not addressed, confronted, and disciplined by influential adults
because this gives the perpetrator the message that their behavior will be tolerated
(Benedict, 1997; Lefkowitz. 1997). The influences such as athlete conviction rates and
an absence of deterrence relate to this type of reinforcement that occurs when antisocial
behaviors are not addressed. Therefore, aggression and violence, similar to the additional
influences mentioned in this section, are not inevitable nor biologically based but a social behavior that is learned, shaped by its consequences, and continued if it is reinforced or rewarded in some manner (Lore & Schultz, 1993; Miller & Knudsen, 1999; National Research Council, 1996; O’Leary, 1988).

**Drug Use**

Athletes in competitive sports are presented with the apparent dilemma of having to win at all costs and yet simultaneously adhere to moral and ethical sport behaviors. Unethical behaviors such as drug use and violence, which often accompany sports, are thought to be an outgrowth of the tremendous pressures associated with succeeding in sports today. It is argued that this need to win at all costs is incongruent with the expectations that athletes should accomplish this goal in a non-violent, drug free manner (Volkwein, 1995).

Although Koss and Gaines (1993) discovered drug use was negatively correlated with athletic participation in their sample of 530 undergraduates which included 140 division I varsity athletes, a number of other studies have found opposite results. Benedict (1997) discussed numerous examples of college and professional teams as well as individual athletes who used drugs and alcohol recreationally and to a great extent before they perpetuated crimes such as male or female physical assault as well as sexual assault. Gallmeier (1988) found support for recreational drug use in his study of professional hockey players because drug use such as marijuana, cocaine, and alcohol was almost universal among the players on hockey teams. Messner (1992) similarly discussed the findings from a number of studies which showed that approximately 70% of the NFL had used either “uppers” or steroids during their careers (Atyeo, 1979; Shear.

Young (1991, 1993) also discovered the use of performance-enhancing drugs by a number of athletes. The athletes discussed the notion that when the coaches prompted an athlete to gain tremendous amounts of size and strength that this was practically forcing the players or coaches to write prescriptions for drugs because it was impossible to make the needed gains without the use of drugs such as steroids. Furthermore, coaches were guilty of putting excessive pressure on athletes to play injured which often forced players to become injured to an even greater extent Young. 1991, 1993). Messner (1992) discovered that once an athlete decided he would play hurt, doctors would give the player painkillers and in some instances inject painkillers into the hurt appendage which would deaden the pain and often cause greater injuries. Young (1991, 1993) discussed a number of players who played hurt and were injured even worse (e.g., Eric Nesterenko). One hockey player, Luc Robitaille, and a football player, Dick Butkus, successfully sued and won settlements from former teams because they were not told the true extent of their injuries by team doctors and were prompted to play while injured (Young. 1991, 1993).

Not all athletes live to tell about their lives as tough hockey enforcers in their sport and their simultaneous use of recreational and performance enhancing drugs. The Sports Illustrated article, "Death of a Goon." (1992) examined one such episode through the death of the NHL's former premiere tough guy John Kordic, who died at the age of 27 years old. The tremendous pressures of being an enforcer caused Kordic to have to constantly fight and win against the other team's enforcers in order to maintain one's job.
status, and position. This caused Kordic to turn to using steroids in order to stay ahead of
the younger up and coming fighters and their constant competition. Continuous steroid
use caused Kordic to become violent both off the ice and in bars and, on at least one
occasion toward his finance, which prompted a restraining order against him shortly
before his death. Kordic’s steroid use combined with alcohol abuse and a cocaine
addiction caused him to be released by several teams and placed into rehabilitation
several times. Kordic also experienced periods of euphoria, dark depression, and violent
rage as a result of his drug and alcohol use. During one such steroid rage, nine police
officers were needed to restrain Kordic who had mixed alcohol, cocaine, and steroids by
injecting steroids into his backside and cocaine into his arm. This lethal “speedball”
combination resulted in heart failure after Kordic had been restrained by the police.
Kordic died later that evening as a result of his use of both recreational and performance

Alcohol Influences

The findings supporting the role of drugs and alcohol as salient factors
contributing to aggression of all types concur throughout the literature. Frintner and
Rubinson (1993) discovered an alcohol component within their study because 55% of the
women and 69% of the men had been drinking during an attempted or sexual assault. 9%
of the women and 68% of the men had been drinking during acts of sexual abuse, and
45% of women and 68% of men had been drinking during an incident of battery,
intimidation, or illegal restraint. One noticeable limitation of these findings is that only
one alcohol measurement question was used for this study, which provides very limited
information at best.
In another study of male undergraduates at a large southeastern university, Boeringer (1996) found through self-report questionnaires from 477 male undergraduates, which included 77 athletes, that 28% of the athletes reported using alcohol and drugs to obtain sexual favors. Moreover, only fraternity members reported a slightly higher percentage (32%) than athletes in terms of their using alcohol to obtain sexual compliance. One limitation of the study was the use of convenience sample, limiting generalizability.

Koss and Gaines (1993) studied the influences of alcohol, athletic affiliation, and fraternities on sexual aggression using a sample of 530 undergraduate men, which included 140 athletes representing all varsity sports and especially revenue producing sports and were compiled from self-reports from a Division I college. The four variables which included drinking intensity (3%), nicotine use (6%), hostility towards women (1%), and athletic affiliation (1%) were positively correlated with sexual aggression and accounted for 11% of the variance. Although the results confirmed previous reports of athletic participation contributing to the prediction of sexual aggression, drinking to get drunk and nicotine use were stronger predictors of sexual aggression than the variables of athletic participation and hostility towards women. This suggests that the contribution of athletic participation to the prediction of sexual aggression must be examined independently because this variable functions through a different path than through alcohol or nicotine use (Koss & Gaines, 1993). The three variables of alcohol use, athletic involvement, and hostility toward women also differentiated men who had reported being part of a group which had sex with one woman (n=17) and those who did not (n=340) (Koss & Gaines, 1993).
Curry (1998) also found that male athletes’ alcohol consumption, sexist attitudes, and aggressive behaviors found institutional support on and near college campuses. Employing a case study life history method, Curry found that athlete aggression and assault were often tolerated and even encouraged at near-campus bars. These establishments apparently gave special privileges to male athletes by allowing them to drink large amounts of alcohol virtually free of charge. Furthermore, these establishments did not hold the athletes accountable for their physically and sexually harassing behaviors toward the men and women patrons nor for provoking fights with male patrons. The researcher observed that these bars were permissive to the point of allowing the male athletes to take unfair advantage of situations where they could prey upon the physical inequalities of others.

Nattiv and Puffer (1991) studied alcohol consumption variables through a study which utilized self-reports from 109 intercollegiate athletes and 110 nonathletes undergraduates at a major collegiate institution. Nattiv and Puffer discovered that athletes’ lifestyles placed them at greater risk than a comparison group in areas such as the quantity of alcohol consumed per sitting and the frequency of driving while intoxicated or under the influence of drugs. The athletes’ family history of alcohol or drug abuse was also substantially higher than the comparison group placing athletes at greater risk for substance abuse issues. Columbia University’s Center for Addiction and Substance Abuse reported alcohol involvement in 95% of violent campus crimes (Little, 1994) and, similarly, the Office of Substance Abuse and Prevention (1991) found that alcohol more than any other drug has been linked with a high prevalence for aggression.
and violence. Finally, arrested athletes often cited drinking as the predominant activity preceding their troublesome behaviors ("Special Report." 1995).

A number of current NHL players such as Bob Probert, Theo Fleury, and Ken Daneyko have been treated for substance abuse problems in recent times; Probert was also incarcerated for his use and transportation of cocaine across the U.S. and Canadian border. One of the greater and more recent hockey tragedies involved the alcohol-related death of standout Philadelphia Flyer goalie Pelle Lindbergh in 1986. The player was killed when his Porsche which was traveling at a high rate of speed crashed into the guard rail. A high amount of alcohol was determined to be one of the causes in this accident.

**Athlete Conviction Rates**

As previously noted, professional athletes accused of felony sexual assaults against women were compared with national crime data to determine whether elite athletes were receiving preferential treatment by the criminal justice system. Data were obtained through Nexus Lexus, which scanned the New York Times, USA Today and Boston Globe and accumulated 217 felony complaints involving college and professional athletes between the years of 1986 and 1995 (Benedict and Klein, 1997).

Out of these 217 complaints, 45 (21%) resulted in no formal proceeding being taken either because investigators found insufficient evidence to warrant an arrest or the victim decided not to press charges. Out of the 172 athletes who were arrested, 55 (32%) had the charges against them dismissed which is typical of prosecutors' disinclination to seek an indictment for cases unlikely to result in a conviction after the result of the prosecutorial screening process. Eight (7%) of the remaining 117 indicted athletes found their charges dismissed before their trial, 43 (37%) had reached a plea bargain agreement.
and 66 (56%) stood trial before a jury. Of the 66 athletes who stood trial, 50 (76%) were acquitted. 6 (9%) ended in a hung jury, and only 10 (15%) were found guilty. Most notable were the findings that of the original 172 arrested athletes, a mere 53 (31%) were convicted when plea-bargain agreements and jury convictions were combined. In conclusion, of the 217 athletes who were initially reported to police for a felonious sex crime, only 24% were successfully prosecuted by law enforcement officials (Benedict & Klein, 1997).

The most recent national statistics for rape convictions were published in 1990. These data resulted in 102,560 rapes reported to police with just 32% of these reports resulting in arrests. This 32% arrest rate is much lower when compared to the athletes' 79% arrest rate in this study. This higher arrest rate for athletes may be explained by the more aggressive manner employed by law enforcement officials when pursuing complaints against athletes because no law official wants to be accused of giving athletes preferential treatment (Benedict & Klein, 1997).

Conviction rates resulting from arrests involving athletes when compared to a national conviction rate present a striking difference in favor of the accused athlete. The national sample of 54% of arrests leading to a conviction is much different than the conviction rate of 31% for athletes. This 23% difference suggests that something in the sport-law connection is working to the advantage of the athletes over their accusers and the population at large. In addition, the national arrest rate of 32% is noted along with its conviction rate of 54% which is shown through an increase in 22% for the ratio of arrest-
to-conviction. This is in contrast to the athletes' arrest rate of 79% and their conviction rate of 31% which is depicted through a decrease of 48% for the ratio of arrest-to-conviction (Benedict & Klein, 1997).

Based on the differences between arrest and conviction rates between the athlete data and the national sample data, athletes were not found to be treated with more leniency because they were more likely to be arrested for sex charges than men in the national sample. Athletes did manage to avoid conviction more readily than the national sample of men charged with sexual assault (Benedict & Klein, 1997).

One noted limitation of this study pertains to the national statistics and data for rape conviction rates accumulated in 1990. It was not clearly communicated in this article why the national statistics data on conviction rates were only observed for one year and not compiled from 1990 and then observed over a greater period of time. The reader had to assume that these national statistics for the year 1990 were the only statistics used to compare with the athletes' nine year span of felonious sex charges because there was no other information which lead the reader to believe otherwise. Any time period longer than simply one year would have been a more accurate comparison of the general population to the nine-year period of time for sex charges observed and accumulated for the athletes.

Furthermore, this writer has some major concerns with the small number (217) of felonious sex charges accumulated over this nine-year period by college and professional athletes. This number seemed extremely low based on some of the reports of athlete sexual misconduct from other studies reviewed in this paper. Even though the three newspapers used in this study were well informed in terms of their knowledge of the
most publicized sex-related athletic crimes, these newspapers are still limited in their ability to be comprehensive because of the tremendous number of athletes in less publicized colleges and professional minor leagues nationwide. For instance, Caron, Halteman, and Stacy (1997) reviewed a Philadelphia Daily News series which surveyed 200 college police departments and discovered that one sexual assault by an athlete was reported on an average of once every 18 days. Therefore, over a nine-year period of time, these 200 colleges alone would account for approximately 180 sexual assault complaints. This approximation of 180 sexual assaults does not include all of the U.S. colleges or any professional teams whether they are minor or major leagues. Hence, the small number of reported sexual assaults in this nine-year time period (217) presented some noteworthy concerns. Finally, the survey by Caron and colleagues (1997) also discovered that athletes were 40% more likely to be reported for rape than nonathletes were.

An Absence of Deterrence

Athletes who are charged with sexual assault present a number of obstacles for prosecutors which hampers their ability to effectively prosecute a case (Benedict & Klein, 1997). The first obstacle pertains to the athletes’ environment which includes a great deal of casual sex offered freely to athletes because of their entertainer status. Large numbers of women sometimes referred to as “groupies” make themselves readily available sexually to the athletes and this encourages an athlete’s defense to center around the strategy preference of sexual consent versus rape. When conviction relies on convincing a jury beyond a reasonable doubt that sexual contact was the result of force, the insinuation that the victim has a reason to lie can be more persuasive when the
accused has a high athletic profile and the accuser is depicted as a woman of questionable morals. Women, therefore, are sometimes victimized a second time by the legal system from which they had sought help (Benedict & Klein, 1997).

Secondly, a larger institutional safety net is accessible to athletes, and this includes strong financial resources and powerful supporters in the form of coaches, agents, lawyers and pillars in the community (Benedict & Klein, 1997). Athletes are often guided to superb legal counsel which is a most outstanding feature of this safety net. Crafty lawyers push back court dates enabling athletes to complete their seasons or finish college careers. This is problematic because unless victims and witnesses are kept in close contact with law officials for a reasonable period of time, people often leave the area which can affect the prosecution when there are no victims or witnesses available to testify (Benedict & Klein, 1997).

Lefkowitz (1997) found a number of factors to be influential and related to the Glen Ridge, New Jersey gang rape which included the tremendous absence of consequences. Parents, teachers and school administrators, and law enforcement officials continuously allowed an extremely high level of permissiveness to the point where the athletes had no fear of anyone or any consequences because they were never held responsible for any of their actions. These negative actions included vandalism, sexual harassment and abuse of other students at school, physical and verbal assaults on other students, drinking alcohol, stealing from their dates at a school dance, the frequent use of pornography, and engaging in voyeurism (Lefkowitz, 1997).

Melnick (1992) provided a strong example of university intolerance toward athlete aggression through discussing the manner in which Brigham Young expelled
several football players reported for an alleged sexual assault even though the players were not formally charged. Melnick continued in the article to make a number of points which could be used for helping to solve the problem of athlete deviancy although some of Melnick’s suggestions needed to be more concrete and at times, practical. This is in contrast to Benedict (1997) who discussed numerous assaults and deviant activities perpetuated by athletes on the University of Nebraska’s football team. The athletes were at times only suspended for miniscule amounts of time in comparison to their deviant acts and conduct. In other words, violence was allowed to occur and therefore, because it was not discouraged, it is practically encouraged by the coach and in this case also by the university administrators who supported the coach’s decisions (Benedict, 1997). When the focus of college sports becomes more concerned with educating the players, less concerned with winning, and more concerned with facilitating humanitarian issues by addressing athlete violence, only then will athletes, “cut-throat” competition, and sports be ready for a transformation.

**Male Bonding and Peer Pressure Influences**

The elements of conformity, peer pressure, and male bonding are also important characteristics in sexual assaults. Berkowitz, Burkhart, and Bourg (1994) found one of the most important elements in predicting sexual assault is membership in a male peer support group. Kanin (1984) found in 71 self-reported date rapists that when compared to a control group were part of a highly erotic peer group which began in middle school and high school. These men had a broad range in terms of the number of partners and methods used for obtaining sex (Kanin, 1984). Dekeseredy and Kelly (1995) found males, who were attached to friends who abused or encouraged the physical,
psychological, and sexual abuse of women if the women challenged patriarchal authority. They were more likely to engage in sexual coercion. Similarly, Schwartz and Nogradi (1996) discovered the type of affiliation with a group such as a fraternity or athletic team was far less significant than the members’ attitudes toward and expressed practices of violence. Furthermore, the researchers discovered that as peer group support for violence against women increased, there was also a greater tendency for other group members to commit these same crimes (Schwartz & Nogradi, 1996).

High levels of conformity and bonding also contributed to deviancy because gang rape was not performed for an athlete’s sexual gratification but to maintain acceptance and status among one’s peers. The “rewards” also included the excitement and camaraderie of partaking in a shared experience, dispelling any doubts toward one’s heterosexuality, and it served to increase group cohesiveness (Benedict, 1997; Berkowitz, 1992; Ehrhart & Sandler, 1985; Melnick, 1992; Neimark, 1991). One athlete in the book Our Guys said he did not leave the gang rape scene because he did not want to risk being teased and shunned by his friends (Lefkowitz, 1997).

Melnick (1992) discussed how experts usually find that gang rapes are associated with the phenomenon of male bonding within tightly knit groups such as military platoons, ghetto gangs, fraternities, rock groups, and athletic teams. This is thought to occur because these groups foster strong feelings of exclusivity, camaraderie, and solidarity (Melnick, 1992). Loyalty to one’s peers is so strong that it often overrides one’s personal integrity and morality. Psychologist Bernice Sandler observed that group members will sometimes do anything to please each other, and, in essence, these members are raping for each other and the women are therefore, incidental (Melnick.
Not to participate in peer deviant behavior is to invite substantial pressure, suspicion of one's loyalty, and often social rejection from the group (Melnick, 1992). Lefkowitz (1997) also found bonding through very traditional notions of masculinity contributed to athlete deviancy because boys were encouraged to be aggressive, dominant, and assertive while girls were encouraged to be submissive and passive. Sanday (1981, 1990) found that societies with a high tolerance for aggression, male dominance, and sex segregation also had higher frequencies of gang and individual rape. Sanday (1981, 1990) found that rape cultures exist in societies which lack social constraints and encourage sexual aggression because this aggression is socially encouraged behavior. Lefkowitz (1997) also discussed the fact that three of the four athlete perpetrators had no siblings who were females; this adds support to the effect of sex segregation and male bonding. Lefkowitz (1997) similarly found that women were treated as barely human and were often referred to as animals, pigs, and "hosebags." Lefkowitz contends that such treatment and references toward women in subhuman terms can make strong male peer groups even more apt to treat women in ways that reinforce their language and beliefs toward women.

Benedict (1997) described the silence and secrecy of the Cincinnati Bengals' team during their gang rape proceedings. After the perpetrators had settled out of court with the victim, the victim tried to reopen the case and identified new and innocent players. Neither the original guilty perpetrators nor the newly accused and innocent players broke the code of team silence by identifying the true perpetrators even though some of the innocent players had families. Peer group bonding and team loyalty
prevented team members from identifying the original guilty participants as well as those who were innocent yet identified and accused as perpetrators during the attempted case reopening.

Lefkowitz (1997) found ample evidence of bonding through the use of pornography which created greater distance between the victim and the perpetrator. There was a thin line which existed between “getting off” in a group masturbation session with teammates following a pornography film and using a surrogate with teammates which one had “picked up” at a party. Pornography has played a major role in the sexual assaults of Canadian college women (Kelly & DeKeseredy, 1994), and Koss and Dinero (1989) found sexual assaults were related to (a) the use of violent and degrading pornography and (b) membership in a peer support group which sexually objectified women. Kanin (1984) found that self-reported date rapists were part of a highly erotic-oriented peer group which began in middle school and high school. Finally, Mike McGraw of the Canadian Hockey Association (CHA) recorded one startling incident during the inaugural 1997 year of the Speak Out Program where a team of adolescents were given pornographic magazines as an incentive to win hockey games: the more wins the team had, the more pornography was distributed among the team (Robinson, 1998).

Curry (1998) also found ample evidence that athletes participated and bonded through group voyeurism practices where teammates would watch as their peer had sex with a woman. The athletes’ voyeuristic ritual occurred when one of the players would lure an unsuspecting women back to their residence. Once intimacy had begun between the athlete and the woman, the player’s teammates who were already hidden in the room would jump out surprising the woman and noting her reactions and the time it took for...
here to leave the situation as well (Curry, 1998). This ritual referred to as a “rodeo” occurred in order to impress the player’s teammates and provide another story among teammates who were extremely committed and bonded (Curry, 1998). Lefkowitz (1997) similarly discovered these same behaviors were also prevalent practices of the rapists before they were convicted of the Glen Ridge, New Jersey gang rape. Lefkowitz (1997) found male athletes further bonded through passing the woman to the next teammate after an athlete had finished having some type of sex with her.

Finally, a number of researchers discovered that athletes bonded with each other through the negative treatment and attitudes they held toward women because women were viewed as sex objects which only existed for men’s pleasure (Curry, 1991, Lefkowitz, 1997; Miller & Schwartz, 1992; Schwartz & Dekeseredy, 1997). The qualitative research findings revealed rich and in-depth information which gave detailed background, lifestyle, and information related to the inner workings of peer support groups and their relationship to athlete violence (Benedict, 1997; Curry, 1991, 1998; Lefkowitz, 1997). Messner (1990b, 1992) found that women were viewed and treated as objects of sexual conquest, and these relationships were often conditional and emotionally distant. Later, Messner and Sabo (1994) discussed the idea of “sexual schizophrenia” which meant that men were supposed to engage in aggressive sexist talk in locker rooms when referring to women while at the same time they were to hold-in their emotional feelings toward women. Curry (1991) also found evidence of this type of talk in the athletes’ lockerroom, and the players often participated in traditional masculine conversations to keep themselves from being verbally targeted by peers.
Sport and Masculinity Influences

Although there exist numerous domains in which males can express masculinity, sports offer males an excellent way to express masculinity by the way sport socializes males (Messner, 1990a, 1990b, 1992). Levant (1994) offered a number of basic components which described the notion of hegemonic or supreme masculinity. These characteristics present a strong foundation for masculine socialization for sports as well. These components included avoiding all feminine things, displaying aggression and violence, showing high levels of self-reliance, promoting achievement and status, hiding one’s emotions, showing nonrelational attitudes toward relationships, and engaging in homophobic conversation.

Williams (1980) viewed the construction of hegemonic masculinity as a whole body of naturalizing social practices that included a host of beliefs, behaviors, and expectations of a group’s perceptions of what it takes and means to be a man. These practices may include the use of violence, playing while injured or hurt, using performance-enhancing drugs like “uppers” or steroids, and even wearing the sports apparel of sponsors (Williams, 1980). Williams believed that all these practices plus others contributed to helping the athletes “make sense” of their personal and professional lives. These practices at the same time contributed to the athletes’ exploitation and victimization because they supported the goals of the owners, sponsors, and supporters who gain from the athletes’ adherence to these practices (Hargreaves, 1986).

Young (1993) found that overtraining, playing while injured, and improper coaching regarding hitting techniques are all avoidable yet represent a number of masculine influences and hazards of the workforce in sports. One former NHL player...
Eric Nesterenko discussed his disillusionment with the game because the players were exploited by the owners and treated as property. Nesterenko described a situation where he was pressured into playing while he was still healing from a shoulder injury. Although Nesterenko knew that he was not fully healed enough to compete in a game, the team had brought in a doctor before the game who told Nesterenko he could play that night. Nesterenko played that night, ripped his shoulder completely, and noted the owner merely shrugged his shoulders and walked away because these situations are quite impersonal to the owners (Young, 1993).

Messner and Sabo (1990) discussed the notion that athletes were glorified, praised, and professionally rewarded for buying into the “pain principle” which was rich in rewards and masculine potential as an athlete played and worked through a painful injury. This often affected one’s health negatively in time. Masculinity born of violence, aggression, and injury are short-lived and contribute to the high morbidity and mortality of certain athletes like boxers and football players (Messner, 1990b; Young, 1993). Hockey and football enforcers are constantly rewarded both monetarily and professionally for contributing their particular brand of labor to the team (Young, 1993). After finishing their careers, many of these athletes suffer from obesity, depression, work-related problems, substance abuse, and early death (Messner, 1992).

Messner (1990a, 1992) also found evidence of masculine socialization practices by examining men’s relationships with one another. Sports players viewed opponents as people to control and dominate during competition (Messner, 1990a, 1992). Therefore, it was important not just to simply participate for these athletes but to be a winner as well. This gave men a “one-up-manship” relationship with one another and allowed men to
bond emotionally in such a way that was conducive to the regulations and rules which structure sports (Messner, 1990a, 1992). Furthermore, Messner discussed a number of other areas that contributed to the masculine socialization of boys and men. These additional domains included violence and aggression, playing with painful injuries, sacrificing health for sports achievements, the promotion of conditional relationships with both men and women, and the emphasis on recognition and status which act as the driving force for many athletes (Messner, 1990a, 1990b, 1992). For instance, Messner (1990a, 1992) found that recognition and status came to boys who were athletes of different socioeconomic backgrounds in different ways. Boys from lower socioeconomic backgrounds were motivated more from community people’s influences while boys from higher socioeconomic backgrounds were influenced more by their families.

Fine (1986, 1987) found that the masculine socialization of boys in little league baseball included aspects such as aggressive pranks which included egging houses and ringing doorbells in order to watch people extinguish bags of burning manure on their porch by stepping on it. The boys also partook in extreme sexualized language which included sexual behaviors they knew of, behaviors they participated in with other boys and girls, and discussions of their relationships with girlfriends which could neither be too distant nor too close so that the bonds of brotherhood would remain strong. The boys also partook in ample amounts of homophobic talk labeling immature or weak boys as “gay” or “queer.” Finally, racial comments were also found to be prevalent and a way for boys to socially differentiate themselves from other groups.

Fine (1986, 1987) found that these behaviors which he called dirty play were not necessarily meant to be harmful but to show their masculinity through their resistance to
adult authority, or "playful terrorism" which brought status, recognition, and involved a
certain amount of daring and risk. These behaviors also facilitated social differentiation
by promoting ethnocentrism in the boy's groups (e.g., "us" verses "them") and a way for
the group to enhance their own communal feelings even at the expense of another group.
Finally, the negative behaviors, which the kids often observed and imitated, were
modeled from older brothers and adults who often tried to hide the behaviors because
they involved adult topics like sex, aggression, and racial prejudice.

Bryson (1987) thought that sports was an area where hegemonic masculine
practices were constructed and reconstructed over and over. This was observed in a
number of ways. Hegemonic practices in men's sports have monopolized sports to an
extent by encouraging positively sanctioned violence within sport and by promoting
aggression, skills, speed, and power in sports. These criteria exclude the involvement of
many men and women because of their extreme emphasis on power and performance in
certain highly visible sports.

Bryson (1987) also saw hegemonic masculinity practices affecting women
through trivializing, ignoring, and controlling women's sports. A number of noteworthy
accomplishments of women in sports have been ignored. Bryson discussed the fact that
many more women have swum the English Channel faster than men, and this information
and accomplishment have been relatively ignored and rarely mentioned. Furthermore,
Bryson discussed the lack of media attention given to women's sports as a way for men
to continue to promote their claim to the sporting domain. Finally, the high number of
male coaches and administrators who govern, coach, and control the numerous aspects of
women's sports continues to send the message that sports are for men and are controlled

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by men regardless of whether this occurs from their actual individual participation within a given sport or by way of their behind-the-scene influences (Bryson. 1987).

**Fan Influences**

Fans also play an important role in the reinforcement of violence. Crowds which cheer loudly for fighting and violence combined with their accompanying hero-worship of these pugilistic hockey players are strong reinforcers for violent behaviors (Young. 2000). In a national opinion poll, 39% of Canadians had indicated that they liked to see fighting at hockey games (Macleans-Goldfarb. 1970 as cited in Smith. 1979b). Smith (1979a) also found that 61% of hockey players perceived that the spectators at these game approved of fighting during the games. More recently, Diamond (1998) wrote about the results of a National Hockey League commissioned marketing survey conducted throughout the United States and Canada which related to the fans opinions about fighting in hockey. The survey, which was disclosed by league commissioner Gary Bettman, revealed that 13% of the respondents said there was too little fighting in the game. 39% said there was too much fighting in the game, and 48% said there was neither too little nor too much fighting in hockey. The division of the fans’ opinions in terms of their desire to see fighting in hockey was no surprise to the leaders of the game who have faced this marketing dilemma for over 80 years (Diamond. 1998).

Another issue relating to the fans, in addition to their desire to observe violence, is the tendency of the crowds themselves to perpetrate violence (Young. 2000). Young (2000) discussed the fact that sports’ crowd violence is not a phenomenon related only to the present times, but these are situations that have been cited throughout numerous historical accounts. Fighting has occurred between rival fans in the mid-Nineteenth
Century at Australian cricket games. English soccer games in the last quarter of the
Nineteenth Century, and at American baseball and football games in the years between
World War I and World War II (Young, 2000). Young (2000) also found that aggressive
sports crowds have not only become a serious social problem but these chaotic and
disorderly spectators have been linked to aggression in numerous sporting domains which
include baseball (Dewar, 1979), boxing (Crothers, 1996), basketball (Greer, 1983),
American and Canadian football (Young, 1988), soccer (Dunning, Murphy, & Williams,
1988), and ice hockey (Smith, 1979b, 1983). In addition to crowd disturbances in North
American sports, frequent crowd insurrections have regularly occurred in British and
European sports like soccer as well as in other parts of the world including Australia,
New Zealand, Central and South American, Africa, and Asia (Young, 2000). Few
societies seem to be immune from violent crowd displays which have occurred in almost
all societies and seem to be especially prevalent in societies that contain rich sporting
cultures with consistent spectator followings (Young, 2000).

Hockey like other sports is not immune from spectator disturbances and other
violence. Ronberg (1984) discussed one of hockey’s earliest and most notable crowd
insurrections which was remembered as “The Richard Riot.” In 1955, the Detroit Red
Wings and the Montreal Canadiens, two teams with a strong rivalry between them, were
competing for the regular season championship as three regular season games remained.
Montreal’s hero, Maurice “the Rocket” Richard, was also approaching his first point
scoring title. During this time, Richard was unexpectedly suspended by the league
commissioner for the remainder of the regular season and the playoffs after he punched
an intervening referee in the face following a situation where Richard had cut a Red
Wing player with his stick. Richard's fans besieged the commissioner’s office with threats and angry calls and when the commissioner attended the next game, he was assaulted verbally and had fruit thrown at him shortly before a tear gas bomb exploded in the arena. Ten thousand angry fans marched down the streets of Montreal rioting and destroying property for hours: more than 70 people were arrested and 37 people were injured following "The Richard Riot." Richard appealed to the people for peace so that no further riots would occur because of his punishment (Ronberg, 1984).

More recently, Young (2000) listed a number of riots related to North American post-sporting events between the years of 1968 and 1994. These post-sports riots occurred after games such as football, baseball, basketball, and hockey. The sport of hockey has been linked to fairly recent post-event riots, including one incident in Vancouver in 1994 following the Vancouver Canuck’s Stanley Cup Finals loss and two in Montreal following the team’s Stanley Cup victories in 1986 and 1993 (Young, 2000). The three hockey riots caused property damage totaling over 6 and one-half million Canadian dollars, injured approximately 400 people, resulted in one person’s death, and lead to approximately 242 people being arrested or charged with criminal activity (Young, 2000).

Family of Origin Influences

Sports’ pressures to succeed, cultural expectations of manliness, and the potential for drug producing violence all add to athletes’ susceptibility to using violence in a variety of interpersonal contexts. In addition, athletes like nonathletes, may also be at-risk from having experienced negative family of origin influences such as violence. Although family and home have traditionally been regarded as places for perpetuating
intangibles such as warmth, intimacy, empathy, and stress control, the reality is that home and family are often significant sources of stress and interpersonal conflict, which can and often does lead to violence (Gelles, 1994). In American society, people are more likely to be physically assaulted, sexually assaulted, and even killed in their own homes by family members than in any other location by any other person (Gelles, 1994).

Violence in adult intimate relationships has often been explained through a social learning process of intergenerational transmission whereby violence is passed from one generation to the next (Lackey & Williams, 1995). Research findings describe a well-documented relationship existing between males who abuse their female partners and family of origin violence (Hotaling & Sugarman, 1986; Sugarman & Hotaling, 1989). Although most children from violent families do not participate in partner violence as adults (Hotaling & Sugarman, 1986), family of origin violence is the most frequently cited demographic factor related to abuse in families (Gelles, 1980).

One of the most widely cited theoretical assumptions pertaining to the study of violence is the cycle of violence hypothesis (Widom, 1989) which is also referred to as modeling or social learning theory for family violence (Julian, McKenry, Gavazzi, & Law, 1999). Social learning theory has been used as an effective model in past studies in order to explore the effects of either experiencing abuse as a child or witnessing interparental violence as a child. Researchers who have studied both dating and marital violence have found an association between a history of abuse and later involvement in an abusive intimate relationship for both males and females (Kalmuss, 1984; Telch & Lindquist, 1984). Similarly, harsh parenting by grandparents was discovered to relate directly to the harsh parenting practices of their adult children. This finding is consistent
with the argument that repeated exposures to aggressive parenting provides individuals with a model of the parental role that will in turn be used with their own children often in a reflexive non rational manner (Simons, Whitbeck, Conger, & Chyi-In, 1996).

Social learning theory suggests that children learn to use and value violence by observing and subsequently modeling the behavior exhibited by their parents. Physical aggression between parents (e.g., father to mother violence) is likely to provide children with a possible model for the learning and imitating of aggressive behaviors as well as the appropriateness of aggressive actions within the family setting (Bandura, 1973). Children are thought to learn behavior or at least some part of it through imitating another's modeled behaviors. Consequently, children can learn to become aggressive through observing aggression which is modeled in their family and their surrounding society (Feshbach, 1980). It is through this view that each subsequent generation learns to become violent by being a member in a violent family and imitating the modeled family aggression (Straus, Gelles, & Steinmetz, 1980).

The idea of an intergenerational transmission of violence or cycle of violence which suggests that “violence breeds violence” originated from a number of assumptions relating to violence and abuse (Widom, 1989). Violent family behaviors are transmitted from one generation to the next and are thought to occur by a number of processes which include modeling and imitation (Langhinrichsen-Rohling, Neidig, & Thorn, 1995). Specifically, it can be argued that violence in one’s family of origin serves as a model for future behavior through either teaching positive definitions for violence or by displaying rewards amassed by aggressive behaviors. For example, a boy who witnesses his father hitting his mother might learn that violence in family situations can lead to getting one’s
way (Lackey & Williams, 1995). Similarly, the modeling of violence is thought to also create a disinhibitory effect for the witness which sends the message that although father to mother aggression is deemed somewhat socially unacceptable, it is positively reinforced through the victim’s compliance (Follette & Alexander, 1992). In their review of 52 studies, Hotaling and Sugarman (1986) have discovered support for modeling as pertaining to the intergenerational transmission of violence because the most consistent risk factor related to perpetrating aggression was witnessing violence in one’s family of origin.

Dutton, Starzomski, and Ryan (1996) found associations between recollections of early family abuse and adult abrasiveness which were assessed through either personality or behavioral measures. The men in the study recalled witnessing an average of 15.3 physical acts of abuse by their father toward their mother during their childhood. The study demonstrated a significant relationship between early recollections of parental mistreatment (father against mother) in their family of origin and abusive personality traits (anger, cyclical borderline personality organization), chronic experience of trauma symptoms, and abusive behaviors both physical and emotional as reported by their female partners. Similarly, Walker (1984) discovered in a study involving 281 female partners of batterers that 81% of these women had acknowledged that partner battering had occurred in their husband’s family of origin as compared to 24% in a sample of nonviolent males. Murphy, Myer, and O’Leary (1993) compared men in three different types of relationships: nonviolent but discordant relationships, well-adjusted relationships, and partner assaultive relationships (male to female). Although the sample
was limited in size. Assaultive men were significantly more likely to report childhood histories with physical abuse and physical abuse of their mother in their family of origin. Similarly, Julian et al. (1999) found that physical violence, which was observed in one's family of origin, was predictive of greater psychological adult distress in both males and females. Husbands' reports of psychological symptomology in particular were a significant determinant of their own physical and verbal aggression.

Hotaling and Sugarman (1986) found strong associations for abusive males, who witnessed parental violence as a child or adolescent, and their sexual aggression toward their wives. The authors also discovered physically violent husbands were generally violent and aggressive within their own family, and these husbands had been exposed to parental violence while growing up. Husband to wife violence was more consistently related to witnessing parental violence than it was to experiencing parental violence in childhood. It was hypothesized that experiencing violence as a child might be so common that this variable may lose its discriminating properties, whereas witnessing parental violence may be less common but the observation effectively models the role of violence in adult intimate relationships.

Although people, who witnessed or experienced violence in their family of origin as children or adolescents, tended to use violence themselves, researchers have discovered that most people do not participate in violence later on during their intimate relationships (Hotaling & Sugarman, 1986; Sugarman & Hotaling, 1989). This means that exposure to family of origin violence does not destine a person to perpetuate violence in their own adult relationships (Lackey & Williams, 1995). Similarly, Follette and
Alexander (1992) found that experiencing or witnessing violence in one's family of origin was not by itself sufficient in explaining violence in dating relationships because violence contains numerous interrelated factors.
CHAPTER 3

METHODS

Introduction

Although qualitative research claims no singular and distinct theory or paradigm of its own, it frequently uses paradigms that employ multiple methods involving an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the subject matter it studies and observes (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998). In essence, this means that qualitative researchers study phenomena in natural as opposed to a lab settings and attempt to interpret and thus make sense out of their findings in terms of the meanings that people attach to events (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998). Qualitative studies involve the use and collection of data through multiple means such as observational, historical, interactional, visual texts, personal experience, case study, life story, and introspection – all of which have the purpose of describing daily life occurrences and meanings in the individual's lives (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998). The use of a wide range of interconnected methods also gives researchers a holistic understanding of the phenomena being studied thereby capturing as much reality as possible (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998). Finally, qualitative research allows the researcher to explore phenomena through the perspectives and insights of its participants who have lived the experiences, described what the happenings were like for them, and the meanings they attributed to the situation (Patton, 1990).
The naturalistic paradigm has a number of assumptions which make it unique when compared to the positivist paradigm (Earls, 1986; Firestone, 1987; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Reason & Rowan, 1981). First, reality is considered to have multiple perspectives, individual construction, and a holistic perspective rather than simply one objective and universal reality. Second, the researcher and the participant interact and influence one another in an inseparable or emic perspective which is unlike the positivist researcher who takes an independent and objective outsider or etic perspective. Third, inquiry from the naturalistic perspective is value bound instead of being value free. Fourth, mutual and simultaneous reciprocal influences make it impossible to distinguish cause from effect unlike a positivist model which explores cause and effect linkages. Fifth, the outcome of inquiry for the naturalistic approach permits structural flexibility for necessary issues such as time and context, and it produces ideographic or transferable statements: the positivist approach is time and context free while it strives to produce generalizations and objective understanding (Earls, 1986; Firestone, 1987; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Reason & Rowan, 1981).

The purpose of this study was to explore and address theoretical and substantive questions pertaining to the perceived frequencies, experiences, and underlying etiology related to hockey players’ use and motivation for perpetrating aggression and violence in and out-of-sport and against both men and women. This present study draws primarily from data acquired from qualitative interviews of personal experiences, author narratives, and a self-report survey which was used to gather demographic information. The interview narratives were designed to shed deeper insights into aggression and violence in the culture of hockey, its participants, and its associated behaviors and practices.

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Interpretive Interactionism

Interpretive Interactionism is a poststructural interpretive style (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998) which is used to understand the meanings of an event that originate from a particular person who has lived the experience (Denzin, 1989, 1998). Events, experiences, and troubles, which are researched and subsequently recorded, are also situations that the writer has already experienced and observed from a firsthand perspective (Denzin, 1989, 1998). Interpretive Interactionism, therefore, focuses on examining life events or epiphanies which have the capacity to radically change and shape the meanings one gives to themselves and their experiences (Denzin 1989, 1998). These significant life occurrences or epiphanies have the potential to impact a person in such a way that the person has experienced a change or turning point in their life (Denzin 1989, 1998). The goal of interpretive interactionism is to locate these meanings while producing thick rich descriptions and accounts of these experiences (Denzin 1989, 1998). Through listening and recording people's detailed accounts of difficulty, troubles, or pain, the researcher is able to illuminate moments of crisis that occur in the person's life because the researcher has lived through similar experiences (Denzin 1989, 1998). Individuals are never quite the same following such experiences, which can include divorce, religious conversion, family violence, loss of a job, and murder (Denzin 1989, 1998). An athlete's recollection of their own perpetration or victimization of violence may also be viewed as such an event.

The interpretive process for this approach begins with the five steps of deconstruction, capture, bracketing, construction, and contextualization (Denzin, 1989). Deconstruction simply relates to examining the past studies and findings associated with
the information being researched; this is readily accomplished through a critical review of the literature. Capture pertains to the researcher's data collection methods which seek to understand and then present the main concepts of the phenomenon by gathering multiple examples and narratives from the respondents' interviews. The capture stage also involves discovering and locating the crises and epiphanies in the lives of the participants. In the bracketing phase, essential elements are inspected, extracted, defined, and analyzed from the narratives as the researcher discovers emerging patterns and themes. Construction builds on bracketing as it classifies, orders, and reassembles the phenomenon back together into a coherent whole as each element is discussed by the way it relates and affects every other element being studied. The interpretive interactionist attempts to gather together the lived experiences which relate to and define the phenomenon under study. Construction sets the stage for the next step of interpretation which is contextualization. Interpretation of the phenomenon is accomplished through the study's data analysis: content analysis is the method of analysis used in this study to discover the etiology pertaining to on- and off-ice violence. Contextualization begins with the themes discovered in bracketing and construction. The researcher then attempts to interpret and give meaning to these structures by relating the study's findings back into the world of everyday experience. Contextualization helps to locate the phenomenon in the narratives and social worlds of the persons studied. and subsequently it presents this information in the informants' language, terms, and emotions. Finally, the stage of contextualization also includes implications for policy and future research because it involves relating the phenomenon back to the ordinary social world.
Denzin (1989) suggests that the Interpretive Interactionist approach is an appropriate method to use when a researcher wishes to study the relationship between personal difficulties, which can include issues like partner violence, alcohol, or sexual abuse, and the public policies and institutions which work to remedy these problems. Therefore, Interpretive Interactionism addresses the interrelationship between private-life dilemmas and the public's response to these troublesome issues (Denzin, 1989). This model, therefore, has the potential and appeal to allow the researcher to be a mediator who can connect data describing the respondents' troublesome issues (e.g., violence) to macrolevel systems which have the power to address and terminate occurrences of athlete violence and other negative practices. Interpretive Interactionism also coincides with this researcher's past experiences which relate to his firsthand knowledge of hockey aggression and violence. Because this researcher has been a participant-observer in his experiences with hockey violence, he has lived the experiences of the participants in his study and is able to, therefore, relate to them as well.

Issues of Reliability and Validity

The positivist paradigm, which contains a consistent theory of truth, insists that the researcher meticulously produces the criteria of validity and reliability through certain techniques accomplished separately and prior to their research (Sparkes, 1989). This is appropriate and consistent if the positivist paradigm assumptions are accepted (Sparkes, 1989). The naturalistic paradigm, however, requires the acceptance of a different view of reality, which is mind-dependent, multiple, and socially constructed with no separate facts and values: this antifoundational stance undermines the possibility of the positivist researcher's central quest for a universal truth (Sparkes, 1989). From this perspective.

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positivist methods are not viewed as sponsors of truth and, therefore, no independent reality or data is free from interpretation (Sparkes, 1989). Similarly, Wolcott (1990) strongly rejected ideas about seeking validity in qualitative studies because he felt this was absurd given the assumption that there is no single “correct” interpretation from this paradigm. Finally, the terms reliability and validity will have different meanings in positivist and naturalistic paradigms because these terms exist in a contrasting set of assumptions and theories (Sparkes, 1989).

Despite conflicting paradigm perspectives, this researcher did attempt to establish “credibility” of the phenomenon and the respondents’ narratives which is the qualitative equivalent of a positivist view of internal validity (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Internal validity from a positivist viewpoint relates to the appropriateness of a certain measure (Ragin, 1994). Positivist researchers’ assess internal validity by examining whether their data collection and measurement procedures operate in the way they claim or, i.e., determine if a process measures what it is supposed to measure (Ragin, 1994). Qualitative researchers’ use “credibility” in order to assess the extent that they are accurately representing the multiple realities of their participants (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). One strategy of producing “credibility” is “prolonged engagement” or spending extended time with the participants and in the field of study itself (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Extra time spent during the interviews with the athletes allowed the researcher to identify interactional patterns which would not be easily recognized if the interaction was brief (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Spending extended time with the participants also allowed the researcher to establish or re-establish rapport which would be extremely valuable when discussing sensitive topics pertaining to violence (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). This
researcher did in fact spend extended amounts of time with the respondents not only before and after some of the arranged interviews, but the researcher also had, in some cases, prior relationships and established rapport with many of the respondents, who were acquaintances, teammates, co-workers, opponents, and even roommates. Although the majority of the relationships were rooted in more distant and past situations with the respondents, the researcher was still able to easily reconnect and re-establish rapport with the participants. From these prior relationships with many of the respondents, the researcher was able to remind some respondents about forgotten or overlooked incidences of violence which could then be discussed because of this shared past history. Although researcher biases and enmeshments can result from prolonged engagement with the clients, this researcher felt that the depth of the interview disclosures accomplished through the existing rapport and prior relationships far outweighed any negative or enmeshing effects of researcher biases.

A second strategy for producing "credibility" was accomplished through "prolonged engagement" or by spending extended time in the field of study itself which allowed the researcher to identify participants’ behavioral patterns which would be difficult to recognize if one were not familiar with the culture being studied (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Because this researcher had played 12 years of higher level hockey in the European and minor professional leagues, college, and juniors levels in addition to his coaching career as a professional and college coach and a summer hockey camp instructor, which continues to the present date, these experiences or "prolonged engagements" in the field spanning over 20 years allotted a tremendous familiarity with
this culture. This extensive time frame allowed the researcher to become very familiar with his field of study and the accompanying violence associated with the hockey culture.

Although quantitative researchers strive to generalize their findings to the larger population, this is not a primary concern or objective in qualitative research which focuses on the detailed processes and description of a phenomenon imbedded in a smaller number of cases (Berg, 1998; Ragin, 1994). This major paradigmatic difference is one reason why assessing the external validity of a qualitative study is not usually appropriate or recommended (Berg, 1998). Donmoyer (1990) rejected traditional notions of generalizability for educational and human service researchers because he felt that traditional thinking about generalizability was inadequate particularly when researchers are concerned with individuals and the meanings in their lives. Not all qualitative researchers agree with this perspective. Lincoln & Guba (1985) coined the term “transferability” for qualitative research, which relates to the positivist notion of external validity and pertains to the representativeness of the participants in the study. For instance, the findings from this present study are not transferable nor applicable to professional hockey players, who have played in the NHL or in European professional leagues, because this sample did not include any players from these particular leagues.

Besides validity concerns, reliability is also considered to be an important issue of concern. In contrast to positivist ideas about reliability, which relate to the consistency of findings based on the assumption that a single unchanging reality exists in order to be measured, qualitative researchers believe in multiple realities and, therefore, emphasize and seek the uniqueness and variation of human experience rather than identical replication (Krefting, 1991). Donmoyer (1990) similarly discussed the value of an
individual narrative or case study from the sense of its uniqueness and peculiarity which is particularly relevant for disciplines like social sciences, education, anthropology, and history. Donmoyer asserted that reliability in the traditional positivist sense of replicability is pointless given this opposite perspective and paradigm.

In spite of Donmoyer’s viewpoint, qualitative research does use strategies for producing the qualitative equivalent of “reliability” or what Lincoln and Guba (1985) referred to as “dependability.” “Dependability” in this study is monitored through the use of “extra questions.” Berg (1998) discussed the notion of “extra questions” as being questions, which are similar to questions already asked, but worded in such a manner that the researcher can observe the consistency of the responses. By examining the consistency of the respondents’ answers, the interviewer can gauge the truthfulness of the respondents’ answers (Berg, 1998). This questioning technique was implemented early on in the first part of the major questions and then “extra questions” were asked again in different ways under the same major topic. In essence, “extra questions” were used in order to gather greater information and to validate the consistency of the respondents’ responses and narratives (Berg, 1998).

Participants

The purpose of sampling in a qualitative study cannot be compared with quantitative probability sampling which is used to generalize study findings to an entire population. Qualitative researchers utilize a purposive sampling which involves selecting information-rich cases for in-depth study and examination relating to players’ exposure to violence. These information-rich cases would not appear in sufficient numbers under traditional or random sampling techniques, and thus would not allow for certain
information on violence be to easily discovered. Researchers then can use their knowledge and expertise about a group and phenomenon under study in order to select particular participants who may best represent the phenomenon and issues they wish to address. only after they become well-acquainted with the culture under study (Berg, 1998).

This researcher has a history of extensive involvement in the culture of ice hockey. with a keen understanding of the perspectives of the players and thus has an understanding of the phenomenon of violence inside and outside of the sporting realm. This experience has occurred through participation in American and Canadian junior hockey levels, which is a stepping stone to the collegiate and professional levels. collegiate hockey participation, over five years of professional playing experience in both the minor leagues and in Europe, and coaching at numerous levels including the men's collegiate and European professional level. It is through being deeply involved in the culture of hockey as both a player and a coach, who has actively participated in diverse hockey experiences in playing levels spanning more than twenty years, that this researcher has a unique insider knowledge of ice hockey and its associated violence as a participant observer. The researcher's unique position as a participant observer within the culture of hockey has allowed him to readily access and recruit this culture of athletes for participation in this study.

The participants for this study were recruited using multiple methods of purposive and convenience sampling methods in addition to the incorporation of snowball techniques because the men were asked to refer other potential participants to the researcher (Berg, 1998). This sample consisted of ice hockey players that the researcher
has known or in some cases known of through his associations as a player, coach, or other sports employment or involvement. Each of the athletes was required to have competed at either the junior, collegiate, or the professional major or minor league level for a period of at least two years. It is this researcher’s contention that only through participation at these elite levels that an athlete can become fully immersed into the hockey culture to the degree that they have been exposed to underlying phenomenon such as violence. Players who have not participated at these elite levels would not be as acculturated or knowledgeable of the deeper culture of ice hockey to the greatest extent possible.

Curtis and Ennis (1988) used former Canadian junior players in their study’s sample which considered juniors an elite-level of hockey because less than 5% of all youngsters registered with the Canadian Minor Hockey Association are able to achieve the junior A or B levels of competition. It is also important to note that the style of Canadian junior hockey is fundamentally different from collegiate hockey in that its rules allow and encourage fighting to a much greater extent than American collegiate hockey. Participation in professional or Canadian junior hockey should, therefore, relate to higher involvement and exposure to in-sport violence because it is sanctioned as a significant part of the game. The majority of the participants in this study have participated in professional or Canadian junior hockey.

The participants featured twenty-three current or former hockey players whose ages ranged between 20 and 58 years old with the participants averaging 35 years old. The participants for this study will be utilized in two ways. First, the athletes were respondents, who provided descriptive accounts of their own experiences with violence.
both off the ice and in sport which pertained to both men and women. Secondly, the respondents acted as key informants who described their knowledge, experiences, and observations of others in the sport as they discussed their overall insights, views, and impressions of violent behaviors associated with the culture of hockey.

The first participants were drawn from the researcher's knowledge and contacts with players and coaches who he was already acquainted with through previous sport encounters. The participants were first contacted by phone and informed that the researcher was recruiting ice hockey players for his study pertaining to athlete aggression (see oral script in Appendix A). Information pertaining to confidentiality and the privacy of their disclosures was discussed in order to let the players know that the information they disclosed would be completely safeguarded. If the potential candidates were willing to be interviewed, the participants determined the time and setting for the interviews, which helped to ensure that the participants had optimal comfort levels and privacy. Once the participants indicated interest in being interviewed for the study, arrangements for the interviews were made so that the researcher was able to conduct all of the interviews in a face-to-face manner. The researcher fully discussed the details of confidentiality with each of the participants and obtained signatures from the participants for their informed consent prior to each interview (Appendix B). All subjects were given two copies of the attached consent form to read and sign, and each participant retained a copy of the consent form for his records. Phone interviews were only considered as a last resort if the distance and cost became problematic. The early participants of the study were also asked to refer other participants with similar experiences because this would create a larger, information-rich sample.
The demographic information in Table 1 describes the 23 participants. All 23 participants were Caucasian, and the athletes averaged 35 years of age. Thirteen participants were born in the United States, and the remaining ten were born in Canada. Fifteen participants played professionally in the minor professional leagues, eight participants played college hockey, and 17 participants had played either Canadian or American junior hockey in conjunction with a higher level of hockey such as college or professional hockey. Junior hockey is considered a stepping stone to both college and professional hockey, and juniors has very liberal rules with regards to fighting. The marital status of the athletes varied and included 13 married players, eight single men, and two participants were divorced. In terms of education level of the athletes, three participants had master’s degrees, eight had college degrees, five participants had some college, and seven participants had either a high school diploma or completed their general education diploma (GED). Five participants were self-employed, three participants worked in a professional trade, seven participants worked in professional or collegiate sports, two participants were student-athletes, and six participants were employed in a business profession.

Family of origin questions indicated that 19 of the 23 participants lived with both natural parents growing up, five participants experienced parental divorce at some point in their lives, four participants lived in a stepparent family at some point, and four participants lived with a single parent for a period of time while growing up. In terms of parents’ educational attainment, three parents had graduate degrees, four had college degrees, seven had some college, 25 had high school diplomas, and seven parents had less than a high school education. Although hockey is considered to be a sport for
predominantly middle- or upper-class people in the United States because of the high costs of ice time, equipment, and travel leagues. Family income is not an issue for hockey participation for Canadian youth. Because hockey is Canada's national sport, Canada has a long tradition of well-organized youth hockey leagues which are coupled with a greater availability of ice rinks nationwide. This, in essence, translates to a greater access to hockey participation for all classes of people in Canada as compared to the United States.

Data Collection

Interviews

The primary means of data collection utilized to address the research questions was the semi-structured, in-depth interview. The semi-structured interview lies between the unstandardized interview, which uses no formal set of questions, and the standardized interview, which uses a formally structured set of questions (Berg, 1998). The interviews are considered as semi-structured because they were guided by a set of five predetermined questions with a number of branching questions which were used to facilitate more detail and more focused attention to the study's domains of interest (Appendix C). Probing questions, which were not preconceived, were also used to provide greater detail and elaboration when necessary (Berg, 1998). The interview questions were derived from previous inquiries into sport violence as well as from the researcher's knowledge and previous focused discussions with participants in ice hockey regarding the use of violence (Pappas, McKenry, Catlett, in press). Demographic information was gathered before the interview through a one page self-administered questionnaire (Appendix D).
Specifically, five major questions asked during the interviews focused on: (a) the players' overall background and experiences in organized hockey; (b) the perceived frequency of violence/aggression toward other men outside the sport of hockey; (c) etiology and motivations for off-ice aggression; (d) the perceived frequency and types of sexual aggression against women and how these behaviors can be promoted; (e) the perceived frequency of physical aggression against women and how these behaviors can be promoted; and (f) the structure and background of the player's family of origin.

Additional questions throughout the interview were used to verify the respondents' consistency and reliability of their responses, build rapport with the respondents, and contribute to the overall detail of the subject area. The interview questions began with nonthreatening general questions and then moved into more complex questions in order to ease the respondent into the more salient subject areas (Berg, 1998). Each of the interviews, which were single-session interviews, lasted from between one and one-half hours to three and one-half hours in duration. All of the interviews in the study were conducted by this researcher.

Another essential component of the data collection process was the element of setting (Berg, 1998). The interviewer accommodated all of the interviewees by allowing them to decide where the interview should occur. Although the setting in an interview is possibly not as important as the setting in an ethnographic or participant observation study, an interview conducted in an environment in which the interviewee is comfortable and secure would logically produce the best opportunity for data collection and the gathering of in-depth information. It is obvious that conducting an interview in an atmosphere, which does not promote privacy or confidentiality would limit the amount
and depth of information the respondent would potentially disclose (Berg, 1998). Hence, because the setting can involve important issues such as privacy and confidentiality, setting is an essential component for an interview if privacy and disclosure are potentially compromised. Issues related to setting may have been prevalent in only one of the interviews because the participant insisted that his wife remain next to him during the interview. This respondent felt that anything he said in the interview could also be discussed in front of his wife because she had already been exposed to so much discussion involving the hockey culture already. For this reason, a lack of privacy minimally might have hampered this player’s ability to be totally honest in his disclosures as opposed to if the interview been conducted in total privacy. Another player’s wife joined the discussion after the interview was completed with her husband. This wife was a positive influence after the interview because she was able to help her husband recall even more incidences involving violence which had been forgotten. Therefore, this particular respondent’s interview was enhanced by his wife’s later participation.

The researcher did allow time for debriefing following the interviews with the participants. Instead, at the conclusion of the interview, issues such as information relating to the study, coaching strategies and hockey talk, personal and family information and difficulties, and general life happenings were sometimes discussed in an informal manner.

Data Analysis

Because all of the in-depth interviews were taped, the data analysis process began with a verbatim transcription of the audio recorded interviews. Following the taped

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interview sessions, the tapes were then re-copied onto other tapes as a precaution and back-up. The typed transcriptions were then checked for accuracy, and later, the tapes were destroyed upon completion of the transcripts to ensure the participants’ confidentiality.

Next, a qualitative content analysis process was next applied to the research data. Qualitative content analysis, which is any technique used for making inferences by systemically and objectively identifying special characteristics of a message, was used to analyze the transcripts (Berg, 1998). Specifically, the researcher first identified and subsequently organized themes that emerged from the transcribed text (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992). The narrative responses contained within the transcripts were next examined for salient topics covered, patterns, regularities, and differences within and across the cases (Berg, 1998; Bogdan & Biklen, 1992).

Initially coded categories were then intuitively developed and were generated from the topics and patterns, and these coding schemes were developed, continuously modified, and redefined throughout the data collection process and after its completion as well (Miles & Hubermam, 1994). Finally, the examined topics and patterns were placed into conceptually focused analytical themes relating to the study’s theoretical foundations in terms of athlete aggression and violence (Berg, 1998; Lofland & Lofland, 1995; Bogdan & Biklen, 1992).

Because there is no single way to conduct qualitative data analysis, this study’s analytic process was accomplished through the physical form filing method in which the data were manually manipulated into the various coded categories, themes, and patterns (Lofland & Lofland, 1995), without the use of qualitative computer software. This
method is currently implemented by researchers as an acceptable and effective method of analysis because it was the standard method of analysis prior to the availability of personal computers (Lofland & Lofland, 1995). Data involving longer narratives are easily amenable to the physical form filing method of analysis because researchers’ presently continue to compile detailed and coded material which is manually categorized into thematic patterns and then distributed into appropriate placements on any large empty surface (Lofland & Lofland, 1995). This procedure allows the coded data to be pondered over, arranged, rearranged, labeled, and relabeled within a tangible form (Lofland & Lofland, 1995). Therefore, despite some researchers’ enthusiastic adherence to computerized analysis, Lofland and Lofland (1995) find that the virtues of computer analysis appear to be lacking in terms of the software’s flexibility when coding various data.

Similarly, Agar (1991) contends that analysis of data relates more to the synthesis and pattern-recognition of themes than the mechanical manipulation of data through computer software. Existing computer software and technology are thought to be physically and intellectually confining to some researchers as programs seem to hinder the cognitive act of synthesis and pattern-recognition (Agar, 1991). Many software programs are used predominantly as a retrieval system, which organizes and manages data, only after the researcher has analyzed, coded, and determined the patterns, categories, and themes within the transcriptions because qualitative software programs do not actually analyze and code the data for the researcher (Berg, 1998). In spite of technology, researchers are still confronted with the laborious task of performing the data analysis because none of the tasks currently accomplished by computers and used in
qualitative research really move beyond data organization and management (Berg, 1998). Researchers, therefore, must use themselves as a human instrument of analysis (Fettersman, 1998) using logic, intuition, and serendipity (Agar, 1991) in order to think through the analytic and theoretical relationships (Berg, 1998) with or without computer assistance.

Finally, this analytic process also incorporated a combination of both inductive and deductive methods in its procedures (Straus, 1987). The data were inductively analyzed in order to allow the respondents’ information, coded categories, and theoretical themes to emerge from the athletes’ own individual perceptions and subjective interpretations as related to their experience with aggression and violence (Straus & Corbin, 1990). Deductive methods were simultaneously utilized in this process because the analysis was guided by a pre-established set of interview and demographic questions and a pre-established theoretical framework (Berg, 1998).
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Table 3.1

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF SAMPLE (N = 23)

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CHAPTER 4

RESULTS: EXPERIENCES OF VIOLENCE

Introduction

This chapter begins with the players' narrative accounts of violence. A variety of types of violence are discussed which pertain to the perpetration of aggression occurring outside of the sporting domain against other men, physical aggression against women, and sexual deviancy and aggression against women. Also addressed are issues related to the perceived frequency of the different types of violence committed by the athletes, the way the culture of hockey may promote different types of violence, and the motivating factors for perpetrating different types of violence.

The results are limited to the purposive sample of 23 athletes. Furthermore, the players had a variety of experiences and exposure to different amounts of violence depending on whether they grew up playing in Canada or the United States, in addition to the types of leagues and time periods in which they happened to have played. Although the sample itself contains no NHL players, this sample does contain numerous athletes who have been teammates with players who became NHL players after their junior, college, or minor league careers. The players' narratives are representative of the culture of junior, college, and minor professional hockey, and the overall information and frequency of certain types of aggression are, in many cases, quite normative for the
culture of hockey at least as perceived by these athletes. These findings are also supported by this researcher's own junior, collegiate, and professional hockey experiences. Finally, these data do not and cannot give absolute explanations and causes for how and why violence occurs in this culture. The athletes do, however, give the reader explanations for what they believe are influences relating to violence in this culture, and these insights stem from the players' own personal experiences which are unique to them and their observations as informants. Insights and explanations for aggression from this sample of athletes are at times used in combination with information from this researcher's own experiences and insights relating to aggression and violence within the hockey culture.

Out-of-Sport Aggression Against Other Males

Perceived Frequency of Off-Ice Fighting

All of the research participants were easily able to identify situations where they had either participated in violence, or they had observed fighting and violence among their friends and teammates. Moreover, these narratives illustrated the way in which violence and aggression outside of the athletic arena are thought to be routine in this culture. For example, some of the players described their perceptions in this way:

...It seemed like every time we would go out...at someone's house or a bar...it seemed like at least once a weekend there would probably be a fight...if you took a random sample of 20 guys that didn't play sports and went out on a Friday or Saturday. I don't think you would find the frequency in them getting into fights as much as you would compared to the 20 guys that I hung out with that I played hockey with...

...80% of the time [fights would occur off-ice]...Every weekend that we weren't playing hockey because you'd go to the parties and the townies would want to fight you for stealing their girlfriends so I would say I'd say a lot...back in the 1980s and that's growing up in Canada...
As far as...playing junior hockey where I did, I would say...probably at least once every two weekends someone in the team would get in a fight off the ice. It might have been a little more frequently sometimes...maybe once a week someone would get in a fight...it was not against other guys on the team but with other guys being...someplace else. So I would say very frequently.

The above players described off-ice fighting as fairly common occurrences during their junior hockey careers, and places such as parties and bars were the usual settings for some of these fights. Other players were able to compare the frequency of off-ice fighting between the juniors and collegiate hockey in this way:

...juniors was a lot of off-ice violence and when I went to [U.S. university]...there was a lot less off-ice violence...so I saw the most off-ice violence in Canadian juniors.

...juniors were probably a lot worse...worse for the balance of off-ice [violence] than [hockey players] in the university...you are looking at a different type of person there that attends university and plays a sport there...more intellectual to get into the university and...a different reason for playing hockey...they want to further themselves and they are generally older than people I played hockey with [in Canada in juniors]...more mature...that’s not to say it didn’t happen [at college]...but...it was...a lot less [in] frequency...for every one time that violence off the ice happened at that university...probably would have been four times more back when I was younger playing juniors in Canada...

In junior, there were a lot more off-ice fights...than there was in college...That was a direct reflection of what was going on - on the ice.

The frequency of fighting overall seemed to occur much more in juniors than in collegiate hockey, and this was suggested because the junior players are younger, less mature, and junior hockey teaches and reinforces on-ice fighting.

Some of the participants compared the frequency of off-ice fighting in their professional minor league experiences with other playing levels such as junior and collegiate hockey. These narratives reflected mixed findings in terms of the frequency of fighting off-ice at these different levels:
...[when comparing off-ice violence in minor leagues to juniors]...ah. no comparison. no comparison [to juniors]...[juniors had much more than in the minor leagues]

After I left juniors [U.S. juniors] and got to the pro level...was probably when it [off-ice fighting] started cause there was more drinking at that level than there was in juniors. Juniors...really wasn’t much drinking cause everybody...was teenagers. But then once I got to the pro level, guys were in their twenties, and thirty years old, and...they go out more frequently than juniors. so...at that level. I think in all pro levels...it happened a few times...

Although the above players discussed varying frequencies of off-ice aggression depending on their individual and team experiences. some players played on teams which experienced higher frequencies of off-ice fighting during their experiences in the professional minor leagues. for example:

I’d say that if you went, if you went to the bar...a hundred times. probably twenty-five times...twenty-five percent of the time something would happen. somewhere in that neighborhood...it didn’t happen a whole lot when I went out with teammates...it wasn’t...a very common thing but then again it wasn’t uncommon...

In a year, two or three, four times, maybe max...not a whole lot...I didn’t see it a whole lot...some pissing and moaning, some arguments, get the fuck out of my face type stuff, and...come on man...you don’t want to be going there. shit like that. But. the actual physical violence...a couple times. maybe.

80% of the time [fights would occur off-ice]...but I think at the minor league level where you haven’t established yourself yet and you’re not in the National Hockey League eye – like national news type thing – you’re in a sports bar...and some guy [insults you] - you nail him...and that happens a lot...

Players described the differences between minor and major league players. not only in terms of their on-ice skills. but also in terms of their off-ice behaviors. thinking, decision-making skills, and the publicity they receive because all these influences can affect the players’ use of violence. Two players explained and elaborated in detail on the
differences between minor and major professional league players in terms of their frequency of fighting and off-ice aggression in this way:

At the professional level of ...[I’ve] seen a lot of fights. every team I’ve been involved with...but I would say again that that goes back to the lowest levels of hockey because of the less skilled people...and then [the fights] they’re...not heard [of] – [not publicized]...It all comes back to the skill level. those players don’t think as well. not only are they not as skilled on the ice but they’re not as skilled off the ice... it’s their demeanor, it just isn’t the same as the higher professionals...every profession has it’s top people and it has it’s lower people. that don’t think as well. hence they get involved in a lot of things that the top guys don’t. Not to say top guys never get involved in that stuff but it’s a lesser occurrence...

You know, there’s different levels of pro sports...once you get up to the very top in pro sports I don’t think you can do that as much because then the media might get wind of what’s going on and you don’t want that to happen. So minor league sports I think it happens more often than it does in the...NHL...cause they can get away with it. they’re not going to get in trouble.

Although some players’ narratives supported the argument that fighters do not always have innate aggressive personalities and dispositions away from the arena. some fighters have perpetrated higher levels of aggression off the ice. Two different enforcers described the frequency of their off-ice fighting in this way:

...we’d average 3 - 4 fights a weekend – we did it everywhere...we were just pissed off at the world...we got in fights at golf courses...at restaurants. we’d actually go up to somebody and ask their wives to dance - just to get a response out of someone - we’re not going dance with him – we were just a couple of dickheads... for two guys...we were 17, 18 - and no interest in women – I mean where most guys would go out trying to get laid all the time that wasn’t even an issue – let’s go get into a fight – I mean it was just simple – let’s get drunk and fight somebody...

...I probably had...about ten fights in the bars when I played [minor league] hockey. but I think it’s more that alcohol...I don’t think it’s being...a fighter on the ice...I think that might have a little bit to do with it. Maybe...playing a tough sport. and...probably more so the alcohol...
The fighters who were interviewed in this study were over-represented in terms of their participation in off-ice aggression. One participant discussed a situation involving a teammate who was a fighter and this player’s propensity to use aggression if he had to:

I remember a couple of times with bouncers at bars. I remember him [the fighter] specifically telling...this bouncer [who was] saying, “It’s close to last call. I can’t let you in tonight.” He [the fighter] said, “Hey, I come here a lot.” Trying to be nice at first and the guy’s like, “Listen. It’s last call. We don’t want to have any problems.” And [the fighter] he’s like, “You’re right you don’t want to have any problems. I get paid to fight. For me to fight you is a joke...It’s five minutes in the box. It’s no big deal to sit there and throw down is no big deal...you want to see the show it’s down at the coliseum.” I just remember that happening...those words being [said]...we actually got in...[laughing]...to go out everyday and fight for a team. for another player, not for you. I mean. you’re not pissed off...it’s different than anything you could imagine...

Influences such as players roles within a team, the different time periods of play, the amount of substance abuse which occurred individually and within a team, and the caliber of play all seem to influence the amounts of off-ice aggression. Furthermore, teams within the same league at the same time period can have very different amounts of off-ice aggression because these influences can vary within teams. Although there does not seem to be any absolute pattern for determining a player’s potential for off the ice aggression, generally players who are more aggressive on the ice appear to be involved in greater amounts of off-ice altercations according to the narratives.

Defending the Honor of Self and Others

Sometimes the participants had felt that they were involved in threatening off-ice situations and had little choice but to defend themselves and their honor in front of others. These participants had felt that they had taken a non-aggressor role until they were pushed to the point where they had felt they were unable to walk away from an altercation in some instances. This narrative described a situation where a former
enforcer felt he needed to physically defended himself and his wife from a verbally and physically abusive spectator at a sporting event:

... my wife was with some friends from work and - I was walking back... behind my wife and... beside this group of these guys and my wife... said something along the lines like the buckeyes [suck]... the guy that’s walking besides me... he’s a big guy like 6’5” and... he started saying lick this and lick that... just rudeness and I said, “You know that’s my wife” and he butted into me with his shoulder and started backing me into and started saying, “I wasn’t saying anything derogatory and all this” and I didn’t even think about it - I drove him right in the throat and with the left and kneed him in the stomach and had his head down on the ground and I was going to feed him his lunch... because when I hit him in the throat it was just to surprise him and then take the wind out of him and... it was just to say, “Hey, that’s my wife” and... not a type of thing that I look at as being excessively violent...

The above player felt like he had no choice but to defend the honor of his wife and then himself when he was being physically harassed by a fan. Another participant felt that he had been taught to stand up for himself and especially when this involved defending one’s honor in front of a female companion, for example:

A situation happened with me as a coach [at] alumni weekend... there’s a party going on and a guy walks up to me and says, “Coach, do you remember me?” ... and... he said, “Does the name [so and so],... mean anything to you?” And I said yes... and [he said], “You cut me... you fucking asshole - you know well I went on to... [a college] and I probably could have made the varsity team there if you would have ever given me a chance and you suck as a coach” – and I started to walk away from him and he threw a beer at me and [my girlfriend] was trying to get me to leave and I just turned around and I went right after him and I grabbed him by the shirt and I jacked him up against the wall and I said, “Don’t you ever, ever come to one of my... team functions – and treat me like that especially in front of my girlfriend and our players – [the team] came and grabbed me and pulled me away and then got him and tossed him out of the party... the guy was bitter because I had cut him... and there was obviously... alcohol...[but] I was brought up to believe that... you stand up for yourself... you know you’re a hockey player, you don’t want somebody to do that to you...

Sometimes altercations arise from players’ feeling the need to defend and stand up for females who they felt were being mistreated by other men. One participant
described an altercation where he and another player had engaged in a fight against other men who were being abusive to females despite the fact that the players did not even know the women who were being mistreated in this way:

A friend of mine and I were walking down the street. We noticed a couple of girls were chatting...some guy bumps into one of the girls...[and] I start walking after the guy...I mean he bumped the girl and I made a comment like. “If that were my sister I’d kick your ass.” He basically said. “No, that’s not the case.” He was a big guy. He was definitely very, very intoxicated...so I decided to confront him and we got into a little bit of a go. It escalated and escalated. He was throwing air punches and I just...tuned him up pretty quickly. His friend came in and my friend came in - took care of him pretty quickly [laughing]...

Another player similarly discussed a bar altercation which occurred because the participant was helping to defend another male who he did not even know from three other male aggressors. The participant discussed this situation in this way:

I was in Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan playing senior hockey and a couple of us went out drinking...to this western bar...I kind of stopped and took notice of these three bikers talking to this guy and they kind of had him up against the wall...accusing this guy [who] had a college jacket on glasses, pocket saver - I’m looking at him I’m like. “Oh my god you’re kidding me” - then...I said. “I think it appears to me what you three fellas are just looking for is a fight and you don’t care who you fight so why don’t you guys fight me” – and...so I hit the first guy...he went down...then all hell broke loose...that was probably the best shit kicking I ever got but it was three of them – so I didn’t feel too bad but it was a situation again where they were picking on this guy and did that come from the hockey?...

The above player who was also an enforcer discussed the origins of his lending physical support to others who were being mistreated:

...I did not like to see people get picked on - I hated it...this kid in high school...[a] pig farmer wore rubber boots to school, smelled like a pig farmer – everybody called him hog strap – just picked on him all the time – I got in more fights sticking up for that poor kid – I was just like. “Leave him alone”...

The above players discussed their participation in off-ice aggression which related to their protecting themselves or others, and these altercations appeared to be much more
of a defensive tactic than an aggressive maneuver. Furthermore, these altercations occurred against males who were quite intoxicated and equally aggressive toward the individual player or someone else. It is also interesting to note that the players did not necessarily have to know the person being mistreated in order to defend that person.

**Athletes as the Aggressor**

Athletes are not always involved in physical aggression because they are defending themselves or someone else. Athletes can also be the perpetrators and instigators of aggression off the ice. One narrative described an off-ice altercation which escalated to the point that it continued into a lengthy, drawn-out situation that resulted in a car chase lasting several hours. The situation eventually involved other people and a number of injuries, and this player discussed this altercation in this way:

...we’d been out drinking and we pull into Seven-Eleven and...there were 6 of them in the car and...I can remember it like today and just as I pulled the door I heard someone go. “Fag” [I] closed the door. [my friend]...went and got his hot dog - I was fighting all 6 of them before...he come out and started helping - but. I had 3 of them down and out before he come out...that fight went on probably for three hours cause we chased them around Calgary and then they pulled into this place where they knew somebody - and this older guy in a full beard comes running out of the house...we had to replace the grill on our pickup - put his head right through it...just how we didn’t get into problems more or hurt somebody and it’s really funny – funny is not a good word – it’s been 19 years...since that one and not a day goes by where I don’t think - I wonder if everybody lived - I do. I think about it - what about that guy...I wonder if he didn’t get up...

It is interesting to note that this participant has looked back on this situation with a certain amount of regret for what he had done almost 20 years ago. Another narrative described one player’s altercation against several other men which occurred at the arena, and this player discussed the very fine line which exists between those who actually start the fight and those who are the non-aggressors in off-ice altercations, for example:
...my philosophy was I never would start anything, but I would...if I had to...finish it. And there was [an] instance over at the [arena] where...I wasn’t playing...I wasn’t injured, but...at the time...playing taxi squad and [the team] had enough players...I was up in the press box...and one of the players got in a fight and he got beat and...hurt or something and...three guys...were heckling...our player, big time. And...so I yelled at them...some comment...like, “You think you’re tough”...and they looked at me and waved me on. “Come on boy”...I was up in the press box and...I flew down the stair tower...and when I went outside the door, three of them were standing there...one guy stepped up and...we went at it and he was done, quick...second guy, same thing...and third guy ran...I think that was a matter of being fired up watching the game...I had a couple beers...but...when the game just started...just having a taste of the action...

The above incident which involved heckling escalated to the point that the player fought with three hometown fans, and the player had noted the influences of alcohol and observing the action of the game. Another narrative described a situation which had occurred during a party and required the coach’s physical intervention in order to keep the situation from escalating into further violence. The instigating player’s size and fighting ability had kept even his own teammates from intervening during this situation.

and this participant described this incident in this way:

[the player]...was just a sick puppy...when he made it all the way back to this league [East Coast] from the NHL...they actually made a league rule [prohibiting him from playing]...but [a minor pro coach] got him to come back – [the coach] gets a phone call in the middle of the night – coach, coach...his [team] captain [called], [the player’s] got us corned and we can’t get out – he had the coach and the whole party in a room and he wouldn’t let them out – I mean he was just drunk and would’ve fought anybody – so...[the coach] shows up says. “I’ll take care of it – outside” – away they go wailing at it – and [the coach’s] a golden gloves boxing champion...slaps [the player] around - couple guys break it up – “Ok, that’s it go to bed” – 6:30 in the morning the door bell rings – [the player] he’s at [the coach’s] house – “I want to go [fight] again – let’s go out in the parking lot” – [coach] gets dressed and says. “I’m going to tell you something right now...we start fighting right now – I’m going to kill you or you better kill me because there’s nobody here to stop it – Now what do you want to do?” The player put his hands down and went home - they got rid of him...
It is interesting to note that both of the previously mentioned combatants had played in the NHL and both were also enforcers. This challenges the belief that NHL players do not participate in off-ice aggression or possibly not as often as minor leaguers do. This may be because major league players may simply learn to control their off-ice aggression to a greater extent when they are in the NHL because they have more to lose in terms of salary and prestige than they do when they are playing in the minor leagues. Even players in the higher minor leagues see themselves as having more to lose because they are closer to being in the NHL than if they were playing in the lower minor leagues.

Group Brawling

The players described a number of brawls which had involved hockey players fighting against multiple numbers of people in off-ice situations. Furthermore, the players discussed a number of off-ice brawls which involved college hockey players who also happened to be using large amounts of alcohol as well. One player described a multiple-player brawl from college:

One [brawl] up in Saratoga, New York. At a bar...we were college hockey players. We...went to a bar that had a...happy hour...it was a three-hour...five bucks all you could drink. And...we drank...it was an all black bar and during this one Wednesday night. it was open to everybody. But after that certain hour it became kind of dark again. So...one guy pissed in the corner...and a couple guys took offense to it. and next thing you know it was three white guys against a whole fleet full of black guys with pool sticks...we didn’t make out too good but we got out of there. and were waking up the next morning just a mess...that was the only time I was ever really, really, beaten up. And...it was...I am a...hockey player...and the beer muscles and everything thrown in there, and the chase for girls...that whole big ego, testosterone. all that crap thrown into one...it was a hell of a barroom fight, and we came out very much on the short end...nothing life threatening or anything - ribs, bruises...bloody noses, lips, facial bruises...we got beat...kicked...whacked with pool sticks...nothing life threatening. but, pretty painful the next morning...
Other players indicated that hockey players’ group brawling did not only occur during players’ college careers because brawls had occurred during their junior playing careers in Canada:

...probably the fight that I would remember the most is that when I was at a bar in St. Thomas, Ontario...and I guess one...guy we played hockey with...was getting thrown out of the bar... I don’t know what it was for, but he was getting escorted out by the bouncers and...the bouncers don’t handle you probably as well as they should. And it ended up that the guys on our hockey team, you know, kind of protecting [with] the same mentality as they do on the ice, we actually got in a fight with I’d say eight to ten bouncers at a bar...[the fight] rolled out to the street. cops came, everything else like that, so that’s probably the most memorable one I’ve had associated with hockey players...No one got hurt...just stitches, a couple of broken noses here and there [laughs]...

...we played in the world juniors [championships]...we got in a brawl New Year’s Eve over there...it was probably about eleven o’clock...some people that followed us...came over from Canada. And I didn’t even see it start, but I was on the dance floor...and I just dove in...me and a couple of buddies that I hung out with...we just ran over there...I was about seventeen. I guess there was thirteen of us, about twenty five of them...just Swedish guys, but...all the hockey teams were there...[so] it’s like fucking New Year’s Eve in 1979...in Sweden, fucking quarter to twelve, [and] the boys are on the bus, going home - not even New Years...cops come...it was pretty wild. No one ever really heard anything about it...it was kept pretty hush hush of course...except in the little hockey world...I enjoyed that one. That was a lot of fun...

It is interesting to note that the settings in all of these altercations included scenarios which were very alcohol-laden, and the second brawl happened overseas during a New Year’s Eve party which was held for the prestigious world junior tournament in Sweden received no publicity whatsoever. Multiple player brawls do not only occur at the junior or college levels of play; sometimes these altercations occurred at the professional minor league level as well. for example:

...when I was in Wichita. We were out at a bar...The hockey players were out having a good time...This one [hockey player]...had this beat up wreck of a car...so the guys came out of the bar all drunk and [the player] was driving up to pick them up and [the teammates] they just started beating the crap out of his car
...but that was the alcohol and the guys having a good time. ...Well, some of the
guys from the town who were in the bar they started taking exception to that.
They were like, “Hey! You don’t do that? What are you doing?” We were like.
“Relax! It’s our friend’s car. He’s right here”. They were like, “I don’t care”.
And these guys started a fight. And these [hockey] guys...They just beat these
guys up pretty good...

All of the above narratives revealed that hockey players competing at a variety of
levels of play have been involved in multiple-player brawls, and these situations are not
all that uncommon. Moreover, the co-occurrence of alcohol and players fighting and
aggression is an element which reoccurs again and again throughout the players’
narratives. The discussion will now shift to the influences which can affect and motivate
the players’ aggression.

Influences Contributing to Off-Ice Fighting

Substance Abuse

Overall, numerous players depicted scenarios where the unabated and uninhibited
use of drugs and alcohol within the hockey culture was linked to violence. Numerous
narratives have already described the many altercations which have occurred in and
around settings characterized by high alcohol consumption at bars and parties among the
players and other bystanders. Other drugs were also mentioned with alcohol, and one
participant described the seemingly lack of concern by one minor professional team’s
players and the management toward the issue of substance abuse in this way:

My...tryout was in Salt Lake City and I had gone out there before - it was like I
got thrown in there so I went down and I was really surprised of the shit that goes
on in the International League – it’s tryouts – [management says]. “You’re all
going to get drug tested tomorrow blah blah blah” – you go out to a party, you’re
looking around and half the team’s snorting coke – I said, “I thought they’re drug
testing tomorrow?” – “They’re not going to drug test tomorrow. it costs 800
bucks a test – they’re not going to do it” – [I] come back next day - everybody’s supposed to piss in a cup, everybody pisses in a cup – everybody’s clean - I’m like I just watched a lot of shit go on last night...

The drug tests had relatively little importance because the tests were too costly to administer. and as a result, both the players and management in this organization placed very little emphasis on the players’ substance abuse issues, at least, during tryouts. Another player described the manner in which teams in the past were accustomed to dealing with players who had substance abuse issues because rehabilitation services were not an option:

I know quite a few guys, actually played with guys that were making big money...like making a hundred and twenty-five [thousand] playing with me in the [International League]. You know, we’re drunks...got in trouble, but [teams] ...never really had the rehab service...what they would do is they would send you down to the minors to the very bottom...even if you’re making a hundred and twenty-five thousand - they can’t take it away from you. But they can try to make you quit...not quit drinking, just quit hockey...back in the...early eighties...late seventies...if you were fucked up, you were history...unless you were that good...like one of the best players on the team...but...guys like me and a few other guys...if you’re on the verge...they just fucking [say]. “He’s a drunk”...nobody would really say, “Look he’s got some talent...let’s give him a chance. see if he wants to go [get help]...[I did not even get the question asked]...[management] they come in. “Come on you got to slow down [drinking] a little bit”...you take a couple of days off [laughs]. I mean they did say that to me a few times of course...

Players who had substance issues were often demoted to the lower minor leagues unless the player was one of the better players on the team. In addition, cocaine was also mentioned for its connection to the players’ aggressive tendencies. Two players discussed the aggression that cocaine could influence:

...people will get aggressive using cocaine...they get aggressive and they think that they are invincible or something like that - and even though they hurt themselves really bad they don’t feel it...[until] they wake up the next day...a guy [athlete] I know - his hand was broken because he punched a wall because he was all coked up...
One night [a guy] and myself used to get together...and I think at the time...he was doing coke. Cause I walked...into him in the bathroom and he had a vile in his hand...and...he went nuts at the house...he was just doing crazy shit. So any ways. time to go...I was straight. I rode with him...I was the passenger [he] was behind. we were taking [him] home. On the way to take [him] home. he slammed the seat...against...the fucking...dashboard...and finally he did it a couple more times and that’s it. “Stop the car”, so [the driver] stopped the car right in the middle of the parking lot...this was late at night...we got in a fight - we fought for an hour...I tore his shirt off...I was going crazy...and [he] was very strong - tough fighter....-[I]...beat him to a pulp to a point where he couldn’t...even fight no more. I was tired...[it] ended up I respect you, I respect you...ended up with our arm in arm, with no shirt. pants ripped, no shoes. and walking from Lancelot all the way to his apartment. But...that was one of those times...where you. you get pushed to a certain point and that’s it. You just go off...there’s no alternative. You got to fight...till they stop. period...

In addition to the use of cocaine. marijuana was mentioned as a drug that did not promote aggression within the players according to those who used it regularly because the drug had a mellowing and sedative effect upon the players. One player described the players’ easy access to large quantities of alcohol which were made available to the team even during tryouts because the team’s owner had a bar:

...we won the Championship the year before. and we had just about everyone coming back...and [we] sat up all night long until training camp in the morning - hadn’t been to bed. about five of us. So anyway. the next day [a guy] he’s coming up from...Winston. he’s got fifty cases of beer...because the owner of our team owned a bar. so they figured they would bring beer up here. you know. we’d pay for them ...fifty cents a beer and it would pay for itself. which it did...we ran out of beer after three days. we needed thirty more cases. We were only there six days [laughs] during training camp...AC Delco’s finest [Atlantic Coast Hockey League]...[the coach] never said a word...we played hard when we played - we won... some guys would stay [all night]...the young guys would go home. and the regulars. we would stay...

Another narrative similarly described the amount of drinking and partying that occurred among the players. and the way in which one player thought that partying helped a team to bond with each other:

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Oh. quite a bit [of partying]. Once you get to know each other, you’re teammates...I mean I think [party ing] that’s how people bond. I mean, it’s probably not the best way in the world but...it’s helped many a team out. I’ll swear to god on that one...

The players were asked to discuss how often they thought alcohol or drugs influenced the players’ off-ice fighting:

...100% of the time - Cause it’s usually in a bar – in a bar or at a party – I mean you don’t see it anywhere else – I mean everyone [is] pretty calm and cool and collected and then you get some beers in you and piss somebody off – and I think it’s all alcohol and drug related – 100% of the time.

Well...drinking and fighting. I mean that’s where it all starts...especially hockey guys... [it] don’t take much to get it going...off-ice stuff...always, always...I say 99.9% of the time [it] would be with alcohol. No doubt about that one. It don’t hurt as much [laughs].

In my playing day...95% of the time was alcohol involved incidents. You know, guys getting beer muscles on and...I’m tougher than you type of thing.

One player discussed the exorbitant amounts of alcohol that some players would consume which seemed to increase the likelihood of off-ice aggression occurring:

...if you take the alcohol out of the equation. I think very rarely you’d have confrontation off the ice because [alcohol] it lowers your inhibitions and it promotes the feeling that I’m in charge, this is mine, and I can kick ass...I think it magnifies the ego about ten times. That’s after you get to that threshold we get to which for most of the guys it was 12 or 15 drinks I would say. Under that, [like a] 6-pack, no problem...10 beers, [it] starts. It’s those extra 3 or 4 - usually shots involved, and once you get to that amount, you’re on 12 to 15 - that’s when [aggression]) it’s going to go...And that’s cause most of the guys drink like that. Someone who doesn’t [drink] obviously...six beers might put [them in a fight] - Guys I’ve played with - it was in excess of 30 cocktails...

Alcohol’s abundant presence and use appeared pervasively throughout the narratives, and alcohol was constantly associated with off-ice aggression. The players discussed in detail the ways in which they thought alcohol contributed to off-ice aggression, and two players discussed these issues:
I think it just adds fuel to the fire - if you’ve already got a kid who’s aggressive by nature and you throw a catalyst in there [alcohol], it just makes everything worse - especially with hockey as there’s a lot of drinking that goes on with it - you mix that with guys who are maybe lonely or depressed and you got trouble off the ice - if things are going on, on the ice that they may not be happy with and then you’re drinking and doing drugs, it makes everything worse - so it’s just adding fuel to the fire...

...there were some inconsequential situations where I got into a fight for no reason - alcohol was the most prevalent factor - without a doubt alcohol because it gives you...a self-centered mentality...that invincibility feeling too - and that breeds violence...its pretty prevalent...

Alcohol was frequently noted throughout these narratives as a substance and catalyst which would enhance the players’ egos and their sense of invincibility. Alcohol’s role as a predominant influence in the players’ participation in off-ice aggression was undeniable according to these narratives.

Team fighters and enforcers are among those players who are often under unique and tremendous pressures. and these pressures may cause them to turn to using performance enhancing drugs such as steroids. One narrative discussed the pressures associated with being a fighter and one participant’s knowledge of his teammates’ steroid use in this way:

I think [a teammate] knew his job was to go out there and fight and he was a little bit older than the other fighters probably in the league...he was going over...across the border to [Mexico]...to the black market to buy...steroids. Physically [he’d] put them in his ass and drive back over. There were a couple of guys that did that actually. And they would come back over and go to either practice or we had a local gym and they would work out at the gym to stay above [the competition]...they had to fight or they [would not] make the team...

Another narrative similarly described the unique pressures associated with being a fighter, and the unique etiquette which related to the manner in which these players carried out their roles through fighting other players. for example:

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...to go out every day and fight for a team, for another player, not for you. I mean, you’re not pissed off...it’s technical, it’s different than anyone could imagine. You have to go out there everyday and fight for your team. It takes a different person to do that day in and day out. You’re making money doing it...[and] it’s just tough because you’re not pissed off...It’s hard to pick a fight sometimes with guys. You have to say something or get their attention [and]...I’ve done it a couple of times. You can’t sucker punch someone, you got to square off, especially in the pros. If you go [fight] in the minor leagues, those guys will remember you and you play a lot of times...there’s nowhere to run. They will get you. Somehow, somewhere, if they don’t get you, they have friends that will. And that’s the truth. You don’t want to sucker punch these guys. There’s an etiquette to these guys...and they respect each other. They may not like each other, but they respect each other. And...it’s [an] interesting...part of the game...

Sometimes the use of steroids negatively influenced a player’s off-ice behaviors and promoted higher levels of aggression as one participant’s wife had noted:

...he was outside on the deck and he was biting the railing of my deck and...actually he was putting teeth marks in it...he went after our cocker spaniel. and wanted to bite our dog...he had the instinct that he was a dog. And when I walked by him, he got on his hands and knees and bit my leg. And he bit so hard that I knew that, that I shouldn’t pull because it was going to tear...so I just stood there and told everybody in the room, he’s really hurting me. It’s really hurting, and I just stood there. and finally he let go and what a bruise. I had bruise. I think for a month...he was a real animal. Crazy. And...he died from...[an] enlarged heart...I think really the steroids and...maybe even cocaine...played a part in that. I don’t know...I’m almost certain it did though. Normal people don’t act like that...

Substance abuse among players is quite common within the hockey culture, and certain drugs like alcohol and cocaine are extremely common and are much more associated with off-ice aggression than drugs such as marijuana. Furthermore, although steroid use was also discovered and related to aggression, steroid use was not all that common among the players.

Negative Family Influences

Violence in one’s family of origin can result in pathology which can lead to aggression. Several players cited negative family influences such as violence and abuse
which occurred their families and potentially contributed to the athletes' use of aggression. Two players described detailed and firsthand experiences of parental physical abuse which they had sustained, and the first player discussed the way this abuse related to his own off-ice aggression:

I think just my growing up and just getting the shit kicked out of me all the time and [being] full of aggression ... I learned a lot from him as a father because I would never do that to my kids...and...I think it was all that frustration and boom – you let it out...where most guys would go out trying to get laid all the time that wasn't even an issue - let's go get into a fight – I mean it was just simple - let’s get drunk and fight somebody...[I] did it everywhere...

...I had a very mean dad...one day I come home, with my brothers...and the old man was having a party. had all the hockey coaches there and stuff...I was telling one of the coaches about a big old buck we saw. and I'm standing upstairs and all of a sudden here comes the old man. He says. “You got a two hundred and forty pounder coming at you” - and I thought he was joking...He hit me on the top of the stairs with about fifteen flights of stairs [below]. and started beating my head against the wall...[he] just snapped, why I have no idea...if it wasn’t for [a friend] being there at that point in time, one of the coaches, he probably would have killed me...and then him and [the friend] went after each other [and] beat the shit out of each other...I got the heck out of there. I was fourteen years old. Never forget that. I took my mom’s station wagon and left. Called her up. told her where her car was - I wasn’t coming back home...[I] stayed gone for about three weeks. I stayed at a buddy of mine’s house...

Another narrative described the frequency of physical abuse that the player had sustained, and the player also described a potentially dangerous situation with his father which caused him to leave home permanently:

Oh probably at least once or twice a week for whatever...there was always something that you didn’t do right for him and then he’d start smacking you around...and then it got to the point where he gave it to my mom one time and I stepped in and I was 17 then and I ended up on top when we hit the bottom of the stairs...I’m sitting on top and I said. “You will not touch her again or me” and...he got up and headed upstairs - my buddy...went out the bathroom window and I went around and I looked and he was loading the [gun] and got the scope on us – we were doing the serpentine [swerving out of the driveway in the car]...he’s trying to point a rifle at us out the door and we’re laughing – like. “Is this really happening?” And I’ve just never moved back since...he quite drinking for 3 years
after that and I don’t even know if he drinks now or not - I haven’t talked to my dad for a year and a half...haven’t been home in 6 - 7 years...

Other players also described a similar situations which resulted in a physical confrontations between the players and their fathers, and they described these situations in this way:

Once my mom and dad got in a big argument...we were all there, [my dad] he hit my mom - just kind of slapped her, backhanded her. That’s the only time I’ve ever seen it, and I had him down on the ground...I wouldn’t hit him though. I was bawling my eyes out too...it’s kind of an emotional deal, but that’s the only time. And...he knew right then...he couldn’t fuck with me. but it never ever happened again. that was kind of sad...I felt bad after I did it. but you know. I was looking after my mom...And it wasn’t like she was bleeding. she took a backhand, but that was bad enough.

...[Dad’s aggression was] mostly [against] my mother...I would get in...and try to get in between them and take most of the blows...And I seen that....way too many times...I’ve seen him where he just be fine and all of a sudden he would just snap...mellowest guy you ever met [until] he was drinking...[mom] she didn’t like drinking and she would get in his face...But...I would stick up for myself too...I’d get right back at the old man. I’d get the shit beat out of me...I never hollered and run...And if my mom was in a bad situation, I knew I was going to get it, but I’d get in it so she wouldn’t get it...there’s nothing worse than hearing your mom cry and scream and yell and bleed...it was pretty intense...but...when I was growing up...as far as violence versus man verses women - I’ve seen it right in my house...

A number of players narratives explained their views pertaining to how parents and other influential models like teammates can inadvertently teach others violence, and these narratives gave support to social learning theory’s concepts of reinforcement and modeling. One narrative described the importance of role models within one’s family and how these models related to aggression:

If you learn to...deal with a problem...for instance in hockey...the way to solve your problem is you fight and you know whether that’s learned playing hockey if you’re a kid or you see your parents having a problem and they get into a fight to solve problems rather than sitting down and talking...those are the traits that you learn - that’s how you learn to deal with your problems...I think both of these
would carry off ice...more into your social behavior...I grew up watching hockey and we’d see fights in the NHL all the time and the next day at practice you know - hey. we’d go and fight the other little kid because we saw it on TV...it’s kind of a trickle down effect...kids learn this...this is what they see...

The above narratives discussed the important role that parents and other salient models play in terms of influencing players’ aggression. Negative family influences such as family violence and abuse can exert tremendous influences over individuals because the models teach people new types of negative and aggressive behaviors.

**Hockey Socialization and The Culture of Masculinity**

“Pack” Mentality Pressures and Expectations.

In addition to negative family influences, athletes often have strong affiliations with each other because they act as both teammates and friends who play together on the same team, live together, and develop strong friendships because they spend tremendous amounts of time with each other away from the arena. These bonds can lead to strong pressures, negative behaviors, and expectations to conform to group thinking which can be modeled and reinforced from this group or “pack” mentality. For example:

You look even here [college]...in the minor leagues and the juniors – it is the same...guys that live together in these houses...it’s that group mentality – it’s a mob mentality – these guys will do things in a group that they would never do as individuals – and a you add alcohol and...I think guys just are susceptible to pressure from other people...more easily influenced – they can be susceptible to any kind of suggestion – and there are guys that know how to push buttons – you know that want to see people go nuts...get people to do stupid things and you know with beer bongs...and...kick stands...and all of a sudden it gets rowdy and noisy and nasty and the guys end up scuffling...over stupid stuff...

...the machismo group mentality – or that locker room mentality comes out in off-ice behavior – off-ice situations...
...on every team you had leaders and you had followers...if your leaders are the right guys, it's gonna make it a much more enjoyable season all the way around. If your leaders are the wrong guys, then you're gonna have to deal with a few issues and a few problems off the ice just because...

Positive peers within a team are important because this lessens the amount off-ice problems which can result from negative behaviors promoted by a group or “pack” mentality. For instance, because players will come to the aid of another teammate during a potential altercation in both on- and off-ice situations, this type of socialization can lead sometimes to group aggression if certain players are acting as aggressors and require assistance from their teammates. for example:

One of our players was getting kicked out of the bar...four or five bouncers throwing him out...[we felt], “Hey, something’s happening to our teammate...we have to stick up for him”...you know 10 or 12 of us got into a fight with 10 or 12 bouncers...I guess we felt challenged and we had to prove our physical dominance in some way over these people...of course we are bonded with these people that we are fighting for and fighting with...so it kind of escalated from one guy getting thrown out of a bar to...at least 15 hockey players fighting with all these bouncers in a bar...so that’s one of the real incidents that I can remember...

Teammates always have your back. Like...I’ve been at parties and someone’s been like, “This guy’s going to fight me tonight” and the team’s got together and said, “If anything goes down, let’s go we’re in it.” And, usually nothing ever comes of it because people know, that if you mess with a hockey player, you mess with a whole...So...you don’t even do it...just like I would not mess with a football player, or I would never mess with a frat guy in his own house...you know you don’t do that. People do, [but] there’s a bond between everybody...

Generally most hockey teams I played on...there’s a strong bond...just bonding together all the time and...it didn’t mean you had to like each other...like if two guys didn’t like each other and one guy got in a fight, that other guy would still you know kind of take that guy’s side because he had that bond of being an athlete – they kind of battle together and everything like that...

Therefore, group aggression can occur as players support their teammates even though some of the players who are involved in the fight had nothing to do with the fight’s preceding events. Players can feel assaulted when their teammates are being
assaulted, and consequently feel the need to intervene in altercations. Furthermore, instigating players can become tougher and more aggressive toward others simply because they were in the presence of teammates who would support them should a fight occur. and this can create a false sense of security and invincibility within a player. These players described these issues and implications as follows:

...I think hockey or any team sport has a group or pack mentality...like I had with...a few of my friends that I played sports with. I was pretty invincible you know. You get around a few of your friends who’ve been in some rough times with. you know...your security blanket...

...usually...in most cases the guy that’s having words with somebody isn’t the one that ends up fighting. It’s one of the other guys that’s with you like...somebody that’s in the background coming up to find out what’s going on [and it’s], “We’ll take care of this guy. more or less."

I...always...felt like I was the team [fighter]. I wouldn’t say I was the toughest guy. but I felt that...if something was going on. I was always there to try to stick up for my teammates. And a lot of times I would put my nose in their business when maybe I should have let them handle it...But if I saw...there was something going on. I would always try to get in the middle, and intercept [it] so they wouldn’t have to...even if they didn’t need it. I still did it. I just felt that was something that I had to do.

Because players have the support from their teammates should an altercation occur, some players use this support to be more hostile and aggressive than they normally would be if they did not have the backing from their teammates:

Oh yeah, backing is pretty big. You’re probably not going to get into a scrap with ten other guys if you’re just by yourself. It’s a lot better if you have your back-up behind you. So that does make a difference...

No one wants to be beat up in front of their buddies – you generally have a little more courage when your buddies are around especially if you know they can back you up if you get in trouble...[fighting, it’s] the usual thing that happens when your buddies are around...if you’re in a bar in Toledo and you don’t know a soul in there, you generally have to keep you mouth shut to avoid fights. No question about it. The fraternities used to be the same when brothers are around. they are as tough as hell. but get them one on one – no way.
Players can carry their learned aggression from on-ice to off-ice situations and teammates can be a continuing influence in this aggression, for example:

I think it’s pretty much the same as on ice...your friends definitely influence you a little bit if you don’t want to [fight], even if they don’t say anything – you don’t want to act scared in front of your friends a lot of times. Sometimes they will say something, they’ll make little comments about backing down so I’d say that they’re effective...

...I think a hockey player that goes out...after playing a three hour game and wants to have a few beers isn’t wanting to get into a fight ’cause they usually just spent all their energy on the ice...I think the only time an incident will happen is if someone starts something with their teammate and much the same way that you respond on the ice, you respond off the ice. And that’s usually when they fight...

On-ice aggression can continue to off-ice situations for the players because aggressive off-ice is often recognized, modeled, and reinforced in much the same manner that aggression is modeled and reinforced in on-ice situations. This narrative described the way that players can be reinforced by teammates for their use of aggression:

I think a lot of the guys that I saw...that had more violence were the people looking for recognition, looking for approval...always trying to be the center of attention and that might have been the reason why they would always get into fights – you know to get that reward...because most people do recognize that...the violence part of it is definitely for the recognition side.

In the same way that players can be reinforced for their participation in aggression through recognition, players who do not support or back-up their teammates during altercations off the ice are sometimes questioned by teammates and are often viewed in a less than a positive manner. Therefore, negative reinforcement from one’s teammates, which related to questioning someone’s loyalty and the use of insults, can be strong influences for promoting off-ice aggression, for example:

...I’ve been in situations where a buddy of mine will fight and I’d get hassled back for it. “Where were you?” I’d try to tell them I was right there. But that’s
part of loyalty, sticking up for your friends. That happens in anything...in [a] business office if it’s about business work. It happens anywhere you go. Loyalty, sticking up for people.

...you were generally perceived as weak if you didn’t go fight...so I mean in the eyes of other people if you were challenged and didn’t fight, it would lower their opinion of you and maybe tease you. whereas if you went out and fought...you were generally seen...in higher standards...you’re a team guy. you’re a guy that would stick up for the other players...you were tough...you’re a lot of things that people respected back then...so you were generally rewarded by them for fighting and kind of looked down on if you didn’t...someone would never walk up to you and say, “Hey that was a great move you made walking away from fighting that guy” – I mean I probably never heard that in my life but I definitely heard...a...person being put down because he backed away from a physical confrontation both on the ice and off the ice...

Players will often succumb to team pressures in order to remain accepted by the group as well as to avoid being constantly ridiculed and harassed. Therefore, a team’s "pack" mentality does create a certain amount of peer pressure for individual athletes.

and this pressure can be difficult to confront. These narratives described the negative pressures which teams sometimes inflict upon individual members in this manner:

If someone were to...try to fight you on the ice...and you backed away...it would be more perceived as “He’s weak, he’s backed away from a physical confrontation” and generally most people don’t want to be seen like that...so I think there was a lot of pressure to stick up for yourself and I think the same goes over into your social behavior often...you’re kind of expected to stick up for yourself and people think you should and kind of have the perception that if you are not, you’re not as manly, you’re kind of more weak if you...back down from a physical confrontation...a lot of times I’ve seen people get teased because that happens, you know, “Hey, you’re scared of that person”. “Hey, you didn’t want to get beat up by that person”...

Nobody wants to feel like the little guy or the guy that’s the weakling or the guy that’s unaccepted so I think when you’re in that situation especially when it’s a freshmen or sophomore who’s out with juniors or seniors – if he’s in a precarious situation with someone and he’s off the ice and knows that teammates or comrades are right around – he may feel that he would have to live up to the expectations that he would have if he were at the arena or he maybe feels like he has to do something [fight]...
Demonstrating Masculinity.

In addition to group pressures and expectations which stem from sport socialization influences, players are often under constant pressure to demonstrate and prove their toughness and "manliness" in both on- and off-ice situations. Thus, living up to the stereotypical image of a hockey player becomes a never-ending situation because it provides players with a certain "macho" self-image and identity. Several players made reference to the idea of a "macho" self-image and the way in which this image contributed to off-ice player aggression:

Pride...that macho image. I wish you could stay away from [it]...getting in those fights, it's childish. Now you laugh at it, but I just think pride, standing up for yourself, being macho - things that could be definitely be avoided...

...a guy might say something to another guy [starting a fight]....again, just the machoism type of thing, the petty foolishness...

...I think...locker room talk is definitely Machismo - definitely without a doubt and...that carries over [into off-ice behaviors] I think...

Although teammates are often the main audience that the players will attempt to impress through their demonstration of toughness, fans and casual observers could also influence the maintenance of this particular "macho" self-image. These narratives described in-depth details of the "macho" image, and the expectations which accompany this image:

I think people that you know and hang around with... expect you to be strong. kind of macho, and stick up...for yourself ...people think...and kind of have the perception that if you are not, you're not as manly. you're kind of...weak if you...back down from a physical confrontation...a lot of athletes have a general view of themselves as being higher, more important...stronger, more dominant than other people and they feel that they demand a certain respect for this...that type of arrogance...but they try to think...they could command more respect than the average person - I think that's another reason it [violence] could carry-over [off-ice]...I think that would probably come...a lot of times from fans...coming up

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to you and saying hey, "You played a great game" or being impressed that hey, "I'm a hockey player"...and [players] think that they should get that respect all the time...people should look up to them and [just because] they play a sport...

...It's like I said, when you play hockey and you're twenty, twenty-five years old, you feel like you're almost indestructible...nothing hurts. You can just about do anything. You're cocky...and...walking around and you don't care who the biggest guy is. if he wants to fight. You might get beat, but you're not going to get killed. you know...and all it is, is that you get punched a few times...

...I'd say the number one thing is just trying to prove toughness I think. Trying to... prove that "I'm a tough guy and I play hockey"...and I won't let anybody else push me around. I don't care who you are...hockey players...view themselves as a tough bunch of guys. I think if you've been playing for as long as I have...you have to be a tough, sick person...I mean there's a lot of violence and I think...guys think that [if] they can take that on the ice, they...should be able to handle anything off the ice - can take [beat-up] anybody off the ice. You know. some guy in a bar. some random guy shooting their mouth off at them. So they may be a little quicker to jump in and get involved in a fight...than they would if they...had been...a checker player their whole life or something like that...

Maintaining a "macho" self-image could promote aggression in athletes because the players will often attempt to conform to teammate expectations of what it means to be tough and "macho" because some teams in the culture of hockey often reinforce these behaviors. for example:

I'd say guys definitely...want to be tougher in front of their teammates. they don't want one of their teammates to say...some...guy pushed him around last night. or...some jack ass...was pushing this guy around last night or he called him names and he didn't do anything about it...I see that all the time...no guy wants to hear in the locker room the next day that he's a wuss...or that people walk all over him off the ice.

Even players who are not known for being fighters on the ice can become influenced by the "pack" mentality which may encourage off-ice aggression through the promotion of an elitist type of attitude simply because the men are athletes. for example:

You're getting recognized, you're a top male athlete...you have people paying to watch you play...college hockey, junior hockey, you are somebody...that stardom thing...I think even the finesse players, the quote unquote non fighting players.
they [have] that ego that we have all created — [it] carries over...you know.
“Don’t fuck with me. don’t mess with me. I am somebody.” Even with the nicest
guys. I think...have that confidence...that air about you...that does carry off the
ice...off the [playing] field...And, it will tend to probably, lead to more quote
unquote violent acts...than the normal person...

Players can have a significant influence on their teammates’ off-ice aggression
through the manner in which modeling influences teammates’ off-ice aggression:

I don’t know if it’s the sport that’s doing it but what I can say is I’ve seen guys
off-ice emulating what they do on-ice - off the ice in certain situations - generally
what I’ve noticed is when hockey players are...in a precarious situation with
someone...off the ice...he may feel...like he has to do something that someone
else he looks up to would have done in a similar situation or may have acted
out...I know that influence was there with me and every so often I would think to
myself. “How would so and so handle himself in a similar situation?”

...there are different role models on the team and...I looked up more to the strong
silent type guys who went out there and did their job...went home and did what
needs to be done...but...I could see in different situations with other guys how
they looked up to policemen [the fighters] on the team as younger guys in the
organization wanting to be that guy that was looked up to and wanting to act the
same way. and talk the same way. and try to do things the same way that they [the
fighters] were doing...

According to these narratives, modeling can occur through directly observing
another’s behavior and interaction. guessing how an influential player might act in a
particular situation. or speculating how a teammate may expect them to act in terms of
their use of off-ice aggression.

Hockey Socialization.

In addition to masculinity influences, contact sports such as hockey promote a
certain amount of physical toughness and aggression, and these are normative elements
which relate to certain sports participation. Contact sports are very different from
noncontact sports in terms of the amount of physical aggression and toughness which are
required components of the game as this player discussed:
I think that...you take maybe your sports like football and hockey...rugby and lacrosse and group those all together as opposed to...something like tennis or golf and maybe they chose that type of a game because they like laid back games...a hockey player likes the banging and the grinding and he’s not afraid of a little bit of a physical confrontation — “What’s a little punch to the head when he’s just been slammed up against the boards?” — whereas maybe a guy in another sport...would be...very, very scared at the idea of being drilled in the head...punched in the face...most guys just they fold or call the police or whatever - I’m not saying the average person wants to be punched but I think hockey players [take it often]...

Certain athletes are taught and reinforced through their sports participation to become even tougher and more aggressive because these skills will make them better and more successful in their sport, and this usually translates into more wins for a team.

Several narratives described this phenomenon of learning toughness, its value, and the potential consequences off the ice:

The notion of toughness - especially in physical or contact sports...toughness, that is the way you win - that’s the way you accomplish things - you accomplish goals - whether that’s on the [ice] or off...[and] that carries over - whether its accomplishing a goal... getting a girl or...scoring a goal in hockey...I think you want to be tough in your mind mentally until you accomplish those goals - but in a contact sport being tough in your mind doesn’t accomplish those alone - you have to be tough in your mind and your body as well and you have to act and sometimes athletes think like they will act off the ice... and that will make them accomplish their goals - you know that’s what he’s going to do - beat that guy that’s talking shit about you at the bar or something like that and the idea of toughness is that every guy thinks that they are tough...they want to be the toughest guy on the team - or they want to act tough because they don’t want somebody to think they are weak - or they won’t get their stuff done - the notion of toughness carries over in everything because people don’t want to seem weak...

Players in contact sports have to be tough or they aren’t going to be on the team - and that’s what the coach wants and the public...a team or a coach or a fan...demand you to be tough, they demand you to do those things - and you have to do that if you want to succeed - so that becomes ingrained in what you do every day and its going to carry over into off-ice violence - because you consider yourself tough and you want to be that person all the time...
People generally that play sports are rewarded for being physically dominant over someone else...that’s what makes them better than a person that’s...that’s what makes you win something - that you are more physically dominant...and you get rewarded for that...I mean in a sport like hockey if say someone says something to you on the ice - what you do is try to physically take them out you know - next time they are in the corner you are going to hit them that much harder - and somehow that might carry over...if you hear aggressive words off the ice - I mean your reaction is. “Hey, this is how I deal with it and with physical-ness”- I am going to do the same thing now - you’re trying to show you’re more superior...you are using your physical dominance...[it’s] not only the fighting but the aggression being that it’s always pushed into you...you’ve got to be aggressive. you’ve got to try your hardest and that’s something that is always coached from a small age...

Players who are not tough and aggressive would be terminated or cut before they ever reached the higher playing levels. Therefore, aggressive sports such as hockey may, in fact, provide a learning atmosphere for players to develop new and enhanced skills in terms of fighting abilities and toughness because in-sport aggression is a common occurrence. Several players discussed how learning aggression in hockey could be beneficial and carry into off-ice altercations, for example:

Hockey players or others in a contact sport could be prone to instigate a fight...[because for] hockey players, instigating fights is part of the game...instigating a fight can work to your advantage...you can get them [opposition] off their game...you know...make them push themselves. push their manhood...I’m not sure if it [hockey] makes you more prone to violence, but it almost does...

I think...if you get into a fight in the ice rink and you lose, you learn from it - and you go off the ice...I don’t think you’re going to be afraid as much. For some reason, whether you win or lose in a hockey fight, it just makes you a tougher person - doesn’t make you nervous to take this guy off ice. I don’t know - your mentality changes...it gives you the confidence that if you got in a fight off the ice, you could most likely handle it...it makes you a tougher person...not as afraid...I really think that contact sports...make you know that you can really beat someone up...if you had to...

Generally hockey players are very aggressive. It’s kind of bred into you as a sport, you know. That’s what you’re taught. And if maybe...part of that aggressiveness is that they carry it off the ice too, you know. being an aggressive
person...being a person that doesn’t so much settle [things], or have a good conflict management other than fighting someone...that would definitely contribute to that [off-ice violence].

No “Turn-Off” Switch.

Aggressive influences which are learned in-sport can filter into aggressive off-ice behaviors because fighting is used in hockey as both a way to win games and as a way to settle disputes with opponents quickly and easily. One player poignantly discussed the way that learning toughness through sport socialization can carry into out-of-sport aggression:

I know in hockey [they] make demands on athletes and demand them to be tough because they want to see it - it [aggression] automatically carries over...I know for me it’s like what do they think this is some sort of surprise because if you’re paying a guy 3 million dollars a year to knock somebody’s block off - “Do you expect them to turn it off?” - “No way” - you’re praising him to be this animal you know - you want him to be a destructive force...but then you want him to be some sort of pussy cat off the [playing] field...really nothing is said until you get into trouble...

Players can sometimes have a difficult time controlling their aggressive impulses once they leave the sports arena and not be able to “turn off” their aggressive tendencies during off-ice situations, and this has been a reoccurring theme among the participants.

Several narratives described this phenomenon:

...certainly...some guys...definitely don’t have a turn-off switch...they take an insult on the ice the same way they would off the ice. And...those are the kind of guys that I look for in a hockey game cause I know...they can’t turn it off. it doesn’t matter what stage of the game it is. a one goal game, tie game in the third period. and you know. these guys are liabilities out there...they don’t understand that...violence...has to have a purpose out there [in a game]...when they get off the ice, they react the same way - I mean...calling them an asshole on the ice is the same as somebody else calling them an asshole off the ice...they want to clock them. And...you see that all the time. I think that’s very common...

...[a] guy I play hockey with...used to be a brawler for a professional hockey team...this guy is the epitome of machismo...just one of the toughest guys I ever
met in my life...he's one of those guys that doesn't have an on and off switch. It is always on...that is how this man thinks and you will find individuals like that...in hockey especially.

People that are the more violent types when they play a sport tend to be the more violent people off the ice as well...I definitely think that people that play...you know hockey or football are more likely to get in a fight because they are in physical sports than say that of a golfer or tennis player...I mean that's something that these people are...taught to be strong. taught for that physical confrontation...they learn to deal with people...through being physical...and...I think a lot of it is that they can't turn it off...

**Coaching Influences on Aggression.**

In addition to players lacking a "turn-off switch" for their aggressive impulses, coaches are among the most influential figures which affect hockey players' lives both on and off the ice because they directly influence players success and failure. For instance, the coach determines who will make the team, play consistently in the games, and remain on the team for the duration of the season. Furthermore, coaches also have a tremendous influence in the amount of on- and off-ice aggression which their team perpetrates simply through the coach's player selection and his own beliefs relating to aggression and fighting. These narratives described the coaches' influence:

From my experiences, coaches are very influential in this process [of curbing aggression / fighting in players]...[in the times I've grown up. I've always had admiration...respect for my coach and everything...you learn and try to learn from...people that you like and respect...if you get rewarded by someone that you admire and respect, you're gonna tend to do those things that...reward you...where if they punish you for doing something, you're gonna take that a lot less seriously from a type of person that really doesn't mean anything to you...

A lot of coaches that I had...you know they hear you get into a fight whether it is on the ice or off the ice...sometimes they even come up and reward you for it saying, "Great fight out there"...you were never punished for fighting...that's something if coaches want to have an effect on that...they should...punish people for fighting or violence...so that's a definite influence if you are a 17 or 18 year old kid...a 35 year old man that you respect and like because he's your coach - he
Coaches can influence off-ice fighting and aggression by their on-ice teaching, philosophies, and the manner in which they handle aggressive off-ice situations.

Therefore, the manner in which a coach will address or fail to address off-ice aggression is often directly related to the amount of aggression and fighting which may occur within a team. Several narratives described coaches’ influences relating to their team’s off-ice aggression:

I think that what coaches try to do is to get their team’s to do what they want them to do - and by discouraging aggression, they are discouraging what they want them [team] to do - so I don’t think there’s a whole lot of discouraging going on until something happens - then they are discouraging it off the ice - oh yeah - if something happens off ice, then they are discouraging aggression - up until that point they don’t discourage anything...

The coach never wanted to know what went on outside the arena...I mean if you came and played good...they never ever worried about your doing something off the ice...maybe if a coach took a more active role in knowing what his players were doing off the ice...other than when they are at the arena...you know that might help a lot...

...you know it’s not the things they say - I don’t necessarily think they [coaches] teach you to be aggressive on the ice and that automatically carries over...they just don’t think that something is going to happen off the ice as a result of their teaching...in younger years I definitely did [have coaches address off-ice aggression], but I had more coaches that didn’t [discuss off-ice violence]...obviously when hitting went on or started - coaches gradually became less interested in teaching us about...what’s going to happen off-ice if you carry these things over - until you got in trouble and they said, “Ok, don’t do that because you’re going to get in trouble”...then there’s a kid kicked off a team or a kid in trouble because of that - I just think the win mentality is not the way to go...

The above narratives presented evidence that coaches may unknowingly influence or encourage their players’ off-ice aggression by their actions or failure to act. One player discussed how his team’s management knowingly encouraged his own off-ice
aggression because even though the management was aware of this player’s off-ice fighting while he was in tryouts, their failure to address this issue acted as subtle yet obvious reinforcement to the player:

...in some of my off-ice escapades in Vancouver during the years when I was there. I had some real crazy things go on - I was in a lot of fights and stuff like that - they [coaches] heard about some different things and they actually kind of liked it...because that was their tough guy fighting and...as far as my [other] coaching went, it was always pretty much discouraged not to do it – but...not a lot you could do - coaches weren’t to anxious to kick people off the team...

Not all narratives depicted coaches who would knowingly or unwittingly promote off-ice aggression by their actions or failure to act. A few coaches had a zero tolerance policy in terms of the way they handled off-ice aggression within their team, and this placed the responsibility for preventing off-ice fighting on all of the players who were both observers as well as the perpetrators of the actual aggression, for example:

...[off-ice fighting] it’s a problem. Our college team was really unique where it was almost where you didn’t want to be associated with [any teammate] labeled a bad drunk...nothing good can come out of trying to have a good time with this person around. And, we were all so cautious and aware of this and tried to intermediate when necessary. Definitely, some people would encourage [fighting], but most of us wouldn’t. We would be in trying...extinguish the fire. not fill it with gasoline [laughs]...but with our guys, we watched out for one another and it was our coach’s...rules he laid down, where if you’re in a situation where something’s going [to happen], you’re as responsible for it [the fight] as the person carrying out the act - if you do nothing to try to...get involved and try to cool things off...if you can do something to prevent it, and you don’t, you’re as guilty as the party who got involved in most cases and that happens when the suspensions...were brought out...so...I think he [the coach] employed the best management technique that you could of...

# Athletes Being Challenged

In addition to coaching influences, a number of participants discussed motivations for fighting off-ice which directly related to being challenged by nonathletes. The
athletes subsequently accepted an opponent’s challenge to fight which would cause an alteration to occur. These players’ discussed being challenged off-ice in this way:

...people know who you are, people will take shots, people will give you crap, people will mouth off after a few beers...and...you are put a little bit more...on a pedestal...in a college campus, especially our college campus...I think that created it more so than anywhere else I’ve experienced it. I think you saw more violent acts on the college campus, by hockey players, by football players...lacrosse...than anywhere else... I still...go back to society creating these quote unquote gods, quote unquote untouchables. You know, I’m...up on the pedestal type people...and then people knowing that, people being jealous, people wanting to challenge you whether it be one sport, another sport...I really think...that’s what causes more [off-ice aggression]...

...at parties...I do see it occur when guys will come up to athletes and give them trouble – you know. “You think you’re a big shot, you think that you’re a tough guy just cause you play hockey – well now you don’t have your shoulder pads, you don’t have your mask that protects you – why don’t you take a shot at me now?” So you got guys that are trying to sucker [hockey] guys into things they shouldn’t be getting involved in...

It’s just mostly people that happened to be at the bar that didn’t know anything about hockey and they would have comments and things like that about...players. Not just you, but even other players...sometimes they didn’t even know...you were a hockey player, and they found out, they would...just try to test you...just by what they would say...they would say things about...hockey is a pussy sport and things like that [laughs] and...once you get drinking and hear someone saying that...you really don’t take as much when you got alcohol in you. Your tolerance level is a lot lower when you are drinking or at least it was for me.

One player described his perception of the number of males who would challenge players to fights on a fairly regular basis simply because they were athletes, for example:

...a guy tried to start with me last year...when I was an assistant coach – we lost a few in a row and some guy was mouthing off to me about how the team sucked and...I should be fired...and he was egging me on. And I just walked away, and...you run into that every now and then. For every...girl groupie there is that wants to be around a hockey player, there’s a guy that despises them...probably jealous you know...

Being provoked by nonathlete males on an on-going basis can readily lead to athletes’ off-ice aggression according to the players, and this occurred fairly frequently.
Other players described the manner in which athletes were provoked and challenged by other males, and they explained this phenomenon in this way:

…it’s not that the players go looking for it [fights] – it comes finding them – you know you bring a team of guys into town - athletic players…take the junior scenario – there’s the townies and the hockey players – and the townies don’t like it when the hockey team comes to town because all the guys are from out of town and all the women like the guys on the hockey team – the guys from town all of a sudden don’t have any women, so now you go to a party or something and there’s the hockey players – “Let’s get them” – so it carries over that way and I think it’s at every level - you know. “There’s that asshole that plays for the [hockey team] – he thinks he’s big shit, he thinks he’s this” and some asshole will come up and…make you mad and you have to be a bigger man about it …every weekend that we weren’t playing hockey - because you’d go to the parties…the townies would want to fight you for stealing their girlfriends so I would say…a lot …and that’s back in the 1980s…growing up in Canada...

...[back] in the day…they’d send cars to pick us up…[the bars] they wouldn’t let us spend any money but they knew that where the Chiefs were, the crowd was coming when there were 4,000 people in there [and] they were all drunk too – so …Chiefs go over, we’d sit there. and drink beer for free – everybody else would come. the place was packed – all the places were like that…[off-ice fights] it’s jealousy from some of the people…you know – “You think you’re tough on the ice well let’s see how tough you really are - try this”...

...you got to remember…when the [hockey player] guys are out they’re at the bar…you’ve always got these [other] guys out there…and they test you to see how damn tough you are. So a lot of it is brought on by the public too…whether a guy is just plum sober, he may just tell a [hockey] guy…if you want to do it. let’s just do it...we’ll see how tough you are, let’s go out back...You get to drinking, hell, it don’t matter where you’re at, you’re going to do it...But I mean. if somebody confronts you…wanting to see how tough you are and stuff like that. drinking is going to bring it out in you...

Because certain players with certain roles on a team are socialized and reinforced for their toughness, these players may not even consider backing down from someone who is challenging them to a fight whether this is on-ice or off-ice. This may be because certain player roles have become extremely ingrained within an athlete as this player discussed:
A tough guy - enforcer as they call him in hockey... You know he wouldn’t back down... doesn’t back down period... maybe that’s characteristic of his personality or it could be a learned trait from hockey... I think it is a little bit of both actually - I think you learn stuff from your environment... you learn traits... personality traits from your environment... arrogance - won’t back down... more pride - you’re going to take your licks, you’re going to give them out... he is there for physical toughness...

**Preferential Treatment and an Absence of Deterrence.**

In addition to athletes being challenged by nonathletes in social settings, the preferential treatment that athletes receive can influence the athletes’ self-image, and this can potentially lead to aggression. Therefore, preferential treatment from others can negatively affect the athletes’ sense of self and propel an athlete’s self-image to more inflated levels:

... I think that teachers that saw me play treated me differently or knew that I was a hockey player and they treated me... as if I was the stereotypical hockey player - that is you know - tough, rough, fist fight, violence... I could always tell they treated me a little bit differently... just their attitude... athletes were in the upper echelon of the social group... even in college...

... it’s gotten me into places or into things or free rounds of golf... you get treated as a celebrity so people want to be around you - they want to do things for you - you call up places and you say, “Hey, I’m the captain or the coach of the hockey team” and right away people stand up and take notice...

... I’d be an idiot to say... there wasn’t [special treatment for athletes]... there’s... not as much glamour as a Hollywood star on TV but for a small college setting and you’re uptown and things like that... people know who you are and you’re pretty visible and people will treat you different... girls wanting to take you home to guys buying beers for you - so people are going to treat you differently because you’re somewhat in the spotlight...

Other narratives further described the way in which athletes are admired, and these narratives showed the way in which this preferential treatment can negatively add to the players’ inflated self-image, if players are not well-grounded:
everybody knows we’re pampered pretty much. You get that spoiled brat attitude when that happens if...logic is not in your mind...you’re treated differently...anybody that’s an athlete knows that. You’re worshiped from a lot of people...a lot of fans here in Winston...hero...worship us...

I mean, no doubt - you’re recognized on campus, things like that...being on scholarship, you literally are a celebrity...every step you make...no doubt...

...the better...preferential treatment...you go to a...restaurant and someone knows who you are, they move you to the best table...when I was playing...under their umbrella in their organization...we went as a team...somewhere and we didn’t wait in lines to get into a nightclub. they move you right to the...VIP door. or...[if] there’s two guys who are equally good looking standing...if one was...an athlete...there’s that aura...they’re heads and shoulders above common folk...but. [I] definitely have been treated probably better that I should have...

Because athletes are often glorified and placed on a higher social pedestal by people in society, athletes have often avoided consequences for their negative behaviors and, therefore, have not always experienced legal or disciplinary repercussions for their actions to the same extent as nonathletes (Benedict, 1997; Benedict & Klein. 1997; Lefkowitz. 1997). Athletes have experienced leniency for their antisocial actions from people such as teachers, college professors and administrators, parents, and law enforcement officials in both society and on college campuses (Benedict & Klein. 1997; Lefkowitz, 1997: Melnick, 1992). Furthermore, because athletes find that they are able to avoid their consequences and being disciplined in a variety of settings, athletes may come to accept and believe that they are above the law in terms of having to account for their negative actions. This type of reinforcement can easily promote an attitude that athletes are exempt from experiencing any kind of ramifications for their negative actions. Several narratives, which represented college, junior, and minor professional levels of hockey discussed this phenomenon of athlete privilege which occurred in various social settings in this way:
...one night... all the guys were at the bar watching a hockey game. A fight broke out where a few of our guys just proceeded to knock the shit out... of seven other patrons of this establishment... And they [the bouncers] called the police and sent the hockey guys out the back door [laughs] and the police came in the front door... and... as we were leaving they said, “You know, can’t come back tonight but tomorrow will be fine.” They sent us on our way. Preferential treatment? Of course...

...a teammate of mine in junior hockey got pretty drunk at the bar and... when they kicked him out of the bar, he was so mad that he kicked in the front window... the bouncers went after him and... the whole ten of us stormed out into the parking lot thinking he was fighting regular patrons. We didn’t know that... they were holding him down and... the owner said, “Hold onto this guy. We’re going to charge him for breaking our window”... I told him he was a member of the Lindsay junior team and the guy just went, “Oh shit.” And I don’t know if he was a sponsor or not. And he was like, “Alright, get him out of here.” And there was no charges laid and they didn’t make him pay for a window... So... he was one of our fighters and... got the benefit of the doubt because he was a hockey player...

...I think at the minor league level where you haven’t established yourself yet and you’re not in the National Hockey League eye – like national news type thing – you’re in a sports bar in Indianapolis playing in the “I” [International League] – and some guy says [something]... you nail him – “Yea, you’re right I am an asshole”– boom – and the next thing you know there’s a big fight but once again you’re playing on a hockey team, they spend a lot of money, you bring a lot of business into that bar - guess what? - he’s the asshole, he’s getting tossed - bouncers are... bringing you another drink and apologizing for the trashy people that were there – and that happens a lot.

The above player mentioned that because minor league players are not in the national media spotlight to the same degree as the NHL players, minor league players may be more likely to engage in off-ice aggression since there is less likelihood that their behavior will be uncovered by the media. One narrative specifically commented on the extent that the media does not uncover minor league players’ antisocial behaviors to the same degree as the media covers NHL players because one player’s legal difficulties were never exposed by the media in the town in which he had played professionally:

You know, there’s different levels of pro sports... once you get up to the very top in pro sports I don’t think you can do that as much. Because then the media might
get wind of what’s going on and you don’t want that to happen. So [in] minor
league sports. I think it [off-ice aggression] happens more often than it does in the
top NHL...I mean the media is not going to find out anything about what happens
to a minor league professional athlete...a [major league] professional athlete gets
a DUI now. the whole world is going to know about it. If it’s a minor league pro
athlete...they’re not going to hear about it...I mean when I played here, the
second or third year...I even had a DUI. Nobody knew a thing about it...nobody
knew I spent a night in jail...I don’t think my coach or even the owner would
have even known if I wouldn’t have told them...So you got to be a lot more
careful when you make it all the way to the top...

As long as athletes are given preferential treatment and are not held to the same
consequences that nonathletes would be for their negative behaviors. athletes will
continue to believe and act as though they are immune from consequences, and they will
expect to be treated as though they are above the law.

Sexual Aggression Toward Women

Players Attitudes Toward Women

The players were asked to discuss the general attitudes that they saw within the
hockey culture which related to the attitudes players held toward women. These player
attitudes were often contingent upon various behaviors which the women expressed
toward the players, and these attitudes particularly related to sexual behaviors. Women
who had sex with few if any players were usually given more respect than those women
who had frequent sex encounters with a number of players. Therefore, the players’
attitudes were fairly consistent in their descriptions of women as typified by the
following players responses:

I think that [in] hockey...I mean this is a generalization, but I think that there is
two schools. There’s the school that really respects women and then there’s the
kind that don’t...there doesn’t appear to be the gray line. I don’t see the gray line.
There’s guys who normally have girlfriends and treat women quite well and then
there’s the guys that don’t seem to have steady girlfriends – [they’re] just going out with girls whenever they feel like it, and they seem to be happy and live with themselves that way...

I think it’s split into 3 groups – I think that the wives and the girlfriends get their respect… I think the spectator is another, and then hockey whore is another and I don’t think they have any respect… whatsoever - I think they are there to serve their purpose and they’re pieces of shit and if they want to be treated that way, I treat them that way...

General attitude towards women… I don’t think you can put one specific general attitude. I think that girls that… go after guys just cause they play hockey or just cause they’re athletes… there’s definitely more of a sort of sex object attitude towards those girls and they certainly take more of a ripping behind their back… than any other girls. And you know… I wouldn’t say it’s necessarily right, but in a way they bring that upon themselves. You know you act like a sex object, you treat yourself as a sex object. Other people are going to treat you that way too… like… most guys aren’t going to come into the locker room and trash their own girlfriend… say… “She’s a slut”...

While the players had respect for women such as mothers, sisters, girlfriends, or wives, this was in stark contrast to their attitudes toward women who pursued the players often as sexual partners simply because the men were athletes and hockey players. This latter group of women were definitely characterized in a negative manner.

Other narratives, which described women in terms of being sexual objects, seemed to represent a fairly common portrayal of the general view toward women throughout the hockey culture. Three players expressed these attitudes toward women:

I would say in the world of hockey, women are objectified quite a bit - no question. They’re a piece of meat as opposed to a human being. There are exceptions to that of course but I mean… locker room talk centers around how big tits Brenda has and how big a box Julie has and this and that… You never hear guys talking about how nice Jennie is and that kind of thing. That kind of thing is not going on… [women are] certainly objectified in the locker room… even when you go to the bars, especially with hockey buddy’s, it still continues. It’s like yeah, “Where can we find the next one? Who is going to be the next victim?” - “Victim” in a light-hearted sense not victim of rape or anything like that. You know, basically it was not a successful weekend on Monday afternoon unless you scored. There is no other world that I have been in that’s more objectified
[women] then they are in hockey. I have been in a lot of different organizations of sport...the work environment and business environment is pretty bad...but it was nowhere near what hockey was...nothing in comparison. Nothing...

...they look at women as objects, sexual objects...tales of conquest. just whatever it takes to get off - it's really of no concern for who they hurt...that sort of thing - there is regret - I think that there are guys who genuinely don't want to be caught up in that, but they get themselves in too far and before they know it they're a part of it and become part of the culture and...it takes a really mature one to stand up for their own beliefs...

...there are things that are not violent but they just seem kind of wrong that guys do in terms of how they relate to women...like...they treat women like objects - sexual objects and they treat them like they are not there - you know they talk about them as if they aren't there and as if they [the athletes] were in the locker room talking...right to their face and don’t care what happens or what they say at all...because they think they’re still going to have sex or whatever...things like that with the misogynistic group mentality - or that locker room mentality comes out in off-ice behaviors...treating women really bad...when a guy finds someone [a lady] that they actually want to spend time with they treat them differently, but as far as other girls like one nighters or short term girlfriends or someone they didn't care very much about - just as objects or sex partners – definitely...

The above narratives described women in terms of being sexual objects who were available for the purpose of the athletes’ pleasure. Other players reflected similar negative views of women who pursued the players making themselves readily available to the players sexually: the players also included the different types of names which were associated with these women followers:

I think the kind of women that would be groupie-type women, the athlete would have a not as good of a view of her as say the girl that he marries or the girl next door - that sort of thing. So his attitude toward her would be she’s a sexual object...I don’t think they’re the same attitude towards their girlfriends...

...they called them in my day...the buffarillos – the girls that hung out – the kind of the not so good-looking ones who just wanted companionship but you knew...at night’s end that if you hadn’t hooked up with somebody else well, there was always so and so – and they were accommodating and they were there because they just wanted to be with a hockey player – and...now a days they call
them dirty... and it's the same girls over and over... there are certain girls. we call them Puck Bunnies, who just come around and screw whenever we wanted to...

The above narratives described some of the different names and characteristics of women who closely followed certain organizations such as hockey teams. Overall, the players thought there was respect for certain women (i.e., mothers, sisters, girlfriends, wives), but the players were quick to point out that this respect did not apply to all women. The discussion will now focus on the type of interactions which occur in hockey lockerrooms.

**Story-Telling and Lockerroom Talk**

Because hockey players spend large amounts of time together in preparation for practices and games as well as time together after these completed activities, the dressing room becomes a sacred place for the players to congregate because the room acts as a safety haven from the outside nonathletic world. Personnel within the hockey culture have a continuous flow of stories and discussions of all types which occur on a regular basis. Certain players have the innate ability to tell captivating stories about themselves and others which at times produces humorous and interesting conversations. Other conversations and interactions which occur in the dressing room can be insulting and demeaning, and these discussions are seldom if ever scrutinized. Players tended to describe the story-telling atmosphere and the types of discussions which can become embellished within the dressing room in this way:

I guess inside the locker room it's more story telling and guys trying to be like macho... "I slept with her, and she's nothing, she's a pig or something"... more silly talk and then meanwhile when the guy was probably outside [the lockerroom] he was probably sweet talking the same girl he was talking about
[earlier] saying she was a pig. So, I would say just in the lockerrooms, probably more guys trying to be macho and outside just regular guys you know trying to hook up with girls.

Well, a lot of guys I think talk a big game, but I think they’re just trying to make up for some lack of self-esteem or something missing in their own relationships or lives...stuff like that – but it comes across as bravado – it comes across as you know they’re... “studly” types...

Some of the players seemed to understand the manner in which lockerroom talk can negatively impact women, and one player discussed this issue in this way:

We all like to share our stories and strengths in the lockerroom so – of course every girl’s fear is being talked about in the locker room. No girls want to be talked about ever. I mean it’s obvious when a girl doesn’t want to be talked about in the locker room because, you know, it’s not a very nice thing to say. I mean it’s not a really bad thing either but you refer to her...Jennifer or whatever is a slut or a broad or whatever. Yeah, you don’t want to be talking about your girl...some of the talk...it’s good, some of it’s bad, you know.

It is interesting to note that although lockerroom conversations often include a lot of jokes and humor among the players in addition to conversations relating to both men and especially the women, the players did talk frequently about women and sometimes in insulting and demeaning ways within lockerrooms. This information is also supported by an earlier lockerroom study (Curry, 1991). Two players described the nature of these conversations in this way, often revealing a lot of sexual detail:

Oh, anything and everything is said. How many times she’s ever fucked this, that, every time - they embellish a lot of times...usually it’s the truth, cause you can’t take the stories much further than what we actually did [laughs] and if you can. they should be an author, not a hockey player. But, just anything you can imagine gets said, and is talked about ...everything that I’ve mentioned so far, plus three times more and...guys will embellish, but they won’t make up an entire scenario

As far as one guy banging a broad and then coming into the locker room the next morning and telling the guys...it’s no big deal to fuck the shit out of a girl every way possible and then come to the locker room and tell all the boys how it was and how she was, how she felt, what she smelt like, and in fine detail...he could
just do his job and do what he did to her [and] kept to himself...[but] especially the one-night stand...I mean, if they were...regular girlfriends, live-in girlfriend, or wives obviously, it's a different situation. You know, for a pick-up one night and bang the shit out of them...[it's] another story, another notch on the belt and you can better believe a lot of other guys are gonna hear about it. And then when they do, they hear this story...somebody else is gonna try to bang her too. So... I think the respect level is very low.

Conversations within the lockerroom are expected to remain confidential among the players even though all players as well as their girlfriends, sexual intimacies, and relationships can be topics for jokes and conversations at anytime. Some players discussed the group mentality behaviors, which related to being in the constant company of other men, and this was responsible for the high amounts of sexual content disclosed during lockerroom conversations, as opposed to the men simply being athletes:

...well I think among the lockerroom – it’s...definitely misogynistic - definitely without doubt and...that carries over I think - you know when the team is all out somewhere and...you’re talking to a girl and all the team’s around you and they talk and say what are you going to do to her - and all that stuff - that kind of talk breeds and I don’t want to say breeds, but it does breed that kind of certain behavior in the group kind of thing...when men have the group thing going with not caring attitude towards women - that kind of carries over - that happens when a guy’s with a girl he doesn’t care what happens to the girl as long as he is getting what he wants - or getting what the group wants - I just think that group or team mentality, it kind of carries over - it does carry over into the sexual aspect of life...if she’s drunk or passed out or whatever...you hear about that stuff in the lockerroom...and...sometimes they’re willing and sometimes they’re not...

In the locker room, you gotta be the stud, you gotta be “the guy.” It’s the talk, you’re cool, you’re this, you’re that, you’re the other thing. And, that’s our pack mentality. Outside of the locker room, I don’t think you’re a whole lot different than anybody else. You know...I hear stories, and the construction. Guys are guys period. in that situation. So. I don’t think the athlete thing really plays into it. I just think it makes it easier for you to do what you do...

Overall, the above narratives described the content of conversations between teammates in the lockerroom, and this subject matter frequently related to sexual topics.
Male Coercion

The players were asked how often situations occurred which involved the use of some type of force in order to gain sexual compliance with women. The players discussed one quite common practice which related to verbal pressure, coercion, and/or manipulation. Although physical force was not that common, verbal coercion was. A number of players discussed coercion and the manner in which they had used this at times:

...it wasn’t so much forced like as in rape. it was kind of...kind of talking her...through it. [I] don’t really know of any stories that were flat out rape like picking...girls up and forcing sex on her and that’s it...[it’s] more of a... I don’t know the word for it... like a struggle type thing, but not a physical struggle or anything like that - more of a verbal struggle to them to do something than it was physical...

I never really saw anybody force anything with them. ‘cause most of the women were all willing anyway - I don’t think I never saw anybody get forced into anything. In all the times I played. and in all the things we did. I think there might be a lot of coaxing, you know...talking them into it...you just say things. until you finally find the right thing to say to get them to do what you want...you know. “Oh. it’s going to be okay. I’m not going to hurt you” things like that...you know. “You’re not going to get pregnant” - a lot of the women all worry about getting pregnant...“Oh. I’ll make sure I’m not going to get you pregnant” - things like that...

...I guess more so. in a few of those situations...coercion comes into [it]. “Let’s do it” ...only a couple times when I think it was actually. and not actually observed. but you know what went on kind of [thing] – “I don’t want to” “Yes you’re going to” and more of a forceful situation...so personally observing. or being aware of that. not a whole lot. I think more so the coercion.

The players were readily familiar with this practice. and one player discussed his techniques and expertise in coercing females in some detail. for example:

I’ve had to be a...good salesmen a couple of times [laughs]...you’re about to get laid and she’s like. “I can’t do this. I don’t know. my roommate is out there. I got to go. We have this policy where all five girls go home together.” And you’re like, “No”. You’re like trying to sell it on...and you know. “Come on. I’ll
give you a back rub” or whatever. You got to be a salesman. You’re a guy trying
to get laid. You know, just like if you’re on break away and you miss the first
shot, but you’re going to stuff the second one in - it’s the same thing. So, I
definitely had to pull that one off. Saying, you know, “You’re drunk, stick
around, lets hang out.” And the next thing you know you’re have to coerce her.
But I’ve never had someone say, “No and stop” and all those crazy stuff. But I’ve
had the next morning, “I shouldn’t have done that. I can’t believe we did that.” I
try to say the same thing to basically try to get them out of your bed as fast as
possible...most girls give it away so it’s very rarely that a chick would walk
away...

Some players did recognize that a certain level of force, although not physical
force, was used in this process, for example:

Well, forcing it is an interesting word because...I mean first of all, at bars, it’s
tough to talk to them, and they don’t want to go home with you - but sometimes
they do - and then of course, they never want to fool around at first...so it’s one
big force right from the beginning that you’re kind of just working on...you see a
guy with a girl and you’re like, “His hard helmet is on and his hammer is out, he’s
doing work” - Basically, the whole thing, most of the time, is working, working,
trying to get a girl to bed with you. and it’s not that hard in college. actually...[I’ve been] pretty successful...

One interesting question arises as to how far some players are willing to go in
terms of the coercion and the pressure they will apply to a woman in their quest to have
sex. One player described the pressure which he had put on a woman in order to
convince her to have sex with him, and although he had mentioned that there was no
physical force during the situation, he discussed the overall pressure in this way:

I’ve certainly pressured. You always put the pressure on...you have to
sometimes. They’ll say, “No, no, no” and that sixteenth time they finally say,
“No” - they just give in. I never physically forced anything on a girl. Never
really had to in college...it was pretty easy. [so]...usually they don’t say, “No”
anyway - The few times they did, usually I was just drunk enough...to sleep it off.
just pass out, and forget about it...

This player went on to discuss some techniques that he used to coerce unwilling women
into having sex:
...you have to tell them they’re pretty...lying to them about...how many girls you’ve been with. The answer is always seven. You want to make it, in other words, believable, but nothing too high where they think it’s bad, you know. So seven is a good answer...

Sometimes the coercive techniques bordered on the physical as noted by this player:

That’s a broad definition. [I] never seen it. I mean...I’d have to say, yes, but I don’t think it was anything criminal...where you’re trying to get a girl to go home and she walks away and you grab her arm and hold her and say, “Come on, come back here.” - I’ve never seen anybody, any girl, say, “No. no. I don’t want to do this. I don’t want to do this” and somebody closes the door behind her...nothing like that....I’ve seen guys really push the envelope, like, “I’m leaving. yada. yada. yada” “You’re staying here” but...I’ve never seen it carried out...forcibly with a girl that didn’t want that to happen...

Overall, the players have described ample amounts of verbal coercion, pressure, and manipulation according to the narratives as well as the isolated physical action of holding a woman’s arm to prevent her from leaving a situation in order to gain sexual favors from a woman. The question remains as to how far some players are willing to go in order to gain compliance with women.

**Thoughts About Date Rape**

The players were asked to discuss their knowledge and interpretation of a number of issues relating to the use of force versus consent which were related to the culture of hockey. Moreover, the players were asked to provide their own views and their observations of other players’ sexual behaviors and practices which related to the use of force and date rape:

...yea. I have heard of it [date rape] but never seen or witnessed anything...I’ve had girlfriends that have told me about people that had done things to them...sexually assaulted them...you know...they were at a party or a bar and
then they went home with someone...and were making out - consensually making out or whatever and it escalated to the point where - something the woman didn’t want to happen – happened...

I think that date rape is prevalent among the jock culture and so I think those things automatically carry over when you teach certain aspects of the game the fans respond to and that’s going to encourage more [aggression]...there are things that are not violent but they just seem kind of wrong that guys do in terms of how they relate to women - off ice - like you know they treat women like objects - sexual objects...things like that with the misogynistic group mentality - or that lockerroom mentality comes out in off ice behavior...treating women really bad...

Although the players thinking about date rape seemed to be fairly general and anecdotal. the players did, however, see date rape as a negative and fairly frequent behavior related to the hockey culture.

Forced or Consensual Sex?

A number of players had discussed sexual situations which they had experienced or observed which raised questions in their mind as to whether the situations were consensual, forced as in date rape, or had aspects which were somewhere in between these two areas. One player discussed a situation which contained a high level of alcohol and ambiguity for at least one of the participants:

...I to a fraternity party after a hockey game and there was a girl that I knew... and...we were drinking and she was matching me shot for shot...I making out with her...she didn’t slow down...we went...to her room and we went at it. and the next morning when she woke up. she thought I raped her. she thought I took advantage of her. I was like. “Wait a minute... you were drunk, so was I – but...I didn’t take your clothes off. you took your own clothes off”...

Another player described a situation which occurred in the professional minor leagues and similarly contained a level of ambiguity in terms of consent verses force issues:
There was one hot tub incidence where we were at the house of a guy who was more or less a sponsor...a lot of people had been drinking for a while...eight different hockey players in the hot tube and then this guy's sister comes out with a bikini. And we were pretty much taken back because I guess...I don't think I would have been going in a hot tub with eight guys...but...maybe I know male tendencies more that this woman did [laughs]. So, she gets in the hot tub and some of the guys start joking around and they say. "Why don't you take off your shirt." Or maybe...she might have alluded to people taking their clothes off in the thing. And the guys were like. "Well, you can." And she was like, "Well, you guys first." Almost all of us quickly took our stuff off...So...I was amazed that she would come in the hot tub in the first place and then undress...but she did. I remember being right beside this girl...I was rubbing her leg and then I'd put my pinky right in her private area and stuff [to] see if she was going to respond to that. And she did and she was pretty much with...it was me, this [other] guy, her and our leading scorer was there [and] they started making out. And then...a guy who was kind of a fighter...came over and got between me and the girl and she started making out with him as well...When I left, it was this one girl and these two guys pretty much going at it in the hot tub. I don't know if it were they were actually having intercourse or anything like that...they were in the hot tub definitely kissing and feeling each other up.

The player was asked to discuss the situation that he had heard about the next day relating to the players in the hot tub:

Well. I remember people saying that the girl, and I don't know if this was rumor or not...had said to somebody that she had actually been raped and that certainly wasn't the story. That wasn't what I saw. I saw her willingly making advances or accepting the advances of these guys but that's what we had heard. And a lot of people were scared about that. That's certainly true...I recall her brother coming out a number of times even before she was undressed...asking her if she was okay...and she was like. "Yeah. I'm fine." Whether she thought that she had gotten herself too far already and couldn't turn back or maybe be ridiculed by the guys - I don't think so because most were saying, "I think you're pretty bold for coming in here in the first place." - I recall...that...was a weird situation...[but] I don't know if any of them actually had sex with her that night [or]...if it were any unwanted advances...

It is interesting to note that although the word rape was mentioned in the above encounter, the player later discovered through the woman's co-worker that a rape had not occurred although the woman was later quite embarrassed about her sexual participation with the players.
Several players discussed the manner in which alcohol could negatively influence the highly intoxicated players to act with physical pressure or force against certain women who were unwilling to participate in sex with them. One player discussed the manner in which alcohol affected the players:

Any ways in college, you go to these parties and there's nobody who's sober by the end of the night. Nobody. And when you're hammered, anything goes by the end of the night. Maybe the person you're not attracted to at all when you're sober, but when you have 15 drinks in you, it doesn't matter at all. You're willing to do anything. I think that a lot of that [force], if alcohol wouldn't have been involved...they would have just dropped it [trying to have sex with an unwilling woman], but with the alcohol...not in all cases...

Overall, the players described a number of situations which contained elements of uncertainty relating to consent verses force issues, and this was because there were high levels of alcohol consumption surrounding these situations.

Forced Sex and Date Rape

Many players were able to recall more obvious examples of forced sex. Although the players in general have a tremendous amount of women available to them who are ready and willing to provide them with sex whenever they desire this, the players still had a number of experiences which they disclosed that related to sexual assaults in which they had known about or participated. Two players discussed their perceptions of the frequency of sexual assaults which related to the hockey culture in this way:

Well...I don't think it's all that common. I think it's most of the time the women are willing, but I'm sure there have been some times where they weren't so willing [and] they just didn't want to come forward and pursue it [sexual assault charges]. ...it's certainly an unfortunate thing, but I honestly don't know [the] percentages. You know, I've never actually seen it so I can't really give you a good count on it...

...not that often - sex happens a hundred times, five, ten times out of that hundred it's been kind of push. push. push. They did not date rape. but...in that line [is a]
small percentage...in my career [in] college and pro... I guess more so, in a few of those situations, more...coercion, “Come on, let’s do it” kind of [thing]...only a couple times when I think it was actually, and not actually observed, but [you] know what went on kind of type. “I don’t want to” - “Yes you’re going to” and more of a forceful situation...so personally observing or being aware of that - not a whole lot. I think [it was] more so the coercion...Stories [about date rape]...a dozen maybe...actually like whether I was involved personally with a girl, that was fairly close [to] something [like date rape], a couple times...knowledge of guys, walking in on [date rape], just knowing. half dozen times...

The two above players discussed a range of frequencies relating to the number of sexual assaults in which the players had either known about or perpetrated. Attempting to quantify the number of sexual assault situations based on interviews relating to what the players had heard about, known about, or perpetrated is a futile endeavor because most players recalled only an isolated incident of this nature which occurred once in awhile. A number of players were, however, able to discuss specific incidences relating to sexual assaults. for example:

I know there was a situation in Erie where [two players] were up on rape charges...I had played in Erie earlier in the year...so they were actually up on rape charges. I think those rape charges ended up getting dropped at some point...but I think that’s the only one that comes to mind...maybe one other one...

It would appear that when a woman goes through the process of filing sexual assault charges on a player or players that one would assume that some type of inappropriate sexual behavior most likely occurred to some extent. Even though charges often get dropped in cases of sexual assault, this does not mean that a sexual assault did not occur. Another player discussed a sexual assault involving one of his teammates and a woman who was friends with both him and his wife:

I don’t think it was really forced. I remember one...when [I] played...this girl came over...that was pretty good friends and she said one of the players forced himself on her. I don’t know how close that [had] come to that borderline [of]
charges being pressed there. But she was pretty upset about it. Like I said nothing was for sure. there were no charges filed...it was just between those two. I think they had just first started dating and she didn’t have a ride home so she was in a tough situation....

The player was asked how the situation was handled when it was brought to he and his wife’s attention:

It was just private...[we] handled it ourselves. Well, we just talked to him and talked to her. you know, just seen how [and] what their feelings were at the time. where it happened...who initiated it. More often, the man’s more physical type so that’s how that goes as far as the [situation] - They finally settled up and they went their ways. They were still, say friends...but they didn’t date anymore...I know...you hear about rape cases and if that’s how it was...we don’t know. but you know probably affects the woman more than the man...we stayed friends with her for a few years and it...turned out alright...

Another player discussed the manner in which one roommate had pressured and pushed women to the point where he had felt it was necessary to intervene in the situation:

I’ve had roommates that have really, really, really, pushed and pushed and pushed...there was a situation where I had to step in and say. “Listen, no means no” - it never happened. but...on a road trip one time...in a hotel room...this...guy that...I grew up with...and ended up playing pro hockey with him...I seen a different side of him when he plays hockey...at home he was the nice guy, super guy, and he got on the road it was like he was a split personality - he was the guy that brought someone back, and...he was groping and grabbing her and she started getting pissed off and he said, “Well, get the fuck out of here ya bitch” - he made her feel like shit and sent her on her way - but it happened, [and] the next day I told him it was wrong and he didn’t remember doing it - and so I saw a different side to him and I didn’t like that – “No” means “No”...

The player was asked how many times that he had come across that type of behavior in his career:

That was pretty much the only time that I saw...that she didn’t want anything to do with it and ya know. I don’t know what the hell did she expect to happen when she goes to a hotel room with a hockey player from out of town – I don’t know [are you] supposed to sit around and be friends, so it’s kind of...like you know it’s coming, so don’t go there type of thing or if you’re going there. don’t be
surprised that it’s going to happen – you’re not going there to watch cartoons and
order pizza, so she should have known, but at the same time - that’s her right –
“No” means “No” and actually [it was] just the one time that I seen that happen to
the point where it bothered me...

Another narrative described a physical and sexual assault which related to a
player and a woman involved in the hockey association of this particular organization:

...there was a girl...who had been sexually abused – yes –[she] used to work for
the hockey management association...I can’t remember the player, but I
remember her because I remembered running into her like a year or two after she
graduated she came back and I was asking her how things were going and then I
remembered asking somebody else ...why’d she stopped working with the hockey
team, and they said because somebody beat her up – one of our hockey players
beat her up...so I think that something must have happened [with] some physical
abuse - I saw her almost two years after it happened – she talked about it as
though it were indeed a reality – that one of [the] guys basically got away with
beating her up [and] yea tried – attempted to [sexual assault] – [she] stopped cold
turkey, was there one day and gone the next [from working with the team]...

The participant was asked if the above situation was ever addressed:

No, because I don’t know if [the coaches] ever found out who the player
was...the girl and her parents...did not pursue it...and he was scared out of his
wits...

It is interesting to note that no one had brought this situation to the attention of the
coaches, and this related to both the player’s teammates as well as other members of the
hockey management association who knew of the assault. Benedict (1997) discussed
high levels of secrecy and silence which are associated with close knit groups such as
athletic teams, and players often remain very loyal to their teammates particularly when
this relates to a teammate who is in some type of trouble. One player discussed a
situation in which he had participated which raised some questions as to whether the
situation was consensual or forced, and this player discussed these situation in this way:

...one time in college...[it] wasn’t really that date rape thing, it was...both [of us
were] absolutely liquored up...I vaguely remember her saying, “No” - We had
been together all night [as] we’d hooked up at a college party. We were both
hammered. and...I think she said, “No, but...I know we fucked” - The next
morning, we both woke up...neither one of us really knew what happened...that
would probably be the closest thing I could think of to something happening.
And I think. she said. “No” because I think she had the hots for me. and she didn’t
want it to happen that way. and it just did. So. in that...circle of forcing...that’s
the closest I could say I ever came to anything like that...

The above player was asked if there were any type of ramifications which resulted from
the situation:

No. I mean we hooked up a couple of more times. but it never developed into a
relationship. It was more. one of them drunken things. that...occurred a couple
more times...I mean. willfully occurred after that. but. whatever happened that
first night prevented any...relationship type thing from developing...

The above player discussed a situation which he admitted may have been
pressured or forced on his part because he had heard the woman say. “No” to his sexual
advances and yet the couple still ended up having sex together. Because the situation
included large amounts of alcohol consumption for both people according to the player.
the situation contained high levels of uncertainty and ambiguity for both parties involved
in terms of their overall communication and what really happened between them the next
morning. In some instances. prosecutors will not take cases which involve a woman who
was under the influence of alcohol. these types of situations present major obstacles for
prosecutors and the women involved in these types of situations (Benedict, 1997).

Sex With Passed-Out Women

The phenomenon of nonconsensual sex does not only refer to players who
pressure or force unwilling women to have sex with them. Nonconsensual sex also refers
to a player having sex with a woman who is severely intoxicated on substances like
alcohol or drugs to the point where she cannot give her consent. A player who has sex
with a woman that cannot give her consent is still sexually assaulting the woman.

Several players discussed their knowledge and thoughts relating to the issue of other players they knew of or themselves having sex with a woman who was not passed out completely, but very close to it:

Very, very close. I mean, close was like coming in and out of being passed out to like mumbling some words and then kind of passing out again... but it was the guy’s girlfriend. I just happened to be lying in the same bed because I passed out too. I woke up to banging at the head board. “What’s going on?” - you know. I looked over and she didn't know what was going on. She was coming in and out of consciousness. basically. but it wasn’t like he was having sex with her... a passed out or dead person laying there because he was almost in that shape. too [laughs] - So. how he was working. I don’t know [laughs]...

Never passed out but pretty severely intoxicated but usually both of them are. I've seen people, even myself, just not even knowing what I was doing, just instincts take over I guess, both of you come home and you wake up the next morning and you both look at each other and say. “What happened last night?” That happened pretty often I’d say but...although I dated a girl for awhile...we had a little deal, that if one of us passed out, the other one would keep going. It was no big deal. I remember she passed out on me one night, but I just kept going and... that was a Saturday night, and I woke up in the morning. I told her. “Thanks for passing out on me last night” and she said, “Well, don’t worry, you did it to me on Friday” - So, that happened. but we had a deal and we were even for awhile...

... no [but] I’ve seen them awful fucked up though... but not [passed out]’cause I think that... is kind of the same as rape... if they’re passed out... whether they consented before they passed out or not... I mean... you might as well just go fuck a dead person if you’re going to do that. I... really never seen that either.

Other participants discussed their knowledge of these practices as it related to hockey players fondling women who were passed out:

I’ve seen guys like touch a girl. you know, grab her boobs or something like that. but never have sex with her... a girl would pass out on the couch. you might squeeze her chest or something. but... I never seen nobody pull down pants or nothing like that.

I’ve come across that once. I did see it and guys were talking about it the next day. Situation was where the girl is passed and he just kept going further and

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further. I don’t think he had sex with her, but he was fondling her while she was passed out. He was scared the next day. He probably knew he went too far. That was the one instance that I’ve been part of that I seen or heard of, but as far as the other things it’s just been second hand stories. But you do hear things like that, unfortunately. The one guy was in the room by himself and the next day he was scared. And at the other end a couple of guys would laugh about it the next day. And there were a couple of other guys who were like, “That’s serious stuff. Stay away from that girl. That’s serious. That’s not good. That’s serious charges. accusations if that stuff comes out.”

Although the above players had knowledge of players who had fondled women who were passed out, they were not aware of any other sexual behaviors beyond these descriptions. Two other players discussed their knowledge of players actually having sexual intercourse with women who were passed out:

oh yeah...It goes back to the alcohol factor...the girl drinks too much. [and] that would be case of forcing something on somebody that maybe doesn’t want it but you don’t know. So yeah....probably about 10 times during my whole career did I hear something like that. I don’t think any guy wants to admit that...I think that’s where your sex addict comes in and a guy like that is oversexed...no normal person would do that - no normal thinking person would...

Oh yeah...when I was at [a large state university] – [some players] just feeling that they’ve been kind of like let down – like, “Don’t pass out on me...I spent the night with you and you can’t handle your liquor so you’re just going to” – sort of just...talking about it in the locker room - you know. “I pulled the girl’s [pants off] - banged her up the butt and took off”...

Another player provided his experiences of having sex with a woman who was passed out:

...I think most were college and...actually go back to high school a little bit. More so college stories...a dozen maybe...whether I was involved personally with a girl. that was fairly close...a couple times...knowledge of guys walking in on [it], just knowing - half dozen times...something like that...[it is] just late night. You’re wanting to get a piece of ass. and it’s going fine [with the woman], and you’re both drinking, and you get back to wherever you’re both going to. And...you’re half out of it [drunk], she’s half out of it, yet whether you really know you’re saying, “Yes” or saying, “No”, or whether you were a little bit more [out of it], or whether she was a little bit more [passed out]. At that point you just want to get your dick wet. and you get your dick wet...
The above player mentioned that he was involved in a couple of situations which related to having sex with a woman who was close to being passed out, and he had also either known of players participating in these practices or he had walked in on at least one half a dozen to a dozen situations during his career. The player had also noted that high amounts of alcohol consumption were prevalent among both participants. Moreover, the participant also mentioned that at a certain point when a player decided he wanted to have sex with a woman who was in an intoxicated or close to a passed out state, he simply did. Overall, the player admitted that these behaviors were fairly common occurrences based on his experiences.

Physical Aggression Toward Women

Players’ Overall Attitudes

Physical aggression against women appeared to be one of the least common types of violence when compared to on-ice aggression, off-ice aggression against other males, and sexual aggression. While players take pride in expressing their physical aggression against other males on and off the ice as well as their sexual conquests which may include certain aggressive actions, physical aggression against women is not behavior that players are willing to disclose in most instances. Therefore, when physical aggression did occur against women, it was often hidden and concealed. Several players spontaneously expressed their attitudes on this issue which helped to clarify and explain the hockey culture’s overall viewpoint on this subject:

...guys only fought, [and] tell that story. you know [laughs]...for the obvious reasons, it’s that [physical aggression against women] it’s something they probably did and they regret doing it and they’re not very proud of it and they

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don’t want to be known as the person who does that, so obviously the frequency of those tales is going to be far less than sexual ones where they’re going to be cast in a favorable light with their peers...

No...I never ever seen it...[with] no guys that I played with. Never. [I’ve] been around a bunch of Westerners [Western League] all my life and...hitting women…it’s the worst thing you can do. in our book…I’ve heard of it...especially in the minor leagues, a lot of drinking and stuff you know…but...I might have been fighting them myself, you know. I would have said something to them I’m sure. But no, I’m glad I wasn’t around it. Thankful for that...

I would say most of the guys on the team know that if somebody sees you abusing a girl, you’re going to get it. The same thing like keep it in the locker room, it’s like an unwritten rule. Like you don’t do that to a woman. And I think everyone, not just hockey players. everyone knows...that rule - that’s just...not acceptable. And so I think people have a positive effect on it because people start meeting their girlfriends and you know getting to know them, cause like I know the girlfriends with all the guys in my house and...if I heard anything would happen to any of them...as long as anyone else was in my house...we’d be in there fast and the guy would be hurting. You don’t treat a woman like that...

Two other participants discussed how players were not likely to mention, much less discuss, their physical aggression against women:

I don’t know anybody...that beat their wives or girlfriends. I mean, there probably is people that do it and...you never know about it. It’s not something you go brag about (chuckles)...

Well if somebody was hitting...a girl. I don’t think they’d go around bragging and telling other people...cause it’s not something that you should do. So I don’t think somebody would be too apt...to say it...so, maybe that’s why I never saw it...because it was kept quiet and...from the guys I lived with and stuff - I knew them pretty well and...I never seen it and again they never talked about it...I don’t think they ever participated in it...

Because physical aggression against women is highly frowned upon throughout the hockey culture, it is very possible that these behaviors occur regularly, but they are not discussed nor disclosed at all to teammates. One player thought that because physical abuse against women is so frowned upon throughout the hockey culture that teammates could potentially be a positive influence on preventing or combating these behaviors:
I actually think that teammates would be a good influence on that because I really think that...if something happened [where] a guy hit a girl, I think other guys that he hangs out with would...would have an adverse reaction to hearing that...I think it would definitely lower everyone’s opinion of that person. So I can’t say it would be encouraged, but I think it definitely would be that if someone found out that I played hockey with that I hit my girlfriend. I would be actually looked down upon and would have less respect from those people than I did before...

Because players are extremely bonded and loyal to their teammates, this type of peer modeling and reinforcement could be quite influential in combating physical abuse toward women. Two other players expressed additional reasons why physical abuse against women is frowned upon in the hockey culture:

...I mean it’s obvious that you could do it if you wanted to but...there’s no challenge there. I don’t know. it’s just not right and I’ve never done it and I really don’t know of anyone who’s ever done it - it may have happened but I didn’t hear about it...

I can’t think of any incidents where a person I have played a sport with has...had any aggression within a relationship whether it’s a girlfriend, a wife...off the ice...what I think the reason for that would be is...when you play sports. it’s kind of a man verses man type of atmosphere and not a man verses woman so if a woman challenges you. it would be totally different than if you’re challenged by another male...

The above players viewed a physical assault on a women as being a situation which was negative and lacked a physical challenge for them and therefore. because the woman was at a distinct disadvantaged from the players’ standpoint, physical abuse of a woman was frowned upon throughout the culture.

Hearing About Aggression

Although all of the participants had heard of athletes from other sports perpetrating aggression against women, approximately 25% of this sample had neither heard of nor known about any incidents of physical aggression against women from players in the hockey culture based on their experiences. Players that did hear about
situations involving physical abuse of women usually heard about situations involving teammates or players from other teams. Several players discussed examples of situations of physical abuse of women occurring among teammates or players they had known in the hockey culture:

A guy back in juniors I played with when he was 16 - a tough kid off the farm - cucumber farm - he got his girlfriend pregnant - knocked her up - she was about 15 - and while I never saw it - he was actually taken away right out of the rink one night because she went to the cops and told them he had been beating her when she was even pregnant with the kid - so that was probably one of the worst stories I had heard because there was a baby involved...

He became an alcoholic between over the hill hockey with us...but I think his problems go back to some drugs...when he played in the American League...he's an alcoholic simple as that and there was no rational thinking whatsoever...it cost him his wife...kids [as] he got deported and...I heard he used to beat on her. but I never saw it...I know he stalked a girlfriend. got arrested for that...as far as his attitude towards women, I think this this a whole lot more to do with alcohol than women...[he] was a fine hockey player and a pretty good guy to hang out with and all that sometimes, but things got to the point where nobody wanted him around. In fact, we didn't let him play anymore [in alumni games]...

Both of the above participants discussed their knowledge relating to the physical abuse of women. Another player discussed his knowledge of a roommate’s physical aggression against a woman:

I did have... an ex-teammate...ex-roommate, who he was a hockey player and the girl he was dating, they were an on-again, off-again relationship and... In my estimation they were both...a little crazy. They ended up breaking up their relationship and the player wouldn't let it go and he would call excessively. I had heard that he had pushed her a couple of times - I had heard that from another roommate that he said he saw something. And at one point, she actually took out a restraining order on him...[in college]...

The player was asked to give his perceptions of what might have motivated this player's behaviors and situation:

What motivates his behavior...he's what I would call a high maintenance type of individual. On the ice, he's the finesse player...almost 100% of the time
nonaggressive on the ice...he grew up without a mother, so in my estimation...He had a father and two other brothers so I don’t think he had ever had a female influence in his life...his mother’s alive but...his parents were divorced when he was like two or three and...he doesn’t keep in contact with her so I don’t know if it has something to do with that...and he’s the type...makes friends easily off the ice...he’s also the type of guy that’s kind of a high maintenance type of individual, needs to be attended to, needs to be talked to, that sort of thing. He needs to be the number one person in all activities. And if you’re doing something, he has to know about it and has to go and be part of the planning. He’s that type of a high maintenance type person and why he would push someone or whatever. I have no idea, but my guess is that he doesn’t know any better because maybe he’s got something deep down inside of him that...has some problems...

The above participant had discussed an abusive situation which involved his teammate and roommate and this player’s girlfriend. Furthermore, the participant believed that this player’s lack of a female presence in his life coupled with his more needy personality were components which may have exacerbated this player’s behaviors with his girlfriend.

Another player discussed two different minor league teammates who were known to be abusive toward their wives:

...he was definitely an aggressive fighter type hockey player and...I believe he carried that over off-the-ice...I know his wife was real meek, gentle person, quiet and I know what happened...it’s hard to see what goes on behind closed doors. but you know, just from what I heard from a particular person...he was beating his wife, hitting his wife and stuff. I never did see it physically...show on her. but...those were just things I heard...I don’t know if they...were the truth for sure or not. That was in pro hockey, minors...

This participant talked about another physically abusive situation involving a different teammate in this way:

...the guy...would pop pills...like speed, take speed before a game because he knew what his role was...and that was pretty much what...he was paid to do...he wasn’t that bad a hockey player, but he was brought in...to be an intimidator and this guy was an idiot...I mean. I never did like the guy...he just wasn’t a good person...he was crazy and...I...heard of him beating his wife...
The participant was asked if he thought this player had substance abuse problems apart from his habit of taking speed before games:

[He] always going out. always high. always drinking. I think that the one guy...was a little bit older toiled in the minors and...he went from city to city...and he was known that [fighting] was his job to do...and I think it came to a point where he probably didn’t want to do it, but he had to take drugs to get himself pumped up enough to go out and do that job. You know I think that would be [it] - I mean...I never...did anything before games. I don’t know how anybody could do that. I could never play that way if I did that. So, if he was doing it to the extent where he had to take drugs...before a game. then...I think he was...maybe fighting it [his role]. and the drugs helped him to get to the point or the level where he needed to be to take care and do his job...[to] be violent or fight.

The above participant discussed the way in which this particular teammate used drugs to possibly detach because he may have been internally conflicted with his fighter role which he no longer desired to do even though this role enabled him to continue playing professional hockey. The participant was asked to discuss how these abusive players’ teammates had viewed them in lieu of their alleged physical abuse:

I think they all feel like I do, that the guy’s an idiot and...he has no business acting like that. he has no business on the ice - I mean he has respect on the ice because he goes out and does his job and probably does it well, but I don’t...have any respect and I know that nobody had the respect for these guys when they knew that they did that to their wives. You know, none whatsoever. So the teammates...they didn’t provoke it...or try and [stop it]...they didn’t think it was a good thing at all...

The participant was asked how the abuse was dealt with on the team when the perpetrator’s teammates started hearing about the physical abuse of his wife:

...just nobody said anything...[players] talked about it once...more or less. I mean this guy was...a big intimidating guy...most guys just kind of either didn’t talk to him...I just didn’t talk to him...and I wasn’t about to go up and say. “You know you’re a goddamn idiot” - I just kind of played it like it was none of my business even though I know...we all [knew] - I know all the players’ wives talked about it and so forth...
It is interesting to note that although players may hear about their teammates' physically abusive behaviors toward women, the players often do not express their concerns to the perpetrators. This lack of confrontation may occur because of the perpetrator's size and demeanor and especially if the player is an intimidating fighter.

**Observing Physical Abuse of Women**

Although players were familiar with physically abusive behaviors toward women only through situations they had heard or known about involving teammates or players on other teams, four players had actually witnessed a hockey player or teammate becoming physically abusive toward a woman. These players discussed their firsthand observation and experience with physical aggression toward a woman as follows:

…I think it had to do with the situation that the girl was yelling at the guy for some reason, like [he] accidentally spilled a drink on her or something like that…she was getting in his face and he just kind of pushed her away. That’s what I’m guessing. I don’t specifically know or remember…it was a long time ago, but it’s not something that I saw very common. I’ve maybe named one or two, three times in my whole life that I’ve seen that pertaining to the guys that I play hockey with.

[One former teammate] I have heard that he maybe does physically abuse his girlfriend. I’ve heard of an instance where he pushed one girl through a table and then he pushed her down the stairs. All I know is that there was a girl with her arm all bruised the next day and people were saying that he did it…I’ve also heard that he is physically aggressive towards his girlfriend and maybe he hits her and pushes her…I have seen in one instance [the teammate] go and try and grab her and rip her shirt, which looked accidental, but he definitely grabbed her hard enough, with some force…while he was yelling at her…

It is interesting to note that certain players who may be perpetrators of physical abuse against women are not directly confronted about their abusive behaviors because these players appear to be able to intimidate even their own teammates, and this discourages any type of intervention. One player discussed his observations of the way a
potential perpetrator’s behaviors and size can effect teammates intervening in these situations which are potentially dangerous to both the woman and them self:

You know a guy - again drunk saying, “That bitch fucked me over and I was everything to her and blah blah blah [and] now she’s fucking so and so – and you know she doesn’t know what she’s doing and… I was the best thing that ever happened to her” – and when they see her they have to go up right into her face and start giving her shit…and in a lot of cases she’s sober and saying, “Get away from me you’re drunk – you’re an idiot you know leave me alone” – and you know [they] badger her – just giving her the business right in front of everybody – it’s awkward. it’s awkward to be there especially when you’re dealing with some big guy [laughs] – and we tried to get him out of there and he’s like, “Back-off. leave me alone”…

This player described other situations which he had witnessed which were potentially physically abusive to women, and he discussed these situations:

In juniors I saw…circumstances…probably 3 or 4 times…where…relationships weren’t all that meaningful to begin with but…it was this week’s flavor [being with a different woman frequently] - and…it was okay when the guy’s were talking about fucking around on…one of these different women, but as soon as somebody found out that they were being fucked around on…they didn’t handle it very well – you know…nasty language, threats,…throwing shit around the room…guys having to wrestle the guy down – tell him to knock it off – don’t do anything stupid…

Sometimes a player’s attempt to intervene in an aggressive exchange can be dangerous. One player discussed the consequences from trying to intervene in a physically abusive situation which he had observed even though he did not know the male perpetrator at all:

…it was just a bar in Vancouver one time. And…I was with this girl and I didn’t get hurt but…I took a couple of shots [punches]. I was like, “I was just trying to fucking help you”…Well. she hits me with a fucking purse, after he’s fucking pulling her hair… I didn’t see how it started. I just kind of walked up on it, you know. He was just slapping her around and had her by the hair…I just walked up and grabbed him and said, “Hey, you better smarten up. leave her alone or you’re going to get hurt” - I…got him away, and the next thing you know. she fucking booted me. and then when I go down like that he fucking swings [laughs]…I never got badly hurt…[I] grabbed him and hit him into the fucking wall and said
look. “You really want it?” - And the girl is still hitting me with her purse you know. So I just fucking threw him down and walked away. You can’t do nothing...if you try to help...they start hitting you with their damn purse...but it was all on alcohol...that’s what it was. just drunk fucking stupid shit...

It is interesting to note that although the participant had removed the abusive male away from the woman who was being assaulted, the woman then began to physically assault the player who was trying to help her. Overall, the narratives described a number of observed physical assaults against women, and the players use of a somewhat non-confrontational approach to the way that some of these situations were handled because a potential for harm existed.

**Players’ Close Calls With Violence**

Four players from this sample had admitted that they were involved in situations with women that were somewhat close to becoming physically abusive. Although these players had felt that they had experienced what could be labeled as “close calls” with women in terms of perpetrating physical abuse, these players had thought they had refrained from engaging in physical abuse:

There was one day I’ll never forget until the day I die. That [day] I wanted to. I got up, and I thought I was going to [hit her]...we went at it [verbally]...[and] we fight...very, very little...it was at a bad time for us because I was working on coaching...had... summer programs going...we had just had [a] kid...she was...away from home...missed home. and I was never home. And. when I was home. it was just a lot of bad things happening. and there was some emotional up and downs for us. And. she got me to the point where...I got up. and [I thought]. “What the fuck am I doing?” - and I just wanted to hit her. And I’d been long since removed from playing. I was coaching...I was [in a human service occupation], I was [working with youth] - And I almost got up. and I wanted to hit my wife. It had nothing to do with [being an athlete] - it had more to do with emotional ups and downs...than anything else...that’s the only one time I can ever even think of...and...I was an athlete...
The above player described a difficult period of time which included numerous emotionally-charged stressors for both him and his family, and these stresses combined to almost push the player to the point of perpetrating aggression against his wife. A second player discussed his "close call" as follows:

The closest I have ever been to that [physical abuse of a woman] was in college. It was a [hard liquor] night. I got into it with a...girlfriend - she came into my room and we got into an argument about something, but...I wouldn't let her leave my room, wouldn't let her go, so she was trying to get out the window and everything, but I wouldn't let her out. I was in control in not letting someone leave. I look back now and know that was retarded. I had a brand new [shirt] and she tore it up...I didn't shake her, [I] didn't grab or do anything - [I] just wouldn't let her out the door, just stood in front of her. I was taking all sorts of licks and everything that night...and that was more passive aggression than anything. [It was the] ultimate control...it was kind of like, "You're going to stay here and I am not going to let you out of here, but I will not touch you at the same time either." [I] wouldn't let her out of [the room] because the argument wasn't resolved. So, that is probably the worst situation I have ever been in with regard to that...

The above player was asked what he thought were the motivating issues behind his actions, and he discussed these:

That was certainly a control issue. That period of time was when I do not have the same mentality that I do now. I am more laid back now about that kind of stuff. I have no interest in controlling anyone. I think control, at its foundation, is a fear issue. Fear of what may happen if you lose control. I thought I was losing it. Fear ultimately reaps exactly what you don't want and it was influenced also by alcohol...It was one of those nights, but the control issue was there whether I had the alcohol in me or not...I shaped up after that night. I thought I have a control issue I need to deal with. You just don't lock people in your room and not let them leave for whatever reason. If someone wants to go, you can go. I think, what I realize is what I feared was actually going to manifest to what I was doing. So, I decided to change and that was it. Since then I have been different. I have never had a problem with it since because I realized what it was. I was hostile for awhile and couldn't figure out what the hell was wrong with me and stuff like that. That was the breaking point...since then, I don't give a dam...even she notes now, she gets pissed because I don't give a dam about anything. She wants to go on vacation with ten guys, whatever. I don't care. I don't get jealous or controlling. You do what you do and I will do what I do...
A third player discussed his “close call” with physical aggression along with other general insights into physical assaults against women in this way:

...I don’t think it has anything to do with being a hockey player but it has more to do with the chemical buildup of the person [and] I mean taking myself into consideration as an example – my answer to everything for years was to just throw a punch and you get into a situation with a wife where you aren’t happy with the situation and you can’t do anything...she’s getting the better of you in an argument you’re saying [profanity] but you just can’t [hit them] – it’s just not right and - I think that...in 99.9% of the guys that are playing hockey...when I played got there because they were disciplined...so they’d have to know the difference between a women and a man and I think it’s just an unwritten rule that you don’t hit a lady...I punched a mirror after an argument with her awhile back - but, you just can’t [hit a woman] – go for a walk – but...I’ve heard of none of the guys hurting their wives or their girlfriends. and I never...seen [any] and I heard of nasty arguments, and she threw this and that but never heard of anyone touching them...

The above player discussed the manner in which he was used to settling disputes through fighting, and the way in which this type of conflict resolution (i.e., punching someone) would not be an appropriate technique for dealing with domestic disputes. The player had also felt that because it was very inappropriate to hit a woman, he decided to punch a mirror rather than his female partner. A fourth and final player discussed his “close call” with physical abuse of a woman in this way:

...any guy...can only take so much...and I’m sure any woman can only take so much ...when you sit there, and you’re arguing and you’re bitching back and forth, and you know you get to a point...it’s hard for me to say...I mean...there’s been some instances where...I felt like I could have hit somebody - a woman. But my philosophy is if you’re big enough to hit me, you’re big enough to get hit back...you know, women either...want to slap you, punch you in the head, or they want to kick you between legs...and you know, even if you try to stop a woman from doing that...you can hurt them...by just trying to stop [them]...I tried to stop my ex-wife from hitting me. Actually...she was in college and...we weren’t even married. Some kind of argument happened in her dorm...and...I can’t even remember what it was about. I’m sure it was about another guy or another girl and of course the alcohol, the drinking probably didn’t help. You know, it wasn’t a big major thing or else I probably [would] remember it...and I think we were both drinking too. But she just started smacking me and

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everything, and...trying to kick me, and, so...then I just grabbed her arms...when she was down...she was trying to hit me. I just kneeled on her wrists and...I even pinned her down on the floor so she would stop...I held her down...until I got her halfway calm...but, I had put my knees on her arms...on her wrists, so she quit doing it and that's how it happened...she said she hurt her wrist...I didn't do anything to hurt her wrist. I was just keeping her from hitting me...she said she hurt her wrist, sprained her wrist, by me doing that. But...I never, never...hit her or hit anybody else...sometimes they can just...get to you so bad, but you feel like you could, and I'm sure that's why guys...do it 'cause I felt like I could have that night...

Overall, the players in this section described their close encounters in terms of perpetrating physical aggression against their female intimates. Although none of the players had assaulted their female intimates, the players did admit that they had come close and had even thought about this. Moreover, in two out of the four situations, the players did have some type of physical contact with their partner.

Players’ Perpetrating Aggression

Not all players described their situations as being “close calls” with physical aggression against a woman. Two players from this sample described their own situations involving physical aggression against female intimates. One player stated:

My wife and I have had problems, yeah, not while I was playing hockey, and whether that stems from hockey, I don’t know. It’s just my behavior...as an individual aspect [which] was just something that we went through [and] dealt with...it was just more of grabbing and shaking, it wasn’t...fists or slapping or something like that. It wasn’t something that would split us apart - it was just something that we talked about, why it happened and that type of deal...we’ve been together almost 20 years...so...we’d known each other for years. It was just a period of time when we were frustrated with...ourselves at the time. We were together for so long that we were able to work it out.

The above player was asked to discuss the issues involved in the first situation in greater detail:
...the year before we got married...we had lived together [for] years and...I guess, she felt that we should have been married before that and I just...didn’t feel like - I was...ready. I just didn’t feel it was right at the time. So I think that was [the issue]...

This player was asked to discuss other influences relating to this situation:

The first time, yeah...that’s what stemmed it. [and] I guess I blamed it on [alcohol]. I mean, I was in control...I wasn’t totally out of control. but I think that had something to do with it.

The player was asked whether alcohol influences had related to the second situation:

No. that’s when we [did] the most straight talking about it — and things were said...that hurt both of our feelings. That’s when we said. “Let’s put an end to this because if we’re going to go on...apparently, we’ve got to [talk to someone]...

The above player had mentioned that alcohol and life frustrations were two elements which influenced this player’s propensity to use physical aggression against his female companion. When alcohol was not an issue in the second incident, the above player had mentioned that he and his wife obtained professional intervention in order to discuss and alleviate any emotionally charged issues between them. Since this intervention, the player had mentioned that there have been no other physical confrontations with his wife.

Another player had discussed a physical confrontation with a female intimate and the role that alcohol played during the situation:

...the night I got out of jail...I already settled down...and then [my girlfriend] started shouting and hollering and got me fucking going again. And I left...I said. “Leave me the fuck alone, I’m leaving” - I took a walk and she was right behind me. just nagging. I turned around and I booted her ass all the way down the road...I’d never do that sober...I felt like an asshole the next day too...You know...I asked her...why didn’t you just...leave me alone? And it was like she would be aggressive there...she said. “Well. I didn’t want you to get run over by a car. or something like that” - I said. “You’d rather me kick you in the ass all the way down the road - I think I would have took my chances letting me go with the
cars” – But... you go through that [and] if anybody has got any beef with [me] about... it hurt. it hurt me... that’s when I started drawing that big line, [and thought] you don’t need to drink the liquor... it just creates problems... [and] I would never do that sober...

This player also elaborated on the influence of alcohol during this situation in this way:

...I don’t think anybody in they’re right mind [and] sober is going to be aggressive towards their woman... I know from past experience myself that I got pretty nasty with [a lady] whom I’m married to now because of drinking. That’s one reason I don’t drink liquor [because]... I know that’s... what can happen - if I’m sober... I’ll be the nicest guy you ever met... that’s why I don’t put myself in those situations. A lot of guys don’t take themselves out of situations, though [and] they’ll get to drinking and... get abusive with their family... but... that’s where you got to draw the line... [and] know when to say when...

The player was asked if there were any other incidences relating to physical aggression against his wife which he could remember:

...I’m sure there was other situations where I got mouthy... but... not the abusive stuff... I just can’t see myself doing it ‘cause... I always look back... at... my dad [who] was... [a] very abusive father... but... that’s why I drink beer ‘cause I don’t get abusive [from] it... they say beer and alcohol are the same, trust me it ain’t. There’s something in... alcohol that... gets me fired up any ways...

The above player discussed a physical confrontation with his female intimate which occurred at a time when he had been consuming large amounts of liquor.

Although the player described his attempts to retreat from his female partner, she did not allow him to leave her which added to the emotional turmoil and culminated in physical aggression from the player. Moreover, the player discussed why he no longer drinks hard liquor because of the way that it negatively affected him in terms of his behaviors and potential for promoting physical abuse when compared to drinking beer. Finally, because the player had mentioned that his father had been abusive to his family growing up, he did not want to exhibit the same behaviors in his own family as an adult.
Additional Perceived Influences on Physical Aggression

Besides the motivations that were already mentioned throughout the players’ narratives which included influences relating to substance abuse, need for control, family of origin violence, and women’s aggressive acts, the players also discussed a number of other influences which they perceived to be related to players’ physical aggression against women. Three players discussed the manner in which they thought some players lack of respect for women could be influential in promoting physical violence against female intimates:

...women are already objectified to the sport. They are already looked down on by the general population of hockey players. So, with the objectification, I think it is just a lot easier for that line to be crossed because they [players] are already in the back of head thinking, “Alright, it’s just a broad, you know” [then] smack [them]. kind of thing. May not even really mean it, but [it] is just kind of like [you] get used to...thinking a certain way all the time and...a lot more...things come out of you before you think about it...

...you don’t have any respect for the woman...or any woman...

...they have no respect for a woman...

The first player in the above narratives discussed the notion that if players become accustomed to thinking about women in a certain way, they may become more inclined to physically assault a woman because this can almost become a kind of reflexive action which is related less to conscious thinking and more to a general lack of respect and disregard for women. Furthermore, this player mentioned that women are already objectified in such a way that physically abuse would not be a far step away from the manner in which women are already viewed and treated in this culture.

Besides the participants perceptions about players’ motivations for perpetrating physical abuse against women which related to a lack of respect and disregard for
women. the participants also discussed the way in which players' need for power, dominance, and control influenced their aggression. Three players discussed these issues as follows:

I guess it's just your personality that you...either have a power trip or you feel you are superior to women. I think it's just the way you feel about women in general. If you feel that you're superior to women, then you're going to act like that towards them...and it's sad to say that it happens, but it does, and it's a big thing for most people that beat their wives up...

Dominance, this ego [thing] - you know we're teaching them all the time to put the nail in the coffin, you know stick a fork into them -- strive to be the best - be dominant - be in charge...etc. etc. etc. - and then all of a sudden we think they're going to just turn that off - then you get in a room where you have to deal with people [and] so many of them are so high strung...

...I've...heard about...never actually seen that much physical aggression against women -- [it] has more to do with men not being physically aggressive against each other and carrying it over to women. And what I mean by that is...when you're growing up you hear stories like this guy hit this girl or beats his girlfriend or things like that happened and to me it was always someone who was weaker than the other guys. Like...probably if he got in a fight with other guys, would get beat up, so I think maybe that was part of taking out his aggressions that most people take on...men [they] were going to fight - not being able to do that or scared to do that...they transmit that to women that are weaker than them. That's more of what I've seen...I've never seen like a...guy that you would consider really, really strong that would get in fights with other guys and probably win at them. take that out on women...

Another participant discussed the way in which the players need for power, control, and dominance could become overly inflated to an extreme measure, and this player discussed this issue in this way:

I guess...all athletes kind of have an invincibility complex that I think some sort of think that, "Hey. everything I do is alright," [because]...they get rewarded for doing certain things all the time. And I think that probably does fall into that where, "Hey nothing's going to happen to me" - that type of thing, "I always have to stand up for myself. I can't let [anyone control me]...but that definitely...goes back to the attitude of the guys - that influences that...
Players are rewarded and reinforced for displaying their dominance, power, and control over themselves and their opponents, and this can undoubtedly create an overly inflated sense of self within the players. Furthermore, because athletes are not always disciplined for their negative behaviors (Benedict, 1997; Benedict & Klein, 1997; Lefkowitz, 1997), athletes can feel as if they are above the rules and regulations which would normally apply to nonathletes. Therefore, because athletes have experienced a lack of deterrence and consequences for their negative actions, this could easily lead to athletes feeling as if they are invincible at times.
CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

Off-Ice Aggression Against Other Males

Perceived Incidence

All of the research participants were able to easily identify and describe numerous accounts of violent and aggressive off-ice altercations against other males, and these experiences included the players’ own individual participation, their teammates’ participation, and group participation in off-ice aggression. It appeared that players who had played junior hockey and particularly Canadian junior hockey had more frequent experiences of off-ice aggression against other males when compared to other levels such as collegiate hockey. Players in juniors are younger and less mature than college or minor professional players, and the hockey culture of junior hockey promotes and reinforces a high degree of in-sport aggression in terms of fist-fighting. Because fist-fighting is allowed in junior hockey, players are socialized and encouraged to fight because this is a way to gain acceptance, recognition, and rewards from coaches, teammates, and fans (Smith, unpublished data, cited in Smith, 1979a).

It can be argued that players who have few reservations about fighting on-ice can engage in fighting off-ice especially when alcohol is introduced into situations.
Moreover, the players in this study were quick to discuss their off-ice altercations against other men because toughness and fighting are constantly reinforced and modeled within the hockey culture. Furthermore, aggressive play was discovered to be instrumental for team and individual player success in hockey (Smith, 1983; Vaz, 1982), and this type of sports socialization could easily impact the junior players aggressive tendencies both in- and out-of-sport. For instance, many coaches encourage aggressive play because it is perceived as a necessary component for winning games, and therefore, it is viewed as instrumental for both individual and team success (Smith, 1983). Survey research involving Canadian youth ice hockey players between the ages of 10 and 18 revealed that approximately 44% of the sample of 1,906 players perceived that coaches thought that “being aggressive all the time” was essential for winning games and making their all-star team (Vaz, 1982).

In addition to the higher frequencies of off-ice aggression discovered among junior players, participants had also described numerous accounts of off-ice fighting which occurred at the collegiate and minor professional levels of hockey as well. Even though the participants discussed numerous accounts relating to off-ice aggression at the collegiate level, the frequency of fighting at the collegiate level appeared to be less common for most players when compared to players who had Canadian junior or minor professional experience. Furthermore, these collegiate altercations almost always occurred in bars or party situations where the presence of alcohol was plentiful. Collegiate rules which prohibit on-ice fighting may diminish some of the in-sport socialization influences that arise from on-ice fighting. The widespread use and high
consumption of alcohol as an influence contributing to off-ice aggression in college seemed to compensate for any lack of in-sport socialization influences such as fighting.

The players perceived the occurrence of off-ice aggression among minor league players as a phenomenon which happened anywhere from a couple of times each season to estimates which ranged from 25% to 80% of the time players were socializing, although this was dependent on the players’ particular team. Furthermore, the narratives throughout this study indicated different perspectives regarding whether players who were enforcers were more or less prone to fight off the ice. Although some players’ narratives supported the argument that fighters do not perpetrate higher levels of off-ice aggression, overall the fighters in this sample did participate in higher levels of aggression off-ice than players who were not fighters or enforcers. Eskenazi (1990) noted that the most aggressive hockey players were often the most popular on the team in terms of fan recognition and appreciation. These powerful socialization messages and reinforcement can provide athletes with the needed incentive to perpetrate aggression in order to acquire respect and admiration from sports-related personnel (Messner, 1990a, 1992).

Sometimes the participants had felt that they were involved in threatening off-ice situations and had little choice but to defend themselves and their honor in front of others. Such participants felt that they had taken a non-aggressor role until they were pushed to the point where they had felt they were unable to walk away from an altercation. Furthermore, the participants felt that during these situations they had little choice but to defend the honor of women who were sometimes wives or girlfriends by standing up to an inebriated aggressor. Sometimes altercations arose from players’ feeling the need to
defend and stand up for females who they felt were being mistreated by other men despite the fact that the players did not even know the women who were being mistreated. Other narratives often described altercations which occurred because the participant was helping to defend another person or teammate. It is interesting to note that one enforcer discussed defending other weaker males, and in one case, he defended a male who he did not even know from three other male aggressors, even though he took one of the worst beatings of his life because he had intervened in the situation. This means that the players did not necessarily have to know the person being mistreated in order to intervene in altercations even though the player was sometimes outnumbered. This finding which was not mentioned in the literature may relate particularly to the unique sports socialization of hockey players.

It is also interesting to note the way that some participants thought that the cultural influences associated with being a hockey player had influenced their behavior because leaving the scene of a fight would have been inconceivable and considered cowardly. This is supported by Faulkner (1974) as cited in Weinstein et al. (1995) who found that hockey players will often participate in fights to avoid demeaning labels which are not easily removed. Moreover, athletes are socialized in their sports to act in aggressive ways which reinforce stereotypical gender role learning for males (Nixon. 1997). Furthermore, McMurtry (1974) found that athletes who chose not to adhere to normative rules relating to aggressive behavior were both socially rejected and negatively labeled by other players. Overall, this unique sports socialization related to hockey players could cause teammates to frown heavily upon players who backed away from altercations both on and off the ice.
It might also be concluded that hockey players are inclined to defend someone being mistreated such as a woman because they are already very accustomed to defending and backing up their weaker, less aggressive teammates constantly in both on- and off-ice altercations. Defending or backing those being mistreated also may be behaviors which are accomplished without too much mental processing because they are learned early in the hockey culture and are deeply ingrained, constantly modeled and reinforced, and they are expected to a high degree in both on- and off-ice situations. For example, criminal justice Professor Smith contended that athletes are more involved in violent behavior than nonathletes because they are physical people who are expected to be physically aggressive in their chosen sport (Nixon, 1997). Moreover, because men seem to be more prone to aggression through their sports socialization than women, this aggression can carry and often does carry over into interactions outside of their sport (Nixon, 1997). Additionally, players had mentioned that supporting others who were being mistreated was not a new phenomenon because these behaviors have their origins in and even before their high school years. Defending others in fights also appeared to be particularly related to, but not limited to, players who already have more of an intimidator or fighter role on a team. Finally, although these types of altercations appeared to be much more of a defensive tactic than an aggressive maneuver, many of these altercations occurred against males who were quite intoxicated and equally aggressive toward the player or someone else.

In addition to defending others, the participants identified and discussed situations where they had acted as the aggressors in fights against other males off the ice. Furthermore, these altercations almost always occurred in settings such as bars, parties.
and fraternities which contained higher alcohol consumption. In general, certain sports socialization attitudes (i.e., valuing toughness, being "macho") were discussed as being salient influences which contributed to players' aggression. According to the players, athlete aggression was most likely to occur when alcohol abuse was prevalent. Similar findings relating to aggression, alcohol, and sports socialization attitudes are supported by a number of studies involving athlete aggression (Benedict, 1997; Curry, 1998; Lefkowitz, 1997).

Findings from the literature also indicated that players did not need to be intoxicated in order to perpetrate aggression because sports socialization influences can be sufficient contributors to aggression without the added component of alcohol. For instance, Nixon (1997) found that male athletes who held stronger beliefs about the value of toughness participated in greater amounts of aggression outside of their sport. Fifty-one percent of the male athletes having the strongest beliefs in the value of toughness had been involved in violence outside of their sport acting as the aggressor, compared to twenty-two percent of those athletes who had moderate or weak beliefs in the value of toughness. It may be concluded that the fighters in this study value toughness to a high degree because they make their living fighting and intimidating their opponents. The team fighters also have a higher frequency of participation in off-ice altercations when compared to other players in this study. Moreover, Nixon (1997) found that 44% of team sport athletes participated in out-of-sport violence as compared to 9% of individual sport athletes, and 49% of contact sport athletes participated in out-of-sport violence as
compared to 23% of non-contact sport athletes. Because hockey is both a team and a contact sport, this may provide another explanation for the higher frequency of off-ice aggression from the present sample of hockey players.

In summary, off-ice aggression against other males is a fairly common phenomenon that occurs at all levels within the hockey culture. Furthermore, there is a substantial range in the estimates relating to the perceived frequency of this aggression within teams and the different levels of competition. Overall, the vast majority of players in this study did not think off-ice aggression against other males was a problem even though most players felt that team management should initially address players’ off-ice conduct in a preventative and preseason fashion. Moreover, the players also felt that off-ice aggression that became frequent and problematic should be addressed immediately by team management. Thus, even though most players did not feel that off-ice aggression was all that common, the players did acknowledge that out-of-sport aggression against other males does occur and needs to be addressed. Finally, although there does not seem to be any absolute pattern for determining the extent of fights off the ice, players who are more aggressive on the ice, in general, appear to be more involved in off-ice altercations according to the narratives.

Influences Contributing to Aggression

Substance Abuse Influences

Virtually all participants had noted that almost all off-ice altercations had occurred in settings such as bars or parties which were very alcohol-laden. The players had also noted that they had seldom if ever experienced or observed off-ice aggression without the presence of alcohol because alcohol was such a salient and pervasive
influence in these situations according to the players. This finding is supported by Columbia University's Center for Addiction and Substance Abuse which reported alcohol involvement in 95% of violent campus crimes (Little, 1994). Similarly, the Office of Substance Abuse and Prevention (1991) found that alcohol more than any other drug has been linked with a high prevalence of aggression and violence. Furthermore, arrested athletes often cited drinking as the predominant activity preceding their troublesome behaviors ("Special Report." 1995).

The players in this study also noted the hockey cultures' normative use of alcohol within teams, and this included what they perceived as exorbitant amounts of alcohol consumption among the players. This higher alcohol consumption was particularly common among college players, but it was not limited to only college players. Professional players spent extensive periods of time in bars because they had so much unstructured time each day after their sport obligations were completed. Nattiv and Puffer (1991) found that intercollegiate athletes consumed higher quantities of alcohol per sitting when compared to nonathletes, and this placed athletes at greater risk for initiating aggression because of their higher alcohol consumption.

Players had mentioned using other drugs besides alcohol that they saw as co-occurring at times with aggressive behaviors; these included marijuana, cocaine, and performance enhancing drugs such as steroids. Gallmeier (1988) found that recreational drugs such as marijuana, cocaine, and alcohol were almost universal among hockey players. Messner (1992) found similar drug usage among his sample of 30 athletes although they were not hockey players. Although the players did not view marijuana as contributing to an off-ice aggression, cocaine use was perceived to very much influence
off-ice aggression in the players. Cocaine was not used as frequently as alcohol or even marijuana according to the players, even though several players did mention their own use of cocaine and its presence in the hockey culture.

Performance-enhancing drugs such as steroids also were used, but this type of drug did not seem to be routinely used among the athletes. The use of performance enhancing drugs, related to the extraordinary pressures associated with playing minor professional hockey, was particularly relevant for players who had specialized player roles. Those players were mainly team enforcers or fighters. Fighters are under pressure to protect their more talented, less aggressive teammates through their intimidation and fighting tactics, and fighters must also consistently win their fights which will enable them to continue in their role as a team enforcer. Therefore, it is commonly believed within the hockey culture that fighters who consistently lose their fights against their opponents and do not have the hockey skills required to be a successful player are in danger of losing their team role and ultimately their jobs to more able fighters. Players discussed the use of steroids as having a negative influence on the players’ off-ice aggression in addition to promoting higher levels of aggression. For example, steroid use was specifically cited as an influence which promoted one player’s erratic and aggressive off-ice behavior during a team party.

Steroid use has been reported in other contact sports such as football and baseball, and steroid use may have contributed to the deaths of one hockey player mentioned in this study who died of an enlarged heart and another hockey enforcer in 1992. Messner (1992) discussed the findings from a number of studies which showed that approximately 70% football players in the NFL had used either “uppers” or steroids during their careers.
(Shear, 1989, L.A. Times as cited in Messner, 1990). Messner (1992) also found the pervasive use of painkillers, performance enhancing drugs, and recreational drug use among his sample of 30 athletes. Finally, a *Sports Illustrated* article, “Death of a Goon” described hockey fighter John Kordic’s unabated steroid use which was thought to have influenced and contributed to his numerous and aggressive off-ice altercations and eventually lead to his death in 1992 at the age of 27. This researcher has hypothesized that steroids are predominantly used by some fighters and enforcers in hockey and not by the majority of players because the game of hockey is not all hitting and fighting but a combination of speed, finesse, coordination, contact, and intelligence. Therefore, hockey players need to have a balanced repertoire of skills in order to be successful and steroids offer limited skill enhancement with potentially destructive side-effects.

**Family of Origin Influences**

Family of origin influences, such as physical abuse and partner violence in one’s family of origin, were disclosed and related to player aggression by several of the participants who tried to explain off-ice aggression. Dutton, Starzomski, and Ryan (1996) found a significant relationship between males’ early recollections of parental mistreatment (father against mother) and abusive personality traits (anger, cyclical borderline personality organization), chronic experience of trauma symptoms, and physically and emotionally abusive behaviors. Similarly, Briere and Runtz (1990) found that parental physical abuse against a child may result in that child becoming aggressive toward others because the child’s abuse may lead him/her to generalize and believe that aggression is an appropriate form of interpersonal behavior which may be used when they are angry or distressed.
Players in this study described aggressive and violent home situations and especially physical abuse that they received from their fathers who were typically intoxicated. The players mentioned that these incidences were not isolated occurrences but chronic family interactions in most cases. For some, off-ice fighting was a way of releasing anger, frustration, and pressures which resulted from the abuse. Two players had left home as a result of their fathers' physical abuse, and one of these players had left home permanently following one incident. Furthermore, both players who had these experiences had participated in higher frequencies of off-ice aggression against other males.

Players also described situations where they had observed father to mother violence. The players from such families mentioned that they would attempt to intervene in these aggressive father to mother incidences in an effort to prevent their mother from being badly beaten. Some of the physical confrontations between the participants and their fathers became quite intense and sometimes resulted in violent physical confrontations. One confrontation escalated to the point where one player's life was in danger because his father was pointing a gun at him as he was leaving home. Five players mentioned such parental aggression (i.e., father against mother) which occurred in their family of origin, and three of these players had intervened in order to stop the aggression against their mother.

Social learning theory is often used in exploring the effects of either experiencing abuse or witnessing interparental violence as a child (Lackey & Williams, 1995). Social learning theory contends that youngsters learn to use and value violence by observing aggression exhibited by their parents (e.g., father to mother violence), and this provides
children with a model that depicts the appropriateness of aggressive actions which are positively reinforced through the victim’s compliance (Bandura, 1973; Follette & Alexander, 1992). In their review of 52 studies, Hotaling and Sugarman (1986) found support for social modeling as it pertained to the intergenerational transmission of violence because the most consistent risk factor relating to perpetrating aggression in their extensive review of the literature was witnessing violence in one’s family of origin. However, exposure to family of origin violence does not by itself cause a person to perpetuate violence in their own adult relationships as violence is predicted by a constellation of factors (Follette & Alexander, 1992; Lackey & Williams, 1995).

Sports Socialization Influences

Most participants discussed the ways in which hockey socialization created a context which not only tolerated violence and aggression, but also encouraged it. The culture of hockey itself was described as an instigating mechanism of male violence. Hockey was clearly viewed as an aggressive sport, and this produced a culture that encouraged aggressive behaviors on the ice. In other words, the players, management, and the fans expected and desired aggression. Players who did not conform to these cultural expectations would not be able to compete on higher caliber teams because they would be terminated from teams before reaching these levels. Therefore, aggression was not haphazard or mindless violence, but functional for individual players and their teams. It is also interesting to note that on-ice fighting, unlike illegal stick swinging, was not considered violence to most players because it was allowed as part of the game.

Thus, aggression in the form of aggressive physical play/contact is seen as being highly related to team success and winning games. Certain players had specific team
roles as intimidators, enforcers, and fighters, and this gave these players the freedom to
intimidate in whatever manner they, their team, and coach deemed as appropriate.
Furthermore, on-ice aggression was continuously modeled by players and reinforced
throughout the culture by coaches, teammates, and fans who applauded players for their
use of aggression. For instance, a comparison between the professional and pee wee
predictors of violence indicated that the younger players relied on the professionals in
order to help them develop and enhance their own playing style, and these imitated
behaviors carried over to their own social relationships (Nash & Lerner, 1981).

This is consistent with Weinstein, Smith, and Wiesenthal’s (1995) survey of
youth and pre-professional junior hockey players which found that violent behaviors
were seen as only mildly penalized and generally viewed as essential for team and
individual player success. For example, referees do not intervene in professional hockey
fights as long as only two players are involved, and teammates and coaches judge
players’ competence more on their aggressive play which especially takes the form of
fist-fighting, than playing and skating skills. Messner (1995) noted that men are raised to
view the world as competitive and hierarchical, and they are taught “to get the job done”
regardless of the consequences to others. Balkan (1966) termed this “unmitigated
agency.” i.e., when tasks become more important than people, violence is sometimes a
problem-solving mechanism (e.g., intentionally hurting an opposing player who stands in
the way of a personal or team goal).

Players in this study emphasized their strong allegiance to teammates, and these
strong bonds produced a type of group or “pack” mentality which resulted from group
expectations and pressures relating to issues of conformity. Players described negative

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behaviors and off-ice aggression as related to their "pack" mentality because players were constantly accustomed to supporting their teammates in on-ice altercations and confrontations with opponents. These same supportive behaviors were seen as continuing off-ice for players in social situations. Therefore, players would intervene in off-ice altercations to help a teammate in a fight even though they had little to do with a fight's preceding events. Players would support one another because they were bonded as a pack and they are responding in the same way they would in a game. In addition, players will often display extra aggressiveness toward nonathlete males in social situations when they are supported by other teammates. In general, these findings are well-supported throughout the literature as athletes consistently have been found to support teammates' perpetration of violent behaviors against both men and women, physically and sexually as well (Benedict. 1997; Curry. 1998; Lefkowitz. 1997; Melnick. 1992).

Players distinguished and described major leaguers from minor leaguers not only in terms of their on-ice skills and abilities, but also in terms of their off-ice behaviors, thinking, and decision-making skills. Furthermore, minor professionals' lower media exposure prevented players' altercations from being known, and this allowed players to avoid the repercussions of their negative behaviors. In addition, minor professional players have much less to lose in terms of salary and prestige if they should get into trouble fighting off-ice when compared to NHL players. Therefore, a professional athlete's higher caliber of play can act as a deterring influence for off-ice aggression because elements such as additional media coverage, salary, and prestige are associated with these higher levels of play which act as deterrents to aggression.
Culture of Masculinity

A culture of masculinity also seemed to characterize the teams that players described. The athletes tended to share a set of ideological beliefs related to traditional forms of masculine expression which included a preoccupation with achievement, maintaining status through fighting or risk taking, and acquiring an identity of toughness (Weisfeld, Muczenski, Weisfeld, & Omark, 1987). Ice hockey players who are labeled “hard-nosed” and “grinders” because of their physical play in the corners are given higher levels of respect and more masculine ranking when compared to less physical players who play with finesse (White, Young, & McTeer, 1995). Furthermore, hockey players who do not celebrate or conform to forceful notions of masculinity are subject to potential ridicule (White et al., 1995). Messner (1990a, 1990b) similarly found that athletic teams functioned as a “masculine proving ground” for both adolescent and adult males. Male athletes are encouraged and reinforced by coaches, teammates, and peers for proving their manhood through acts of toughness, aggression, and domination during competition (Melnick, 1992). Players in this study had discussed the importance of maintaining a “macho” image and identity around their teammates and fans even though this often influenced their use of off-ice aggression. Furthermore, players discussed the way in which their teammates would model certain aggressive behaviors which would be emulated and reinforced within the culture. For instance, certain players noted how teammates and themselves would admire and attempt to emulate older veteran players for their toughness and perceived strength both on and off the ice. Strong team bonds emerged through reinforcement of players’ aggressive behaviors, and this also resulted in strong bonds of allegiance and loyalty. In essence, players were expected to physically
defend themselves or their teammates without question should any hint of an altercation appear. Players who do not conform to these masculine images are often rejected and insulted relentlessly.

Research has found that hockey players with the strongest levels of endorsement of traditional masculine ideologies are more likely to fight than are other players (Weinstein et al., 1995). Kilmartin (2000) contends that violent behaviors by athletes are motivated by one athlete’s perception that another is trying to hurt him or someone else. This was represented in the players’ comments regarding the need to be on guard, the necessity to protect oneself or a teammate from the violence inherent in the game, and the dominance perspective wherein the athlete is constantly battling against teammates and opposition who are motivated toward domination. Furthermore, the culture of masculinity carried over to off-ice aggression because the players saw themselves as being tough, “macho,” and they wanted to be that way in all situations because it was rewarding and a part of their self-image. Players went to great lengths to avoid portraying behaviors which would be perceived as weak or less aggressive from their teammates’ point of view. Finally, some of the athletes did recognize that off-ice aggression was at times the result of not being able to “turn-off” and control aggressive tendencies away from the arena because their aggression was so deeply engrained.

Although numerous domains exist in which males can express masculinity, sports offer males an excellent way to express masculinity by the way sport socializes males (Messner, 1990a, 1990b, 1992). Levant (1994) offered a number of basic components which described the notion of hegemonic or supreme masculinity, and these characteristics present a strong foundation for masculine socialization for sports as well.
These components included avoiding all feminine things, displaying aggression and violence, showing high levels of self-reliance, promoting achievement and status, hiding one’s emotions, showing nonrelational attitudes toward relationships, and engaging in homophobic conversation. Williams (1980) viewed the construction of hegemonic masculinity as a whole body of naturalizing social practices that included a host of beliefs, behaviors, and expectations of a group’s perceptions of what it takes and means to be a man. Finally, Bryson (1987) thought that sports was an area where hegemonic masculine practices were constructed and reconstructed over and over. Hegemonic practices in men’s sports have monopolized sports by (a) encouraging positively sanctioned violence within sports and (b) promoting aggression, skills, speed, and power in sports. These criteria exclude the involvement of many men and women because of their extreme emphasis on power and performance in certain highly visible sports.

In addition, most coaches were seen as negligent, if not somewhat encouraging, of players to remain tough and aggressive off the ice. Players described coaches who were openly reinforcing of on and off-ice aggression. Furthermore, coaches were implicated among the players for being catalysts for substantial amounts of on-ice fighting. Players also thought that many former coaches were not all that concerned about their players’ off-ice behaviors as long as the player was playing well. Furthermore, players thought that not all coaches were eager to release players from teams because of their off-ice aggression. One player even mentioned that his team’s management did not address his off-ice aggression, and therefore, the player perceived that the management liked the idea that their enforcer was fighting off-ice. Coaches who do not address off-ice aggression are, in fact, reinforcing players for their aggression because the players received no
negative sanctions or punishments for their indiscretions. Benedict (1997) supported this finding through his discussion of the University of Nebraska football team. Nebraska players under coach Tom Osborne were repeatedly cited for physical and sexual aggression against women, and the players were given few if any negative sanctions for their behaviors.

**Athlete Privilege and Absence of Deterrence**

Besides sports socialization and masculinity influences on aggression, participants discussed the idea that players are often challenged and provoked into fighting by other males. Players readily thought that nonathlete males had a lot of jealousy toward athletes because of their popularity, and this, when combined with intoxication produced males who would challenge athletes to fights in bar settings. One player had mentioned that for every woman who admired a player enough to want to go home with a hockey player, there was also a male nonathlete who despised the athletes because they were jealous of the players' popularity. Therefore, nonathlete male jealousy and aggression was often perceived as a cause of athletes' aggression.

Athletes in general recognize that their greater attention and popularity has translated into preferential treatment because they are considered celebrities in certain settings. Because athletes are often glorified and placed on a higher social pedestal by society, athletes have mentioned that they have avoided consequences for their negative behaviors and, therefore, have not always experienced legal or disciplinary repercussions for their actions. This finding is supported in the literature as athletes have been found to experience leniency for their antisocial actions from people such as teachers.
professors and administrators, parents, and law enforcement officials in all sectors of society (Benedict & Klein, 1997; Lefkowitz, 1997; Melnick, 1992).

Because athletes find that they are able to avoid consequences and being disciplined in a variety of settings, athletes may come to accept and believe that they are above the law in terms of having to account for their negative actions. Players discussed numerous examples of how they themselves and teammates had avoided social and legal consequences simply because they were athletes. This type of reinforcement can easily promote and encourage more antisocial behaviors because athletes do not receive punishment for negative behaviors. Canadian players have noted that because guns are illegal, fist-fighting against another man outside of a bar in order to settle a dispute was a fairly common and acceptable practice. Thus, because fist-fighting was a common occurrence which was not condemned, it was viewed as an acceptable behavior and thus flourished. Moreover, even though Benedict and Klein (1997) found evidence that present-day athletes who are allegedly involved sexual aggression are arrested more frequently than nonathletes (because law enforcement officials do not want to be guilty of granting athletes any privileges), other studies have presented ample evidence that athletes continue to receive privileges and tend not to be held accountable for their negative behaviors (Benedict, 1997; Curry, 1998; Lefkowitz, 1997).

Sexual Aggression Against Women

In addition to off-ice aggression against other males, aggression was also found in the players' relationships with women. Sexual aggression was one form of aggression that was discovered, and this was differentiated from physical assaults and aggression against women. Other researchers have differentiated sexual and physical forms of
aggression as well. For instance, The Conflict Tactic Scales (CTS2) was revised to include new measures which differentiated sexual aggression from physical aggression because researchers saw the need to measure different forms of aggression separately in order to gain greater understanding of the various types of violence which exist (Straus, Hamby, Boney-McCoy, Sugarman, 1996).

**Attitudes Toward Women**

Other than a few women such as wives, girlfriends, or some women friends, players tended to view women negatively as sex objects. Players especially disrespected women who had frequent sex encounters with a number of players. Overall, the players very negatively characterized these women who pursued the players as sexual partners simply because the men were athletes and hockey players. In essence, a double standard was prevalent among the players because they viewed women negatively for their promiscuous behaviors while their own teammates were reinforced for having sex with numerous women.

Players discussed the characteristics and their slang names for women “groupies” who followed sports teams such as hockey. Furthermore, the narratives illustrated the negative way in which the players viewed these women. yet the players had little difficulty with sexually using these women. Therefore, in one sense, the players liked the women “groupies” for their availability as needed sexual partners, but when the encounter was finished, the players had little respect for the women because of their very sexual availability. Players’ lack of respect for female groupies usually lasted until they wanted to have a sexual encounter with one of these women, usually when “nice” or “good” women would not.
Players also described women "groupies" and often women in general in terms of being sexual objects who were viewed as available for the purpose of the athletes’ pleasure. In essence, women were there to be used and aggressively pursued by players. Certain players actually discussed the fact that the hockey culture was far more involved in the objectification of women than any of the other groups with whom they had been affiliated or were familiar, including the business world. Interestingly, one participant did note that although some of the players did not want to be a part of this group mentality which objectified women, they also recognized that it took a stronger, more mature person to resist the group’s influences. Thus, some players were not able to break away from group thinking despite their differing viewpoints because the group’s mentality exerted a strong influence over individuals who had subscribed to the group’s normative treatment of women.

For instance, players often viewed women as objects of conquest, trophies, and prizes which were there to be conquered and won. Women were conquered and won only after one of the players had sex with her. Furthermore, if one player had sex with a woman, other players sometimes saw this as a challenge to them to see if they were also able to have sex with the same woman as well. Players described their need for adventure and promiscuity which would then translate into story-telling among one’s peers. In essence, the athletes’ competitive nature acquired from their sports socialization and other masculinity influences within the culture translated into their sexual behaviors because the athletes competed with peers in order to have a greater amount of sex with numerous women. Caron et al. (1997) found that scores for competitiveness were significantly correlated with reported sexual aggression and athletic participation.
Furthermore, higher competitiveness scores were significantly correlated with hostility and aggression toward women, and athletes had the highest scores for being competitive.

These attitudes by athletes toward women have been supported in other research on athletes. For example, Benedict (1997) found large numbers of women "groupies" who were readily available to have sex with basketball and football players despite the negative treatment and objectification that these women received from the athletes. In one instance, an athlete had referred to the woman as his "piece" for the evening even though she was walking next to him (Benedict, 1997). Similarly, Leifkowitz (1997) found that the athletes involved in the Glen Ridge, New Jersey rape had categorized females into those who were merely sexual objects and partners to them, and those women who were friends that received somewhat more respect than the previously categorized women. Furthermore, Curry (1991) found that athletes objectified women during his study of athlete interactions in lockerrooms. Women were often viewed as depersonalized objects which were used for men’s pleasure (Curry, 1991).

Although players emphasized the idea that women existed for the players’ enjoyment, some players did mention that a certain element of respect was a covert part of this process. The notion of respect for women almost seemed to be equated with a player being settled into a more steady relationship. Therefore some players respected women as a result of being involved in a serious relationship. Being in a committed relationship was viewed as unattractive and undesirable throughout the culture because relationships were largely seen as mundane and boring; relationships were seldom described in terms of sexual behaviors and stories which are interesting and sufficiently vulgar for the hockey community. Messner (1994) interpreted this behavior in terms of
"sexual schizophrenia" which meant that men were supposed to engage in aggressive sexist talk when referring to women while at the same time they were to hold-in their emotional feelings toward women during their time in the lockerroom. Curry (1991) found that athletes who decided to share emotional content about their female intimates with teammates in the lockerroom did so through secretive whisperings with teammates they could trust to keep their disclosures silent.

Because hockey players spend large amounts of time together in preparation for practices and games as well as time together after these completed activities, the players regarded the dressing room as a sacred place which contains a continuous flow of captivating stories and discussions of all types. Some of these conversations and interactions which occur in the dressing room can be quite insulting and demeaning because these discussions are seldom if ever scrutinized. Themes containing content of bravado and machismo are frequent occurrences within the hockey culture even though players admitted that a certain amount of embellishment often existed among the players. This façade often took the form of somewhat egotistical attitudes which modeled behaviors that were culturally appropriate for hockey but not necessarily behaviors which represented the players' true beliefs. Curry (1991) found evidence of themes of athletes' "one-up-manship" in addition to players participating in traditional masculine conversations in order to keep themselves from being verbally targeted by their teammates. Lefkowitz (1997) also found in his study of one gang rape that athletes had a significant impact on their peers because some athletes did not leave the scene of the Glen Ridge, New Jersey rape even though they mentioned they wanted to and did not participate. These athletes had mentioned that they were fearful of leaving the scene.
because they thought that their teammate peers would verbally abuse and ostracize them (Lefkowitz, 1997). Finally, it might be expected that athletes may become more inclined to engage in sexual aggression against women when so much of their lockerroom conversation is constantly centered around themes involving sex, aggression, and sexist language (Curry, 1991). In essence, these repetitive themes relating to aggression may become modeled, reinforced, and engrained to the point that the players will perpetrate behaviors based on these discussions.

**Verbal Coercion**

The players discussed one very common practice regarding their relationship with women, i.e., the use of verbal pressure, coercion, and/or manipulation. Although physical force in the pursuit of sex was not that common among the athletes in this study, verbal coercion was. Most of the players discussed the idea that they had seldom if ever observed or even heard about players using force to rape women within the hockey culture. The players were much more aware of players using verbal coercion, persuasion, and manipulation in order to convince an unwilling woman to have sex with them. Because verbal pressure was a much more common occurrence, the players were readily familiar with this practice and readily discussed their expertise and methods. The players did not view sexual coercion as an aggressive behavior, but rather it was viewed as an action that was normative and necessary in order to persuade a hesitant or unwilling woman into having sex. It is interesting to note that certain players viewed every encounter with a new woman in terms of planning to have sex with her. Therefore, “the forcing” begins from the moment that a player meets a woman and continues throughout the whole process, until he finally convinces the woman to have sex with him. This
process of convincing a women to have sex was viewed as "one big force" because it sometimes took a lot of work to convince a woman against her will to first go home with the player from a bar and then have sex with him. Furthermore, players thought that they were constantly forcing women, although not in the physical sense, but instead in the verbal sense because many women were opposed to complying with the player's agenda to leave with them and have sex. Therefore, the process of "picking-up" a woman from a bar was thought to be both a type of "force" and a lot of work in order to gain the woman's compliance. Consistent with expressions of masculinity by athletes in hockey and other sports, males are expected to be superior, dominating, sexually promiscuous, and competent with women (Messner, 1992).

These findings are also supported in the literature on athlete behaviors. For instance, Boeringer (1996) discovered that 60% of athletes reported at least one instance of using verbal coercion to obtain sexual favors. Although athletes had reported higher percentages than nonaffiliated students, the findings do not support the notion that varsity athletes are more likely to engage in sexual aggression because the differences were not statistically significant (Boeringer, 1996). Athletes did, however, significantly differ from nonathletes in terms of whether they would force sexual behaviors on a woman if they were guaranteed immunity (Boeringer, 1996). The athletes reported a disproportionately greater inclination and readiness to engage in sexual force to coerce a women into a sexual act than did nonathletes (Boeringer, 1996).

In essence, some players in this study seemed to believe that the whole process of meeting a woman and then ultimately having this culminate into convincing her to have sex with him. was one big manipulative game and challenge, not unlike the sport of
hockey itself. The players described pushing the limits by putting overt pressure on a woman in terms of verbal coercion, pressure, and manipulation and even physical pressure in one isolated instance where a participant observed a player holding a woman's arm to prevent her from leaving a situation. These tactics were undoubtedly used as an attempt to gain sexual favors from a woman. Furthermore, the use of coercive sexual tactics is another way that players will demonstrate to their teammates that they are both "macho" and sexually desirable to women because they are able to gain sexual compliance with a woman one way or another.

Players did admit that date rape occurred within the hockey culture although they did not believe that this was a very common occurrence. Some players had mentioned they knew women who were date raped by various athletes, but this was not limited to hockey players. Other players described sexual situations with women which contained high levels of sexual ambiguity for the participants. This occurred because large amounts of alcohol were involved, and this caused some of the woman in these situations to question whether they had been sexually forced and raped by the players because they did not remember much about the preceding evening's sexual circumstances. The high consumption of alcohol undoubtedly clouded the participants' judgement and recollection of the sexual behaviors in which they had participated in the night before, in addition to lessening the participants' sexual inhibitions. Furthermore, it is possible that consensual sexual behaviors in conjunction with high alcohol consumption, which produced only vague recollections from the previous night, can be perceived as a sexual assault if one person is regretful about their sexual participation upon their waking up the next morning.
Although no study examining athletes' self-reported sexual aggression toward women has found a statistically significant difference between the rates of athletes versus nonathletes (e.g., Boeringer, 1996; Caron et al., 1997), other studies that did not use athletes' self-reports of their own aggression have found that athletes were overrepresented in their use of sexual aggression when compared to nonathletes (Crosset et al., 1996; Frinter & Rubinson, 1993). Boeringer (1996) discovered that 15% of athletes reported using physical force to obtain sex from women. Although athletes had reported higher percentages than nonaffiliated students, the findings were not statistically significant (Boeringer, 1996). Athletes did, however, significantly differ from nonathletes in terms of whether they would force sexual behaviors on a woman if they were guaranteed immunity (Boeringer, 1996). The athletes reported a disproportionately greater inclination and readiness to engage in sexual force to coerce a woman into a sexual act than nonathletes (Boeringer, 1996). Similarly, Crosset et al. (1996) compared rates of reported cases of sexual assaults for varsity athletes versus the general male student population, and found over a three-year time span that although male student athletes accounted for a mere 3.3% of the total male population, the male student-athlete population accounted for 19% of the reported sexual assault perpetrators.

Finally, Frintner and Rubinson (1993) found through a sample of 925 undergraduate women at a large mid-western university that although the population of male athletes was less than 2% of the male student population, 22% of the reported sexual assaults, 18% of the attempted sexual assaults, and 14% of the cases involving acts of sexual abuse were committed by members of sports teams or clubs on campus. Thus.
male members of club and varsity teams were undoubtedly over-represented among the accused in terms of perpetrating a variety of crime-related behaviors in this study.

**Alcohol and Sexual Aggression**

Players in this study also discussed the manner in which alcohol could influence the highly intoxicated players to act with physical pressure or force against certain women who were unwilling to participate in sex with them. Although participants thought that most players would stop their unwanted sexual advances with women if they were not under the influence of alcohol, players did note that the higher levels of alcohol present in these sexual situations with women might prevent some players from controlling their sexual advances. Finally, participants noted that certain players who were under the heavy influence of alcohol might do "almost anything" because alcohol seemed to promote and encourage a very apathetic and noncaring attitude in terms of the way they would treat women.

The use of alcohol in conjunction with sexual assault is supported in the literature. For example, Frinter and Rubinson (1993) found 55% of the women and 69% of the men had been drinking during an attempted or sexual assault, and 9% of the women and 68% of the men had been drinking during acts of sexual abuse (e.g., unwanted sexual fondling). One noticeable limitation of these findings is that only one alcohol measurement question was used for this study, which provides very limited information at best. Boeringer (1996) found through self-report questionnaires from 477 male undergraduates, which included 77 athletes, that 28% of the athletes reported using alcohol and drugs to obtain sexual favors. Finally, Benedict (1997) found numerous incidences of athletes committing sexual assaults in conjunction with alcohol abuse.
Sex Segregation Influences

Participants discussed another influence besides substance abuse which was believed to be related to aggression against females. For instance, one participant noticed that his teammate and roommate who perpetrated aggression against a female intimate lacked any female presence in his life because he did not have a mother or sister. This issue when combined with the player's more needy personality was thought to exacerbate this player's aggressive behaviors toward his girlfriend. Research findings have been inconclusive regarding sex segregation influences. For instance, Lefkowitz (1997) found that three out of four of the male athletes that were indicted in the Glen Ridge, New Jersey gang rape had no female siblings in their family of origin. Conversely, Boeringer (1996) found that all-male living environments were not correlated with sexual deviancy within a group.

Date Rape

Players in this study also discussed (a) the perceived incidence and (b) their perceptions relating to date rape among players within the hockey culture. Although the players in general have numerous women available to them who are ready and willing to provide most with sex whenever they desire it, the players still had described a number of experiences which related to sexual assaults in which they had known about or participated. Participants who had known about or walked in on situations where players had forced sex on women ranged from zero to a high of approximately a dozen situations. Most players' knowledge of date rape, however, was minimal; most players recalled only an isolated, distant incident of this nature which had occurred only occasionally. Given
the aggressive nature of the hockey culture, it might be easy and logical to assume that date rape would be more commonly reported in this study than it was.

One player had described a situation where he had stopped a teammate who was pressuring a woman sexually. The situation had bothered the player to the point where he had confronted his teammate’s behaviors even though this friend had not remembered the situation either because he had had too much alcohol and may have experienced a blackout, or the player was in denial. Furthermore, the player discussed the notion that he felt the woman had to be much more aware of her behaviors because she was in a hotel room of an out-of-town player she did not know. Other players had similarly thought that women’s naivete had placed them in risky situations with players as well. Moreover, the players believed that the woman had a responsibility in some of these situations because she could not be naïve to the point that she did not know what the player may have been expecting in terms of sexual behaviors from her. Because players have so many women willing to perform any and all types of sexual behaviors for them at a moment’s notice, players can misperceive and mistake a woman’s intentions, if the woman behaves in such a way as to mirror behaviors of a female “groupie.”

Benedict (1997) similarly found that even though athletes had large numbers of women sexually available, this did not prevent sexual assaults from occurring on numerous teams in a variety of sports (Benedict. 1997). Moreover, Benedict (1997) discussed the way that players would walk in and out of rooms when women were with teammates, in addition to discussing the way that women had put themselves in very vulnerable positions with the athletes.
One participant in this study had discussed a physical and attempted sexual assault which occurred on his team and involved a player and a woman from the hockey management association. Although the woman and her parents had decided neither to press charges nor pursue the situation in any way, the participant did not doubt the validity of the woman's story. It is interesting to note that no one had brought this situation to the attention of the coaches, and this related to both the player's teammates as well as to other members of the hockey management association who knew of the assault. Benedict (1997) discussed codes involving high levels of secrecy and silence which are associated with close-knit groups such as athletic teams because players often remain very loyal to their teammates particularly when this relates to a teammate who is in some type of trouble.

**Sex With Passed-Out Women**

The phenomenon of nonconsensual sex not only relates to players who pressure or force unwilling women to have sex with them. Nonconsensual sex also relates to a player having sex with a woman who is severely intoxicated on substances like alcohol or drugs to the point where she cannot give her consent. A player who has sex with a woman that cannot give her consent is in essence sexually assaulting the woman. The participants discussed situations that they had known about or participated in where players had sex with women who were very close to being passed-out. Other players had mentioned situations where they had known about, observed, or participated in fondling or having sexual intercourse with women who were passed-out, and some participants discussed knowing about approximately a dozen of these situations over the course of their career. Participants also tended to explain this behavior in terms of players higher levels of
intoxication. In addition, players had also mentioned that they had known women who were drugged and then sexually assaulted by athletes who were acquaintances but not hockey players; the players had known about these situations occurring in both high school and on large university campuses. Previously cited studies have supported the notion that high levels of alcohol consumption are usually found among both perpetrators and victims of sexual assault (Benedict, 1997; Frinter & Rubinson, 1993; Koss & Gaines, 1993) in addition to the way that substances like alcohol were used to coerce women into having sex (Boeringer, 1996) even though the sexual assaults did not occur with women who were passed-out.

Although some players had heard, known about, or actually perpetrated sexual assaults against women who had passed out, more players had not personally observed or known of teammates who had perpetrated these behaviors. Furthermore, some of the players were quick to point out that they would stop any sexual assault occurring with a passed-out woman. Players explained that they would stop this type of assault from happening because it would be viewed in the same way as a larger hockey player “picking on” a smaller player. Therefore, players would come to the rescue of a smaller player being victimized in the same way that they would come to the rescue of a woman being victimized when she was passed-out. There are strict rules of etiquette pertaining to larger players victimizing or “picking on” smaller players in the hockey culture, and because of this obvious disadvantage and mismatch, these behaviors are sometimes met with intense scrutiny and physically aggressive rebuttals.
Physical Aggression Toward Women

Incidence and Perceptions Related to Aggression

Physical aggression against women appeared to be one of the least common types of violence when compared to off-ice aggression against other males. While players take pride in expressing their physical aggression against other males on and off the ice as well as their sexual conquests which may include certain coercive or aggressive actions, physical aggression against women is not a behavior that players are willing to disclose in most instances. Therefore, physical aggression against women related to more covert behaviors because the players' overall views toward physical abuse were very negative based on this sample of participants and this researcher's experiences. In essence, physical aggression against women is frowned upon to such an extent that it would cause the perpetrator to be viewed in a negative manner by his teammates. Furthermore, a number of players had mentioned how they would most assuredly intervene along with other teammates if they saw or knew a woman was being physically abused. Moreover, players had mentioned that the physical abuse of women related to an unwritten rule in the hockey culture which silently detests and abhors the physical abuse of women. This cultural norm may be because hockey players in general who physically take advantage of anyone smaller and less aggressive than themselves are regarded very unfavorably by other players. Hence, women would definitely fall under this umbrella of being physically smaller and weaker than the players.

Because physical aggression against women is highly frowned upon throughout the hockey culture, it is possible that these behaviors occur more regularly, but they are not discussed nor disclosed at all to teammates. Players had discussed some situations
which they had known or heard about involving the physical abuse of women although
these were not very common. Because perpetrators would be looked down upon and lose
respect from their peers, players thought that teammates would be a positive influence in
preventing and prohibiting physical aggression against women. In essence, because
players are extremely bonded and loyal to their teammates, this type of peer modeling
and reinforcement (i.e., peers negatively sanctioning perpetrators) could be quite
influential in combating physical abuse toward women. Numerous researchers have
discussed the intense loyalty and bonds which can exist within athletic teams, and these
bonds have a strong impact and influence on teammates’ behaviors (Benedict. 1997:

Although all of the participants had heard of athletes from other sports
perpetrating aggression against women, approximately 25% of this sample had not heard
of or known about any incidents of physical aggression against women from players in
the hockey culture. The players who did know of incidents involving the physical abuse
of women usually described situations relating to teammates or players from other teams.
Moreover, some participants who had known about players’ physical abuse of women
described situations where an abusive player’s aggression was sometimes met with legal
implications from law enforcement officials. Legal implications sometimes related to
arrests, restraining orders, and even deportation of these abusive players. Furthermore,
these players’ alcohol/drug abuse and other addictions were often described in
conjunction with their physical abuse of women. Frinntner and Rubinson (1993) found
that 3% of male student-athletes at a large midwestern university perpetrated 11% of the
reports for battery, intimidation, and illegal restraints against women and furthermore.
68% of these athletes had been drinking during these incidences. In addition, arrested athletes often cited drinking as the predominant activity preceding their troublesome behaviors ("Special Report," 1995).

One interesting finding in this study related to the way in which players, while mentioning that they would potentially confront a perpetrator for his abuse, in reality, did not address these perpetrators with their concerns. One participant had mentioned a perpetrator's lack of respect among his teammates, but the players had dealt with the situation by simply not speaking to the perpetrator at all. Several participants had mentioned that the player's size and demeanor had most likely influenced teammates' decisions not to address a perpetrator for his abusive behaviors, and this was especially true if the perpetrator was an intimidating fighter. It is interesting to note that certain perpetrators were able to intimidate even their own teammates, and this discouraged any type of teammate intervention. Players also discussed the way a potential perpetrator's behaviors and size can effect teammates intervening in abusive encounters because these situations can be potentially dangerous to both the woman as well as the players themselves.

Several participants described situations which they considered to be "close calls" in terms of their own potential for perpetrating physical abuse against their female intimates. In other words, these players had felt that they had the potential to become physically abusive to their female intimate during a particular situation. One participant's "close call" included his physical restraint with his girlfriend which was intended to stop her physical assault on him during an alcohol-related situation. Moreover, the participant had felt that a person can only take so much abuse before they
will attempt to stop the perpetrator. Furthermore, players had recalled aggressive situations where they had observed females physically assaulting their teammates, and this appeared to be as common as the participants' reports relating to the frequency of males' perpetrating aggression. Through meta-analysis using specific behavioral measures, Archer (2000) found that women were significantly more likely than men to have used physical aggression toward their partners and to have used it more frequently.

Another participant specifically cited his need for power, dominance, and control in conjunction with high alcohol consumption as strong influences in his own “close call” with physical aggression toward his female intimate. Moreover, other participants discussed the way in which the players’ perceptions of their superiority and dominance could influence the players’ aggression because players are continually encouraged and reinforced for modeling these traits within the culture because they lead to individual player and team success. For instance, Messner (1992) found that males were rewarded and glorified by peers, coaches, and fans for their sports aggression and “animal-like” behaviors. Furthermore, Messner found evidence that athletes’ relationships with one another included elements of domination and control because the men viewed these peer relationships in the same way they viewed their opponents. Players are rewarded and reinforced for displaying their dominance, power, and control over themselves and their opponents, and this can undoubtedly create an overly inflated sense of self within the players. Furthermore, athletes are not always disciplined for their negative behaviors (Benedict, 1997; Benedict & Klein, 1997; Lefkowitz, 1997), and this can further add to athletes feeling as if they are invincible, all-powerful, and above laws which would normally apply to nonathletes.
The sample contained two participants who described incidents of their own aggression against female intimates. Alcohol was mentioned by both as an influence which when combined with the players’ frustrations helped to produce aggression in both of these situations. It is interesting to note that both players had made changes in their lives after these situations had occurred. One of the players had mentioned that he had stopped drinking hard liquor which always affected him in a negative manner, and the other player had obtained professional intervention after a second incident occurred with his wife which did not involve alcohol.

Because the culture of hockey overall depicted higher levels of disrespect toward women because players routinely objectify and disparagingly discuss their attitudes toward women (i.e., groupies, puck bunnies), it would not be difficult to conceive that certain players may internalize and translate these attitudes and beliefs into concrete behaviors such as physical abuse. Curry (1991) thought that athletes may be more inclined to use aggression against women because so much of their conversation focused on themes of women, aggression, and sex.

Conclusions

Drawing on data from in-depth interviews with a group of current and former college and professional hockey players, this study sought to understand the relationship between hockey socialization and culture and the frequency, etiology, and motivation for perpetuating aggression and violence. Furthermore, these aggressive behaviors are discussed in relation to both men and women and involve contexts both within and
particularly outside of the sports realm. The players described their own use of aggression and acted as informants of other players' aggression which was observed within the hockey culture.

Overall, the study's findings indicated that interpersonal aggression is common in the lives of these hockey players and their teammates, both on and off the ice. Off-ice aggression against other males appeared to be particularly common, and this was related to, but not limited to players who had more aggressive roles within their teams. Furthermore, players' aggression seemed to be amplified when players competed in leagues which allowed on-ice fist-fighting as a part of the game. These circumstances typically occurred in alcohol-laden environments such as parties or bars.

The informants also identified athletes' tendency to objectify women, and this was seen as a factor that contributed to the aggression against women. Certain women were viewed with general disrespect and treated as sexual objects, especially if they had sex with numerous players. Some connected sexual aggression to what they termed lockerroom talk, and this meant that certain male sexual bravado in the peer culture was carried off the ice to their relationships with women. In general, the athletes seemed to speak of a culture that had a lesser regard for women who they made themselves sexually available to players.

Participants discussed physical aggression against women which was the least common and least talked about form of player aggression when compared to other forms of aggression discussed by the players. The occurrence of physical aggression against women may be more common than what this sample of participants had known about or
discussed. Physical aggression against women perhaps was the least mentioned because it is associated with strong negative connotations within the hockey culture. Perpetrators become potential outcasts among their teammates.

Finally, sexual aggression in the form of coercion was common among the players and not viewed in a negative manner because coercion was seen as required behavior in reducing women. Furthermore, players were also able to describe situations where physical pressure and force was used against women sexually although this was less common, and these circumstances were often described as ambiguous because of the high levels of intoxication which were prevalent in both the player and their partner. Participants were also able to recount experiences where players had sexually assaulted women who were passed-out from too much alcohol. Overall, the respondents tended to differentiate between general physical violence and sexual aggression or violence, seeing the latter as less serious and more understandable than general physical violence.

Off-ice aggression against both men and women was specifically mentioned along with players' higher consumption of both drugs and alcohol because substance abuse appeared in virtually every aggressive incident which players mentioned against both men and women. In addition to the salience of substance abuse influences, aggressive behaviors were also seen as manifestations of a number of additional components which included an absence of deterrence, sports socialization, masculinity, and family of origin influences. Overall, aggression was found to be learned both within the hockey culture in addition to other settings such as one's family of origin where aggression was modeled by significant and reinforcing agents. Therefore, athlete
aggression appears to be the result of numerous interrelated influences that were both modeled and reinforced in and around the athletes' environment.

In general, the findings of this study have illuminated men's subjective experiences as participants and informants of the sport of hockey. Furthermore, the participants have brought personal insights to our understanding of aggression and violence which occurred in and outside of sports. This in-depth exploration of the hockey culture begins to fill this knowledge gap through its unique contribution to understanding athletes' expressions of aggression and violence outside the sports context against both men and women because players noted aggression in broader social relationships as a logical extension of on-ice violent behavior. This relationship between participation in violence in sport and in other social contexts is consistent with the well established relationship between and among various types of violent displays consistently found in the literature (Fagan & Browne, 1994; Levinson, 1989).

Limitations of the Study

This study does have a number of inherent methodological limitations. First, although the sample does include a balance of athletes at different ages who competed at the junior, college, and minor professional levels, the sample included no participants who were regular players on a major professional National Hockey League (NHL) team. Therefore, the data in this study cannot be related to all hockey players and particularly cannot be transferable to those at the highest caliber of play. Although qualitative studies cannot be generalized to a broader population, certain researchers feel that the narrators have strength through their distinctive and unique expression in the empirical social world (Blumer, 1969). Furthermore, because the empirical social world is constantly
changing along with its participants, certain researchers believe that variables that can be defined can also be redefined on an on-going basis and, therefore, this notion challenges the idea of generalizability altogether (Blumer, 1969).

Another limitation is the nature and use of retrospective interviews (Fettermann, 1998). Retrospective interviews are used to reconstruct the past as informants are asked to recall personal historical information (Fettermann, 1998). Although some of the respondents were recalling events in the recent past or that which had occurred within the past five to ten years, other participants were asked to recall situations which had occurred in their career as far back as 20 to 30 years ago. Even though recalling events from the somewhat distant past may involve some memory lapses or filtering of past events (Fettermann, 1998), it is this researcher’s contention as a participant observer that this is not a problematic issue. This researcher feels that this issue of recall is not a substantial problem for most players because playing college or professional hockey has such an impact on one’s psyche that the events are often discussed and reviewed. Therefore, these memories can remain firmly imbedded in an athletes’ mind, making lasting impressions even decades after the player’s careers have ended.

The final limitation in this study pertained to a practice which was not used in this study called “member checks” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). “Member checks” are sometimes used to enhance the “credibility” of a study through subject verification which involves presenting the participants with information such as raw data, interpretations, or conclusions from the study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Lincoln and Guba (1985) contend
that obtaining the thoughts, comments, and reactions is important in order to accurately represent the participants' views, which allows them to be part of the process in an empowering manner.

In contrast to this perspective, Sparkes (1989) has questioned the procedure of "member checks" and whether this procedure can actually enhance or reduce credibility or trustworthiness of a study. Sparkes discussed a situation that occurred during the use of "member checks" (see Sparkes, 1987) in which a participant initially disagreed with his researcher's interpretation and then a year later agreed with the interpretation retrospectively. As a result of this situation, Sparkes was forced to evaluate whether a respondent's later agreement enhanced the credibility of his interpretation and results and, conversely, decide whether the participant's initial disagreement reduced credibility of his study. Sparkes suggested that the interpretations of a researcher related to a set of events, which are only interpretations, and not necessarily ones that will be in agreement with others. Therefore, the credibility or trustworthiness of a study should not be affected by a participant's agreement or disagreement with the researcher's interpretations (Sparkes, 1989). Miles and Huberman (1984) similarly supported these ideas by contending that even if participants do not have the same perspectives or analytical constructs as those of the researcher, this lack of agreement does not cause such constructs to be invalid or contrived. In essence, Sparkes (1989) criticized Lincoln and Guba's (1985) attempt to equate foundational criteria to a naturalistic paradigm as being misguided because the naturalistic paradigm assumes multiple realities and reality as
being mind-dependent. Therefore, if the naturalistic assumptions are accepted, the idea of applying foundational criteria which sorts out trustworthy findings from untrustworthy ones seriously undermines these assumptions (Sparkes, 1989).

The researcher chose not to use “member checks” because of the extreme inaccessibility and the overall apathy from the population in this study. The present athlete sample would not have been accessible at all for a first interview unless this researcher had a previous bond with many of these participants because he was a hockey player himself. Participants were also inaccessible because of their intense schedules which related to sports careers, self-employment, or their general lack of energy and interest in this endeavor. This researcher was forced to use extreme patience and persistence at times while drawing upon his prior relationship and rapport with a number of the participants in order to get an interview. Some interviews were basically a favor to the researcher because the participants had little or no interest in being part of a study. Therefore, a second interview or mail follow-up would have been considered a definite imposition from these participants’ perspectives. This researcher did attempt to contact one player through a phone call and a follow-up letter when the last part of the participant’s taped interview became inaudible because of a tape malfunction, and the player never responded to this communication. Another reason “member checks” were not implemented related to the sensitive nature of the material which was investigated. This researcher did not want to risk having any of the disclosures recanted once an interview was completed. Finally, “member checks” were not considered because of the substantial logistics and costs involved in this procedure. Therefore, because “member checks” are only one of several different ways that researchers might enhance the
"credibility" of a study and other "credibility" checks were already implemented, this researcher does not believe that failing to include "member checks" will be a substantial limitation that will negatively affect the study.

Recommendations for Future Research

Although the subject of athlete violence has been addressed more frequently within the media and empirical studies since the 1990s, the study of athlete aggression and violence remain very limited. Furthermore, the sport of hockey has not been identified specifically within the studies relating to athlete violence. Past studies have emphasized and focused their efforts mainly on researching the frequency or occurrence of aggression associated with sports such as professional or college football or basketball (Benedict, 1997). Moreover, studies on athlete aggression are often highlighted within studies which are referred to as revenue-producing collegiate sports, and these studies do not include the frequency of aggression for professional players (Benedict, 1997; Crosset, Benedict, and McDonald, 1995; Crosset, Ptacek, McDonald, & Benedict, 1996; Frintner & Rubinson, 1993; Koss & Gaines, 1993). Studies relating to professional athletes' use of aggression are documented predominantly through journalistic coverage or court documentation records and interviews (see Benedict, 1997; Robinson, 1998). Overall, the sport of hockey has not been researched exclusively and extensively since Michael Smith's work in the 1970s and 1980s.

In addition, because hockey is unique from other sports by allowing certain types of in-sport aggression (i.e., fist-fighting) to occur within a variety of playing levels (i.e., juniors, professional), hockey should be differentiated from both noncontact and contact sports which lack this component. In addition, studies involving hockey players should
specify the athletes' playing levels because certain playing levels, which allow in-sport fist-fighting, may impact the frequencies of off-ice aggression (i.e., male-to-male fist-fighting) when compared to playing levels which do not allow fist-fighting. Moreover, influences such as players' age, position, and players' roles within the team need to be taken into consideration during these studies because these influences can also impact the frequency of players' use of aggression. Furthermore, team and individual substance abuse can also have an influence on players' aggression against other males and females because virtually all assaults in this study were related to high levels of alcohol or drug consumption. Finally, once hockey has been studied as a separate entity in order to understand its unique etiology of aggression, it then would be feasible to compare hockey players' use and frequency of out-of-sport aggression against athletes from other sports. Additionally, it would be interesting to investigate the motivations for other athletes out-of-sport aggression when compared to that of hockey players.

Finally, because researchers have noted that factors relating to certain types of aggression (i.e., sexual assault) have been difficult to identify and replicate, and sexual aggression may even relate to behaviors indirectly related to being an athlete (Caron et al., 1997; Koss & Gaines, 1993), athlete aggression may be most appropriately studied from historical, institutional, and interactional contexts (Dobash & Dobash, 1983). Furthermore, athlete aggression studies should include a range of diverse methodologies because self-report instruments which were the preferred method for gathering sensitive information relating to issues of violence and aggression have produced the lowest participation rates and lowest prevalence estimates of adult sexual assault (Brickman & Briere, 1984; Hall & Flannery, 1984). In addition, although some studies have found
athletes to be overrepresented in terms of physical and sexual assaults when compared to control groups (Benedict & Klein, 1997; Crosset et al., 1995; Crosset et al., 1996; Frinter & Rubinson, 1993). Other studies have found weak associations (Koss & Gaines, 1993) or no significant associations at all (Boeringer, 1996; Caron et al., 1997). The inability to consistently replicate these studies suggests that researchers cannot merely identify athletes through their athletic participation or through randomly selected variables because athlete aggression against women may have less to do with being an athlete and more to do with behaviors indirectly related to athletic participation (Dobash & Dobash, 1983). Therefore, researchers should address this dearth of information through paying attention to methodological limitations and concerns of past studies which included small samplings of athletes, inconsistent and insignificant variables relating to aggression, and the failure to identify the athletes' specific sports and their individual positions. By addressing these issues, researchers will have a greater likelihood of increasing their overall knowledge of athlete aggression in a variety of sporting domains.
APPENDIX A

Verbal Script of Original Contact
VERBAL SCRIPT OF ORIGINAL CONTACT

I am Nick Pappas, a doctoral candidate at The Ohio State University and former professional hockey player and coach. I am studying the frequency, causes, and origins of athlete aggression. Your name was given to me by __________ as a potential participant for this study. Your participation would involve an interview which would last approximately one hour and a half. Anything you tell me will be held in strictest confidence. No names will be associated with anything you say. You have the right to refuse to answer any questions you judge to be objectionable, and you have the right to cease participation in the study at any time. The report of the research findings will be in summary form, reflecting the general responses of all participants in the study. If you are willing to take part in the study, I would like to schedule an appointment at your convenience to conduct the interview.
APPENDIX B

Consent Letter
Volunteer Consent for Participation in a Research Study on Athlete Aggression

Study Purpose: Nick Pappas, a Ph.D. candidate at Ohio State University, under the direction of Dr. Patrick McKenry, Principle Investigator, is asking you to participate in a study that explores the phenomenon of athlete aggression and violence. This subject is of interest to researchers who hope to learn and understand more about the frequency, causes, and origins of athlete aggression. Your participation in this study will help to advance this knowledge and understanding which has only recently been studied scientifically.

Study Procedures: Eligibility for this study is based on having played an advanced level of ice hockey for a period of at least 2 years. This would include but is not limited to levels such as juniors, college, and professional hockey. If you are eligible and willing to participate, you will be asked a series of questions about your experiences relating to athlete aggression. Each interview will take about an hour and a half, although some individual interviews may take longer. You need not answer any questions that you do not feel comfortable answering. The interviews will be tape-recorded, transcribed afterward, and all personal identification will be removed from the transcript. This will make the transcript identifiable only through a number and initials.

Confidentiality: This interview is completely voluntary and confidential. Your identity will not be revealed in this study. After the interview is transcribed, the tape will be destroyed and any personal identification will be removed from the transcript. Your interview will be identified only with a number and initials to ensure that you remain anonymous. Neither your name nor your identity will be used for publication or publicity purposes. Should you wish to stop the interview at any point, you may do so freely.

If you have any questions about this study, please contact Nick Pappas or Dr. Patrick McKenry, Principle Investigator, by phone in Columbus at 614-292-5616 or by email: Nick Pappas (pappas.48@osu.edu) and Patrick McKenry (mckenry.1@osu.edu).

Consent Statement: I have read and understood the information above. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I can withdraw from the study at any time without prejudice. The researcher has answered all questions that I had to my satisfaction, and I have received a copy of this form. I consent to take part in this study.

Date: ___________ Signed: ____________________________

(Participant)

Signed: ____________________________

(Co-Principle Investigator)

Signed: ____________________________

(Principle Investigator)
APPENDIX C

Interview Guide
Interview Questions

1. Describe your career in hockey from the beginning.
   a. Describe how you got interested in hockey?
   b. Who was influential in your career?
   c. How satisfying was your career in hockey? (positives/negatives)
   d. Would you do it again? Why?
   e. Have you ever been treated differently as an athlete? If so, by whom? (e.g., fans, women, men, bosses, professors)? How?
   f. What makes you different as an athlete?

2. Does fighting and violence between men carry over from on-ice to off the ice? How?
   a. Do you think being in hockey promotes physical aggression or fighting with other men off-ice? How?
   b. How often does fighting and violence occur with men off-ice that you have seen, experienced, or heard of?
   c. At what level did fighting and violence begin and become a common occurrence off-ice?
   d. What motivated this fighting and violence?
   e. Describe the most memorable off-ice athlete fight that you have witnessed (or heard of).
   f. What made it memorable?
   g. Describe any injuries that had occurred.
   h. How often does fighting and violence occur that you have participated in off-ice.
   i. At what level did fighting and violence begin and become a common occurrence off-ice?
   j. What motivated this fighting and violence?
k. Describe your most memorable fight with another guy off-ice?

l. What made it memorable?

m. Describe any injuries that occurred.

n. What causes athletes' physical aggression and fighting with men off-ice?

o. Probe for: psychological influences (aggressive personality), drug and alcohol influences, lack of consequences, group secrecy and silence, media influences, no "turn off" switch, peer pressures, group or "pack" beliefs, narrow concepts of masculinity (what it means to be tough or a man), family of origin violence (child abuse, witnessing parental violence, antisocial parents), coaching influences, teammate influences, and fan influences.

3. Do you think being in hockey promotes athletes' aggressive sexual behaviors with women? How?

a. What types of aggressive sexual activities have you seen, experienced, or heard of that athletes have done with a woman?

b. How often does this occur? When did this begin?

c. Why does this occur?

d. What happens before, during, and after an incident?

e. Describe any injuries that occurred.

f. What types of attitudes do you believe hockey players have toward women in and outside of the lockerroom?

g. What causes athletes' aggressive sexual behaviors with women?

h. Probe for: psychological influences (aggressive personality), drug and alcohol influences, lack of consequences, group secrecy and silence, media influences, no...
‘turn off’ switch, peer pressures, group or ‘pack’ beliefs, narrow concepts of masculinity (what it means to be tough or a man), use of pornography, attitudes toward rape (myths), treatment and attitude toward women, family of origin violence (child abuse, witnessing parental violence, antisocial parents), coaching influences, and teammate influences.

4. Do you think off-ice aggression against men carries over to physical aggression against women? How?
   a. Do you think being in hockey promotes athletes’ physical behaviors toward women? How?
   b. What types of athletes’ physical behaviors against women have you seen (or heard of)? (Threatening, pushing, slapping, hitting, throwing objects, fighting, knives, guns)
   c. What happened before, during, and after an incident?
   d. Describe any injuries that have occurred.
   e. How often does this occur? When did this begin?
   f. Why did these actions occur?
   g. What types of physical behaviors against women have you participated in? (threatening, pushing, slapping, hitting, throwing objects, fighting, knives, guns)
   h. What happened before, during, and after an incident?
   i. Describe any injuries that had occurred.
   j. How often does this occur? When did this begin?
   k. What motivated you to do this?
   l. What causes athletes’ physical behaviors with women?

Probe for: psychological influences (aggressive personality), drug and alcohol influences, lack of consequences, group secrecy and silence, media influences, no ‘‘turn off’’ switch.
peer pressures, group or “pack” beliefs, narrow concepts of masculinity (what it means to be tough or a man), use of pornography, treatment and attitude toward women, family of origin violence (child abuse, witnessing parental violence, antisocial parents), coaching influences, and teammate influences.

5 Now I want to talk about your family background.

a. Describe the structure of the family you lived with growing up.

b. Describe each member’s involvement in hockey.

c. Probe for: Type of discipline from mother/father/parental figure, harsh parenting, family of origin violence (parental violence or child abuse, spousal violence in family, grandparent violence, aggressive family members, sibling violence), and family alcohol or drug problems.
APPENDIX D

Demographic Questionnaire
Demographic Information

1. What is your age?____

2. What is your race or ethnic group: White or Caucasian____: Hispanic or Latino____: African American____: Native American or American Indian____: Asian American____: Other (specify ______________)

3. What is your highest level of education?
   a. 8th grade or less____
   b. Less than high school graduate____
   c. High school graduate____
   d. Some college____
   e. College graduate____

4. Present Occupation________________________________________________________
   a. What are your job duties?____________________________________________________

5. Where were you born? (circle one)
   United States Canada Europe Other (specify ______________)

6. What is your Current Marital Status?
   Divorced____ Single and dating a partner or girlfriend____
   Separated____ Living with a partner or girlfriend____
   Single____ Married____ Remarried____

7. When I was growing up I lived most of the time with:
   My mother and father____ My mother and stepfather____ Foster parents____
   My mother____ My father and stepmother____ My relatives____
   My father____ My father and his girlfriend/partner____
   My mother and her boyfriend/partner____

8. Mother’s highest level of education___________(years)
   a. Mother’s occupation___________________________(if retired, last occupation)

9. Father’s highest level of education___________(years)
   a. Father’s occupation___________________________(if retired, last occupation)
LIST OF REFERENCES


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