

**“That’s just what people think of a hockey player, right?”: Manifestations of
Masculinity among Major Junior Ice Hockey Players**

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ABSTRACT

“That’s just what people think of a hockey player, right?”: Manifestations of Masculinity among Major Junior Ice Hockey Players

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Ice hockey at the Major Junior level is particularly significant in Canada as the players are simultaneously coming of age and beginning to take on a full-time career in the sport. This stage of life raises questions about masculinity on the public agenda in terms of the problematic nature of hypermasculinity in sport, stereotypical images of athletes, and questions of social responsibility as both men and athletes. This dissertation outlines a study conducted to address the relationship between masculinity and ice hockey. In particular, it concentrates on hypermasculinity (also referred to as hegemonic masculinity) as it relates to Major Junior Ice Hockey and the experience of being a player at that level. Surveys and interviews were conducted with an entire Canadian Major Junior ice hockey team as part of a research project with the overarching objective of comprehending how the players’ understandings of manhood influence their perceptions of and attitudes toward their lifestyles and environment. With this in thought, the players were asked a range of questions, most of which focused on the following themes: how their time is spent, their priorities, their social environment, how to be successful, and what it means to be a man. This dissertation will offer an overview of the data and findings along with the challenges that work of this nature presents. It will conclude by suggesting key issues that have been identified over the course of the research and areas requiring further investigation.

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AN INTRODUCTION TO HEGEMONIC MASCULINITY AND MAJOR JUNIOR ICE HOCKEY IN CANADA

Because the demands on a goalie are mostly mental, it means that for a goalie the biggest enemy is himself. Not a puck, not an opponent, not a quirk of size or style. Him. The stress and anxiety he feels when he plays, the fear of failing, the fear of being embarrassed, the fear of being physically hurt, all the symptoms of his position, in constant ebb and flow, but never disappearing. The successful goalie understands these neuroses, accepts them, and puts them under control. The unsuccessful goalie is distracted by them, his mind in knots, his body quickly following.

-Ken Dryden (1983: 119)

Ken Dryden's description of the experience of a goaltender captures the experiences of many male hockey players both on and off the ice. Dryden, a goaltender for the Montreal Canadiens of the National Hockey League (NHL) between 1971 and 1979, was an all-star goaltender, although by no means a typical member of a Canadian hockey club. Dryden embarked on a year-long hiatus in 1973-1974 as he was not pleased with his proposed salary and chose to finish a law degree during his time with the Canadiens. He retired at age thirty-one after the 1978-1979 season, but not before having achieved six Stanley Cups and representing Canada in the monumental 1972 Summit Series against the Soviet national team. Dryden was inducted into the Hockey Hall of Fame in 1983 and works as an author, lawyer, politician, and businessman in Ontario (Hockey Hall of Fame 2011; Parliament of Canada 2008).

The quotation presented above comes from Dryden's book *The Game*, a personal account of life as a professional hockey player. Dryden's story is compelling, in part,

because he is able to step back as an outsider and put into words the experiences of a hockey player—experiences that tend to be reduced to the fame, entitlement, and violence by those who report on the lives of professional hockey players. Perhaps Dryden was an outlier, to some extent, given his choice to pursue an education and leave hockey behind. Nonetheless, he had first-hand experience in the profession and chose the famous words seen above to characterize his experience—demands, mental, himself, anxiety, failing, hurt, successful, neuroses, control. If read closely, this quotation is contradictory in nature. On one hand, it expresses excitement, pride, epic challenge, the unwavering respect teammates have for their goaltenders. On the other hand, however, it has distinct connotations of constant struggle, solitude, and angst.

While the quotation only applies, in this context, to the role of a goaltender, it can be taken as a more general commentary on the experiences of many hockey players both on and off the ice. In fact, I argue that the quotation also describes the hockey player's understanding and experience of masculinity and life as a male athlete. Dryden, of course, avoids the subject of masculinity in his book. Although he offers an impressive description of the life of a professional hockey player, like many other male athletes, he presents masculinity-related themes throughout his book, but never directly acknowledges or considers them. Indeed, besides the common claim that hockey players are 'out to prove their masculinity' by participating in hazing, violence, alcohol consumption, and other 'manly' activities, masculinity is often a topic left off the table in discussions of the lives of hockey players. The contradictory nature of the quotation in question is rarely ever examined in terms of the lives and experiences of male hockey players. What does masculinity mean to them? How is it manifested and displayed in

their lives? Is it important to them? Does it indeed relate to their choices and actions?

These are questions worth asking in an era when mainstream media is littered with accounts of athlete hazing, violence, drug addiction, and suicide. Moreover, aside from scholars sounding alarms on male athlete behaviour, the general public has become visibly concerned as well. Although the following incidents and events may be common knowledge and even old news to the devoted ice hockey enthusiast, a brief review of some of them paints a clear picture of the growing unrest—much of which can be tied, in some way, to issues of men and masculinity—in the North American ice hockey world.

- **2004, National Hockey League:** Todd Bertuzzi of the Vancouver Canucks punches Colorado Avalanche rookie Steve Moore from behind, causing Moore to collapse on the ice with three broken vertebrae and a concussion. Bertuzzi is suspended for seventeen months. The incident ended Moore's career and sparked passionate debate over the place of violence in hockey (CBC Sports 2004).
- **2005, Ontario Hockey League:** The Windsor Spitfires are handed a \$35,000 fine following hazing incidents and the league commissioner cracks down on the league's no-hazing policy. Most notably, a fight breaks out during a team practice between veteran Steve Downie and rookie Akim Aliu after Aliu refused to take part in the 'sweat box' or 'hot box', in which new players are forced to stand naked together in the bathroom of the team bus (CBC Sports 2005).
- **2006, Quebec Major Junior Hockey League:** Lewiston Maineacs goaltender Travis Fullerton and Quebec Remparts forward Simon Courcelles both charged with drunk driving. Lewiston releases Fullerton following the incident and, in an interesting turn of events, acquires Courcelles without knowing he had also been charged with the same crime (Pelletier 2006).
- **2008, National Hockey League:** Among his other antics, Dallas Stars' Sean Avery is suspended for six games just hours after having sought out a TSN sports cameraman to publicly express his thoughts regarding his ex-girlfriend, Elisha Cuthbert, dating Dion Phaneuf of the Calgary Flames.

Avery stated: “I just want to comment on how it’s become like a common thing in the NHL for guys to fall in love with my sloppy seconds. I don’t know what that’s about, but enjoy the game tonight” (Marche 2008).

- **2008, Quebec Major Junior Hockey League:** Former NHL goaltender Patrick Roy’s son, Jonathan, of the Quebec Remparts, receives a \$500 fine, is suspended for seven games, is forced to donate \$5000 to a charity, and narrowly escapes up to five years in prison after having attacked Chicoutimi Saguenéens goaltender Bobby Nadeau on the ice. Roy struck Nadeau several times as Nadeau curled up into a ball, refusing to participate. Patrick Roy is accused of encouraging his son to initiate the altercation. Jonathan leaves hockey and more debate is sparked over the place of violence in hockey (CBC News 2009).
- **2009, Ontario Hockey League:** After having been in a coma and on life support following his head hitting the ice during a hockey fight, twenty-one year old Don Sanderson of the Whitby Dunlops died in a Hamilton, Ontario hospital. The incident motivated league commissioner David Branch to review the rules surrounding fighting and the removal of helmets (McGran & Vyhnak 2009).
- **2009, National Hockey League:** Former captain of the Calgary Flames, Theoren Fleury, releases a book, *Playing With Fire*, outlining his tumultuous past as a hockey player. On top of public battles with drugs, alcohol, and gambling, Fleury divulges that he was sexually abused by former junior hockey coach Graham James. He states that his motive in releasing the book is to encourage others who have had the same experiences to feel more comfortable coming forward (CBC Sports 2009).
- **2011, National Hockey League:** Boston Bruins’ Zdeno Chara hits Montreal Canadiens’ Max Pacioretty into a stanchion, leaving Pacioretty with a concussion and fractured vertebra after having hit the ice. The league decides not to harshly penalize Chara as it appears that there was no intent to injure, however, this opinion is unpopular. Several players and teams speak out about the incident and major Canadian airline Air Canada threatens to revoke their sponsorship of the NHL if head shots and life-threatening injuries are not taken more seriously by the league (Garrioch 2011).

- *2011, National Hockey League*: three NHL players are dead in just over three months. New York Rangers enforcer Derek Boogard overdoses on drugs. Vancouver Canucks enforcer Rick Rypien commits suicide after a long battle with depression. Lastly, Wade Belak of the Nashville Predators commits suicide before the opening of the 2011-2012 season. The league vows to look into the string of deaths and the role of the enforcer is brought into question (CBC Sports 2011).

- *2011, Manitoba Junior Hockey League*: a fifteen-year-old rookie with the Neepawa Natives is forced to walk around the team dressing room in front of an assistant coach and teammates with water bottles tied to his scrotum as part of initiation. The team is given a \$5000 fine, at least twelve players are suspended, and the head coach resigned. (Turner 2011).

- *2011, National Hockey League*: former NHL enforcers Jim Thomson, Chris Nilan, and Stu Grimson speak out on the mental and physical difficulties associated with the role as well as the commonality of drug and alcohol problems linked to it. Well-known hockey commentator Don Cherry refers to the three men as ‘pukes,’ ‘hypocrites,’ and ‘turncoats’ on national television discrediting the argument that fighting in hockey is a problem. The comments spark anger among many viewers and Cherry is threatened with a lawsuit, but eventually apologizes on the air for some of his remarks (Crosbie 2011).

Controversy surrounding these and other events is not altogether new.

Specifically, academic literature on Canadian ice hockey shows that it has long been accused of promulgating masculine character traits to the extent that they become problematic (Robidoux 2001; Robidoux 2002; Adams 2006; Allain 2008; Gee 2009).

Since hockey is so deeply engrained in Canadian culture, it is often a primary site for the socialization of young males. This socialization becomes problematic when young men begin to embody traits of a dominant masculinity—often referred to as R. W Connel’s (1987) ‘hegemonic masculinity’ type—and consequently hold other players to the same standard (Allain 2008; Robidoux 2002; Robidoux 2001; Colburn Jr. 1985). Hockey

players are expected to be aggressive, stoic, competitive, independent, and to show little emotion, especially in the context of the game. These descriptors correlate well with Dryden's words in the quotation as he explicitly states that successful players are able to 'understand' and 'control' those expectations—or in his own words, 'neuroses'—on the ice.

While the above descriptors are not always negative characteristics, strict adherence to such qualities in hockey can often reach violent and mentally harmful levels of competition and dominance between both teammates and competitors. While this issue is undoubtedly prominent, recent studies suggest that although male team-based athletes are more likely to exhibit characteristics of hegemonic masculinity (than non-team-based athletes), not all athletes subscribe to this identity to the same extent or at all (Connell 1987; Pronger 1990; Messner 1992; Burstyn 2004; Robidoux 2001; Robidoux 2002; Messner 2007; White & Young 2007; Allain 2008). Much like the Dryden quotation, a contradiction exists encompassing the positive and negative aspects of ice hockey within the same context. That is to say that while qualities like stoicism and competitiveness can be positive personal traits, they can also be extensively problematic.

Major Junior ice hockey is a central site of socialization in both masculinity and hockey contexts as the players are on the cusp of adulthood and on the verge of professional careers in the sport. In order to rectify the apparent gaps in knowledge about the subject, it is important to conduct exploratory and descriptive research with these players to better understand the extent to which the tenets of hegemonic masculinity play out in their lives. This understanding will allow for a better assessment of and, if necessary, approach to work towards healthier and more constructive models of

masculinity in competitive ice hockey. With this in view, the following study was conducted with a Canadian Major Junior hockey team utilizing quantitative and qualitative surveys and semi-structured qualitative interviews with the players and head coach in order to answer the following research question: In what ways is masculinity made manifest in the lives of Canadian Major Junior ice hockey players?

The study has several outcomes and relevant contributions. Primarily, it adds to the literature on hegemonic masculinity as a concept and critically discusses its usefulness as a tool with explanatory potential. The study simultaneously reveals the limitations of hegemonic masculinity through its focus on the social context in which these hockey players live. It is one of the first studies that seek to clarify the nature of the experiences of Canadian Junior hockey players as well as their relevant perceptions of masculinity by obtaining first-hand accounts from them directly. Additionally, the study makes cultural contributions as it was conducted in both French and English in order to allow the players to express themselves as clearly and comfortably as possible while prompting topics surrounding language and geography in connection with the social construction of the Canadian Major Junior hockey player. Lastly, although the following is not a direct objective of the study, it can also offer insight on how to address issues surrounding masculinity and sport and pertinent implications for policy-making.

Chapter 1
REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND CONTEXT

‘Hegemonic masculinity’ is one of Australian sociologist R. W. Connell’s (2005) four types of masculinity used to signify the socially constructed hierarchical classification of masculinities in the West. Specifically, as the type at the top of the hierarchy, it refers to a normalizing ideology of gender relations involving the production, negotiation, and reproduction of male domination over women and other men (Levy 2007). The development of women’s liberation and gay liberation in the 1970’s necessitated new ways of understanding gender and society (Connell 1987; Messner 1992; Connell 2005). As an alternative to the ‘sex roles model’, which places men and women into narrow and fixed categories, Connell proposes a classification system or ordering of gender into different versions of each masculinity and femininity. These classifications would also correspond to race and class on a large scale that can accommodate for societal and worldly interaction. While still acknowledging the West as a patriarchal society, Connell posits that images of masculinity can change over time and place and argues that hegemonic masculinity is currently touted in the modern West as ideal, although not always the form of masculinity that is maintained. The other four types are complicit, subordinated, and marginalized (Connell 2005). Sociologist Donald Levy (2007) holds that most men actually compose the complicit type of masculinity, striving to attain the traits of hegemonic masculinity in order to benefit from the domination of others. Individuals in the subordinated category—namely homosexuals—are seen as maintaining practices and ideologies that are not consistent with the hegemonic category. The marginalized category is reserved for non-Caucasians and the

disabled, who are seen as having no hope of ever attaining hegemony (Levy 2007).

The concept of hegemonic masculinity has been used extensively in scholarly research and discussion of modern sport, particularly combative sports such as ice hockey. It is typically argued that male athletes in combative sport demonstrate the characteristics of hegemonic masculinity, therefore it is imperative that relevant studies of gender and sport consider this type of masculinity in such a context (Messner 1989; Bryson 1990; Connell 1990; Messner 1990; Whitson 1990; Messner 1992; Messner 2002; Connell & Messerschmidt 2005; Messner 2007; Kimmel 2008; Kimmel 2010) The following is a review of the relevant literature on the subject. It will be divided into three broad categories: the definition of the concept and scholarly considerations of it, masculinity and sport, and hegemonic masculinity in the realm of Canadian ice hockey. Finally, the review will point to gaps in the literature and propose ways in which future research should proceed, including the objective of the current study.

1.1 Defining Hegemonic Masculinity

The core tenets of hegemonic masculinity can be succinctly summarized by the work of sex role researcher Robert Brannon (1976), in which he proposes four rules that men are often expected to follow. The first rule, 'No Sissy Stuff,' calls for the rejection of all that is feminine; this includes traits such as openness and vulnerability. The second rule, 'The Big Wheel,' requires striving endlessly for fame, success, and social status by all possible means. The third, 'The Sturdy Oak,' encourages independence, confidence, strength, and toughness. The fourth and final rule, 'Give 'Em Hell,' denotes violence,

aggression, bravado, and a willingness to defy authority. Connell (1987; 2005) maintains that these characteristics are highly valued in the modern West and uses Gramsci's (1975) term "hegemony" to indicate the ways in which the characteristics in question are ideologically and institutionally perpetuated. She begins by stating the following:

'Hegemony' means a social ascendancy achieved in a play of social forces that extends beyond contests of brute power into the organization of private life and cultural processes. Ascendancy of one group of men over another achieved at the point of a gun, or by the threat of unemployment, is not hegemony. Ascendancy which is embedded in religious doctrine and practice, mass media content, wage structures, the design of housing, welfare/taxation policies and so forth, is." (Connell 1987: 184)

She states that although hegemony is not based on force, the two are related.

Additionally, it does not mean total control over other types of masculinity to the point of extinguishing them, leaving a population of solely hegemonically masculine men. There are always other categories and hegemonic masculinity can only exist in comparison to them. What is more, it can involve the creation of a non-existent ideal, such as the masculine identity of a film character. Connell (1987) lists Humphrey Bogart, John Wayne, and Sylvester Stallone as examples. Finally, she emphasizes that "the most important feature of contemporary hegemonic masculinity is that it is heterosexual, being closely connected to the institution of marriage; and a key form of subordinated masculinity is homosexual. This subordination involves both direct interactions and a kind of ideological warfare" (1987: 186).

Connell (2005) argues that most men actually occupy the complicit category of masculinity, though nevertheless strive to attain the traits of hegemonic masculinity in order to benefit from the domination of others. That is to say that most men attempt but never manage to fully embody it. Individuals in the subordinated category—namely homosexuals or men with supposedly feminine characteristics—could be said to engage

in practices and attitudes that are not consistent with the hegemonic category. The marginalized category is reserved for non-Caucasians, the ill, disabled, and poor who are seen as having no hope of ever attaining hegemony (Connell 2005). She makes clear, however, that these types are “not fixed character types but configurations of practice generated in particular situations in a changing structure of relationships. Any theory of masculinity worth having must give an account of this process of change” (2005:81).

The concept of hegemonic masculinity has not developed without criticism regarding its merit and usefulness. In 2005, Connell and criminologist James Messerschmidt wrote an article responding to critiques of the concept and offered an updated version of it. They argued that it was still culturally relevant in part because it was useful to disciplines such as education studies, criminology, studies of men’s representation in the media, men’s health studies, organizational studies, and discussions of professional practice, among others. The concept did, however, require some alteration due to accepted criticisms such as its tendency to devolve into static typologies and the specificities of men’s lived experiences of masculinity. Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) opted to keep the basic definition of the concept, but acknowledge that their simplistic model of social reactions attributed all masculinities to a singular global pattern of power. They also decided that the surrounding terminology should not focus so much on static or decontextualized traits in order to avoid making hegemonic masculinity appear as a fixed category. Three important additions were made to the description of the concept. First, its meaning grew to include the geography of masculine configurations at the local, regional, and global levels (geopolitics on micro and macro levels). Second, it recognized the increased prominence of academic work on social embodiment and the importance of the body in social relations. Third and last, it had to take the dynamics of

masculinities into account as well as the possibility of positive forms of masculine hegemony. These conceptual adjustments made the concept more culturally relevant to and appropriate for contemporary gender studies.

Scholars such as Concordia University sociology professors Marc LaFrance and Anthony Synnott also examine the evolving constellation of masculinity studies in which hegemonic masculinity resides as a concept. While LaFrance relies very much on Connell's work and agrees that hegemonic masculinity is ever present (2010a, 2010b), he has noticed a recent trend in representations of men, specifically in mainstream media. He points out the image of the 'idiot male'—a portrayal of men in advertising, television and film as unintelligent and lethargic, among other things. This image opposes the classic ideals of hegemonic masculinity and LaFrance suggests that some men have begun to feel inferior and face a kind of loss of identity due to changing gender roles, some of which have been propelled by the increased participation of women in the workforce. Whether this changing image of men in the media is a cause or effect of this phenomenon remains to be seen. Synnott (2009) has also acknowledged this change and in his latest work on the state of contemporary masculinity seeks to present a gender continuum that places men as heroes, villains, or victims. Citing various other scholars (Dowd 2005; Goldman 2005; Cross 2008; Parker 2008), he indicates that men have recently been pegged as “the suicide sex, the violent sex, the criminal sex, the death sex, the disposable sex—and as the enemy, misogynistic and morally inferior to women” (2009: 1) and various other negative descriptives. He addresses this in his work and argues that “all these wars against men are not wars against men are not matters of gender so much as of power: political, economic, religious, ideological, etc.—and of how power is exercised,

by whom and for what ends, and how powers change and evolve and conflict” (2009: 9).

American sociologist Michael Messner notes that “employing the concept of the gender order, we can see that the turn-of-the-century ‘crisis of masculinity’ was, in actuality, a crisis of legitimation for hegemonic masculinity” (1992:18). In light of this, Connell (2005) argues that maintaining and defending the patriarchal order is quite simple, given that the men who tend to exemplify hegemonic masculinity are the ones in charge of the state, large corporations, and cultural practices. She attributes this structural maintenance of competitive and dominant masculinity to current environmental problems, military destruction and violence, and economic inequality, among other issues. While some scholars disagree that hegemonic masculinity is structurally maintained (Allain 2010), Connell and others agree that modern sport is a central site of the production, negotiation, and maintenance of hegemonic or dominant masculinity in Western culture (Messner 1989; Connell 1990; Messner 1990; Whitson 1990; Messner 1992; Messner 2002; Connell 2005, Connell & Messerschmidt 2005; Messner 2007; Kimmel 2008; Kimmel 2010).

Several other scholars (Pollack 1998; Whannel 2002; Frosh, Phoenix & Pattman 2002; Atkinson 2011) echo the work of Connell, Kimmel, and Messner in part by agreeing that masculine roles and perceptions are changing and that hegemonic masculinity is contemporarily ever-present. Michael Atkinson (2011), for example, a professor of Physical Education and Health at the University of Toronto, argues that “white masculine hegemony has been maintained in Canada for quite some time through complex interplay between male-dominated capitalist power, institutional authority, social position, and common ideology across social landscape” (106). Moreover, White

& Young (2007) state that in particular contexts, “some types of masculinity may be ascendant over others. Some men will enjoy more access to power and influence than others” (262). Pollack (1998) and Frosh, Phoenix & Pattman (2002) agree that this masculinity is learned at an early age, often in terms of social popularity, and that young boys are taught to value toughness, contention of authority and learning, sporting ability, and fashion. Pollack (1998) establishes a ‘Boy Code’, which is based on Brannon’s (1976) four rules of masculinity and, not unlike Kimmel’s (2008) Guy Code, encourages emotional detachment and silence. Kimmel (2008) refers to this silence as the Code of Silence while Pollack (1998) terms it the Mask of Masculinity.

1.2 Masculinity and Sport

Literature on masculinity and sport, whether depicting hegemonic masculinity or not, can be classified into three themes: interpersonal relationships of athletes, appearance, and the physicality of sport. Much of the work on the subject begins by offering a general overview of the historical connection between sport and masculinity. Connell (1987; 1990; 2005), Messner (1989; 1990; 1992; 2002), Whitson (1990), Bryson (1990), and Kimmel (2007; 2008; 2010) establish that young boys who participate in sport are encouraged by families, friends and coaches to embody a particular type of masculinity. They are taught that skill and force will lead to sporting success, which is very important in the lives of boys and men. This importance has historical roots in the movement of women from the private to public sphere during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Organized sports were created as a homosocial sphere where men

could enact masculine practices in a space of their own, away from the supposed threat of femininity (Messner 1990; Messner 2002).

Although women participate in sport more than ever, it still remains an institution that perpetuates aggressive and competitive masculinity (Messner 1989; Bryson 1990; Messner 1990; Messner 2002; Connell 2005; Kimmel 2008; Kimmel 2010). That said, some scholars (Messner 1989; Messner 1990; Messner 2002; Kimmel 2010) suggest that the gender order within sport is quite complicated and that although there does exist a dominant or hegemonic masculinity, other forms of less dominant masculinity are apparent and should be considered as well. Messner (1992) posits that hegemonic masculinity is defined in relation to the other masculinities and that resistant masculinities are not successful in overcoming the hegemonic norm that is characterized by competition, aggression, physicality, and the subordination of femininity. Lower-class men and members of ethnic minorities tend to be excluded or lack resources and opportunities compared to those in the hegemonic category (Messner 1989). In addition, David Whitson (1990), a Political Science professor at the University of Alberta, points out that confrontational or combative games such as rugby and football especially work to maintain hegemonic masculinity while less combative or individual sports such as badminton tend to deviate from it. Finally, Connell (1990) notes that many athletes who exemplify hegemonic masculinity cannot do so all the time; they also exhibit contradictions to it. In support of this claim, she lists athletes who have limited social and romantic lives because of the demands of their training and competition regime as an example. In other words, their lack of social lives or romantic commitments can be attributed to their athletic careers and not to their lack of personal qualities.

Other scholars (Eitzen 2000; Rees & Miracle 2000; Theberge 2000; Frosh, Phoenix & Pattman 2002; Burstyn 2004; Atkinson 2007; Davison & Frank 2007; White & Young 2007; Coad 2008) weigh in similarly on the subject. Like Connell, independent scholar and writer Varda Burstyn (2004) also attributes the development of sport to men's backlash to feminism and extends the explanation to the absence of working class fathers in the nineteenth century. Sport was used to replace fathers and train boys and young men for the workforce. She remarks that sport was supposed to be a site of asexuality, but has nonetheless developed homoerotic masculine characteristics, mostly through the commercialization and worship of athletes that has come to characterize contemporary Western society.

Theberge (2000) and White & Young (2000) also extend the notion of hegemonic masculinity in sport by discussing its challenges. In this, they acknowledge the continued marginalisation of women and homosexuals, but still remark on their increased participation in sport, which indicates a challenge to traditional gendered understanding of sport. Eitzen (2000) and Rees & Miracle (2000) discuss the positive and negative impacts of sport on boys. Sociologist D. Stanley Eitzen (2000) agrees with Connell, Kimmel, Messner in stating that "sport serves to control persons ideologically by reinforcing society's values among the participants" (373) and "sport in its organization, procedures and operation serves to promote traditional gender roles. Most importantly, sport advances male hegemony in practice and ideology by legitimating a certain dominant version of social reality" (373). He points to the importance of the coach in positively shaping the male experience in sport as the coach is responsible for teaching both athletic skills and personal values. The clear consensus is that sport has been and

continues to be a male-dominated sphere that systematically socializes boys and men into hegemonic masculinity through interpersonal relationships, physicality, and most recently, physical appearance.

1.2.1 INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS. Studies of male athletes' relationships with others have yielded complex and sometimes conflicting results. For example, some research suggests that male athletes lack unity with other individuals (Messner 1990) while others argue that the bond between athletes—especially teammates—is a very deep and unifying one (Robidoux 2001; Pappas, McKenry & Catlett 2004). Connell (2005) and Messner (1990) posit that sport acts as a site where male athletes can come together and support or reproduce the tenets of hegemonic masculinity by not having to show or share emotion. Furthermore, they claim that interaction is laced with competition. Kimmel (2008) agrees, but acknowledges that they do share the emotions associated with winning and losing. Michael Robidoux (2001), a Health Sciences professor at the University of Ottawa, extends Kimmel's point by adding that some interviews with professional athletes revealed that they felt they had invaluable and close personal bonds with some of their teammates.

Messner (2002) provides a view of the internal dynamic of athletic peer groups. Very much in line with Connell's (1987) four types, Messner suggests four types of team members: the leaders, audience, marginals, and target. The target comprises the group that is feminized, ridiculed, and victimized for not adhering to the tenets of hegemonic masculinity. The leaders are the team members with the highest status who orchestrate misogynist, homophobic and degrading attacks on the target both physically and verbally.

The audience encompasses boys and men who are not leaders, but applaud their attitudes and actions. Finally, the marginals are the lower-status group who choose not to support the leaders, but nonetheless do so with their silent complicity in situations geared towards the subordination of the targets. Messner (2002) work, which is also echoed by Kimmel's (2007) work on masculinity as homophobia, reveals that many athletes choose to remain silent in order to avoid being included in the target group.

1.2.2 APPEARANCE. David Coad (2008), a lecturer at the University of Valenciennes in France, posits that male gender roles are changing and describes the interpersonal relationships and team dynamics among athletes as Robert Lipsyte's (2004) 'jock culture'. Such a culture is centered on hypermasculinity and falls in place with the same descriptions of the athletic sphere as those of Connell, Messner, Robidoux, and others. Coad (2008) makes an interesting addition to jock culture by listing a preoccupation with fashion as a new aspect of jock culture. He uses Simpson's (2002) term 'metrosexual' to describe athletes who are now becoming interested in fashion and personal care and having an aesthetically pleasing and fit body. He lists athletes such as football player Joe Namath and soccer player David Beckham as examples. He states that "metrosexuality does not discriminate against homosexuality or insist on heteronormativity," (17) making the phenomenon an internal challenge to hegemonic masculinity.

Media and sport researcher Garry Whannel (2000; 2002) notes the increase in body-centered research on sport as well. While physicality in a literal sense is at the forefront, appearance has also gained importance among athletes. He claims that "the

growth of body culture, the popularising of personal grooming and the changing forms through which gender relations are lived have placed focus upon the appearance of men in new ways” (2002:71). He prefaces this discussion with the assertion that the athletic body is a necessary aspect of this phenomenon and that non-athletic bodies are marginalised.

1.2.3 PHYSICALITY OF SPORT. The literature tends to tie the physicality of sport to hegemonic masculinity in two ways. It emphasizes the importance of the athletic male body and it links the significance of violence to the connection between sport and masculinity. Hegemonic masculinity in the context of sports has been constructed throughout Western history as physical superiority over women, femininity, and non-athletic masculinities (Connell 1987; Messner 2002). Sport puts men’s bodies on display and emphasizes required physical characteristics such as an active, muscular body that is capable of acquiring specific skills, undergoing intense training, accepting and overcoming pain, and inflicting pain on other bodies (Connell 1987; Connell 2005). Messner (2002) points out that this form of masculinity is produced in opposition to other forms of physical play such as those involving equality and amusement encouraged through educational systems by mostly female educators.

Connell (2005) and Whitson (1990) state that sport—especially team sport—perpetuates and legitimizes aggression among males. While most of the literature on violence in sport frames aggression and violence as problematic (Whitson 1990; Messner 2002; Connell 2005; Messner 2007), other sources argue that violence is a necessary part of the game that acts as an outlet for aggression and builds respect for opponents

(Robidoux 2001; Pappas et al 2004). Other research is concerned with whether or not athlete aggression in sport carries over to non-sport situations. Messner (2002) and Pappas et al. (2004) conclude that athletes who are involved in revenue-producing contact sports are most likely to use violence outside of the sport context. In addition, the objectification of women could also be linked to violence and assaults external to sport. Messner (2002) specifically points to Canadian ice hockey as violent and claims that “looking at Canada, where the central sport, ice hockey, is dominated by white men we see the vast majority of sexual assaults by athletes are committed by white males” (29). He also notes that a central point in his analysis is “the fact that the majority of male athletes do not commit acts of off-the-field violence against women or other men. Though in the numerical minority, the men at the center of the athletic group are expressing the dominant, hegemonic, most honoured form of masculinity” which is being upheld through violence and aggression (2002:29).

Several other scholars (Pollack 1998; Young 2000; Whannel 2002; Burstyn 2004; Jamieson & Orr 2009) add to the issue. Jamieson & Orr (2009) and Whannel (2002) list hockey violence as an issue both on and off the ice in Canada. Violent episodes can break out between players, fans, parents, and others involved with the sport. This is not unlike hooliganism and soccer riots in Europe. Jamieson & Orr (2009) attribute these problems to poor management on the part of those in charge of hockey leagues and venues. Whannel (2002) and Pollack (1998) stress the importance of athletes being role models and the fact that they perpetuate violence with this social power. Along with the debated nature of interpersonal relationships between players and appearance, physicality is a common theme in studies of male athletes. American psychologist and psychoanalyst

William Pollack (1998) sums up debates over masculinity in sport rather well when he states that although sports can offer “a chance for openness, expression, and intimacy, sports can also push boys back to loneliness, shame, and vicious competition...the goal of winning at any cost, a quest for narcissistic glory at the expense of others” (273).

1.3 Hegemonic Masculinity in the Realm of Canadian Ice Hockey

Literature that bridges hockey and hegemonic masculinity surfaces from two key fields—men and masculinity studies and sport sociology. Moreover, it focuses on three main themes that mirror the literature on masculinity and sport in general. They include the construction of one’s identity as a hockey player, the physicality of the game, and the interpersonal relationships of the players.

1.3.1 IDENTITY. The construction of the identity of the hockey player is closely linked to both hegemonic masculinity and nationalism in Canada. Some of the literature (Robidoux 2001; Robidoux 2002; Adams 2006) states that ice hockey has undergone a notable change. It has gone from a Canadian pastime to a way of life in the sense that the sport now involves family, social, educational, and economic relations in Canada ever since it was introduced to bourgeois society in the late nineteenth century.

Robidoux (2002) and Trent University sociologist Kristi Allain (2008) claim that the popularity and appeal of ice hockey are rooted in Canadian nationalism. They argue that Canada can, therefore, be viewed as representing, exemplifying, and understanding its own national identity through some tenets of hegemonic masculinity, such as physical

dominance, competitiveness, and heterosexism. Additionally, Robidoux (2002) and Mary Louise Adams (2006), a professor in the Cultural Studies department at Queen's University, state that hockey has enabled Canadians to reinforce discourses of patriarchy and national belonging. They also assert that hockey is a fundamental site for males to negotiate their worth as men through practices of hegemonic masculinity. In a similar vein, Gruneau & Whitson (1993) contend that although women are increasingly involved in hockey, Canadian culture is still predominantly masculine and, as alluded to by Robidoux and Adams, is characterized by work, education, religion, and Canadian ice hockey. According to these scholars, hockey is purposely used to promote national pride and unity in Canada. Lastly, Sarah Gee (2009), a lecturer in Sport Management at Massey University in New Zealand, analyzes media representations of hockey masculinity and lists the National Hockey League's 'Inside the Warrior' campaign (created by the NHL and aired on NBC in 2005) as a message about identity construction because it conveys to North Americans. She states that it takes a particular type of aggressive, brave, proud, and driven man to play hockey and points out that this campaign was produced in spite of the increase in women's participation in hockey and the perceived 'crisis of masculinity' (e.g. Atkinson 2011), which warns of the endangerment of hegemonic masculinity.

1.3.2 PHYSICALITY OF THE GAME. The next common theme in the literature is that of physicality in hockey. It, too, focuses on the body and violence respectively. Robidoux (2001) argues that the concept of hegemonic masculinity opposes conceptions of the body in terms of hockey because the sport privileges the body over the mind,

which decidedly opposes patriarchal values (mind over body). This contradicts the work of Connell (1987; 2005), who acknowledges the importance of the mind in hockey, but places more emphasis on the body being touted as an integral part of hegemonic masculinity.

Allain states that “a hegemonically desirable Canadian hockey masculinity predicated on a hard-hitting, physically aggressive game has been ascendant in Canadian hockey practice for at least 50 years” (2008:476). Most of the authors agree that the physical nature of ice hockey requires players to display a certain form of aggression and bravado that they would not require in everyday life (Colburn Jr. 1985; Young 2000; Robidoux 2001; Robidoux 2002; Pappas et al. 2004; Adams 2006; Allain 2008; Allain 2010). British sport sociologist Kevin Young (2000) notes that although sport violence in Canada and the United States often technically qualifies as criminal assault, athletes are usually excused from such crimes during games. Young (2000) states that regardless of these exceptions, hockey still rates as one of the Canadian sports with the highest rate of criminal reports.

A particular point of interest in hockey is the fist-fight. Robidoux (2001) discusses the importance of ‘enforcers’ on a hockey team—those individuals who make a point to demonstrate a physical presence, hit, and fight regularly to defend themselves and their teams. These individuals are well-respected by teammates, coaches, and fans alike for their contributions. Colburn Jr. (1985) and Pappas et al. (2004) conclude that the fist-fight, although a form of illegal assault, has symbolic significance as a way to settle battles of dominance, restore order, release aggression, show respect for opponents (i.e. a just way to settle a dispute), and restore trust among opponents. According to these

researchers, the fist-fight is a legitimate act for hockey players. University of Ottawa Economics professor Marc Lavoie (2000) further investigated the fist-fighting phenomenon and discovered that hockey violence, more than quality of play, promotes high attendance rates and economic gain. In light of this, Pappas et al. (2004) note that although hockey specifically requires more aggression than everyday life, sometimes “interpersonal aggression is common in the lives of these hockey players, both on and off the ice” (2004:308). This echoes Messner’s (2002) argument that athletes in revenue-producing contact sports are more likely to be violent outside of the sport context because the violent nature of the sport alludes to off-ice aggression in the players’ everyday lives. Atkinson (2011) weighs in on the issue with the following statement:

Thinking sociologically about how definitions of acceptable, wanted, unwanted, and even criminal violence in the sport of ice hockey are created, I would encourage sociologists to consider how ice hockey (and other) sports organizations manufacture consent to their ideologies of, and expectations for, traditional hegemonic male violence in the following way. First, as a total institution, ice hockey creates a culture of ideological insularity regarding violence in the sport[...], underpinned by an historical ethos of masculinity and aggression. Second, discursive strategies are deployed within the sport in order to publicly frame violence in the game as non-crisis producing and socially unthreatening; in other words, tolerable (136).

Put differently, Atkinson is calling for an analysis of how young men are socialized through ice hockey into a particular set of traditional or stereotypical masculine values and practices. He is also calling for an analysis of the ways in which the regularity or commonality of violence in hockey has come to be accepted.

1.3.3 INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS. The final theme in the literature on hockey and hegemonic masculinity encompasses matters of interpersonal relationships

among teammates. It can be divided into three categories: debates over the closeness of the players on the team, the extent of homosocial activity among teammates, and the homogenization of players on a team.

Research relating to the closeness of players on a hockey team resembles the aforementioned scholarship. These studies are divided by debates between players' lack of ability to share emotion and their claim that sport allows them to have very close and meaningful friendships with teammates. Robidoux's (2001) work shows that players feel so close to each other that they are comfortable joking around in a homosexual manner with one another by grabbing each other's private parts or making suggestive verbal jokes. His work also shows that the players believe they could not find such close friends anywhere else. This contradicts Messner's (1990) argument that sport acts as a site where emotion is unnecessary and discouraged and interpersonal relationships are limited and superficial. At the same time, Robidoux (2001) also states that the players' relationships are based on competitiveness because they need to contend for spots on the team and time on the ice. Homosociality is also a common theme in terms of interpersonal relationships among teammates. Seemingly homosexual acts and utterances are used by hockey players for friendly and joking purposes (Robidoux 2001; Kimmel 2008) or to feminize and victimize the group that Messner (2002) would call the target. He also notes that this practice can function both ways at all times. They function in both ways in the sense that men can ridicule their peers in a friendly manner, yet use the exact same words and actions to intentionally insult someone as well. Robidoux (2001) establishes that his account of players' homosexual acts, although not actual homosexual relations, calls into question hegemonic notions of heterosexual masculinity in hockey.

The homogenization of teammates is the last aspect of players' interpersonal relationships in the literature. This is discussed in terms of hazing rituals to bring the team together and in terms of teams holding a collective set of ideologies and world-views. Bryshun and Young (2007) and Atkinson (2011) report that knowledge of hazing in Canada is limited and more research is required on the subject as the activity continues to be increasingly problematic. These rituals often involve the veteran players forcing new ones into acts of nudity, excessive alcohol consumption, feminization, and infantilization (Bryshun & Young 2007; Robidoux 2001; Kimmel 2008; Atkinson 2011). Atkinson (2011) also adds that information on hazing may be limited since it is an activity that is quietly conducted regardless of it being formally banned by many athletic organizations. He specifies that although not all athletes are in favour of hazing practices, they are still problematic and that high school and college-age males can be the most cruel when administering initiation rituals. He describes the practices as the following:

Hazing rituals are common in contact sports like ice hockey, rugby, wrestling, and football. The acts are classic social degradation ceremonies that symbolize a younger player's willingness to respect his or her elders' statuses on a team. The hazing ritual reinforces the idea that as a group, a sports team is defined in part by a rigid social hierarchy. At the same time, rookies receive great kudos from veteran players for undergoing the rituals (2011: 149)

Robidoux (2001) also states that initiation rituals are important for a team because they bring players together in order to quickly build trust and a good relationship on the ice. He notes that this is especially meaningful in Junior hockey in Canada because this level of hockey represents a player's official entrance into highly competitive and career-oriented hockey. Players at this level tend to be between the ages of sixteen and twenty-one and begin to leave home to play hockey and receive a small salary (Robidoux 2001).

Kimmel (2008) agrees that initiation has positive effects on athletic teams, but warns of the dangers caused by overstepping boundaries with initiation rituals, resulting in sexual and violent assaults. For Kimmel, such activities do not encourage team cohesion. He, like Robidoux (2001), attributes them to the fact that young men in this context are freed from parental constraints and left to create their own form of socialization that allows for harmful and degrading initiation rituals.

The homogenizing effect on a team is accelerated through initiation rituals but continues to happen throughout players' time spent together as they begin to take on a shared worldview. Robidoux (2001) and Pappas et al (2004) argue that players begin to acquire not only a shared set of goals in relation to hockey, but a collective world-view premised on characteristics of hegemonic masculinity: aggression, preoccupation with success, a disregard and lack of respect for women, and a lack of emotion outside of that associated with winning or losing. In addition, Robidoux (2001) notes that hockey players tend to develop a violence-oriented vocabulary along with their own regional terminology. He also remarks that the acquisition of these characteristics is most apparent for young men at the Junior level. As with the literature on masculinity and sport in general, the scholarly work on hegemonic masculinity and Canadian ice hockey clearly points to the overarching themes of identity, interpersonal relationships among players, and the physical aspect of the game. These aspects of ice hockey, however, are still in need of further exploration according to the scholars.

1.4 How to Proceed: Gaps in the Current Scholarship

A great deal of the literature on masculinity, sport, and ice hockey ends with suggestions for how further research should proceed. Some research (Connell 1987; Messner 1989; Messner 2007) calls especially for more work on the understanding of different dynamics of masculinity and how hegemonic masculinity operates. Other research suggests a closer look at the structural perpetuation of hegemonic masculinity (Connell 1990; Messner 1990; Connell & Messerschmidt 2005; Atkinson 2011) and especially its perpetuation through organized sport (Messner 1990; Connell & Messerschmidt 2005; Kimmel 2008). A small body of work calls for activism such as rewarding positive forms of masculinity in sport (Whitson 1990), launching antibinge drinking programs in the sport contexts (Messner 2002), and providing athletes with an environment that does not encourage silence and compliance in the face of violent or degrading behaviour (Messner 2002). White & Young (2007) suggest that more time should be spent speaking with hockey players and Atkinson (2007) states that “researchers embarking on interview projects should continue to ask if sport serves as a ‘masculine social function’, if sport is indeed a site for confirming hegemonic masculinity, how men feel as gendered athletes, and if there are social consequences in using sport to celebrate male roughness, dominance, and aggression” (43).

There are some noticeable holes in the body of literature on ice hockey. There are few studies available and the academic literature that does exist places little emphasis on Junior level players, whom Kimmel (2008) claims are at a pivotal age in their masculine development and Robidoux (2001) claims are at a critical point in their hockey careers. Additionally, it places much emphasis on initiation rituals and the violent aspect of the

game, but very little on identity construction and relationships between the players outside of these two contexts. The latter two elements are vital aspects of research that could answer the call for further understanding of how hegemonic masculinity operates among athletes. It is imperative to speak directly with these players in order to flesh out whether or not they are aware of the masculine characteristics with which they are associated, how they perceive their own masculinity, and how those two perceptions are played out in their relations with teammates. Put simply: in what ways is masculinity manifested in the lives of Junior hockey players?

Chapter 2
GENDER: A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The research will not rely heavily on theory as it will be mostly inductive, though it will still be informed by a framework that will help build an understanding of general manifestations of gender. Neuman (2006) states that an inductive approach to theory involves “developing or confirming a theory that begins with concrete empirical evidence and works toward more abstract concepts” (60). Moreover, “whereas deductive theorizing requires you to begin with a clearly thought-out theoretical picture, with inductive theorizing you can begin with a general topic and some vague ideas that you then refine and elaborate into more exact theoretical concepts” (Neuman 2006: 60). The framework is comprised of a combination of symbolic interactionist theories of performance, theories out of sex and gender studies, and theories of hegemonic masculinity from critical masculinity studies. The theorists discussed include George Herbert Mead (1962), Erving Goffman (1959, 1962), Ian Burkitt (2008), Suzanne Kessler and Wendy McKenna (1978), Judith Butler (1990, 1993, 2004), R.W. Connell (1987, 1995), and Michael Kimmel and Michael Messner (2001). The theories of hegemonic masculinity are relevant here as they speak more directly to the research question. They were presented in the literature review, therefore the main ideas will only be briefly revisited here.

2.1 Symbolic Interactionism

Sandstrom, Martin & Fine (2006) define and characterize symbolic interactionism

in the following way:

Symbolic interactionism is a perspective in sociology that places meaning, interaction, and human agency at the center of understanding social life. This perspective grew out of the American philosophical tradition of pragmatism, an approach developed in the late nineteenth century in the writings of Charles S. Peirce, William James, and John Dewey. These thinkers challenged the mechanistic worldview and dualistic assumptions of classical rationalism, the philosophy that dominated Western thought since the seventeenth century. Unlike the rationalists, they saw 'reality' as dynamic and multifaceted, people as actors rather than reactors, meanings as linked to acts and perspectives, and knowledge as a key resource for problem solving and changing the world. (2)

They also lay out a brief overview of the main tenets of symbolic interactionist theory, derived from the work of George Herbert Mead (1962) and Herbert Blumer (1937). They credit George Herbert Mead (1962) as the founder of interactionism for his early contributions via pragmatist philosophy and his ideas regarding human behaviour. They also discuss the importance of Herbert Blumer (1937) for coining the term 'symbolic interactionism' and point to his three main premises. The first premise is that a fundamental part of understanding human behaviour is understanding how people define the various aspects of their surroundings as the meanings associated with people, places, and objects can change depending on how they are defined and understood. The second premise states that the meanings acquired through the first premise are learned through both personal experiences and interactions with others. The third premise is that the meanings we attach to the people, places, and things we learn about can change as we grow to understand them more. (Blumer in Sandstrom, Martin & Fine 2006). Sandstrom, Martin & Fine (2006: 8-11) then go on to establish their own set of eight main assumptions that symbolic interactionism relies on. They are as follows:

1. Human beings are unique creatures because of their ability to use symbols.
2. People become distinctively human through interaction.
3. People are conscious, self-reflexive beings who shape their own behaviour.
4. People are purposive creatures who act in and toward situations.
5. Society consists of people engaging in symbolic interaction.
6. Emotions are central to meaning, behaviour and the self.
7. The 'social act' should be the fundamental unit of social psychological analysis.
8. Sociological methods should enable researchers to grasp people's meanings.

Taken together, the above theoretical tenets form the general basis of the theoretical framework. With them in thought, it is possible to move on to theories of performance and sex and gender to build a model for the study. Theories of hegemonic masculinity are lastly added to the model in order to focus in on how the theoretical framework ties together with the literature on masculinity in relation to ice hockey.

2.2 Performance

The foundational work of Goffman and Mead will be overviewed and the theoretical framework will then proceed on to Burkitt's perception of the self and part of Kessler & McKenna's notion of the performative foundation of gender. Butler's highly influential theory of performance as it relates to gender will also be covered. Goffman's (1959; 1967) work on impression management and self-presentation marks some of the roots of performance theories. Particularly, he proposed that human social life very much resembles a staged scene with actors since thoughts, feelings, and self-images must be projected on to others using words, gestures, props, and personal appearance (Goffman

1959). In other words, humans engage in ‘performances’ in order to create and maintain a desired impression for others. This is loosely translated into self-presentation—“the ways we present ourselves to others in order to elicit favourable impressions and to control their definitions of the situation” (Sandstrom et al. 2006:118). Goffman formed this theory in part by drawing on Mead’s (1962) contention that the self and mind arise from symbolic communication and gestures. Goffman (1967) makes further claims about such performances. For example, he posits that people feel the need to project a positive self image to others, that those who do not conduct themselves within accepted societal norms are seen as socially unfavourable, and that embarrassment occurs on the part of an individual who has not conducted him or herself within societal standards.

Burkitt’s (2008) theorizing of the self and society is quite consistent with the work of Mead and Goffman. Burkitt holds that “to truly understand ourselves and to answer the question ‘who am I?’ we must first of all abandon the image of ourselves as self-contained monads or self-possessed individuals who can only find out about their identity by looking for and identifying some essence within them that is the secret truth of self, whether that be sexuality or some inherent personality trait” (2008:187). What is more, “as individuals we are born into a world of social relations that have been made by previous generations, and, even though we can work to change these, nevertheless we can work only with the materials and tools we have at hand” (2008: 187). He argues that social class and those around us can affect our presentation of self as people who have or are perceived as having wealth, privilege and education both feel and are viewed positively by society. Put differently, the self relies heavily on image and an important aspect of image is performance management and regular interaction with others.

Such theories lead to Kessler & McKenna's (1978) claim that gender has a performative foundation. Butler (1990; 1993; 2004) has developed an ensuing performative theory of gender, positing that gender is a repeated performance of actions and behaviours with historically determined masculine and feminine characteristics. For Butler, performativity is a 'citation' of previous words and actions that constitute the arguably inauthentic performance of gender (Hollywood 2002). This notion of citationality is an extension of Derrida's suggestion that the hand signature was meant to be a sign of authenticity, however, the repetition and recognition of it made it reproducible and potentially forged (Hollywood 2002). Additionally, this performance of gender is what creates the illusion of a natural sex and perpetuates regulatory social structures and power struggles. Butler writes that "such acts, gestures, enactments, generally construed, are performative in the sense that the essence or identity that they otherwise purport to express are fabrications manufactured and sustained through corporeal signs and other discursive means" (1990:185). With that said, Butler (2004; 1993) stresses the repetitive nature of social interaction and believes that "terms such as 'masculine' and 'feminine' are notoriously changeable; there are social histories for each of them; their meanings change radically depending on geopolitical boundaries and cultural constraints on who is imagining whom, and for what purpose" (2004:10).

2.3 Sex and Gender Studies

Some general theories of gender provide a strong basis for the theoretical framework. Given that the framework will operate from a symbolic interactionist standpoint, it is imperative to primarily state that symbolic interactionists tend to be of

the opinion that gender identity is developed socially over time and is constituted by sociohistorical notions of masculinity and femininity (Sandstrom, Martin & Fine 2006). The work of Butler (1990; 1993; 2004) and Kessler & McKenna (1978) is particularly relevant.

Butler (1990; 2004) believes first and foremost that sex is a social construction—not a natural category—and accordingly underpins her theory of performance with notions and claims about gender. She defines gender as “the apparatus by which the production and normalization of masculine and feminine take place along the interstitial forms of hormonal, chromosomal, psychic, and performative that gender assumes” (2004:42). Additionally, she asserts that “to conflate the definition of gender with its normative expression is inadvertently to reconsolidate the power of the norm to constrain the definition of gender” (2004:42). Normative expression, here, refers to the acting out of conventional gender roles, which will be discussed further in the theoretical framework. Nonetheless, Butler argues that there exists a discourse on gender that necessarily separates man and woman so as to regulate society. This consequently “naturalizes the hegemonic instance” (2004:43), thus maintaining heteronormative privilege and reinforcing the binary that awards men higher status than women. She (1990) suggests problematizing the concept of gender and inaugurating a discussion about identity in which no one fits into a fixed category.

Kessler & McKenna (1978) investigate the functioning of the Western social reality that relies on only two genders. They also question the nature or ‘naturalness’ of gender and seek to understand how it is conceptualized in everyday life. They do so by using the concept of gender attribution—the constant and reoccurring process of ‘acting

out' gender roles. Moreover, it involves the way people act so as to present their gender and the cultural regulations that demarcate masculine and feminine which individuals act out. After having examined several standpoints on gender, Kessler & McKenna (1978) argue for an alternate framework for understanding gender since gender attribution, which is arguably quite prominent, relies too heavily on the idea that gender is performed so often that it appears normal or natural. Like Butler (1990; 1993; 2004) the authors argue that masculinity and femininity should no longer be perceived as natural and that a new paradigm is necessary to demonstrate the constructive and performative foundations of gender.

2.4 Theories of Hegemonic Masculinity

Hegemonic masculinity is one of R.W Connell's four proposed categories of masculinity that can be defined by psychologist Robert Brannon's (1976) four rules of masculinity. The rules are as follows: (1) "no sissy stuff" (rejection of femininity);(2) "the big wheel" (striving for fame and success); (3) "the sturdy oak" (confidence and toughness); and (4) "give 'em hell" (willingness to defy authority and use force). In *Gender and Power* (1987), Connell states that these rules describe the most highly valued form of masculinity in the modern West and that this type of masculinity is considered hegemonic by virtue of the fact that it is associated with the group of men with power in society.

Additionally, although many men strive to fit into this category, few men in Western society actually do and thus participate in the process of maintaining it as a

cultural standard. From this, Connell (1987) has derived the ‘complicit’ type of masculinity; men who do not fit the standard but define themselves according to it. Sociologist Tony Coles (2009) adds to Connell’s work by explaining the following: “Even though hegemonic masculinity may not be the most common form of masculinity practiced, it is supported by the majority of men as they benefit from the overall subordination of women. [...] Structurally, men as an interest group are inclined to support hegemonic masculinity as a means to defend patriarchy and their dominant position over women” (31).

Individuals in the subordinated category—namely homosexuals—are accused of maintaining practices and ideologies that are not consistent with the hegemonic category. The marginalized category is reserved for non-Caucasians and the disabled, who are seen as having no hope of ever attaining hegemony. Connell (1995) later states that any model of masculinity must account for the ways in which masculinity can vary depending on elements such as time, location, race, and social class. Sociologists Michael Kimmel and Michael Messner (2001) similarly add that “Masculinity is constructed differently by class culture, by race and ethnicity, and by age. And each of these axes of masculinity modifies the others. [...] The resulting matrix of masculinities is complicated by cross-cutting elements; without understanding this, we risk collapsing masculinities into one hegemonic version” (xvi). More recently, the work of Connell & Messerschmidt (2005) responds to criticisms of the concept and calls for the continuous evaluation and reworking of hegemonic masculinity in order to continue to understand cultural developments in the modern West.

The models of masculinity proposed by Brannon (1976) and Connell (1987), as well as the theoretical claims made surrounding performance and sex and gender will highly inform the study in question. Most importantly, what should be taken from the theoretical framework is the idea that meaning is created through experience and social interaction and humans will often act according to their interactions with others, however masculinity itself can vary. While gender roles are deeply and historically engrained in human social interaction, there is no one framework or set of guidelines for one's gender orientation and understanding of him or herself and the world around him or her. This will be further discussed in relation to the identity and ontological perspective of the researcher in the methodology chapter. It is also important to keep in mind that the bulk of the literature associates male athletes, especially hockey players, with hegemonic masculinity.

Chapter 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

According to Denzin and Lincoln (2003), research often takes place in seven steps. I have condensed these steps into five common phases that best describe my research. First, the researcher self-reflects in a sociohistorical manner, considering his or her position in and perception of society. Second, the researcher considers a broad and open-ended theoretical-philosophical paradigm in which to house his or her social inquiry. Third, he or she designs a study. Fourth, the researcher collects, interprets, and analyzes data. This process can be constantly on-going and can restart several times throughout the research. Fifth and last, the researcher must communicate his or her findings. I loosely followed these five phases.

My goal in completing this research was to establish and understand the ways in which masculinity is manifested in the lives of Junior hockey players while keeping the concept of hegemonic masculinity in mind to determine how it holds up in their accounts of masculinity. A methodology of ethnomethodological nature will be employed. Ethnomethodology is a form of sociological analysis that, without any set of particular methodological rules, examines how conversations and practices are used by individuals to construct an understanding of their world or social situation (Kessler & McKenna 1978). An entire Canadian Junior hockey team has been sought out with the intention to administer questionnaires and hold individual conversations with players (and their head coach) in order to formulate a collective understanding of their experiences and perceptions of masculinity and what it means to be a man. Given the centrality of ice hockey in Canada, the emphasis placed on the Junior level, the lack of research in the

area, and the fact that hockey players are touted as portraying a certain kind of masculinity, especially Connell's (1987) hegemonic masculinity, such a study and choice of participants is appropriate. Semi-structured qualitative interviews are also a concrete strategy for answering the research question. It will become apparent throughout this section that my research had an unexpected ethnographic element at the beginning. Ethnography is a qualitative method employed by immersing oneself in a culture or society in order to gain an understanding of that culture or society (Emerson, Fretz & Shaw 1995). Early on in the project, my research proved to be just as rich when my tape recorder was turned off as it was when it was on since the conversations and environment around me were sometimes quite telling in terms of the lives of the players, coaches, and administrative staff. In the following sections, I will further discuss my choice of interview participants, recruitment process, implication of my identity as a researcher, the ethnographic nature of the study, and research methodology.

3.1 Sampling and Recruitment

3.1.1 SAMPLE. The sample population for this study consists of one entire Canadian Junior ice hockey team and their head coach. A sample is "a smaller set of cases a researcher selects from a larger pool and generalizes to the population" (Neuman 2006:219). Social research is at times less interested in generalization and more interested in acquiring a concrete understanding of how a sample "illuminates social life" in a certain context (Neuman 2006:219). Surveys and interviews were conducted with the

team using a judgment-based interactive sampling technique. Denzin (2009) states that “interactive sampling models explicitly focus on natural behaviour units and offer strategies for uncovering how such units interrelate and influence one another. These include techniques for sampling social relationships, social groups, organizations, and cliques” (102). Denzin (2009) also notes that using the interactive method often requires a reconfiguring of traditional sampling methods, which can be a positive aspect of theory construction. Interactive sampling methods are then appropriate because they will allow me to observe and understand a collective conception of the social relationships, interactions, and perspectives that compose manifestations of masculinity in the players’ lives. Judgment sampling is “the deliberate search for groups and situations which will permit the maximum test of one’s theory” (Denzin 2009:46). This technique coincides with the goals of interactive sampling in that I specifically want to gain access to an entire team as opposed to a cross section of a team, which may not yield the completeness which I am in search of. Such a choice also offers comparability among players, which Denzin (2009) claims is an important aspect of qualitative social research because it can reveal inconsistency.

One of the major challenges associated with this sampling method is the fact that it produces a relevant sample population—and by extension, a relevant study—more than a representative one (Denzin 2009). Such is the case in this research because the study of one hockey team cannot be generalized to manifestations of masculinity among all hockey teams; this study can only speculate on the current situation with this particular team in this particular location and time. It is also likely that it may offer minimal insight regarding manifestations of masculinity on other teams, though certainly not enough to

make solid claims about them. This will be discussed further in the section dedicated to my identity as a researcher.

3.1.2 RECRUITMENT. Recruitment was a process comparable to the snowball technique. The team itself was chosen for reasons of convenience based on geographic location and personal contacts. Through networking, I made contact with the head coach who agreed to have his team take part in my study. He seemed somewhat apprehensive due to the potentially personal nature of my study, but agreed to an interview himself and to help orchestrate the team getting together to fill out questionnaires by making the event a mandatory team activity. He also provided me with contact information for fifteen players and instructed them to set aside time for interviews with me. This is somewhat similar to snowballing as the snowball technique is motivated by convenience and involves making contact with several individuals who are relevant to the research topic and then establishing contact with others through them (Neuman 2006). My contact with the coach, then, facilitated my access to the rest of the team.

In the end, I had access to twenty out of twenty-five players for the survey as some were either at professional training camps, not fluent in French or English, or the coach felt that they were too young to participate. I also ended up with thirteen interview participants instead of fifteen as one participant was reassigned before the interview could take place and another refused to respond to my attempts at contact. Thirteen players was still an appropriate number because it still comprised more than half of the team and because it was still sufficient for the time constraints of the study.

As part of the agreement to have his team participate, the coach indicated that he would need to approve any documents or questions that I administered to his players. To that end, he had me remove interview questions that I had intended to ask about hazing and girls and explained to me that he did not want some of the less mature players saying something that would get them in trouble. He also said that he specifically chose older and more mature players on the team who were fluent in either English or French to participate in the interviews. The players who participated in the survey were between the ages of sixteen and twenty and those who participated in the interviews were between seventeen and twenty. Some were new to the league and others were not.

3.2 Considering the Identity of the Researcher

There had to be a certain degree of my consideration of my position and identity as a researcher in this study (Mason 1996). This included accounting for my ontological standpoint, its epistemological implications, and the fact that I am both a woman and an outsider to the team. First, I operate from the structural position that there is no finite or universal truth about hockey. In other words, I believe that any real truth about hockey is contingent upon how hockey is known and understood and who knows and understands it. This is an important aspect of my study as it alludes to the basis on which all of my claims were made. Second, it coincides with my identity as a woman who is well-versed in the sport of ice hockey. These elements have to be considered as they affected the formulation of my questions and how much personality, attitude, and knowledge I revealed to the players and coach alike.

3.2.1 *ONTOLOGY*. In conjunction with my discussion of relevant versus representative sampling, my ontological perspective as a researcher greatly informed and affected my study. According to Mason (1996), it is imperative that a researcher not only considers but also openly accounts for such elements in order to remain transparent and better understand both the basis and outcomes of his or her work. Given that I believe that there is no universal truth about hockey, I believe that truth is situational and contingent and argue that no one can generalize from one hockey player or team to another. When this perspective is combined with my sampling techniques, it becomes explicitly impossible that my study would produce representative data on manifestations of masculinity among Canadian Junior hockey players. With this in mind, I relied more on personal questions about the players' experiences and opinions instead of asking them to speak frequently on behalf of a wider population.

3.2.2 *IDENTITY*. My identity as a woman who is involved with ice hockey and possesses a great deal of knowledge of the sport affected my study in two ways. First, it helped shape the basis of my research question given that the male-dominated sport is a keen interest of mine and I have always found the experience of the 'other' to be appealing in the sense that I want to know what hockey is like outside of the experience of women. Moreover, my knowledge of hockey also allowed me to comfortably immerse myself in the language and literature associated with the sport, creating a certain standard from which to begin my inquiry and forcing me to continually remind myself that not everyone is as fluent as I or the players would be. Some who knew little or nothing about hockey or who believed in universal truths would produce an entirely different study.

Only having experienced hockey as a woman also allowed me to formulate a more general image of manifestations of masculinity among the players because I was on the periphery—an outsider.

Second, my identity as both a woman and an outsider caused me to evaluate the way I approached my interview. Mason (1996) states that researchers must consider how much of themselves to reveal to participants as this may affect the nature of responses. I attempted to enter the interviews with a vocabulary that would be familiar to the players. For example, I would utilize jargon that is common to them, such as ‘rookying’ and ‘fighter’ as opposed to ‘hazing’ and ‘enforcer’. Additionally, it turned out in some cases that the more I revealed about myself, the more information I received in return. For example, the pace and tone of two particular interviews changed entirely once I revealed that I had grown up around hockey and played myself as the participant seemed much more at ease and began to speak more naturally with me. This will be further addressed in the analysis section. Moreover, used terms such as ‘manhood’ as opposed to ‘masculinity’ as a strategy to perhaps simplify questions and not place too much pressure on respondents. My goal was to put the respondent in as comfortable and familiar of a setting as possible so that he might be more willing to speak openly during the interview.

I was not and will never be able to fully control my position as an outsider. I am a woman and am by no means part of this team. This definitely meant that I was allowed limited access to the team and their world. Although I may have been able to use technical jargon associated with the hockey world, there is still a certain bond often present between young men and athletes that Kimmel (2008) claims will stop them from fully divulging certain experiences, opinions, and explanations to anyone outside that network

of social bonds. This is especially true considering the growing social concern over the negative effects of hegemonic masculinity among athletes (Messner 1989; Bryson 1990; Messner 1990; Whitson 1990; Messner 2002; Burstyn 2004; Connell 2005; Kimmel 2008; Kimmel 2010). In the simplest of terms, Kimmel (2008) believes that there is a ‘Guy Code’ that states that what happens amongst ‘the boys’ stays between ‘the boys’, what happens on the ice stays on the ice, and women and outsiders have very little business in those happenings. I saw this at play in some of my interviews and will elaborate further during my analysis. I tried to rectify this as best as possible with my confidentiality agreement and the fact that I was somewhat relatable to them, however, I will never know exactly to what extent I was subjected to this code of silence.

3.3 Methodology

The research methodology comprised three phases, including a mixed methods approach using surveys and interviews. The three phases included the survey with twenty players, interview with thirteen players, and analysis of the findings. A mixed methods approach appeared appropriate because it was intended to provide more rich and well-rounded results including consistency and elaboration (Creswell 2008).

3.3.1 SURVEY. First, I conducted anonymous group-administered written questionnaires with the twenty above-mentioned players on the team in their dressing room after an afternoon practice session. I gave them each a ten-dollar gift card from a local restaurant as compensation. According to Gray & Guppy (2008), “surveys involve

collecting information by asking people specific questions. Identical questions are asked of everyone participating in the survey, and responses are categorized using a common coding scheme. Since everyone is asked the same questions, researchers are able to compare in a systematic way the responses people give” (1). Additionally, surveys are used “to describe, explain, or influence some phenomenon” (Gray & Guppy 2008:10). I used the surveys in order to acquire a preliminary understanding of how the players engage with notions of masculinity.

The survey was two pages long, consisted of ten questions, was available in both English and French, and took approximately fifteen minutes to complete (Appendix A). I had the players answer anonymously in hopes that it would make them more comfortable answering the questions honestly and less like their privacy was being invaded (Gray & Guppy 2008). The option to complete the survey in either language was also aimed at their comfort and understanding. The survey had three parts. The first six questions asked about what they think is expected of them as individuals and hockey players. They were close-ended questions formulated with a Likert-scale for optional responses. A Likert-scale is a set of pre-determined responses that capture a respondent’s feeling toward the question being asked (Denzin 2009). In the case of the survey, respondents were asked the degree to which they agreed or disagreed with what was being asked of them (i.e., strongly disagree, disagree, undecided, agree, or strongly agree). The last four questions were open-ended, meaning space was provided for respondents to write in their own answers. Two questions asked what is necessary for success as an individual and a hockey player. The last two asked what ‘masculinity’ means and what it means to be a man. I attempted to make the questions neutral enough that notions of hegemonic

masculinity would only arise if the players chose to bring them out. My intention was to disregard any assumptions about hegemonic masculinity that I had developed from the literature review and to create non-leading questions with the potential for a wide range of responses. The expectation was that if players demonstrated any characteristics of hegemonic masculinity, they would make that apparent themselves without my intervention. The tools of hegemonic masculinity were only used to interpret the nature of my findings resulting from the survey responses.

3.3.2 *INTERVIEW*. Semi-structured, in-depth qualitative interviews were conducted individually with the head coach and the thirteen players on the team that remained available to me to further identify how masculinity is played out in their lives. The interviews were meant to add depth to the initial surveys and allow for more personal accounts to surface (Neuman 2006) as a way to gain a further an understanding of what it means to be a man and a Junior hockey player for these individuals. I used a qualitative, inductive approach in the interviews. Bryman & Teevan (2005) state that “qualitative interviewing is much less structured with an emphasis on openness and greater freedom to modify and add to initial research ideas once in the field” (183). They also note that qualitative interviews “give insight into what the interviewee sees as relevant and important” and “can depart significantly from any schedule or guide” (Bryman & Teevan 2005:183), allowing the interviewer to insert probes or investigate tangents. Semi-structured interviews make use of a list questions or an interview guide, however, the interviewee can offer broad answers, questions may not follow a particular order, and

“some questions not included in the guide may be asked as the interviewer picks up on things said by the interviewee” (Bryman & Teevan 2005:183).

The interview with the coach was meant to determine his philosophy on how a team should be run and to establish how exactly he executes that philosophy with his players (Appendix B). I was particularly interested in how much emphasis he placed on hockey and how much, if any, on developing the players as individuals outside of hockey. It took place in his personal office at the team’s facilities, lasted approximately twenty minutes, and was very general. My plan was to see if any of his philosophy would come through in the player interviews later on.

The player interview was designed as a follow-up to the survey that would provide a more personal account of the players’ environment, lifestyle, and perceptions. They took place at the season ticket holders’ lounge at the team’s playing facilities and in a common area of another local rink that the team occasionally practiced at. I felt that these two locations were appropriate because they were both accessible and familiar to the players. The interviews ranged from twenty-five to forty minutes, depending on the talkativeness of the participant and whether or not he led me beyond the structure of my interview guide. Respondents received a second gift card from a local restaurant for their participation. The interview had six main questions along with five to ten probes for each question (Appendix C). I ended up using most of my probes as the main questions tended to receive narrow responses (this will be addressed further in the analysis of the study). The first three questions were geared towards getting familiar with the player’s hockey career, including the experience of transitioning to the Major Junior level and how his time is organized during the season. The next two questions were aimed at images of

hockey players, including his perception of a stereotypical Major Junior player and a discussion about his actual teammates. The last question asked about his perceptions of success both in and out of hockey and what he thought was expected of him to succeed. Taken together, the answers to these questions provided direct and indirect insight into the players' lives and how they are connected to their coach, their teammates, families and friends, and the notion of masculinity.

Again, the questions were actively formulated in a way that remained neutral from hegemonic masculinity in order to see if it surfaced as a common theme without leading players to the subject. This interview method was appropriate because I wanted to know what the players consider important and wanted to hear about their own personal experiences. It also added to the preliminary survey to make the study results more robust as opposed to purely quantitative research or non-mixed methodology, which would likely have yielded less depth and personal answers. I received some detailed and unique personal accounts from the players, which added more meaning to the research and also further explained many of the responses on the survey and interview data with the coach.

During my initial meeting with the coach (intended to create a loose schedule and go over my documents and procedures), he offered me my own space in the facility so I could have a headquarters and meet with the players before and after afternoon practice. I was instructed to communicate with the fifteen designated players via text message and they all agreed to meet with me at my convenience (with the exception of the one who did not respond to any of my attempts at communication via text message or e-mail).

Upon arriving for my first player interview, the assistant coach gave me access to the season ticket holders' lounge. After three interviews, the head coach indicated to me

that he would prefer that I not hold my interviews until the evening and suggested the other rink that the team used. This indicated to me that something had caused him to change his mind regarding his initial offer as it ensured that I would no longer be part of the team environment and forced me to have to take up some extra free time from the players. I connected this to his earlier comment about the personal nature of the study and thought that he may be worried about me having access to particular information (which made the personal interviews seem even more lucrative to me).

3.3.3 *ANALYSIS*. Third and last, I compiled and analyzed the survey data and transcribed, compiled, and analyzed the interview data. My first priority was to identify and interpret common themes in the data and determine whether or not they had any relation to the information presented in the review of literature (Emerson, Fretz and Shaw 1995).

I first interpreted the Likert-scale questions on the survey using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences), a computer software used for analyzing statistical or quantitative data. After having inserted the data into the program, it provided frequency distributions and crosstabulations in order to demonstrate how the questions had been answered and if there were any patterns in the answers. The open-ended questions were scanned for common adjectives and responses and summarised accordingly.

The interviews were analyzed much like the open-ended questions in the survey; they were scanned for reoccurring or overarching themes and interpreted with the information presented in the literature review in thought. Connections were drawn between the survey data and interview data in order to identify consistencies,

inconsistencies, and common themes. The player interview data was also compared with the coach's interview data, also in search of consistencies, inconsistencies, and common themes. Lastly, any noticeable irregularities were noted as they may have also been indicators of significance. Once that process was complete and I had exhausted connections with the review of literature, I began to apply my own interpretations and understandings of the data in order to draw further conclusions and better answer my research question.

Finally, pseudonyms were given to participants for confidentiality and anonymity and the findings will be presented in their own respective chapter. The analysis section is structured in two ways. First, the results of the survey are presented and analyzed. Second, the remaining study results are presented in the following ways: according to common themes and their significance, extenuating or inconsistent findings and their potential significance, the relation of the findings to the research question, and some conclusive statements outlining the answer to the research question. Major points were presented using the Toulmin Method, a paragraph formulated with a claim, relevant data, a warrant, and a qualifier (Weida & Stolley 2011). This presentation style is favourable because it presents the main findings and claims resulting from the study in a structured manner while still capturing the ethnographic nature of the work, allowing a kind of anecdotal story to surface. It can be an interesting and engaging way to present information to readers (Emmerson et al. 1995)

Chapter 4
ANALYSIS I: THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The administration of the questionnaire was my first chance to interact with the team in its entirety. Until that day, some of the players had seen me walk through their gym on my way to meet with the coach, but they never really spoke with me other than to say hello as I passed through. Following an afternoon practice early in the season, the coach brought me into the team dressing room where the players were getting dressed and joking around. Once they noticed me, the chatter quickly stopped and everybody stared at me. The coach introduced me and had me talk a bit about myself and why I was there. I told them a bit about my history with hockey and about my research with other players that they likely knew of, and then explained that I would be administering a questionnaire and contacting some of them for interviews.

I handed out the consent forms and some pens. The players who were under the age of eighteen already got theirs ahead of time from the coach as they needed to be signed by their billets, the individuals considered the players' legal guardians at the time. Once the forms were returned, I handed out the questionnaire. The players knelt on the ground and used the benches as tables or tried to write on their laps, sometimes comparing answers and quietly asking each other "what is manly supposed to mean?" and other similar questions. I told them to try to answer the questions themselves without too much consulting with others. One asked me what I thought masculinity meant and I pleasantly responded that it did not matter what I thought; it was his own perception of it that I was interested in hearing about. I noticed that the majority of the players were Anglophones, the Francophones mostly kept to each other, and the bilingual players

appeared to speak to everyone, quickly switching between languages. While they filled out the questionnaire, I walked around and gave each of them a thank you card containing a little note from me as well as a debriefing sheet and the \$10 gift card. They all seemed quite surprised and pleased with the gift card and I noticed that approximately two thirds of them took the time to sit and read my debriefing sheet.

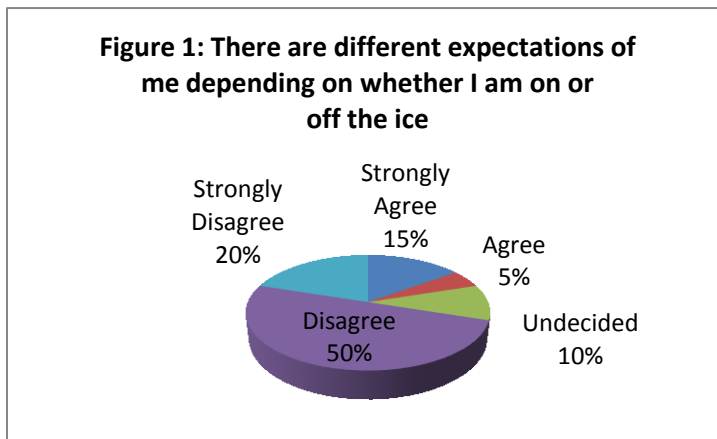
One particular incident that stood out was after the questionnaire was complete. As I was getting ready to leave, a cell phone began to ring, and the whole room erupted in “ohhhh” and “ouuuu.” The coach asked whose phone it was and many of the players began to point to one in particular. The coach approached the individual and told him to hand over his gift card. The player grinned and said it was not his phone. The coach continued to insist that the player give him the gift card and eventually also smiled and said “you know the rules”. I assume this meant that as a rule, the players were not to have their cell phones on in the dressing room. It struck me as a particularly strict method of control given that practice was over, but I never asked for details on why exactly the incident took place. I later heard through conversations with other competitive athletes that it is standard practice to disallow cell phone use in the dressing room.

The purpose of the questionnaire was to obtain a preliminary canvassing of how participants understood themselves as hockey players and as men. It was meant to anonymously collect their basic perceptions of masculinity as an introduction to the interview material. The analysis of the questionnaire was done in two phases—descriptive and statistical analysis of the scaled, close-ended questions (i.e., frequency distributions and response patterns) and a summary of the written, open-ended questions. The following is a presentation and discussion of the results obtained from the twenty

survey respondents.

4.1 Close-ended Questions

4.1.1 *FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTIONS.* The following frequency distributions

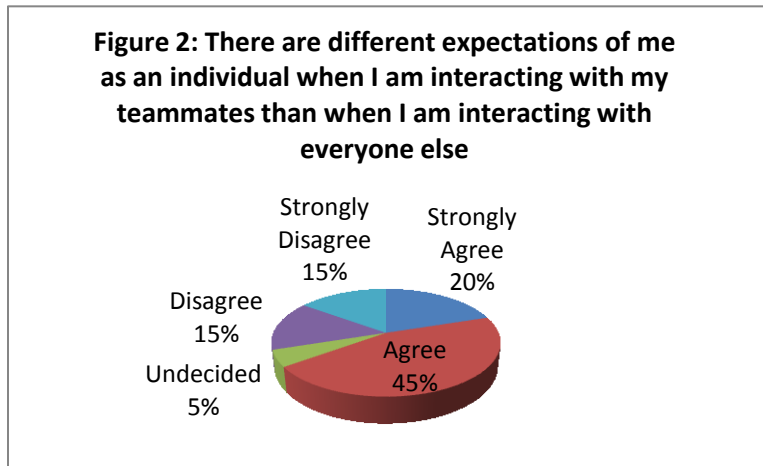


offer a breakdown of how each of the scaled questions was answered by the players. The first statement read ‘There are different expectations of me depending on whether I am on or off the ice’. This statement

was used to determine whether or not the players felt that they had to act differently in each context. It was chosen as a way to gain insight from the players regarding the debate in the literature review over whether or not violent or traditionally masculine tendencies are context-specific. Exactly half of the players (10) disagreed that there are different expectations of them depending on when they are on or off the ice and 20% (4) strongly disagreed. **Figure 1** (above left) shows the complete frequency distribution for the question. Thus the data suggest that a considerable number of the players believe that expectations of them as individuals are the same both on and off the ice. This question was followed up on in the interview.

The second statement read ‘There are different expectations of me as an individual when I am interacting with my teammates than when I am interacting with

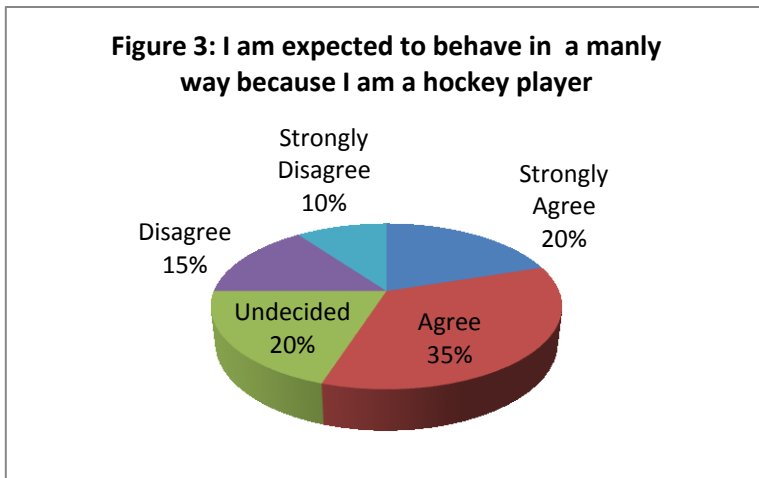
everyone else'. This statement was chosen as a preliminary investigation into team dynamics in terms of the nature of social interactions and whether or not a particular set of expectations was placed on the players depending on social context. Almost half



of respondents—45% (9)—agreed that there are different expectations of them as individuals when they are interacting with their teammates than when they are interacting with everyone else. Put differently, two thirds of respondents tended to agree to some extent while approximately one third disagreed to some extent. **Figure 2** (above right) demonstrates the complete frequency distribution for the question. This suggests that social interactions are more decisive than environmental or activity-based contexts. This begs the following question: If there is no difference in physical environment, who has expectations of the players and what exactly are these expectations? This was also delved into further in the interviews.

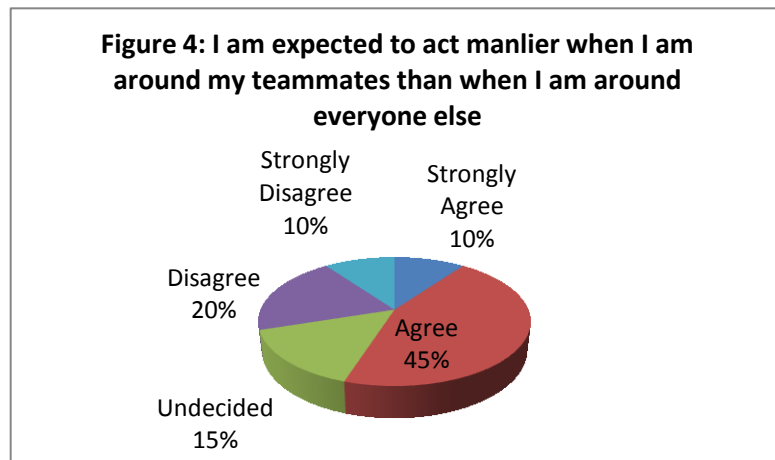
There was a more noticeable variation in the question containing the statement 'I am expected to behave in a manly way because I am a hockey player'. This statement was meant to address the recurring claim that athletes, and especially hockey players, demonstrate traditionally masculine traits on a more frequent basis than non-hockey players. A total of 35% (7) agreed, which again, is considerably less than half. Moreover, 20% (4) strongly agreed, 20% (4) were undecided, 15% (3) disagreed, and 10% (2)

strongly disagreed. **Figure 3** (below left) visually depicts these proportions. Perhaps most importantly, nearly a quarter of respondents were not certain what they thought on the matter. This was kept in mind during the interviews as the uncertainty indicated further ambiguity. Otherwise, more respondents fell on the agreement side than the



disagreement side, which indicated that to some extent the players felt that there were specific gendered expectations of them when they played hockey.

The fourth question contained a statement that read “I am expected to act manlier when I am around my teammates than when I am around everyone else”. This statement was chosen in order to address the argument made in the literature review that hockey players maintain hegemonic masculinity among themselves. A total of 45% (9) of respondents



agreed that they are expected to be manlier when they are around their teammates than when they are around everyone else. Otherwise, 10% (2) strongly disagreed, 20% (4) disagreed, 10% (2) strongly agreed, and 15% (3) were undecided. **Figure 4** (above right)

depicts the distribution. Just over half of respondents tended to agree to some extent while just under half of them tended to disagree to some extent. Once again, a considerable number was undecided. Again, although not concrete, there is some indication of ambiguity on the matter but also considerable agreement that there are gendered expectations of the players when they are interacting socially with other players.

The fifth question contained a statement that read “There exists a stereotype of the Major Junior ice hockey player”. The majority—95% (19)—of respondents either strongly agreed or agreed that Major Junior ice hockey players are stereotyped in some way. The 5% who disagreed worked out mathematically to one participant and none were undecided. The players were asked to elaborate further on this subject in the interviews with regards to the characteristics, interests, and priorities of the stereotypical Junior player. Given the anonymity of the survey and the fact that every interview participant agreed that there was a stereotype, it was impossible to obtain an explanation from the individual who disagreed with the statement as he was either not interviewed or had changed his mind on the subject.

The sixth and final close-ended statement read “It is important that the team lives up to a certain standard as a role model in the community. The majority—95% (19)—of respondents either strongly agreed or agreed that it is important that the team lives up to a certain standard as a role model in the community. Only 5% disagreed, which, again, works out to one respondent. The same individual who disagreed on this question also disagreed on the question about stereotypes. It might have been interesting to receive

more depth from this individual. Nonetheless, this too was a clear answer and it followed up on further in the interviews.

4.1.2 RESPONSE PATTERNS. In order to determine if there were any patterns in the answers to the questions, crosstabulations were run using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences). Crosstabulations are used to determine the existence and nature of a potential relationship between dependent and independent variables. None of the elements of the questions could truly act as independent or dependent variables in this instance, meaning that none of the relationships turned out to be statistically relevant or correlated. The crosstabulations were simply a convenient method of obtaining additional descriptive information on the questionnaire as a whole beyond the capabilities of the individual frequency distributions. The following is, therefore, a set of observations on answering patterns for the questionnaire.

The statements “There are different expectations of me as an individual depending on whether I am on or off the ice” and “There are different expectations of me as an individual when I am interacting with my teammates than when I am interacting with everyone else” were analyzed together. The questions were formulated to be similar in nature and, surprisingly, yielded different results—as shown by the frequency distributions. When the frequency distributions are combined, it is apparent that approximately one third (six out of twenty) respondents agreed with the first statement and disagreed with the second. Otherwise, three respondents strongly disagreed to both and two respondents strongly agreed to both. While this is not necessarily a strong indication, it can be deduced again that there is a difference between the on-off ice context and associated social interactions for this group. More specifically, the findings

suggest that players draw a distinction between the expectations bound up with social context and those bound up with social interactions.

Next, the statements “I am expected to behave in a manly way because I am a hockey player” and “Hockey players are expected to be more manly when they are around their teammates than when they are around everyone else”. These two were combined as they both touched on gendered expectations. A quarter of respondents (five out of twenty) agreed to both and two participants strongly agreed to both. Three participants responded that they were undecided about manliness in connection to being a hockey player, but agreed that they were expected to act more manly around their teammates than around everyone else. This crosstabulation did not demonstrate any particularly noteworthy trends, but still points to the existence of some kind of gendered expectations as well as some uncertainty about them. The interview data will delve further into this and add the dimension of what the players think it means to be a man in general.

The last two statements to be combined were “There are different expectations of me as an individual when I am interacting with my teammates than when I am interacting with everyone else” and “Hockey players are expected to be more manly when they are around their teammates than when they are around everyone else”. This combination focused solely on social interactions. Four respondents (20%) agreed to both and three respondents disagreed with the existence of expectations around other people, but agreed with the existence of expectations around teammates. The remaining respondents answered with various other different combinations. Again, there is no noteworthy trend, but enough of one for these findings to indicate that social interactions within the context

of hockey are bound up with gendered expectations in some way.

4.1.3 SUMMARY. While none of the close-ended questions revealed notable results, they were most certainly a beneficial tool for a preliminary canvassing of how the players engage with the idea of masculinity. The answers were quite evenly spread out at times and quite one-sided at others. Nevertheless, the following seven statements best summarize the results of the close-ended questions: 1) The largest proportion (70%) of respondents believes that the expectations of them were the same on the ice as off the ice. 2) The largest proportion (65%) of respondents believes that they are expected to act differently around their teammates than around everyone else. 3) The largest proportion (55%) of respondents believes that they are expected to behave in a manly way because they are hockey players. 4) The largest proportion (55%) of respondents believes that they are expected to act manlier around their teammates than around everyone else. 5) Almost all (95%) respondents believe that there exists a stereotype of the Major Junior ice hockey player. 6) Almost all respondents believe that it is important for the team to act as a role model in the community. 7) Although larger proportions of respondents were detected, sometimes there were still considerably-sized groups of respondents who were undecided or in disagreement. These seven statements indicate that social relations and gender expectations are indeed at play in these hockey players' lives in some way and that the players are not always unified in their thoughts and opinions on the matter. The open-ended questions then examined what 'manliness' (or masculinity) means to them, leading into the semi-structured qualitative interviews on how masculinity is manifested in their lives.

4.2 Open-ended Questions

There were four open-ended questions on the questionnaire. These questions were meant to open up the floor to each individual respondent in order to obtain a more robust understanding of the team's viewpoints as a whole. The open-ended questions thus left room for personal responses as opposed to forced scaled responses with no room for personal touch or flavour. The first two questions asked the players to list characteristics necessary for success in life and in hockey. The last two questions asked the players to provide their own definition of masculinity and to write what they thought it means to be a man. The following is a description and discussion of the analysis of each question.

4.2.1 PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS. The first question asked players to list three individual qualities that are necessary for general success in life. It was anticipated that 'success' had good or positive connotations and players would accordingly produce relevant characteristics that would demonstrate what success meant to them. The characteristics were tallied in order to see if any were more common than others. The most common responses, followed in brackets by the number of respondents who wrote them, were determination (7), perseverance (6), hard work (5), respectful (5), work ethic (4), caring (3), and humbleness (3). To better exemplify the proportions, 'determination' was the most common characteristic and was used by 35% of respondents. Other responses used less often included: having character, good communication skills, dedication, desire, discipline, being a go-getter, honesty, integrity, kindness, leadership, motivation, optimism, passion, people skills, personality, politeness, a positive attitude, sense of humour, seriousness, straightforwardness, striving to be better, trustworthy, and

willing to learn. While the survey was not able to capture what exactly was meant by these choices, it is worth mentioning that they echo the expectations outlined by the team's head coach, which will be discussed in the analysis of the interviews. The diversity in the responses is ambiguous and warrants further investigation, but they are all certainly compatible with hegemonic masculinity in some way. How they were compatible remained to be clarified by the interviews.

The second question asked the players to list three characteristics that are necessary for success as a hockey player. This exercise was used to compare the ice hockey context to the non-ice hockey context. The most common responses, followed in brackets by how many respondents wrote them, were determination (8), discipline (6), work ethic (6), hard work (5), competitiveness (4), passion (4), perseverance (4), teamwork (4), and confidence (3). Again, to better describe the proportions, 'determination' was the most common response for this question as well, this time expressed by 40% of the team. Other responses used less often included: attitude, character, commitment, dedication, drive, being a go-getter, grit, guts, honesty, integrity, intelligence, leadership, making smart choices, skill, sociable, and straightforwardness. These responses were less ambiguous: they related more to meeting goals, and less to being a good person. For example, responses from the last question such as respect, humbleness, and caring were not on this list. It should be noted, however, that three respondents did indeed list the same three characteristics for both questions. One respondent chose attitude, passion, and perseverance while the second chose hard work, go-getter, and perseverance and the third chose perseverance, discipline and straightforwardness. Aside from these three individuals, there was a minimal yet

distinguishable difference in the players' responses. Elaboration on this dynamic was, therefore, included in the interviews.

4.2.2 DEFINING MEN AND MASCULINITY. The first question regarding masculinity asked the players how they personally defined masculinity. It was imperative to obtain an idea of how they understood the concept in order to determine where to begin conversations with them about the subject. Moreover, the anonymity of the questionnaire may have encouraged them to answer whole-heartedly with less fear of judgement. The responses to this question revealed a wide array of input on masculinity. The most common responses to the question included or were similar to how a man acts, how a man is perceived, and being manly (these were reported by four or six respondents, which is less than half of the team. Other common themes included standing up for yourself and others, being tough, facing challenges, being hard on yourself, never giving up, and doing things to the best of your ability. These themes were not entirely common, however, because they were only mentioned by three respondents. Moreover, as the list of examples below will indicate, elements such as physical work, being cocky, and being attracted to women were only mentioned once.

This indicates two things. First, approximately a quarter of the players were able to express a dictionary-like definition of the word masculinity. Second, the majority of the team used adjectives or qualities to describe their understanding, most of which can be associated with stereotypical understandings of masculinity, but not always. For example, the more stereotypical responses (which were not common answers, but taken together, evoke a common theme) were warrior, fearless, strong, physical work, cocky,

being attracted to women, and the opposite of femininity. Descriptions that are not stereotypically tied to men include never giving up, being determined, doing things to the best of your ability, and feeling good about yourself. One respondent briefly indicated that masculinity was the opposite of femininity and that it did not mean much to him. In summary, the responses varied, however the most common ones discussed the association of the word masculinity with the overall presentation and perception of men and the rest were mostly geared towards stereotypical masculine qualities or connotations of strength, confidence, and heterosexuality.

The final question asked the players to briefly explain what they think it means to be a man. It was chosen for two reasons. First, it was very similar to the first question, but perhaps sounded less loaded to the players, allowing them to express themselves more clearly. Second, it was used to assess whether or not the players did indeed feel that there was a difference between ‘masculinity’ and ‘being a man’. The responses to this question can be classified into three overarching categories. The most common responses were positive and non-stereotypical in nature. Examples included being a leader and role model, standing up for one’s beliefs, being humble, being mature and making good decisions, and having responsibilities and respecting them. Another common category of responses was more comparable to traditional images of men. These responses included being physically and mentally strong, not making excuses, being hard on one’s self, and showing little emotion. Finally, two of the answers were quite literal, stating that to be a man meant that “your gender is a male” (the respondent seemed unaware of difference between sex and gender) and that it indicated a particular life stage, such as “having left high school.”

The most striking response of the collection, which was the most common response in the sense that it was conveyed by three separate participants (the most commonly listed response), stated that being a man meant that one must act a certain way or else he will be stereotyped or judged. Unfortunately, none of the three participants elaborated further on the subject. Of course, the objective of the interviews was to further explore statements such as this one, so additional analysis will take place later on. Another striking response that the interviews sought to pursue was the following: being a man “means everything and Im (sic) not sure whether it has to do with being a hockey player. Since I was little that’s all I’ve ever done but I feel its (sic) important to not get pushed around and get the job done.” This was the only participant who linked hockey to masculinity in any way and the response indicates strong feelings, seemingly accompanied by some confusion, towards the subject.

4.2.3 SUMMARY. Along with the rest of the questionnaire, the final two questions demonstrated that the players all view masculinity somewhat differently. Despite some common responses, there was a wide range of answers where questions of manhood and masculinity were concerned. Some of them associated the word ‘masculinity’ with the way a man presents himself or is perceived and some others felt that it meant traditional or stereotypical masculine traits such as heterosexuality and physical strength. Moreover, some of them thought that being a man meant being respectful, honest, and accountable, while others simply thought it meant being out of school and earning a living. Put succinctly, some engaged with it in conceptual terms and others in pragmatic ones.

The variety in responses generated from both the open and close-ended questions was quite compelling in the sense that no definite consensus was reached on how these young male hockey players experienced and understood manhood. There were certainly some common responses, but none prominent enough to indicate a strong overarching theme. Put differently, the questionnaire-driven data do not appear to suggest that all players view manhood or masculinity the same way. Both the ambiguity and diversity of the responses confirmed that the study would highly benefit from one-on-one interviews. The interviews would help produce a better image of the different ways in which masculinity is manifested in the players' lives and additionally, their perceptions of that process at work.

Chapter 5
ANALYSIS II: THE INTERVIEW

The interviews took place in three settings. First, I interviewed the coach in his office the same day I administered the questionnaire to the players. Second, I interviewed some of the players in the season ticket holders' lounge at the team's playing facility. Third, when the coach told me I could no longer hold interviews at the playing facility, I had no choice but to relocate to a common area at another local rink where the team occasionally practiced. The interviews were all recorded using a digital recorder, lasted between fifteen and thirty-five minutes and were then transcribed for analysis.

The coach's interview and player interviews had their own specific purposes. As previously stated, the coach's interview had two objectives. The first objective was to obtain an overview of his coaching philosophy in order to determine whether it was reflected in the views of his players. The second objective was to obtain examples that supported claims that the coach had made in interviews with local media that stated that part of his coaching philosophy was to impact young players and make them good people. In contrast, the player interviews had the sole objective of determining how masculinity is made manifest in the players' lives. This was achieved by asking questions about their lifestyles, values, and beliefs – all of which related in some way to the survey questions. All in all, the picture painted by the interview data demonstrates how the team as a whole understands masculinity and in what ways it is a part of their lives as men and ice hockey players. The following analysis will present the interview results in the following order: a summary and analysis of the coach's interview, a definition and discussion of the existence of a 'code of silence' in the interviews, an outline of

overarching themes in the various aspects of the players' lives, and finally, a collection of extraneous and unique statements or moments from the interview process that are worthy of consideration.

5.1 Coach's Interview

The coach's interview will be presented in three phases. First, a brief description of the coach, Jean, and his career will be given. Second, an analysis of his coaching philosophy and its relation to the player interviews will be conducted. Third and last, the same analysis will be conducted in terms of how he fulfills his objective to impact young players and make them good people. Taken together, these three phases will yield an overall image of the team as a collective.

Jean was a soft spoken man in his late forties or early fifties. When prompted, he modestly listed his experience with ice hockey, ranging from playing at the Junior and college levels to an ascent through the coaching ranks with his sons' hockey, leading to positions at the college, professional, international, and various Junior levels. He has led his current team to the national championship on more than one occasion. When asked how he was initially led to coaching, he said the following:

I have a degree in physical education. Umm, and at the time, with it came a TC-5 [coaching certificate], so I wanted to...to—I was going to university and my plan was to be a teacher. And...and basically, I look at this job as I...I teach hockey. So in many ways, umm, I'm—I ended up in the profession that...that I thought I would. I wanted, at the university level, to work with young people, umm, try to educate them and help them become better. It

just happens that the vehicle is hockey, but umm, the principles are the same.

Given the great importance he places on these matters, quotations like this one were immediate indications that I would have more to ask him about his coaching philosophy and how exactly he wants to educate and help young people.

When prompted, he stated that he chose to work with this team in particular because he believes the organization is “first-rate with honourable values” and says that his family feels at home with the organization through the efforts of its gracious owner and staff. He also credits the organization as a main reason that he and his family are happy to accommodate the demanding schedule that his position entails. When asked about the distribution of his time, he said that he struggles with a work-life balance and that his family has had to make many sacrifices of their own time in order for him to pursue his career. For him, the hockey season runs all year; the playing season runs from mid-August to early June and draft season, in which he is responsible for building a team, runs in between. He puts in anywhere from eight to sixteen hours a day and maintains that an individual must be passionate about this job in order to be successful in it.

In discussing moments and experiences that he is proud of, Jean first pointed to the team’s educational program for players. Again, he used it as an opportunity to showcase his objective of changing young people for the better:

You know what? The uh, the winning would not be the first thing that comes to mind. The...the, umm, I got into this job to positively impact young players. Initially, as a teacher, I was going to positively impact young people, so I think that, uhh, the winning is—are obvious highs, but one team wins...and fifty-nine lose across the country every year and...and, umm, if you evaluated your job performance solely based on that, there’d be a lot of unhappy people. Umm, I’d like to think that we do a very good job here, umm, at helping develop good people. Umm, our

school program is very strong. We have not had a player since I've been here who finished his Junior career who did not either sign a professional contract or go back to university on a full-time basis with, umm, with significant scholarships. Anybody who has been involved in this program knows how structured our school program is. We understand that the odds are against you becoming a professional hockey player if you go to Junior hockey...just like the odds are against you when you go to college hockey, but you come here and play two...two to four years in the best development league in the world and we support it with education.

At this point in the interview, his priorities were becoming very clear. He appeared quite realistic about the fact that not every single player under his direction would go on to a career in hockey and evidently wanted to prepare them for that possibility. With this in mind, I asked what other challenges he faced coaching at this level, aside from helping young people manage potential careers. He said that his biggest challenge was trying to build and blend a cohesive group of teenagers from all over North America and Europe. Aside from that, he said he felt that it was his responsibility to help his players through their potential challenges, such as being away from home for the first time, moving to a higher level of play where the individual is no longer the best at what he does, dealing with criticism from fans, various aspects of relationships with girls, and the anxiety surrounding the fact that “you’ve got a small window, uhh, for being sixteen to eighteen and if things go right, you become a millionaire and you’re set up for life. And if things don’t go right, have you missed that opportunity? Most sixteen to eighteen-year olds don’t need to ask themselves that question.”

What can be taken from this first portion of the interview is that Jean is certainly there to build a winning team, but he wanted to strongly convey his belief that there is more to hockey than the time spent on the ice; the Junior level is a time of personal

change and growth for young men in which they have to do a lot learning, self-reflection, and decision-making. He feels that it is his duty not only to build a winning team on the ice, but to help guide his players through their lives outside of hockey as well. It was also apparent that education played an enormous role in both his and the organization's priorities.

5.1.1 PHILOSOPHY. After having obtained some background and general information from Jean, the interview turned towards his coaching philosophy. This involved asking questions about his beliefs on how a team should be run. When asked for a description of his coaching philosophy, he quickly stated:

We have three basic rules here. Umm, be a good person, be a good teammate, and give 100% in everything you do. And that applies to...to our hockey, that applies to our school, that applies to our training, that applies to...to anything we do off the ice and, like I said, the hockey is only the small part. It's—you're a person a lot longer than you're a hockey player. And...and managing the personal side of the players—their confidence level, teaching them about work ethic, teaching them about discipline, teaching them about integrity...All those things—these are—your job is to build a winning team on the ice, but you...your job should really be to teach life lessons.

This quotation demonstrated three things. First, it showed his ongoing commitment throughout the interview to articulate the importance of the hockey-life balance. Second, it shows how inextricably linked hockey and life are for the players. Third, it concretely demonstrated what he expects of his players and shows that he believes that meeting those expectations will lead to success both on and off the ice.

He added that mastering these three rules also teaches “the value of preparation, the

value of discipline, the value of working for what you want, the value of dealing with setbacks, and learning how to get along with other people,” all lessons that are necessary to learn for success in and out of hockey. Hockey is simply a vehicle that enforces these lessons while the players are doing something they love. In short, Jean’s philosophy professes that mastery and maintenance of his three rules—be a good person, be a good teammate, and give 100% in everything you do—guarantees a good set of values and positive results in all aspects of his players’ lives.

5.1.2 IMPACT. The final portion of the interview was dedicated to finding out how he implements his coaching philosophy and how that process was related to his commitment to impacting young players and shaping good people. It also elaborated further on what exactly it meant to be a good person and a good teammate since he had not yet explicitly characterized the elements of his philosophy. Jean said that he implements his philosophy in two ways. The first, which will not be elaborated on here, is to try to attract players who are personable and team-oriented during the scouting process. The second, which will be further discussed, is fundamentally to speak with his players in both formal and informal settings.

Formally, Jean and his staff hold occasional sessions with the team to discuss what it means to be a good person. He listed three specific examples: a personal talk about being a good person, a talk about the implications of social media on the players’ lives, and a session with a mental skills coach geared towards focus, preparation, dealing with nerves, and achieving goals. The first two examples were of particular interest because he

orchestrated them himself and they spoke directly to the values he is trying to instill in his players. He described them in the following manner:

We just talk to them! We talk about how to treat people the way you want to be treated and being respectful. When you go to a team promotion and you meet people and...and you're nice to them. You're...you're polite, you're humble. Umm...a good teammate is not selfish. You communicate and you...you don't talk about other players behind their backs or criticize other people. And these days, like right after you left, we talked about, uhh, we talked about Twitter and Facebook. Some teams in our league have an immediate policy like the NHL with regards to Twitter. In today's technology, in today's world, be careful what you say 'cause it's out there and it's gone. We're talking to them about Facebook and how that, uhh, future employers and NHL teams can find their way on to your Facebook now, so don't post dumb stuff, and better yet, don't do dumb stuff! They wanna get a snapshot view of who you are 'cause they want to know the type of person they're bringing in the organization. Who is this guy? And those are life lessons. Those are just life—we find teachable moments and...and, umm, we try to guide them through this.

In summary, then, being a good person involves being respectful, polite, and humble, among other things. Being a good teammate involves being unselfish, communicative, and honest or loyal. These characteristics are not straightforwardly hegemonic and the player interviews will be scanned in order to see how the implementation of Jean's philosophy plays out in the players' lives.

Lastly, informal dialogue takes place in the form of giving the players feedback. Jean believes in verbally praising his players when they demonstrate an understanding and execution of his three rules. Put simply, “you catch them doing something good, on or off the ice, and you tell them about it.” He said that it is equally his duty to be attentive to his players' actions in order to ensure that their hard work does not go unnoticed.

Conversely, he also needs to be attentive to moments when they need to be spoken to for not adhering to the three rules. Jean emphasizes that players who do not follow the rules are not welcome on his team, but he is certain to speak with the ones who simply need direction or to be reminded of the rules as well. Nonetheless, his bottom line is to implement his philosophy first and foremost through verbal communication.

5.1.3 REFLECTION. Initially, the player interviews were classified according to the ways in which they echoed Jean's coaching philosophy. This was judged according to the players' descriptions of their teammates, their ideas of success on and off the ice, and their willingness to share information. Willingness to share information refers to the depth they provided about their experiences as a young man in the Junior hockey realm. Notably, Jean never gave any explicit indication of any of the negative attributes attached to the concept of hegemonic masculinity discussed in the literature review and, in fact, made a point to underline his efforts at instilling very positive qualities in his players without ever alluding to those qualities being linked to gender. As a researcher, this lack of attention to any overly negative aspects of his job led me to question the possibility of the 'code of silence' at play. This suspicion was solidified when I thought back to his concern with confidentiality and anonymity, his hand-selection of participants, and his outright refusal to field questions regarding hazing and girls. All of this was kept in mind while reviewing the player interviews. An examination of the interviews revealed three levels of similarity between the interview with Jean and the player interviews. Before presenting them, the analysis will first address a resounding similarity between the players and coach.

All thirteen interview participants echoed the coach's three rules in terms of success in both hockey and life. This is to say that whether or not they learned it from the coach and whether or not they live by his rules, they are certainly aware of what it means to be a good person and a good teammate. As demonstrated by the survey results, words such as respect, humbleness, discipline, hard work, and honesty were all present in each player's description of what it meant to be successful both on and off the ice. It is important to note that qualities such as respect, humbleness, and communication are not necessarily tenets of hegemonic masculinity and that thus far, hegemonic masculinity has not been a prominent theme in the data.

The three levels of similarity with the coach's interview were focused on willingness to share information and can be categorized as follows: little to no deviation from the coach's main points, some deviation from the coach's main points, and frequent deviation from the coach's main points. Players who hardly deviated from the coach's interview offered very surface-level responses with little personal detail and maintained the positive attitude towards the team that Jean portrayed. Players who deviated slightly from Jean's interview discussed the importance of Jean's coaching philosophy, but went above and beyond by sharing more personal stories and opinions and alluded to there being a 'bad side' to some Junior players. Finally, players who frequently deviated from Jean's interview were quite talkative and often expressed a view of Junior hockey quite different from Jean's and were willing to share team secrets that I eventually realized Jean and perhaps other players did not want me to discover. The following is an example of the difference.

One of the interview questions asked the players to talk about how the social

interactions among teammates had changed upon their arrival to the Major Junior level, if at all. This first response was from Chris, a nineteen-year old third-year veteran with the team. Chris was largely considered to fit into the ‘little to no deviation’ category. His response to the question was as follows:

Umm, I don't think so. I mean, like...I think every—in every hockey group, you get the same social interactions with the boys. My teammates are...a bunch of beauties. I mean we're...we're a tight-knit group. I think to be a successful hockey team...I think you need that. I think you need the social interactions with the boys and to be happy like, hanging out with them and going to the movies with them, so I think—I don't think it was any different, no.

The length and depth of this response were typical of Chris and other players who fit into his category. He alluded to what Jean said about being a cohesive group and provided very little descriptive information regarding the nature of social interactions with his teammates. This next response to the same question came from Bobby, an eighteen-year old freshman with the team. Bobby's interview was classified as frequently deviating from the coach's interview. When asked about a change in the nature of social interactions among teammates, Bobby replied:

Yeah, 'cause everyone...like in Junior A, like you have like maybe three, four people who really wanna play hockey and like, will train and everything and then you have everyone else that just wants to party and like...you got some people that like...I dunno, will do drugs and stuff, don't really care about their hockey. But here [in Major Junior], you don't see people branch off as much because everyone's so concentrated on hockey and like, we have to spend more time all together and they all share the same dream of like, going to the NHL. But like, you still have your quiet guys. And there's still trouble-makers here, but they're just not as noticeable 'cause they're like...protected here, you know? Like I

heard this one guy and his friends who like, aren't on the team, or whatever, beat the shit outta this other kid and put him in the hospital, but like, you don't see it, like...in the paper or on the news, you know? 'Cause like, at his level, they just have the people who make it go away or whatever. They have reputations, I guess, and like...and you don't want the community finding out about that stuff and like...making your team look bad, right? And there's...there's other stuff too, but like, it's not everyone that's like that. That's like, a smaller number of people than before and no one cared about it in Junior A, but they would here and that's the difference, I guess.

Clearly, when held up against Chris' response to the same question, Bobby not only had different things to say than Jean, but he also went above and beyond the scope of the question. He did not necessarily reference any of the tenets of hegemonic masculinity, but he did bring up the code of silence in saying that the team has 'people who make it go away' when players are publicly out of line in order to maintain the team image or reputation as an organization that shapes good young people. He also alluded to misbehaviour among players at the Junior level. This was a rather extreme comparison; most respondents (6) fell within the 'some deviation' category and fewer comprised the 'little to no deviation' (4) and 'frequent deviation' (3) categories, which were presented here.

5.1.4 SUMMARY. Three main conclusions can be drawn from the analysis of the coach's interview. First, Jean, the head coach, is education-oriented and believes that successful hockey teams develop through players' efforts to be good people, be good teammates, and do their best in all endeavours on and off the ice. He implements this philosophy through speaking with his players. This has arguably been successful because

the players are able to articulate that philosophy as well as how to master its components. Second, although the players understand Jean's coaching philosophy, they all have varying views of the Junior hockey experience. Not only can these views be classified into three categories of deviation from the coach's interview, it will also become apparent that the players have varying thoughts and opinions of their experiences beyond the connections to the coach's interview. Given this variation, no one way of interpreting the Junior hockey experience, or masculinity for that matter, should be expected—much like the questionnaire results suggested. Third and last, it appeared that the code of silence would potentially play a large role in the remainder of the analysis.

5.2 The Life of a Major Junior Ice Hockey Player

I enjoyed my time with the players as they were all fairly polite and enjoyed having a good laugh when answering some of my questions. It made for a very light atmosphere. The interview data was separated according to recurring themes within the players' responses. It was expected that the responses would illustrate the players' lifestyles, interests, experiences with hockey, social lives, perceptions of their environments, values and beliefs. It was also expected that in having them speak about the various aspects of their lives, conclusions could be drawn regarding their perceptions of masculinity and how it is manifested in their lives. The examination of the responses yielded ten themes: hockey, school, work, family, girls, stereotypes, competition, behaviour, social life, and success. Given that the interviews were conducted in French and English, some of the responses that will be presented in French and paraphrased in brackets in English.

Additionally, since reasons of anonymity and confidentiality limit the amount of information available about each player, it can be difficult to tell them all apart and truly characterize them as people. For that reason, a table of their names and brief descriptions of them will be presented ahead of the common themes.

NAME*	AGE	TIME WITH THE TEAM AND PREVIOUS LEVEL OF PLAY	LEVEL OF DEVIATION FROM THE COACH'S INTERVIEW
Bobby	18	First year, came from Junior A	Frequent
Bob	19	Second year, came from Midget	Some
Brian	18	First year, came from Junior A	Some
Chris	19	Third year, came from Midget	Little to none
Claude	20	First year with the team, third year in the league, came from Junior A	Little to none
Gaston	17	First year with the team, second year in the league, came from Midget	Some
Guy	19	Third year, came from Midget	Little to none
Larry	20	Fifth year, came from Midget	Frequent
Mike	19	Second year, came from Junior A	Frequent
Patrick	19	Third year, came from Midget	Some
Ryan	18	Second year, came from Midget	Some
Shayne	19	Second year, came from Junior A	Some
Stéphane	19	Third year, came from Midget	Some

* Pseudonyms have been applied.

5.2.1 HOCKEY. Hockey is the central theme in all of the players' lives. It takes up the majority of their time and they appear to have a love-hate relationship with it—just like Ken Dryden's passage about the goaltender originally demonstrated. I first had them talk about their hockey careers and the experience of moving up to and playing at the Junior level. It was intended that this initial conversation would first make them comfortable speaking with me and second, reveal any gender-oriented information related to the sport and experience playing it. We discussed the balance of their time,

their job description, the challenges and rewards associated with being a Junior hockey player, and what their goals were in hockey.

The players have a hockey-related event six days a week—if they are lucky. Between games, practice, off-ice training, and community events, they do not have much time to themselves during the season. In the particular month that the research took place, they were supposed to have two days off throughout the entire month, however, there was a billet barbecue (social event with the families that the players live with during the season) during one of their days off, so they truly only had one full day to themselves all month. They all agreed that it was a major time commitment and eleven of the thirteen said that they were fine with it. I had each of them tell me what an average week looks like for them. The responses were all similar to Shayne's, a nineteen year old sophomore with the team, who described his week as follows:

Well, during the hockey season, we, say, on average, we might practice like Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. So like, I would get up, say seven-thirty...have some breakfast, out the door at eight, school starts at eight-thirty, so I get there at eight-fifteen. I take online courses in a classroom at [a local high school] that you go to if you're taking online courses since we have to be supervised. Uhh...the course I'm taking right now is Corporate Finance, so that's what I'm kinda interested in. And, so...school would be from eight-thirty to about eleven-thirty and then eleven-thirty, go to the rink, have lunch, pack a lunch before school, eat your lunch and then practice usually starts around, like one-fifteen, one-thirty, so obviously you need time to get your gear on and do what you gotta do before practice and practice might go 'til around like, three-thirty on average and we get off the ice. There might be a workout from three-forty-five to four-thirty and by the time we're showered and get home, it's about five and uhh, just a couple hours to relax and have some supper and then just relax for the rest of the night, maybe go to one of the boys' house and play Xbox or ping pong.

And like, that would be the same, like...for all our practice days and game days are different. Well, game day, if it was on like, say, a Friday, we'd still have to go to school, so everything stays the same up until like eleven-thirty and I would go to the rink. We usually have a meeting around twelve-fifteen, so I have a meeting, run back home, say...twelve-forty-five...uhh, grab some...some lunch, just a quick bite to eat, head down to bed for a couple hours, 'til maybe like three, three-thirty, then I just get up, put my suit on, have a pregame meal and run to the rink for...we play at seven and I like to be at the rink for around four-thirty and you have lots of time to...do what you gotta do. Then after games, you just go home or go out to eat with the team or something.

The players' schedules are undoubtedly packed. Shayne did not include the two to sixteen-hour travel schedule they have for away games. There is no longer time for other organized sports and several players reported not having any friends outside of hockey because there was simply no time to maintain meaningful relationships with anyone other than their families, teammates, and perhaps a girlfriend, as long as the girlfriend was very understanding and accepting of the team schedule.

Although two of the players said they were unhappy with the balance of their time, all thirteen said that it was worth the sacrifice. Ryan, an eighteen-year old sophomore with the team said "I wouldn't want my life to be any other way right now" and Claude, a twenty-year old francophone in his last year of Junior said "J'trouve que c'est super correcte. Moi, chu satisfait (I think it's fine. I'm satisfied). Shayne justified it in terms of his career aspirations:

Major Junior is designed to prepare players for the NHL and other pro leagues, so they're just trying to mimic, like...what you do here is what...what it's gonna be like if you wanna do that as a career, so obviously it is a lot more time consuming, but it's...it's

good if that's the route you wanna go. And we're in the midst of deciding that, if we haven't already, you know?

The amount of time that these individuals spend on hockey is considerable. Not many young people between the ages of sixteen and twenty spend upwards of six days a week preparing for a career.

Another topic of discussion was how the game had changed compared to their previous level and what was expected of them now. The players all came from Midget or Junior A, both below the Major Junior level. They said that at the Major Junior level, winning takes priority and it is likely the first time that players were no longer the best ones on their teams. The pace and physicality of the game posed the biggest challenges on the ice for the players. Patrick, a third-year veteran with the team, commented on the overall change:

Well, of course, uh, I, uh...I never played with like—we play, like, with men, basically. There's uh, twenty-year old guys, nineteen-year old guys and, uh... I'm not very big, so, uh—I mean you definitely had to keep your head up, so uh—the guys are a lot stronger here. And everything happens so quick that you don't have time—your decision-making's gotta be so quick, so, you know, I mean as soon as you get the puck, you have somebody on you, so you gotta know where your guys are and uh, it happens so quickly, but that's a transition you gotta make, and like, uh, I find the first year it took me probably about 'til Christmas and after you get that confidence, you...you get used to it.

The part of Patrick's response that was the most compelling was this idea of 'playing with men'. Several players also made the same comment, especially in terms of the physical aspect of the game. Ryan, for example, said "if you're getting hit by guys your age, a couple years older, it's not a big difference, but when you get hit from twenty-year

olds, it's a big difference. You get hit by a man when you're sixteen—you're not really mature enough, as they are. It's gonna hurt more than it did." All of the players agreed, however, that although the transition can be difficult, the older players on the team had truly done their best at accepting the younger ones and helping them develop into 'men'. It can be deduced from this, then, that in some way, Major Junior hockey is where one becomes a man. The players come into the league looking at older teammates and opponents as men and eventually, through hard work and the guidance of their coach and more advanced teammates, graduate to that level, having grown mentally and physically and, in some cases, being ready to move on to a professional career in the sport.

The players shared some of the most common challenges and rewards associated with being a Major Junior ice hockey player. As with the time commitment, they assured me that the positives outweigh the negatives. When asked what the worst thing was about being a Major Junior hockey player, the most common response was having to sacrifice living like a 'normal' teenager. Shayne said the following:

Ummm...I think the worst thing is probably that like...you can't be a normal teenager. Every other seventeen, eighteen, nineteen-year old, they're going away to university, they're partying, having a good time, but like we're...we can't do that obviously, right? So you kinda like, give up your teenager—teenage years to play hockey and those are like something you'll never get back, but obviously it's a fair consequence.

Most of them said that 'partying' (consuming alcohol and going to the bar) was something they were missing out on compared to their other teenage counterparts.

Another common challenge was dealing with nerves or pressure in terms of fans and critics. The players all went from playing in community arenas in front of hundreds of fans, at best, to a stadium of over five-thousand fans each night. Chris, a third-year

nineteen-year old veteran with the team, described the feeling:

It can get stressful and the nerves get to you, like on the ice, obviously, when you got about seven-thousand people wanting you to—and here you are on the ice and...if you screw up, I mean, I think ‘what are people gonna think?’ Like, obviously the nerves sometimes get to you, but, if that’s the worst part, it means it’s really not that bad.

Mike, a nineteen-year old sophomore on the team, expanded on Chris’s point about what the fans would think by informing me of the criticisms that the team receives:

You go home after a game and you go on the Internet, on the forum thing about the games and like everyone is like ‘Awh this guy didn’t play good. This guy didn’t play good.’ Oh, those guys will rip you apart! Like, guys that know nothing about it are just like making—like if you don’t play good, like [one of the players] gets it the worst! Everyone on there goes ‘Trade him! He’s garbage!’ Like...he’s the heart and soul of our frigging team! Like he’s the hardest worker on the team and everyone just rips him apart! Like if you have a bad game, you’re garbage. The next game, if you play well, they’re like ‘Oh, he’s awesome!’ So some of the stuff is amusing to read, but you can never believe it. There’s a few guys that really are, like, stressed about it, haha, but I mean, we’re all just, like, don’t read it, right?

These feelings of nervousness and being offended by criticisms oppose hegemonic masculinity, which encourages resignation from feelings and conversely discourages a lack of confidence and vulnerability. Typically, it would be expected that men who are described as hegemonically masculine would thrive under the pressure of performing in front of so many spectators and be completely unconcerned with what others thought of them. Not all of them were concerned with performance or what others thought of them but it was a common theme throughout the interviews nonetheless.

In spite of the challenges, the biggest reward for the players was the opportunity to live out their passion on a daily basis and to be treated well and have people look up to

them. Their passion for their current positions truly came out when they were asked what was the best thing about being a Major Junior hockey player. Larry, a twenty-year old in his fifth and final year with the team (he had been there the longest of all the players), said “Well, first of all, being able to play, like, in one of the best leagues for your age in the world. Ummm...and uhh...you know, having the opportunity to like, just enjoy hockey for...try to...make it into a career, you know what I mean?” Bobby, one of the players introduced in the coach’s interview analysis, said “who would complain about getting to wake up and do what you love every day, right?” Stéphane added that the best thing is “just...to be out there with your teammates and competing every night to win games. I mean, uh, when you know you’ve, uh, outworked the other team and, uh, everybody’s—the mood’s so happy and these are your best friends and just, uh, being in the hotels with the guys and having fun. Can’t beat that.” The players had positive things to say about the friendships they form during their Major Junior career. These friendships will be addressed in the section on their social lives.

5.2.2 *SCHOOL*. The coach, Jean, told me in his interview that not only does the team pay for players’ education, but every single player leaving the team as a twenty-year old either signed a professional contract or went on to finish university. I found this impressive and kept it in mind as I conducted the interviews. In total, four players were still in high school, two were enrolled in college programs, six were enrolled in university business programs, and two of those six were also taking English courses at the university level. One player was not in school and I was never able obtain an answer as to why this was acceptable given the organization’s firm belief in education. Nonetheless,

the rest of the team attends school part-time each weekday morning unless they need to go on a road trip for a game.

Two opposing topics of substance recurred throughout the interviews. One group of players was delighted that playing Junior hockey meant that school was less of a priority while another group expressed their appreciation for the opportunity to be in school free of charge and their eagerness to obtain post-secondary training. One player in particular, Claude, was highly enthused about school being less of a priority. When asked what the best thing was about being a Junior hockey player, Claude—a twenty-year old francophone freshman with the team—had this to say:

La meilleure chose? Uhh, c'est que c'est le seul moment que tu vas pouvoir dire que le hockey passe avant tes études! C'est la seule place qu'ils vont dire ça! Hahaha! Même si c'est à moitié vrai, mais c'est la seule place qu'ils vont dire ça! C'est vrai que c'est super important, les études, là, mais c'est la seule place dans ta vie que tu vas entendre un coach dire que le hockey passe avant les études. C'est ça la meilleure chose!

(The best thing? It's that this is the only time you can say hockey comes before school. School is very important, but this is the only time in your life that a coach will tell you hockey comes before school. That's the best thing!)

Claude's response was one of the more lively ones, but he was not alone in his thoughts.

Many of the players said that they enjoyed not having to focus so much on education.

Comparatively, several players frequently reiterated the importance of their studies, how thankful they were to have their education paid for, and their plans to continue on with it if hockey does not work out. One player, Gaston, came from another team in the league.

With his previous team, education was not a requirement and Gaston said this often led to

boredom. It also put him a year behind as a high school student. Bobby said that one of his main goals in life outside of hockey is to complete a university program. In his words:

That's a pretty big accomplishment. Like it would be pretty cool to say, like...university. Pretty cool. Not everyone gets to do that, so...and like, right now the team pays for all of our school, so graduating in a university program would be an awesome accomplishment.

While school may not be a priority for all of them, it is a priority for the organization and in providing education free of cost for the players, the organization is definitely providing them not only with tools for if hockey does not work out, but tools for general intellectual development as individuals. What is more, this studiousness is not straightforwardly hegemonic as it is most commonly linked to femininity and girls and their attention to detail.

5.2.3 *WORK*. The players are paid by the team, although they told me it was not a considerable amount. Work outside of hockey was not a prominent theme on their radar. Seven of them have no jobs outside of hockey, three of them have summer jobs, two go on unemployment each summer, and the player who is not in school, Larry, works throughout the season and the summer. He goes to work in the mornings while the players are in school. Many of the players said that they felt training was their summer employment. On average, they work out for two or three hours a day five days a week during the summer.

The theme of work, although minuscule, is entangled with notions of hegemonic masculinity in compelling ways in the interviews. One might claim that a man who exhibits the characteristics of hegemonic masculinity would have a job because

employment is a sign of social status, he takes pride in having money, being a provider, and/or acquiring assets and services. On one hand, these individuals do not seem concerned with having a job; none of them expressed any concerns with money or social status. On the other hand, however, some of them argued that physical training could be considered their employment and that they had to train up to three hours a day in order to maintain the proper level of fitness for the sport. During the hockey season, the players usually train three hours every weekday afternoon (sometimes including on-ice practice) and are expected to put in additional time on their own. This is arguably more time than the average man (or woman, for that matter) would spend on fitness. Moreover, fitness and bodybuilding are highly tied to notions of hegemonic masculinity because they imply physical strength and an attractive masculine physique. What the players have done, then, is oppose one tenet of hegemonic masculinity and replace it with another by not adhering to the status associated with employment, but replacing it with an adherence to fitness. It should be pointed out, however, that this exchange comes with the territory of being a hockey player as they are appointed social status by the public and the training is part of the sport, so in a sense, they still manage to obtain the social status which hegemonic masculinity emphasises.

5.2.4 *FAMILY*. The players discussed family in terms of what their families expect of them and in terms of being away from home. Many players said that the worst or most difficult part about playing Junior hockey is having to be away from home. Two nineteen-year old veterans, Shayne and Bob (not to be confused with Bobby), said they were not as concerned with being away from home because they began to leave at a

young age and have become used to it. Shayne left at age fifteen to play hockey at a preparatory school in another province and Bob lived in a very small community that had few opportunities to play competitively, so he had to be away from home in order to continue on in his career. When asked how often he speaks to his mother, Bob replied “she calls me every night. Drives me nuts, but...she does.” Aside from these two, four players on the team were either from the team’s home city or from surrounding areas, so they either lived with their families or were able to see them quite often. The rest of the players, however, said that it is difficult to be away from home and family. While the Europeans likely would have been able to offer the most compelling insight on being away from home, nineteen-year old Guy, who had been with the team for three years, seemed to provide the most honest and heart-felt description of the experience. He said without reservation that the most difficult part of moving up to the Junior level was the following:

Partir de la maison, pis mes parents. C’est sur que c’est une grosse adaptation, parce que ma mère...ma mère me manquait, c’est sur là, au début là, mais j’m suis habitué. Là, rendu à dix-neuf ans, c’est sur que chu un ‘ti peu plus autonome, mais c’est sur que j’m’ennuie d’elle là, qu’elle fasse ma bouffe préférée là, mais euh, c’est ça que...la...la...la grosse affaire. Ma mère, mon père, mes frères et sœurs. C’est sur que la famille là, c’est un gros, euh, un gros changement.

(Leaving home and my parents. It’s certainly a big adaptation because I missed my mother at first, but I got used to it. Now, at nineteen, I’m certainly a bit more independent, but I certainly miss her, and her making my favourite food. That’s the biggest thing—my mother, my father, my brothers and sisters. It’s definitely a big change.)

In fact, many of the players singled out their mothers as being who they missed the most and they characterized their mothers as being very warm and nurturing. I found this a bit surprising as I had expected a more traditionally masculine attitude that would have portrayed being away from home as being perfectly tolerable. This is more evidence in opposition of hegemonic masculinity, which would peg players as showing little emotion or having no difficulty with missing loved ones.

While being away from home was difficult, several players indicated that the organization has done their best to rectify the issue by choosing excellent billet families (with whom the players live) and by trying to involve the players' actual families as much as possible. During my interview with Stéphane, a native of the area in his third year with the team, he commented on his experience of being able to stay home and his perception of having to be away:

Well, I still stay at home with my family, so I think most guys probably miss their families. But I think the...the whole organization tries to make it home for everybody, you know? Just, uh, taking good billet families that can support the guys. They fly all the parents to come see their kids, you know, 'cause I—I imagine it's probably hard, so uh...uh, I think the guys are pretty comfortable with their billet families and if they don't like them, they can change houses. And uh, I try to hang out with them sometimes, make sure they feel comfortable here too.

This recognition of the organization's efforts and remark about trying to make his teammates feel at home is a demonstration on Stéphane's part that he can empathize and can even be seen as compassionate in his admission to trying to help players from away feel more comfortable. This again opposes the fundamental tenets of hegemonic masculinity, which would likely diagnose this situation as one in which players from away should dryly accept their situation and their teammates certainly should not

demonstrate any kind of sympathy or efforts to make them feel better.

The other recurring theme with regards to family was the families' expectations of the players. We discussed what their families expected of them as individuals and as hockey players. The players unanimously agreed that their families, and especially their mothers, expected them to be good, hardworking people. Hockey aside, the players all offered the same general description of what they were taught it meant to be a good person. One player in particular, Mike, had the most memorable answer because it appeared to be the most simple and genuine of them all. He said his family expects the following:

Ahhh, just...work hard and be...be a good guy. Speak polite to people and, uh...you know, no one—you're not gonna get anywheres in life if no one likes ya, so...you gotta...you gotta...haha. My Mom always says it's a lot more pleasant when everyone is pleasant back to you. And, yeah, just work hard. They kinda want me to get my school together, haha, but uhh...we'll see how that goes anyways.

Expanding on Mike's point, Bobby said that his mother always told him that "if you're someone that tries at everything and has lots of respect for people, you're gonna get somewhere in life." Gaston remarked that his mother really began to emphasize the importance of being a good person when he moved away because at sixteen, he was no longer under her roof and she felt that she no longer had as many opportunities to instill good values in him; she could only hope that she had already done so and that he would be respectful and responsible all on his own. This reflects the concern in the literature regarding young hockey players participating in dangerous or immoral activities because they no longer live at home as teenagers. In any case, the players appear to know what is expected of them and these expectations provide consistency in their lives because the

coach has the same expectations and strives to make them aware of how to meet them.

The final sub-theme in relation to family and expectations is the family's expectations—or lack thereof—in relation to the players' hockey careers. The majority of players said that they felt as though their families had no real expectations of them in hockey. Guy, the nineteen-year old who had originally found it so difficult to be away from his parents, said that his parents never expected anything of him as a hockey player as the sport was just a game. He reflected on the experience here:

Non, jamais. Mes parents m'ont jamais poussé, euh, à jouer au hockey, mettons, dans l'aréna, euh, chu amoureux du hockey, fait que j'me suis jamais chicané avec mes parents. Ma mère m'a toujours dit, euh, tu sais, 'euh garde, si t'aimes pas ça, on ira jouer aux quilles,' haha. Ça, c'était toujours sa phrase, là, quand ça allait pas bien dans mon hockey, j'étais... j'étais 'down' un peu. Euh, elle disait 'ben...lâche...lâche pas, là, tu sais, le hockey c'est juste un jeu. Si t'es rendu au point que c'est plus le 'fun' là, c'est fini.' Si ça marche pas, là, pis c'est tes parents qui te poussent à jouer au hockey, pis c'est pas ton sport, tu sais, mes parents m'ont jamais poussé. J'en ai vu, là, de mes...mes chums quand j'étais jeune, y se chicanaient avec les parents après les parties, là, tu sais, y'avaient huit, neuf ans, pis y voulaient pas. Moi, mon père disait ça, là, que c'est moi qui doit me pousser moi-même, mais euh, chu content qu'ils m'ont encouragé pis m'ont aidé à m'informer, pis euh...comment dire...m'ont donné des belles qualités, des belles valeurs.

(My parents never pushed me to play hockey. I love it so I never argued with them. My mother always said 'if you don't like it, we'll go bowling,' haha. That was always her sentence when hockey wasn't going well or if I was feeling down. She'd say 'it's just a game and if it's not fun anymore, it's over.' If it's not working out and your parents are the ones pushing you to play and it's not your sport—you know, my parents never pushed me. I saw some of my friends that were eight, nine years old and arguing with their parents after games because they didn't want to play. My father said it was my responsibility to motivate

myself, but I'm still glad that they encouraged me and instilled good qualities and values in me.)

Many of the players had similar, yet perhaps shorter, responses. Ryan, for example, said “they wouldn’t care if I played marbles or what I did, haha, so as long as I like what I’m doing, they’re fine with it.” This demonstrates an effort, on the part of the parents, to not reproduce or maintain masculine ideals of finding ‘manly’ employment or ‘following in the father’s footsteps’ or other traditional ways of viewing the upbringing process.

Placing importance on their child doing something that he likes is a sign of a more open-minded upbringing that may be less likely to instill ideas of masculine hegemony.

Comparatively, three players did say that their parents had expectations of them as hockey players. Bobby said that his parents wanted him to make it to Junior and he’s done that, so they are happy. Gaston said that his father has high expectations of him whereas his mother does not and is more or less his shoulder to cry on when things are not going well in his hockey. He speaks to his father after each game. He said “normalement, j’va avoir un appel à mon père, qui va me parler de mon match. C’est un psychologue sportif, haha. (Normally I’ll have a phone call with my father about my game. He’s a sports psychologist, haha).” He also mentioned that when he does not speak to his father, he feels that he plays poorly. Bob, on the other hand, says that “ya can’t listen to them at this level. You gotta listen to your coach and stuff.” Where so few players discussed family expectations and none of them indicated any real displeasure with those expectations, the subject was left alone. What can be taken from this is that to date, the tenets of hegemonic masculinity are not overly prominent in the lives of these players (if so, only a select few) and they do not outwardly associate ideas of gender with

the elements of their lives thus far with the exception of some of their fathers being more involved in their hockey and their mothers being the nurturing figures in their lives.

5.2.5 *GIRLS*. According to the players, there is little time for girls in the life of a Junior hockey player. Although this may go without saying, none of the players indicated homosexual relationships or preferences. Given that I did not have permission to ask anything other than if they were in a romantic relationship and what their partner expects of them, girls were a much more insignificant theme than expected in the study. Seven of the players were in long-term relationships with girls and six said they identified as single. Eighteen-year old Ryan, however, did not sound overly convincing as his response was “well...not...to an extent...no.” I did not have permission to ask for details. Bobby, who could always be counted on for significant detail, had the following to say about his romantic situation:

I had a girlfriend when I was moving here and like...she just—it drove her crazy ‘cause everyone like, everyone expects so much of you and like... it just, like back home, like it just like created so much jealousy and everything that...that’s why I had to break up with her. ‘Cause she would like—‘cause like people...everyone told her that...I would like...fuck or whatever, sleep with so many girls coming here. Which wasn’t her fault for freaking—like being so stressed out every day. Like I don’t blame her for it, but it just got to the point where I couldn’t do it anymore, but that’s just ‘cause of what like people think of a hockey player right?

This anecdote is consistent with the players’ description of the stereotypical image of the Junior player, which will be discussed further in the analysis. What can be pointed out here, however, is that the players feel that girls view them as arrogant (or ‘cocky’, in their

words) and disrespectful and only interested in promiscuous and unintelligent girls.

Patrick countered this in saying the following:

I had my girlfriend before [coming to the team], so I know, uh, she's a good girl that didn't just come with me 'cause I'm [on the team], I mean I wouldn't do that. I respect girls more than that and, uh... uhhh, I hope people don't think of me that way 'cause, uh, I certainly don't want to come off that way 'cause I'm not that person. She has a hard time when we leave sometimes [for away games], but uh, she's, uh, she's good with it. She goes to university and, uh, she's, uh... uhhh, she... she understands what... what, uh—it's been three years now, so she understands this kinda life, but, uh, I mean sometimes it's hard, but it, uhhh, she accepts it.

As indicated earlier, the subject will be further dissected in the section on stereotypes.

Nonetheless, it is clear that many of the players do make time for girls and the team is divided because approximately half are in relationships, half are not, and the stereotype of the Junior hockey player can apparently affect this status.

The players who did have girlfriends were asked what they thought their girlfriends expected of them both on and off the ice. They unanimously agreed that their girlfriends had no expectations of them as hockey players. Several of them were completely stumped, however, when it came to what their girlfriends expected of them as individuals. Brian and Chris, both in relationships of at least one year, particularly had responses that demonstrated their confusion. When asked what their girlfriends expected of them as individuals, they said the following:

Brian: Just, uh....this is hard! Haha... Uhh... well, I guess respect her and everything. Uh...don't cheat on her? Haha... I really don't know...

Chris: *Ahhh...just to be like...I don't know.... Haha, you're killin' me! That's... a good question. I... have no...idea.*

The only other time any players said the interview questions were difficult was when they were asked what it took to be successful as a man in life outside of hockey. This question about their girlfriends elicited the longest, most painful silences, fraught with 'uhhh' and 'hmmm' and several sighs. Shayne, in a three-year relationship, initially had a similar reaction, but after some probing, pulled his cell phone out of his pocket, thrust it toward me, and offered the following:

Ummm...do you want to call her? Hahaha. Umm... I guess...I think she definitely does. I mean, she...she knows, like, what kind of individual I am, so she knows...like what...what to expect and kinda, like...what type of person or boyfriend I am, so I think she kinda knows what to expect, but there's still...still definitely some...some general expectations like treat her well, be loyal and honest, those kinds of things.

The rest of the players also agreed that their girlfriends expected them to be nice to them, to support them, and not to hurt them in any way. It was somewhat tedious to get these responses from them, however. This speaks to the fact that many of them said there was little time for girls. While it should certainly be acknowledged that relationships at that age can lack substance, this inability to identify a long-term girlfriend's expectations should not be discredited. It elicits the question of how the girlfriends themselves would have answered the same question. More on girls' perceptions of the players will follow in the next section on stereotypes.

5.2.6 *STEREOTYPES*. As a follow-up to the questionnaire, I had the players give their opinions on the idea of a stereotypical image of a Major Junior ice hockey player. All thirteen players agreed that the image existed. Eleven of them provided the same general description of the stereotype, quite consistent with the claims made by the literature review regarding male athletes and hockey players. This will be discussed shortly. What was peculiar and worth noting is that two of the players, Bobby and Larry, did not describe the generally accepted stereotypical image of a Major Junior hockey player. The most common image portrayed by the rest of the players will be presented first and the analysis will then attend to Bobby and Larry's responses.

I received a whole collection of descriptors from the other eleven players. In their view, the stereotypical Major Junior hockey player (whether existent or perceived) is primarily interested in hockey, girls and alcohol. He is likely scruffy-looking with 'flowy' hair and often wears a baseball hat and sweatpants or track pants. He is likely considered by his friends and teammates to be a 'meathead,' someone who is a bit superficial and lacks intellectual depth. He talks and acts like he is mentally and physically tough. He can be a bit of a womanizer, can be quite arrogant, and is likely unconcerned with education. He uses—perhaps in excess—hockey lingo such as referring to people as 'beauties' (good/nice/favourable people) and adding an 's' or 'y' to the end of everybody's name (i.e. the family name Jones would become 'Jonesy'). Girls who are characterized as nice (mature and intelligent) would think he is ignorant, while more promiscuous and superficial girls would think he is wonderful. He 'parties' (consumes alcohol and attends parties or bars) more than his teammates and would use his status as a hockey player to attract attention from others, especially girls. He is likely

condescending towards people who are not in his social circle, including teammates, and might be a ring-leader in more harmful team initiation rituals. This description fits perfectly with that of scholars such as Kimmel and Messner, who indicate that athletes who meet this description are the most problematic in terms of the production and maintenance of hegemonic masculinity.

The players acknowledged the existence of this image and some were even willing to discuss its relevance to their lives and team. The general consensus was that one or two people who fit this description can be found on every team and furthermore, many other players could exhibit a select few characteristics, but not all of them. When asked how his teammates compared to that image, Mike said:

I think, for the most part...most fellas do fit it in some...some sort of way, actually, haha. Now that I think about it, it's kind of true, isn't it? Haha. But they're not all...not all to the extreme, like, I mean...there's very few guys that are all of those things in one, but I can definitely pick out the ones that are. But like, when you look at the whole team, though, I mean everyone's a bit like...some guys love to drink, some guys chase the girls, some guys that...don't do anything, haha. Some guys just sit at home and play hockey and say they don't got time for anything else, haha.

Shayne gave the same response, adding that he thinks “every team has a few, otherwise we wouldn't be sitting here talking about how it's stereotypical, you know?” Bob, Stéphane and Patrick expressed their annoyance with the image, saying that players who fit the description ruin parts of the Junior hockey experience for the many other players who are respectful, intelligent, and responsible. They are forced to face judgement at school and in the general public simply because they are members of the team and are accordingly dismissed as being arrogant and stupid.

The two players who did not describe the stereotypical image of a Junior player caused me to question whether or not they themselves were the ones on the team who best embodied its characteristics. Bobby, whose story about having to break up with his girlfriend because of her jealousy became more interesting to me at this point, was asked to describe the stereotype and began to say “when I was a kid you like always looked up to them and as you get older, you get closer to that...and once you become that you what it feels like. We probably act like kids more here. I don’t know how to explain it.” When asked what the players interests might be, he said hockey and girls. When asked what the player might wear, he pointed to his own clothes (a t-shirt and jeans) and said “normal clothes, like these.” This lack of detailed responses like his teammates’ and the fact that he thought the stereotypical Major Junior player would wear clothes like his own led me to wonder two things. First, was he the stereotypical player on his team? Second, if so, was he aware of it? I never asked as I was worried that it might be an insulting question or perhaps he had misunderstood the question and I did not want to lead too much as an interviewer. The same occurred during my conversation with Larry. Larry characterized a stereotypical player as being physically fit, handsome, wearing nice clothing, and being thought of as ‘picking up a bunch of girls.’ Additionally, when asked why Larry thought these things, he responded “that’s just the feedback I personally got from like...girls.” Larry was also the only player of the thirteen interviewed who said that in his spare time, he likes to party and go to the bar. Again, this led me to be curious as to whether or not he was one of the people whom his teammates would describe as stereotypical. None of them ever pointed to exact players on their team and given that Bobby and Larry were two of the more talkative respondents who were willing to deviate from the coach’s

interview, I knew not to expect much more information than I had already obtained. I also did not want to actively pit any players against one another in case it might prompt some to stop speaking openly.

5.2.7 *COMPETITION*. The theme of competition unravelled itself in three different ways. All players agreed that competition exists among teammates on and off the ice. The most prominent form of competition is in terms of getting into the line-up and getting ice time. At the time of the interviews, the team had six healthy scratches (players who had to sit out of games even if they were not injured). Bob said that this situation can create fierce competition. He continued to say “I don’t think it’s bad competition, I think it’s good competition, but there’s a lot of it ‘cause you wanna move up on the line. A lotta people wanna get in the line...so, yeah, there’s a lot of competition ‘cause if you don’t perform, your job could be taken away at any time and given to the next guy who stepped up his game.”

The next source of competition on the team was over things ping pong, girls, and Xbox video games. Every player except Larry said that they like to play ping pong in their spare time when hanging around with teammates. Mike said “everyone wants to be better than the other one. It...it’s more of a friendly—just a friendly competition, but when we’re playing ping pong, we’re there to win! Like...hahahaha, whoever loses is pissed!” Bob said that some players will stake out girls and others will briefly try to pursue the girl in a friendly way to aggravate the individual and “especially over Xbox. We get crazy on that thing!” Claude said that he has no tolerance for social competition, at least not in the dressing room and not during important moments for the team.

According to him, there is a time to be serious and a time to have fun and it bothers him when his teammates joke around and compete in a social manner when it is time to focus, although this does not happen often.

While none of the competition discussed here sounded problematic, its existence still aligns with hegemonically masculine ideals that encourage men to try to overpower one another, especially in terms of attracting girls. If other more serious forms of competition existed, the players did not share them with me. I did not pursue the subject any further.

5.2.8 *BEHAVIOUR*. The players were quite vocal about their behaviour and the organization's expectations of them with regards to it. The main response I received when I asked if the coach, Jean, expected anything of them off the ice was to be respectful and professional or else be sent home as a consequence. Some players told me that the owner of the team told them that if they wear the team logo in public, they are expected to be on their best behaviour so as not to embarrass the team and give the organization a bad reputation as one that does not teach its players good values. Shayne's response to the question, like that of many other players, was as follows:

Yeah, so like, not to do dumb things and to just be a decent person. And like, we're not allowed to wear our [team] clothing if we go downtown at night because they don't want us to attach the team with a bad image. But I think they expect you to be...like respectful individuals and...you know, always like...like caring about like what you do and just like...trying your best and...and being a good leader as well...and...and a good teammate.

Larry added that “where our friends can go drink or like...do dumb things and like no one will care, but like...you know, if we did it, then we would be in trouble.” I found this odd considering Larry had just told me that he likes to ‘party’, apparently knowing full well that it is frowned upon by the organization. At the same time, however, I was pleased to be receiving a more complete picture of how the players’ lives are actually played out. Stéphane echoed Shayne’s thoughts and shared a story with me as evidence of Jean’s threat to send players home when they do not meet his expectations with regards to behaviour:

Yeah, well obviously, I mean, like, if you do something bad off the ice, it’s gonna look bad on the team, so, you know, it’s all about the team, so obviously they talk about us and, you know, just behaving off the ice because since you make—we had a teammate that played for us. He’s in jail right now, so...it’s definitely, uh...well, he got in trouble for one thing and got sent home after the season and then went to jail for something he did, like, after, or whatever, but it’s definitely not something that, you know, they wanna see their players do in the future, so, we definitely—they definitely, you know, talk about it with us.

I asked Guy if he thought that there was too much control over him as a teenager and if it upset him that as a hockey player, he might face more consequences for his actions, he said that it was part of what he signed up for and that he took pride in being a role model in the lives of others. His response was as follows:

Parfois, faut être des personnes publiques. Oui on est des jeunes, mais on est les jeunes les plus vieux, que les enfants, euh, tu sais, que les enfants regardent, on est des idoles pour les jeunes. En dehors de la glace, faut pas faire de colleries, c’est sur, pis faire attention a notre Facebook pis les affaires de même, tu sais? Faut juste faire attention. C’est pas une grosse affaire.

(Sometimes you need to be a public figure. We're young, but we're the oldest of young people that children look up to. They idolize us. You can't mess around off the ice and you have to be careful of what you put on Facebook and stuff like that. You just need to be careful. It's not a big deal.)

This attention to younger people and being a positive role model opposes hegemonic masculinity, which might be more likely to either have players not care about the example they set or encourage younger people to share the same ignorance of consequences as some other players. It is imperative, here, to think back to the very first of Bobby's quotations presented in the coach's interview analysis, in which he said that Major Junior players still misbehave, they just had the people to 'make it go away.' No other players made this claim.

This theme was puzzling at first. The players all seemed to understand the importance of good behaviour, but I would occasionally get tastes of stories about players on the team who had misbehaved and received different consequences: one had people 'make it go away' and the other was sent home. Furthermore, once my digital recorder was turned off, a player shared the story of the individual who went to prison and asked that I not include the story in my thesis as he did not want to get in trouble for divulging information that would upset his coach or reflect poorly on the team. Given that my recorder was turned off and I had agreed to maintain full anonymity and confidentiality, I had to fulfill his request. I checked local media releases in hopes of the incident being public information, but found nothing. Perhaps Bobby was right in saying that there were people who had the power to make unfavourable events go away. Nonetheless, the situation left me feeling as though my ethical obligations (which, at this point, hardly seemed ethical) forced me to adhere to the code of silence and not reveal the problems

associated with playing Major Junior hockey, which, as a researcher, should have been my duty. This was further confirmation that the code of silence absolutely needed to be further analyzed.

5.2.9 *SOCIAL LIFE*. The players' social lives are organized in terms of in and out of hockey, although hockey significantly takes over their social lives outside of it. Only one player said that he made a significant effort to maintain friendships outside of hockey; the rest said that they had little to no time for other friends. The players spend all of their time together both on and off the ice. In fact, some of them even went as far as saying that these young men and coaches were their family now. Many of the players said that the veterans made the transition to the Major Junior level much more comfortable for them by including them, being friendly, and helping them get adjusted on the ice by giving them advice and extra opportunities for practice. Guy spoke about the closeness of the players:

Ya...ya beaucoup de joueurs qui donneraient n'importe quoi pour être comme on est ensemble. Quand tu joues au Junior, là, c'est quasiment, euh, vingt-quatre heures par jour ensemble, pis c'est vraiment, là, uhh, des belles années. C'est...c'est vraiment le 'fun', là, pis c'est sur que j'va, euh, que j'va...comment dire, j'va vraiment m'ennuyer d'eux plus tard. La vie Junior, la famille qu'on crée, euh, c'est des chums que t'invite a ton mariage, tu sais, là, ça reste pour la vie. C'est des belles amitiés.

(A lot of players would give anything to be like we are together. In Junior, you spend almost twenty-four hours a day together and they're good years. It's fun and I'll definitely miss them later. The family that you create in Junior are the people you invite to your marriage. That's for life. They're good friendships.)

As an alternative way of approaching the closeness of the players, I also asked if they felt that they could have very personal conversations with their teammates. The players who were considered to not deviate from the coach's interview, such as Chris and Claude, said that they could, without reservation, have personal conversations with their teammates. Some other players, however, said that they were a bit sceptical of having conversations with their teammates and if they do, they choose their listeners very carefully. Patrick, who is a brother to Stéphane, explained how he decides who to speak to when he said the following:

Uhh...well...my brother is the only teammate that I can say everything to him, he says everything to me, so...I talk to my girlfriend and my brother when I need to have personal conversations. It depends on whether or not they're like...trustworthy or mature or whatever. I mean, if one of my teammates had a problem, I'd definitely talk to him about it, but I mean, uh, it's boys. We don't—we don't usually talk about that. Or not a lot of us, anyway. We talk about girls, haha, that's pretty much it.

Larry answered the question differently than the others, saying he had no personal conversations with his teammates because, although he felt they could all be open with each other, he did not really have anything personal to discuss. Nonetheless, the diversity of the answers should be taken into account because it demonstrates the opposing opinions the players appear to have of each other and themselves. Moreover, Larry's apparent lack of personal matters and Patrick's claim about how the team talks about girls more than personal subjects sounds an alarm regarding hegemonic masculinity; men should not talk about their feelings and problems. This was particularly interesting considering that several of the players were willing to discuss their feelings with me. This situation can be linked to the questionnaire results in which some of the players felt that

they were expected to act more manly around their teammates and because they were hockey players in general. This is confirmation that, to some extent, the Major Junior hockey world is one that does not encourage the sharing of personal matters.

Given the level of diversity in the questions about the social nature of the team, I had the players describe their teammates, what they like to do together, and what they thought people from the outside world thought of them. This set of questions was also used to potentially pull themes related to masculinity out through the players talking about themselves, the people around them, and how they spend their time. The descriptions of teammates were quite diversified. Some players gave very little detail and simply said that the team was a great group and it ended there. Claude was a prime example as his response was “C’est vingt-cinq gars qui sont là pour avoir du fun ensemble pis jouer au hockey. (It’s twenty-five guys who are there to have fun together and play hockey.” Claude was considered to be one of the players who did not deviate from the coach’s interview. He kept his answers short, simple, and positive. The first quotation from Bobby in the coach’s interview described the team in full detail. Mike’s response, although less detailed, will be shared instead of repeating Bobby’s:

We got some guys that are just off-the-wall hilarious, like just have so much energy, and some guys that don’t say boo, haha! But we’re a pretty tightly-knit group. Like, everyone likes each other and we just always torment each other, haha. Like, everyone’s trash talking everyone and it’s all good fun. It’s kinda the way it is on every team, I think! Everyone gets along, but some people are tighter than others. There’s a few fellas that I hang out with every day, but then there are some that I don’t see outside the rink, but you still like them, you just don’t have the same interests, I guess.

I came across a self-admitted antisocial type, as Mike discussed, in Gaston. He said he likes to keep quiet and does not really need a lot of friends. He also said that this attitude got him into trouble on his last team because he had no interest in participating in the team initiation rituals and was consequently excluded by some of his older teammates. I was not allowed to ask questions about hazing, therefore the subject was not pursued. Nonetheless, the different personalities converged when I asked what the players liked to do together outside of hockey. Xbox and ping pong were the most popular responses, closely followed by going to movies, the mall, and out to eat.

Besides a general description, some players chose to talk about divisions or ‘cliques’ they noticed among teammates. Language turned out to be a division insofar as the Francophones and Anglophones often kept to each other and the five fully bilingual players were able to go back and forth between the two and bridge the two groups at times. I was not able to speak to the Europeans, Bobby was fairly certain that they spoke the same language and he also said that the other players made efforts to help them improve their English. Some players said that there was a bit of an age division off the ice since the nineteen and twenty-year olds had more in common than their younger teammates. The nineteen and twenty-year old group was also indicated as receiving the most respect among the team because they tended to have the most experience and skill, therefore, it was important to give them credit when necessary and try to be like them. After all, they are the ‘men’ of the league. Several players said that if younger team members did not respect this rule, they would be the targets of more hazing and would be socially excluded, much like Gaston had said. This raised questions about players’ rights to refuse hazing or participate in activities that they did not agree with, but again, the

subject had to be left alone. The league has a no-hazing policy, but my previous work with individuals who had gone through this particular team's program confirmed that the policy was largely ignored throughout the league. Fundamentally, this portion of the study was also blocked by the code of silence, which is unfortunate given the considerable body of knowledge that claims that players assert their masculinity through initiation rituals.

The final theme that surfaced through discussing the closeness of the team had to do with how people outside of their hockey circle perceived them. While some players brought it up on their own, one of the interview questions specifically asked if people treated them differently now that they were at the Junior level. The question and its various branches throughout the rest of the interviews yielded four kinds of responses. First, the players said that they felt like mini-celebrities now since strangers could suddenly pick them out in public and they were often asked for autographs. Bobby, who in his first year was only beginning to have these experiences, appeared somewhat disturbed:

It's kinda weird. Like...creepy old ladies messaging me on Facebook and stuff, like, and like...just a few days ago, I was out to dinner with my billets and there was this family that like came over to our table and was like 'Oh, can we get your autograph and a picture with our kid?' you know?...Even like, random people, like, that you never talk to from back home. 'Cause where I'm from, like no one makes it to Junior, like...like everyone makes it to Junior A and that stops there and like...it's a really big thing back home, so like...people act like they know me now! Haha, or, like, it's true, they'll like...they'll send me texts and I'll say, like, 'who is this?' and they'll be like 'How's everything going?' when I've talked to them maybe once in my life. Like I've seen them maybe once. It's so weird.

Ryan also said that people from his past that he barely knew suddenly appeared and that he felt they tried to get close to him in order to make themselves look popular or to move up on the social ladder in some way. He also added that the friends he did have began to ask when he was going to the NHL. His response to that is always “it’s a long ways away, so don’t get your hopes up. Don’t need that kinda pressure”. This new-found popularity can be interpreted in two ways. First, these players are put on a pedestal in their communities since they are on the cusp of the professional leagues and they provide entertainment in the community, therefore there is some element of the public being starstruck around them. Second, one might speculate that, in some way, these players form the hegemonic group of their peers given the status awarded to them when they join the Junior ranks. They leave this group behind to join a more complex group—a competitive hockey team—in which masculine hegemony is magnified even more. Because of this, they are looked up to even more by their previous set of peers.

The final way that players thought they were perceived was negatively by others. Many of the players said that they were well-liked in their hometowns, but not as much at their schools in the team’s community, especially at the high school level. Some players said it was due to jealousy while others said it was due to the stereotype. They said that they were often prejudged as expecting everyone to be nice to them and look up to them or give them special treatment of some sort. According to the players, this judgement came from two sources surrounding the stereotype. First, the stereotype has been a generally long-standing one, therefore many people were likely to judge them solely based on that. Second, the few players who had fit the description of the stereotype over the years had tarnished the reputation of the team to an extent, and other players were

forced to be looked at through the same lens. Bob says that he made a sincere and dedicated attempt to be himself with the students at the high school and that over time, they all seemed to like him very much, but it was difficult to break that judgement barrier. This, then, is a matter of the public being aware of the tenets of hegemonic masculinity (although they likely would not refer to them as such) and projecting them on to these players. Much like this study has determined thus far, not all of the players exhibit the problematic tendencies associated with hegemonic masculinity, but they all seem to have to face the public backlash the problematic tendencies attract.

5.2.10 *SUCCESS*. One of the survey questions asked them what it took to be successful men outside of hockey. This was the other question that caught them off guard after the one about their girlfriends' expectations. It was intended that the answer to this question would add to the definition of what it means to be a real man that they expressed on the questionnaire. The players mostly answered the question in terms of the future and considered a successful man to be educated, ambitious, hardworking, have a family, and have money.

Some discussed general qualities, such as being respectful, working hard, being a good leader, and treating others the way you want to be treated. Others painted whole pictures of how they envisioned their success coming together. Stéphane, for example, said the following:

...Ouf. That's a hard question. Haha, wow! Successful as a man!...Well...growing up, I wanted a good job and to—I want to provide for a family, I want my kids to, you know, have all—everything that I had. I was real lucky growing up and I'll thank

my parents every day for giving me the life I had, but, you know, I'd love to provide for my family and have a good job and just live happy.

Guy offered a similar response:

Ben...un jour j'veux être riche. Si c'est pas au hockey, ça sera—mon père, y travail dans la...dans la construction. J'aimerais ça, prendre sa relève. Euh, mes frères travaillent avec lui. Pis j'dis riche, là, mais c'est pas juste riche avec l'argent. C'est riche avoir une belle famille, être content, pis être uh, être riche de...toute les valeurs que—de garder mes valeurs, mais dans le fond, être riche, haha.

(Some day I want to be rich. If it's not through hockey, I want to take over my Dad's work in construction. My brothers work for him. And I say rich, but that's not just rich with money. It's rich with a nice family, being happy, and maintaining my values, but fundamentally, being rich, haha).

Gaston took a comical approach to the question, but revealed that he would someday like to own a restaurant:

Faire de l'argent...peu importe la manière, haha. Euh, mais, euh...c'est sur que j'aimerais ça, avoir mon restaurant. J'ai vu ça à quelque part pis j'aimerais ça. C'est une autre ambition. Peut-être la haute cuisine, euh, j'aime ça faire à manger, j'aime la bouffe, haha, mais euhhh, oui, c'est ça, un restaurant chic, tu sais, à Montréal ou quelque part de même.

(Making money any way possible, haha. But I'd like to have my own restaurant. It's another ambition. Maybe 'haute cuisine.' I like cooking and I like food, haha, but that's it, a stylish restaurant, maybe in Montreal or some place like that).

These responses can be interpreted in two different ways. While the qualities that the players listed as making a man successful were non-gender oriented, the scenarios they described were typically masculine. They want to provide for a family, have money, be entrepreneurs. Of course, these roles are becoming increasingly associated with women as well, but they do still carry traces of masculine connotations.

It is also important to note that these success stories are not male-oriented to the point of being problematic. None of the players said that successful men are those who overpower others, objectify and degrade women, and make a living by dishonest means. Additionally, for players like Stéphane and Guy, it is evident that masculinity is manifested in their lives through their exposure to their parents' lifestyles, which they appear to aspire to as well. It is evident through these responses that while the players may have some growing up to do, they have given some thought to what it will take to be successful, especially if they do not necessarily make careers out of their sport.

5.2.11 SUMMARY. Much like the questionnaire results initially indicated, masculinity is not manifested in unified and linear ways among these young men, some of whom do not even yet consider themselves men. Some conversation subjects coincided with hegemonic masculinity, some opposed it, and others fell in some grey area that was hardly related to gender at all, depending on the player in question. Elements such as the focus on winning, the elevated level of physicality and bodily training, the competition, and inability to explain what their girlfriends expected of them could be interpreted as falling in line with hegemonic masculinity. The tenets of hegemonic masculinity do, after all, encourage dominance over other males, mental and bodily strength, and the rejection of anything feminine. I am hesitant to say that these players represent extreme cases, however, as they answered many questions differently and none of my conversations with them explicitly pointed to problematic or detrimental ideals or behaviour. Moreover, their willingness to discuss subjects like their closeness to their families, their experiences of missing home, and the difficulty they sometimes faced

in their transition to the Junior level are in direct opposition of hegemonic masculinity, which professes a stifling of emotion and an intolerance of showing weakness in the face of a challenge.

The argument can be made that the Major Junior hockey experience is one in which these individuals see themselves as becoming men, transitioning into bigger stature, higher speeds, and thoughts of inaugurating a professional career and perhaps a family. The players appear to look to their families, their older teammates, and their coaches to learn what it means to be a man, be it one who embodies hegemonic masculinity or not. It can also be confirmed that the stereotypical image of the Major Junior hockey player absolutely falls within the hegemonic masculine ideal—laden with arrogance, toughness, and womanizing, and a stifling of emotion, or better yet—the code of silence. This is also a site where the code of silence becomes more prominent than ever, as demonstrated by the coach’s censoring of questions regarding hazing and girls and the one player’s request to have information left out of my work. These issues will be discussed at greater length in the overarching conclusion of the study.

5.3 Unique Moments

There were two outlying stories or moments that did not constitute the overarching themes of the interviews, but were worth mentioning as part of the analysis. Two of the players in the group that deviated from the coach’s interview, Bobby and Mike, shared stories with me that stood out from all the others. Bobby told me about a game that he and his teammates often play called Pterodactyls and Mike told me that he did not like

hockey all that much and that he had no real plans of continuing on after his Junior career. These stories were so unlike anything else that the players had told me, yet seemed so meaningful.

When I asked Bobby about his experience being integrated into the team, he went silent for quite some time, appearing to be in deep thought. Eventually, he looked up at me and told me something that none of my time either studying or playing hockey had prepared me to expect. I often wonder if the story was not told on a dare from other teammates, but it went, in his own words, as follows:

My first days here, like I went to [a teammate's] house with the boys, and like...you know how like, when you're around girls...like all the guys around girls, like... with the people around them, the people...like we act like mature and like, that like, you're older and like...you're so like, relaxed and like, I dunno. Like you're grown up? The second there's not...someone that's like...the second it's just the boys from the team, we act like kids more than I've acted the last eighteen years of my life. Like, the first days I was there...I was sitting on the couch, didn't know anyone yet and it was the second day I was here and they were like...come with us. And I was like okay. So we all go to Trask's and it's all—and they start playing a game called Pterodactyls, chasing each other around the house like...they're like kids. They're like 'play with us, play with us!' And I'm like I dunno how to do this and like, whatever, I started doing it, right? Like, pterodactyls? Really? Haha! And like they're flapping their arms, making noises and chasing each other around the house! And like, at the start I was like 'man this is weird'...and then like...and then...like I started being around them, so it started being like this all the time, right?

Then you notice, like...and then like, I talked to a few guys and they were like 'yeah when we first came to the [league], you like—you expect everyone to be so much mature', but there's so much stress on us like, when we're not just together, that as soon as you're with the guys, you just like, you have your fun and like

it's so much fun. Probably the most fun I've had in the past ten years. And like...just everything else. Just like playing like... it just, I dunno. It brings you so much closer together. You know how people say hockey players are kids for life?...It's so true. Like, being here now I see it, okay? I bet you playing in the NHL would be the same way. Like, I betcha if you seen us at the club or something...you wouldn't be like 'these guys are gonna go home and play pterodactyls' hahahaha! You wouldn't—you wouldn't think that!

This story was surprising for two reasons. First, given the immense body of knowledge on how athletes, and especially hockey players, never seem to grow up, I was surprised that this was the only time there had been any reference to child-like activity. Perhaps the players chose not to discuss the matter with me, but I had expected to hear more about it (beyond the fact that many of them referred to the team as 'the boys'). Second, while I expected the players to be child-like, I never thought that it would have been to the extent of playing make-believe with each other. As an outsider and an adult, it struck me as quite odd that this would be a source of enjoyment. Again, since Bobby was the only one who brought it up, I chose to leave it out of the section on overarching themes, but felt that it was worth mentioning as one of the more memorable moments throughout the study.

Mike's story was also unique because amidst all these players who seemed desperate to make a career out of hockey, if not simply obtain a spot in the line-up, Mike was quite unconcerned with hockey. He was the team enforcer and had not played many games at that point in the season. He said he preferred Junior A because there was less pressure, he was not forced to go to school, and he had more time for his personal interests. He said that he just happened to be good at hockey and enjoyed playing, so he used it as an excuse to delay the demands of 'real life'—education, a 'real' job, not

spending so much time joking around with your friends. I detected his care-free attitude throughout the interview and we finally reached the following exchange:

I'm really hearing from you that hockey is just sort of something that happens in your life.

Yeah! It never really....like, you get guys growing up like 'I wanna play in the NHL' and stuff, like—I don't. I'm just gonna play. This'll be my last year... 'cause I'm not gonna make it as a twenty-year-old, so I'll just play here, have fun, just to say I made it and then next year I'll go back to Junior A and...see where that goes! I'm pretty...I'm pretty easy-going, like...I...I wouldn't even say I love hockey... I... I play it 'cause it gives me something to do and I don't have to work, but... I don't have the drive some guys have. Like, yeah... I work hard or—when it's time to work, like, you know we train all summer and like, work...work our bag off, haha. I don't really have the drive. Like, I'm not gonna make it to the NHL, so I just chill, haha.

Have you thought about what you'll do after Junior A?

No. I haven't. Haha, I should be. I should have thought of that! But uh...I'm not really sure.

Haha, then what made you choose the English courses?

'Cause the other guys were takin' it! Haha! Ya! And it's easy 'cause it's French university and I'm English, so the stuff they're teaching is like how to make a normal sentence in English, which is pretty easy! Haha!

Mike's story was also interesting for two reasons. First, in the midst of all the passion and dedication was this one individual who nonchalantly said that he did not love hockey; it was more like an enjoyable band-aid holding him over until he had to make real decisions. Given this attitude and willingness to share extensive detail, it demonstrated that not all competitive hockey players can be shaped into a homogenous group. Moreover, Mike appeared to be quite social and was highly regarded by his teammates

whenever they spoke of him, so it made him a very unique case to add to the collection of differing thoughts and experiences among the group. Second, the role of the enforcer in hockey never came up in a meaningful way. Very few players mentioned fighting and none made it a topic of any concern, including Mike. They all focused more on the physicality in terms of getting hit by larger men instead. Whether or not this was done on purpose is unclear.

Chapter 6

DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

This study explored the relationship between masculinity and ice hockey and, more specifically, the role of hypermasculinity (also referred to as hegemonic masculinity) in the lives of young men at the Major Junior level in Canada. Major Junior ice hockey players in Canada are at a particularly significant stage of life as they are becoming adults and making decisions that will likely affect their careers in the long-term. For some players, the Junior years constitute the point in time at which they become men. This stage of life can be quite public in nature compared to that of other young men of the same age because the players are more than likely living with a family other than their own and are almost constantly under the watchful eyes of the community in which they play. The very public nature of the players' transitions to manhood and, in some cases, a professional career in hockey raises issues about masculinity-particularly as they relate to the problematic nature of hypermasculinity in sport, stereotypical images of athletes, and questions of social responsibility.

The study sought to answer one key question: In what ways is masculinity made manifest in the lives of Canadian Major Junior ice hockey players? The objective was to answer the question by conducting surveys and interviews with a Canadian Major Junior ice hockey team and its coach in order to arrive at an understanding of how the players' collective conceptions of manhood influence their perceptions of their lifestyles and environment. The coach was asked about his coaching philosophy and the players were asked a range of questions designed to allow their conceptions of masculinity to surface. The questions were centered on their hockey careers, their social environment, what they

think others expect of them, how to be successful, and what it means to be a man. These questions are relevant since contemporary Western society has entered an era when the mainstream media, the general public, and the world of academia have become preoccupied with athlete hazing, violence, drug addiction, and suicide. Moreover, most scholarly work on the subject focuses on athlete hazing and violence instead of working on the ground to communicate with players at the Junior level who are being socialized through hockey. This study sets itself apart from the academic research on hockey and masculinity insofar as it privileges communication and conversation with the players in order to more precisely identify what masculinity means in their lives. Better understanding the meaning of masculinity in this context might allow us to intervene more effectively into the socialization process associated with the world of Major Junior Hockey.

6.1 Closing Remarks

The study results demonstrated that there is little gender awareness among young men. The players rarely considered masculinity and the kind of masculinity that was evident from the research was one organized around ethics and humanism more than hegemony or hypermasculinity. The section on limitations will further problematise the nature of this key finding. For now, however, it suffices to say that the results of the study coincided with Ken Dryden's quotation presented at the beginning of the dissertation: that is, they were contradictory in nature. Much like Dryden, the players were unlikely to discuss masculinity unless probed. Also in line with Dryden's account of hockey, they

sometimes alluded to issues bound up with masculinity, apparently without being aware of doing so, in describing the experience of being a hockey player—facing epic and sometimes complicated challenges, yet adoring the game and being thankful to wake up every day and experience it as a career. Examples of this were found in the players' accounts of the difficulties they faced as hockey players: being away from home, dealing with a fast-paced and highly physical level of play, juggling school and hockey and perhaps a girlfriend, receiving harsh criticism from fans, having to sacrifice the opportunity to live life like other young men their age, feeling the need to act more manly around teammates, and undergoing the transition from boyhood to manhood. Most players agreed that as difficult as these situations may be, they could also be the sources of great pride, friendships, happiness, and self-worth. Put succinctly, the positive appeared to outweigh the negative in their lives.

With regards to hegemonic masculinity (or hypermasculinity) specifically, the study results were somewhat contradictory in nature as many of their interview responses opposed the tenets of hegemonic masculinity and others corresponded with them to varying degrees. Put concisely, the raw findings indicated no strong presence of hegemonic masculinity among this team's players. The questionnaire results indicated gendered expectations are indeed at play in these young men's lives in some way and that the players are not always unified in their thoughts and opinions on such expectations. At the same time, a small but considerable number of the players felt to some extent that they need to act differently around their teammates than around everyone else. They also felt that they need to behave in a manly way because they are hockey players and they felt the need to act manlier around their teammates than around everyone else. This was

evidence that although they may not embody it, the players felt the presence of notions of hegemonic masculinity in their lives. The players also tended to engage differently with the ideas of masculinity and being a man. This was made apparent by the diversity in their responses to the questionnaire. Some of them associated the word ‘masculinity’ with the way a man presents himself or is perceived and some others felt that it signified traditional or stereotypical masculine traits such as heterosexuality and physical strength. Moreover, some understood the experience of being a man as linked to respect, honesty, and accountability, while others viewed it quite literally: to them, it meant being out of school and earning a living. Again, there was evidence of hegemonic masculinity, but the study was not in a position to offer true insight into its reach or impact on the players’ lives.

The role hegemonic masculinity plays in the players’ lives was more evident in the interview data, however, the lack of detail around issues of girls, violence, and initiation—which are, arguably, three of the more important pillars of hegemonic masculinity in a hockey context—seriously undermined the possibility for any substantial claims to be made on the subject. The coach almost entirely avoided discussion of problematic forms of hypermasculinity by focusing on his ethical and humanistic approach to coaching. He is education-oriented and believes that successful hockey teams develop through players’ efforts to be good people, good teammates, and to do their best in all endeavours on and off the ice. He implements this philosophy through mentoring his players and has been successful – at least to some extent - because the players displayed great awareness of his philosophy. Holes in the results became more apparent in the player interviews, which were found to be quite telling when held up against the

content of the coach's interview. Many of the players echoed his sentiments in terms of the importance of being a good person, but some players stated that not all Major Junior hockey players are good people and that this included some of their teammates. Evidence among some players of a 'winning at all costs' attitude, elevated levels of physicality and training, competition, and their inability to explain what their girlfriends expected of them demonstrates a compatibility with hegemonic masculinity. At the same time, however, the explicit emphasis on being a good, caring, and humble person coupled with the players' comments relating to experiences such as that of missing their mothers and being vulnerable in their sport appear to work against norms of hegemonic masculinity.

Regardless of what appears to be a strong moral code amidst the team's members, my findings can only be seen as incomplete since I was not given access to a range of information that may have undermined player reputations. The players displayed an admirable code of personhood, if not masculinity, that was decidedly humanistic in nature. This clearly opposed accounts in the literature review of male athletes and ice hockey players, which almost always pegged the athletes as negotiating and maintaining hegemonic masculinity to the point that it is harmful to the athletes and society at large.

6.2 Limitations

The limitations of the study are important to consider by virtue of the fact that they obstructed my access to a definite answer to the research question. In addition to the fact that the study cannot claim to be representative, the limitations imposed by the team resulted in my claims about masculinity being mitigated. Ultimately, there were four

limitations at work throughout the study. They included the coach's choice of my interview participants, his censoring of my questions, his insistence that I change interview locations, and what Michael Kimmel (2008) calls "the code of silence."

6.2.1 PARTICIPANTS. The coach hand-picked the fifteen players with whom I was originally supposed to speak. He chose older players, only two of which were in their first year in the league, which made me more likely to receive a mature account of life in Major Junior hockey. Of course, the contradictions in the research and the uncovering of incidents such as the assault that Bobby claimed he had heard about countered my assumption. It may still have meant that I received a more narrow account of life at the Major Junior level given the lack of variation in age. It is worth noting, however, that one player I was meant to interview was reassigned just before I was scheduled to meet with him and three other players to whom I spoke have been traded or cut since my research took place. All of the players with whom I did not speak remain on the team to this day, which makes me wonder if the coach knew he was choosing individuals who may not be around much longer to speak to me.

6.2.2 QUESTIONS. As previously mentioned, the coach's removal of questions surrounding girls and hazing limited the study because sex, violence, and initiation are at the heart of hegemonic masculinity in sports contexts; they were, moreover, common themes in the review of literature. Not having access to the players' thoughts and experiences in these realms made it impossible to determine their ties (or lack thereof) to hegemonic masculinity and consequently mitigated the opportunity to make claims

regarding the ways in which masculinity is made manifest in their lives. This is not to say that an assumption was made about their involvement in problematic hypermasculine activity; indeed it may have been an opportunity to uncover their true feelings about the subjects and to open a platform of discussion on ways to decrease and eliminate the stereotypical image of a hockey player, which relies so heavily on masculine hegemony.

6.2.3 LOCATION. Being forced to change interview locations seriously undermined the ethnographic element of my study. I was no longer interacting with the team as a whole or regularly speaking with coaches. While this may not have hindered the results as much as other limitations, it certainly took away the depth and overall experience of seeing the players where they were most comfortable and having access to the minute details of their everyday lives. The one-on-one interviews away from the team's playing facility segregated the players from each other and created more of an all-business-no-play atmosphere.

6.2.4 CODE OF SILENCE. I believe that a code of silence was at work in my research and that it was inextricably linked to a number of the study's other limitations. This code had the effect of denying me access to certain aspects of the players' thoughts and lives. Codes of silence such as these were discussed in the review of literature and were anticipated and acknowledged in the methods section. Viewed positively, the code of silence forced me to focus on things other than sex and violence such as locker room interactions, family relationships, education and work ethic. All of these areas of enquiry were highly telling and useful, but they did not allow me to paint a full picture of the

players' lives and the ways in which masculinity is made manifest in them. It was further evident that the players themselves self-censored because some interview responses mimicked those of the coach while others were very exhaustive and revealing. Little substantial work can be done on this subject unless the people involved in ice hockey are willing to come forward and discuss their experiences. Only once an avenue of dialogue is opened can key players such as academics, authorities, parents, and the players themselves begin to address the claims made in the literature and consequently create a resoundingly positive experience for the boys and men who participate in Canadian ice hockey.

We are currently seeing movement in the direction of open dialogue as serious injuries are escalating and more players are coming forward with personal struggles with homosexuality, depression, and drug and alcohol abuse. Recent hockey legend Sidney Crosby of the NHL's Pittsburgh Penguins has missed more games than he has played over the course of the last year as he was diagnosed with a concussion in January 2011. Authorities have not taken the incident lightly (CBC Sports 2012), which indicates that safety measures are being taken to ensure that athletes are not getting back to the game too soon. In 2010, CBC's *The Fifth Estate* broadcast a documentary about the life of Brendan Burke, the son of Toronto Maple Leafs general manager Brian Burke. Brendan Burke was a homosexual hockey player and, until his death in a car accident in 2010 at age twenty-one, was advocating for the acceptance of homosexuality in ice hockey. Since his death, his father and the Maple Leafs organization have begun to advocate for gay rights, which would have been unheard of a mere five years ago in men's ice hockey. Stories have also begun to surface regarding players' addictions to pain medications such

as Percocet (Gordon & Maki 2011). Lastly, Ken Dryden recently wrote an article for a Canadian newspaper in which he called upon NHL Commissioner Gary Bettman to take firmer action regarding headshots, given “the dangerous mess of the past few years, with the premature deaths of former players, suicides and concussions that have ended or shortened careers. Now, there’s the grave uncertainty over the future of [the] league's biggest star, Sidney Crosby” (2011: n.p). These are all examples of efforts to break the code of silence surrounding issues that have long been common in men’s ice hockey. Regardless of my own study results, these recent events are all proof that finding those individuals willing to speak out and working towards a collective understanding of their experiences is the first step towards changing the problematic nature of masculinity in the realm of ice hockey. Fundamentally, if hockey players are increasingly encouraged to speak freely about their experiences and are willing to expose their identities, the original goals of this research will become more attainable. I was able to find a small group of these individuals, but none of them were willing to come forward and identify themselves publicly. This study can, therefore, be seen as part of a slow beginning on a long road to changing masculine ideals in the world of hockey in Canada.

Recommendations for Future Research

Aside from the challenge of breaking through the code of silence, future studies of this nature should consider four central recommendations that have emerged from my findings. These recommendations include spreading the research out geographically,

continuing to assess the usefulness of categories of masculinity as conceptual tools, continuing to hold conversations with hockey players, and extending the research to the mainstream. Suggestions on how to execute these four recommendations will be discussed below.

6.3.1 GEOGRAPHY. This study took place in one specific geographic location. While the players I spoke to could likely speak on behalf of many Major Junior hockey players throughout Canada, the same study in another location would have undoubtedly yielded a different set of stories and experiences. It is important to expand this kind of research geographically in an effort to generate national and international discussion on the experience of being a Major Junior hockey player and how that experience is bound up with the dangers that are sometimes associated with the embodiment of hegemonic masculinity.

6.3.2 CATEGORIES OF MASCULINITY. It is necessary to examine the usefulness of categories of masculinity as conceptual tools for analyzing masculine ideals, be it within athletics or otherwise. This is necessary for two reasons. First, as demonstrated by Connell and Messerschmidt's (2005) most recent revisiting of the concept of hegemonic masculinity, it needs to be critiqued in order to assess whether or not it was still appropriate in contemporary discussions of masculinity. The concept is still useful to consider in discussions of ice hockey at the Major Junior level, but the fact that my results appeared to oppose it to some extent needs to be considered. When Connell's (1987) other three categories of masculinity are considered alongside that of

hegemonic masculinity, the results from this study suggest that the “complicit” category does not entirely correspond to the group dynamic of the team and the perception of hegemonic masculinity of its members. In fact, all the players could have arguably been placed in the complicit category because the tone of their interview responses was one that sent the message that they were aware of players who embodied hegemonic masculinity and they did not agree with such comportment, but did not feel inclined to try to counter it. Connell (1987) would classify these individuals as complicit and further indicate that they were supporting hegemonic masculinity in their silence for the purposes of reaping what he calls a “patriarchal dividend.” Perhaps most importantly, Connell does not account for players who do not confront hegemonic masculinity out of fear or vulnerability. The players made clear that those who do not conform to team ideals or participate in team activities are excluded, mocked, and heavily initiated. For them, it is less difficult to tolerate the presence of hegemonic masculinity and be part of a cohesive group than it is to take it on, likely single-handedly. My results suggest, therefore, that current theories need to be able to account for how men’s silence in the face of hegemonic masculinity might be linked to individual experiences of fear and vulnerability rather than presuming that it is a quiet attempt to maintain and benefit from patriarchal power relations. Indeed, it could be argued that failing to account for these experiences of fear and vulnerability reproduces the very erasure of male emotion that critics of hegemonic masculinity purport to admonish.

The second reason that the usefulness of categories of masculinity should be considered is because gender has, over recent years, come to be seen as a continuum and less of a binary (Ballard-Reish & Elton 1992; Bradway 1995; Bem 1998; Cobb, Walsh &

Priest 2009). This break from a dualistic view of gender means that a category-driven view of gender should be evaluated continually in order to ensure that it still corresponds to contemporary displays and performances of gendered identity. A continuum-based view of gender may help us to explain why some players felt that some of their teammates embodied hegemonic masculinity more than others. Moreover, the results found that some players exhibited some characteristics of hegemonic masculinity, but not all of them together. In other words, a continuum may better account for the fluidity and fluctuations of gendered personality traits. While this study was only concerned with hegemonic masculinity, further research should consider various routes to approaching gender and be prepared to assess the usefulness of prevailing categories of masculinity.

6.3.3 *MAINTAIN CONVERSATIONS.* Further research should, without question, continue to hold conversations on the ground in order to ensure that the current state of masculinity in an ice hockey context is up to date in academic work on the subject. The problematisation of hegemonic masculinity will never be remedied without communication with the individuals who live the lives under the microscope of academia and the mainstream media. As with the geographic spread of research, creating an open and accepting environment for dialogue will help bolster conversation about difficult topics and will lead to up-to-date theoretical and conceptual accounts of the ice hockey experience all while generating opportunities to create the possibility of further making ice hockey a safe, enjoyable, and prosperous site of socialization for young men. The players, however, are not the only important source of contact. Further studies should also consider reaching out to league officials, families, fans, and any other groups

associated with the sport that may have information to share. This will create a more robust view of ice hockey, especially where it is so popular in Canada. It may also make the players feel more comfortable speaking about their lives as they will not be the only ones asked to come forward and they may have different viewpoints than those around them.

6.3.4 *MAINSTREAM ACCESS*. Finally, it is imperative for academia to keep in regular contact with the mainstream media and sources of information dispersal. Nothing that is achieved in academia on this subject is worthwhile if it is not shared with the general public and the hockey world. Findings should be made public in the media, books and videos should be put forth for players, parents, coaches, and others to understand the gender patterns that are at work behind the scenes in hockey. The media often create moral panic around the dangerous and harmful aspects of the hockey world. It is the duty of academics, certainly in the social sciences and humanities, to analyze the issues that lead to these moral panics, to attempt to remedy them through the examination of their sources and possible solutions, and to share those experiences with the people who are affected by them—namely players, families, and league authorities. At the same time, it is also the duty of academics to share positive findings about the ice hockey world, much like the stories of ethical responsibility and humanism that I have found, in order to rectify the myth that all hockey players fit the hegemonically masculine stereotype that was all too familiar to the players with whom I spoke. This process of creating dialogue with key players in the hockey world, analyzing their experiences, and sharing

information openly with others will promote the negotiation and maintenance of positive masculine ideals for all who participate in Canadian ice hockey culture.

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APPENDIX A: QUESTIONNAIRE (English Version)

INSTRUCTIONS: The survey contains two sections. Do not indicate your name or any identifying information on the sheet. If at any time you decide not to complete the survey, leave the rest blank, indicate whether or not you would like your answers thus far to be included in the study, and return the sheet to Cheryl.

SECTION A: Answer each of the six questions by indicating whether you strongly agree, agree, are undecided, disagree, or strongly disagree. If you would rather not answer a question, leave it blank.

1. There are different expectations of me as an individual depending on whether I am on the ice or off the ice.

Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	Undecided 3	Disagree 4	Strongly Disagree 5
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

2. There are different expectations of me as an individual when I am interacting with my teammates than when I am interacting with everyone else.

Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	Undecided 3	Disagree 4	Strongly Disagree 5
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

3. I am expected to behave in a manly way because I am a hockey player.

Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	Undecided 3	Disagree 4	Strongly Disagree 5
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

4. Hockey players are expected to be more manly when they are around their teammates than when they are around everyone else.

Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	Undecided 3	Disagree 4	Strongly Disagree 5
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

5. There is a stereotype of a Major Junior hockey player.

Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	Undecided 3	Disagree 4	Strongly Disagree 5
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

6. It is important that the team lives up to a certain standard as a community role model

Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	2	3	4	5
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

SECTION B: Answer each of the next four questions by writing your responses in the spaces provided. If you would rather not answer a question, leave it blank.

7. List 3 individual qualities that are necessary for general success in life.
- a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____
8. List 3 individual qualities that are necessary for success as a hockey player.
- a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____
9. How do you personally define the word 'masculinity'?

10. Explain what you think it means to be a man.

This concludes the survey. Is there anything you would like to add?

Thank You!

APPENDIX B: COACH INTERVIEW GUIDE

- 1. The first questions are geared towards getting to know you as a coach. Tell me about your coaching experience leading up to [your current team].**
 - a. What motivated you to get into coaching?*
 - b. What towns and cities have you coached in?*
 - c. At which levels have you coached?*

- 2. Tell me about what an average week looks like for you.**
 - a. What are your weekly responsibilities?*
 - b. How much time do you spend on them?*
 - c. What activities do you do outside of hockey?*
 - d. How much time do you spend on them?*
 - e. Are you happy with the balance of your time?*

- 3. I want to transition in to your personal thoughts and perceptions of being a coach. Tell me about your experience coaching [your current team].**
 - a. Tell me about positive experiences you've had.
 - b. What are some of the challenges of coaching this level?
 - i. Are there challenges associated with coaching players who are coming of age under your supervision?

- 4. What is your philosophy on how a hockey team should be run?**
 - a. What are your priorities as a coach?*
 - b. What do you do in order to fulfil that philosophy?*

- 5. In interviews with the local media, you often speak about positively impacting young players and building a team of good people.**
 - a. What do you specifically do to positively impact your players?
 - b. What characterizes a team of good people for you?
 - i. How do you achieve that with your players?*

- 6. Those are all the questions I have for you. Thank you for taking the time to speak with me. Do you have any questions or is there anything you would like to add?**

APPENDIX C: PLAYER INTERVIEW GUIDE (English version)

- 1. My first questions are geared towards your experience with hockey and with the Wildcats. Tell me about the history of your career in hockey up until now.**
 - a. Where are you from originally?*
 - b. Is your family highly involved in hockey?*
 - c. Which cities and towns have you played in?*
 - d. At which level?*
 - e. How long have you been with [your current team]?*

- 2. Describe your transition to the Junior level.**
 - a. What was difficult about it?*
 - b. What was easy about it?*
 - c. What did you think of the level of physicality on the ice?*
 - d. What did you think about the time commitments?*
 - e. What was the pace of the game like?*
 - f. Were you away from home for the first time?*
 - g. How were the social interactions with teammates different than before?*
 - h. How were the expectations of you as a player different than before?*
 - i. Do people treat you differently now that you play at the Junior level?*
 - j. What is the best thing about being a Junior hockey player?*
 - k. What is the worst thing about being a Junior hockey player?*

- 3. I want to get an idea of how your time is organized here during the season. Tell me about what an average week would look like for you.**
 - a. Hockey-related
 - i. How much time do you spend on the ice (practices and games)?*
 - ii. How much time do you spend on the road?*
 - iii. How much time do you spend on film, meetings, media, and other non-physical off-ice activities?*
 - iv. How much time do you spend training or in the gym?*
 - v. Tell me about your game day routine.*
 - b. Outside of hockey
 - i. How much time do you spend at school or doing homework/studying?*
 - ii. How much time do you spend with family?*
 - iii. How much time do you spend with friends?*
 - iv. How much time do you spend on other hobbies?*
 - v. Are you in a romantic relationship?*
 - vi. Do you have a job outside of hockey?*
 - c. Are you happy with this balance of your time?

4. The survey asked if you thought there was a stereotypical image of a Major Junior hockey player. What is your opinion on that?

- a. Describe that individual.
 - i. *What does he look like?*
 - ii. *What are some of his personal characteristics?*
 - iii. *How does he speak?*
 - iv. *What are his priorities?*
 - v. *What are his interests?*

5. We're going to move away from stereotypes and talk about your actual team.

- a. *Tell me about your teammates*
- b. *Tell me about the coaching staff*
- c. *What do you like to do with your teammates outside of hockey?*
- d. *Is there competition between players on your team?*
- e. *Can you have personal conversations with a lot of your teammates?*
- f. *Which players on the team get the most respect?*

6. For the last section, I'm going to change directions a bit. I'd like you to speak to me about perceptions of success both in hockey and outside of it and what is expected of you in each context.

- a. What does it take to be successful as a hockey player at this level?
 - i. *What expectations do you have of yourself?*
 - ii. *What does your coach expect of you?*
 - iii. *What do your team mates expect of you?*
 - iv. *What does your family expect of you?*
 - v. *What do your friends expect of you?*
 - vi. *What does the community expect of you?*
 - vii. *Is there anyone else who expects something of you?*
- b. What does it take to be a successful man for you right now?
 - i. *What expectations do you have of yourself?*
 - ii. *What does your coach expect of you?*
 - iii. *What do your team mates expect of you?*
 - iv. *What does your family expect of you?*
 - v. *What do your friends expect of you?*
 - vi. *Does your relationship partner expect anything of you?*
 - vii. *What do your teachers expect of you?*
 - viii. *What does the community expect of you?*
 - ix. *Is there anyone else who expects something of you?*

7. Those are all the questions I have for you. Thank you for taking the time to speak to me. Do you have any questions or is there something you'd like to add?