

THE UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

Hazing in Sport: An Exploratory Study of  
Veteran/Rookie Relations

by

Jamie Bryshun

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES  
IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE  
DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

CALGARY, ALBERTA

SEPTEMBER, 1997

© Jamie Bryshun 1997



National Library  
of Canada

Bibliothèque nationale  
du Canada

Acquisitions and  
Bibliographic Services

Acquisitions et  
services bibliographiques

395 Wellington Street  
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4  
Canada

395, rue Wellington  
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4  
Canada

*Your file* *Votre référence*

*Our file* *Notre référence*

The author has granted a non-exclusive licence allowing the National Library of Canada to reproduce, loan, distribute or sell copies of this thesis in microform, paper or electronic formats.

L'auteur a accordé une licence non exclusive permettant à la Bibliothèque nationale du Canada de reproduire, prêter, distribuer ou vendre des copies de cette thèse sous la forme de microfiche/film, de reproduction sur papier ou sur format électronique.

The author retains ownership of the copyright in this thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's permission.

L'auteur conserve la propriété du droit d'auteur qui protège cette thèse. Ni la thèse ni des extraits substantiels de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans son autorisation.

0-612-24577-2

Canada

## ABSTRACT

This study investigates hazing rituals within sport subcultures. A recent escalation in public concern with hazing both in and outside of sport has prompted numerous investigations and indictments of players, coaches, and administrators across North America. While many people in the world of sport know something about hazing, almost nothing has been written on the phenomenon in the sociology of sport literature. In an attempt to uncover the nature and extent of hazing practices in sport, a study of amateur, varsity, and professional athletes in Saskatoon, Calgary, and Vancouver was conducted. The findings show that despite increasing internal and external attempts to police and/or eliminate hazing, many rookie athletes continue to be introduced to some form of hazing by veteran teammates. Data from structured individual interviews expose forms of hazing both within and across various sports, as well as a higher frequency of female involvement in hazing than expected from the literature. A cultural studies theoretical framework informs this exploratory analysis of veteran/rookie power relationships and the identities that are inscribed upon neophyte athletes. In an increasingly legalistic social climate, the study shows how greater policing of hazing rituals in sport may have the unintended effect of pushing the phenomenon underground.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I would like to thank a number of individuals who made this research possible, especially the athletes and coaches who returned my phone calls and letters, and took the time to be interviewed. Your willingness provided me with exciting experiences as well as valuable data.

I am sincerely grateful to Dr. Kevin Young who was my inspiration throughout my program. You provided me with insightful advice and editorial comments on every 'draft' that I placed on your desk. More importantly, you not only fulfilled the role of supervisor but became a good friend. Finally, my family and friends who supported me throughout my seemingly never-ending program. Thank-you for listening to my problems and helping me deal with my stress.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Approval Page .....	ii
Abstract .....	iii
Acknowledgements .....	iv
Table of Contents .....	v
<b>CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>1</b>
Purpose of the Study .....	1
Organization of the Thesis .....	2
Scope and Limitations of the Study .....	3
Notes .....	5
<b>CHAPTER TWO: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK .....</b>	<b>6</b>
The Concept of Subculture .....	6
The 'Gendering' of Sport .....	8
Sport as a Site of Power Relations .....	12
Sport and Identity Formation .....	15
Summary .....	18
Notes .....	19
<b>CHAPTER THREE: A HISTORY OF HAZING .....</b>	<b>20</b>
Historical/Anthropological Context .....	20
Rituals .....	20
Educational Settings .....	23
Universities .....	23
High Schools .....	28
Military Settings .....	29
Canada .....	29
The United States .....	32
Sport Settings .....	33
Rugby .....	33
Ice Hockey .....	34
Football .....	37
Summary .....	37
Notes .....	40

<b>CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH DESIGN</b> .....	41
Methodology .....	41
Semi-structured Interviews .....	41
Procedure .....	44
Methodological Experiences .....	48
Getting In .....	48
Learning the Ropes .....	49
Maintaining Relations .....	50
Leaving and Keeping in Touch .....	52
Notes .....	54
<b>CHAPTER FIVE: SPORTS-RELATED HAZING</b> .....	55
The Context of Hazing .....	55
Timing .....	55
Location .....	57
I. 'Private Shows' .....	57
II. 'Public Shows' .....	59
The Hazing Process .....	63
Soccer .....	63
Ice Hockey .....	66
Wrestling .....	70
Volleyball .....	71
Field Hockey .....	73
Rugby .....	74
Basketball .....	76
Swimming .....	78
Synchronized Swimming .....	80
Water Polo .....	81
Football .....	82
Interpretations and Meanings .....	85
Why does Hazing Take Place? .....	85
Resistance to Hazing .....	88
The Continuous Nature of Hazing in Sport .....	90
Notes .....	94

<b>CHAPTER SIX: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION .....</b>	<b>95</b>
<b>REFERENCES .....</b>	<b>107</b>
<b>APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE .....</b>	<b>112</b>
<b>APPENDIX B: CONSENT FORM .....</b>	<b>116</b>

## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

### PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

In the United States between 1984 and 1994, 23 people died in hazing-related violence (*Macleans*, February 20, 1995:17). A death toll such as this seems to be an outcome of the fact that social institutions such as the military, schools, colleges, universities, and sports groups have adopted hazing activities as a socialization tool for their newest members. Although the types of groups conducting ritualized hazing practices vary, certain elements, such as degradation and abuse, appear to be normative. Rituals within subcultures commonly occur as part of context-specific initiation events that take place annually, semi-annually or, as in the case of sport, seasonally.<sup>1</sup>

Growing public awareness of and concern with what are actually centuries-old hazing rituals has surfaced, however, relatively recently in contemporary institutional settings. Indeed, the 'social problem' of hazing, as it is now popularly perceived, has of late assumed the status of a significant legal issue. In many ways, hazing-related practices appear to have recently changed status from that of condoned or "tolerable deviance"<sup>2</sup> to practices now viewed as morally unacceptable and even illegal. Among the most commonly expressed concerns with hazing activities are practices involving or producing violence, sexual harassment, crime, personal injury, and even death. The issue of changing social attitudes to and policing of hazing is central in this research.

As a surprisingly slim literature on sports-related hazing reveals, hazing activities performed among athletes do not appear to be substantially different from those conducted in other social institutions, such as the military (*Macleans*, February 20, 1995:17, October 16, 1995:31; *Calgary Herald*, February 14, 1995:C4, February 1, 1997:A2; *Calgary Sun*, February 1, 1997:8; *The Star Phoenix*, January 20, 1997:A4) and university fraternities (*University of Calgary Gauntlet*, September 10, 1987:36; Hornbuckle, 1988; Sanday, 1990:135-45; Nuwer, 1990; *Macleans*, January 30, 1995:14).

Although the substantive literature on hazing in sport is limited (Young, 1983; Donnelly and Young, 1988; Oliver, 1990; Nuwer, 1990; Gretzky and Reilly, 1990; *The Toronto Sun*, February 28, 1995:5; *Lethbridge Herald*, March 18, 1995:A4, C1; *Calgary Herald*, March 16, 1996:D3) and warrants further exploration, recent exposés have confirmed the prevalence of hazing in social groups, including sport. This leads us to believe that the relative lack of literature does not accurately portray the extent of hazing within the world of sport.

### **ORGANIZATION OF THE THESIS**

The thesis is divided into six chapters. Following this brief introduction, Chapter Two lays out the theoretical framework of the thesis. Beginning with the works of Gordon (1970) and other early subculture theorists, Donnelly (1985), and Donnelly and Young (1988) provide a conceptualization of sport subcultures and the socialization processes occurring within them. They describe how athletic identities are constructed and confirmed or tested within sports settings. The question of how sport is gendered is then addressed with particular focus on issues of masculinity, femininity, power, and veteran/rookie hierarchies within sport.

Chapter Three provides a substantive overview of the social history of ritualized hazing practices. Dating back to primitive tribes and progressing into modern social institutions such as educational settings, the military, and sport, this chapter reveals the significant history of ritualized hazings in various social contexts. Upon examining the literature, this chapter also reveals the limited number of in-depth studies of hazing activities in sport, particularly with regard to the involvement of female athletes.

Chapter Four outlines the methodology and procedure used in the thesis. Essentially, a qualitative, exploratory field study enabled the researcher to acquire an understanding of the prevalence of sports-related hazing. The researcher implemented a convenience sampling technique (Fowler, 1983) which included male and female athletes participating at amateur as well as professional levels of competition. Additionally, by

employing a semi-structured interviewing strategy (Spradley, 1979; Lofland and Lofland, 1984; Berg, 1989), the study was able to explore the interpretations and meanings that athletes attribute to hazing activities. Influenced by the qualitative work of Shaffir and Stebbins (1991) and others, the chapter concludes with a critical examination of the methodological experiences of the researcher.

In Chapter Five, an in-depth examination of the nature, extent and meanings of sports-related hazing in sport is presented. The chapter also delves into the continuous nature of hazing and socialization processes in sport, extending outside of what is known in sport circles as 'Rookie Night'. The final chapter consists of an integration of the findings of the study with the theoretical concepts and tools delineated in Chapter Two. Here, it is argued that hazing is a socializing agent that is used widely by veteran athletes to construct and confirm the neophytes' new identities on their respective teams, as well as to confirm the place of veteran members in the group. It is also demonstrated that these identities are often associated with deeply masculinist traits that have been shown to be embedded within the realm of sport subcultures (Sabo, 1987; Donnelly and Young, 1988; Hargreaves, 1990; Hall, 1993; Theberge, 1997).

### **SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

The lack of in-depth studies of hazing in general supports the need for further exploratory research in the area. In this way, the current research contributes to the limited knowledge available on hazing in general and, more specifically, sports-related hazings. Since the work that is available on hazing typically focuses on male-defined settings like fraternities, the military, and sport played predominantly by males, this study is also unique with regard to its inclusion of female athletes in the sample.

As the literature will suggest, groups that condone hazing tend to produce and reproduce identities which support 'masculinist' traits and belief systems (Brake, 1985)<sup>3</sup>. This research further addresses the issue of gender identity formation as well as additional socialization tools and meanings within the sport realm that, arguably, may

have been overlooked by certain masculine traditions within sport research itself. The data emerging out of this research may ultimately assist in assessing the social problem of hazing in sport and perhaps guide those involved in developing social policies dealing with hazing practices.

The data presented here were collected using a convenience sampling method (Fowler, 1983) which included athletes from the Western Canadian cities of Saskatoon, Calgary, and Vancouver. Due to obvious time and funding constraints that are associated with most thesis projects, a limit was imposed upon the sample size - all sports and athletes could not possibly be represented. Thus, a major limitation of this project is the issue of external validity, i.e., the extent to which conclusions are generalizable. The conclusions drawn in this study, then, are not intended to be generalized to athletes or sport subcultures outside of the parameters of the current sample.

## NOTES

1. Research (Young, 1983; Oliver, 1990) has recognized the ongoing and continuous nature of some initiation rites. This theme is developed later in the current work.
2. Stebbins (1988:3-4) defines tolerable deviance as :**"An act that is accorded legitimacy and has a level of threat low enough to refrain from actively opposing it. The behavior is enacted by a small proportion of community members yet the welfare of the community is still believed to be preserved."**
3. Brake (1985:178) defines 'masculinism' as the demonstration of socially appropriate or hegemonic acts of manliness, such as force, aggression, and often sexism.

## **CHAPTER TWO: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

In this chapter, theoretical concepts which are crucial to the understanding of sport subcultures and the socialization processes acted out within them are discussed. Acknowledging that the sociological study of subcultures dates back to 'deviancy' research at the University of Chicago in the 1920s (Anderson, 1923; Park and Burgess, 1925; Thrasher, 1927), the chapter begins in the more contemporary setting with Donnelly (1985) who comprehensively reviews the various attempts at defining different kinds of subcultures. Because gender and power structures have been shown to interface in sport (Sabo, 1987; Donnelly and Young, 1988; Sabo and Panepinto, 1990; Hargreaves, 1990; Messner and Sabo, 1990; Hall, 1993; Theberge, 1997), the chapter then moves on to a consideration of how gender and power issues related to sport may be approached theoretically.

### **THE CONCEPT OF SUBCULTURE**

The term 'subculture' has been widely used to refer to everything from an ethnic population category to a single sport team. The broad and varying parameters surrounding the concept are addressed by Donnelly (1985:559-64) who claims that the problems associated with defining a subculture arise from researchers' inability to agree on the exact characteristics of the subject matter. Avoiding the lay usage of the term, the following attempts to define the characteristics and parameters of subcultures related to sport.

Donnelly and Young (1988) define subcultures as "small social structures within the larger dominant culture" (p. 223-225). It is within these social structures that individuals share common values, behaviors, attitudes, symbols, and rituals. The authors feel that these shared characteristics are what differentiate the particular subculture from the larger culture. Donnelly and Young (1988) contend that the exclusiveness of a subculture is contingent upon how isolated it may be from other subcultures within the

larger culture (p. 223-228). However, according to the authors, even the most extremely segregated subculture will not be so exclusive that it does not overlap in some way with other subcultural groupings. In other words, a subculture will not exist independently without sharing some qualities with other subcultures, and with the mainstream society more generally.

Donnelly (1985, 1993) acknowledges that leisure subcultures have become a significant characteristic of western society since the 1950s. However, he argues that research on sport subcultures has been complicated by obscure or ambiguous definitions of what constitutes such formations. In his work, for example, Donnelly (1985) cites earlier subcultural studies (cf. Petrie, 1976; Phillips and Schafer, 1976; Snyder and Spreitzer, 1983) which commonly referred to a sport or athletic 'subculture' in very general terms. Attempting to narrow the scope of sport subcultures and to add conceptual clarity, Donnelly (1985) proposed categorizing subcultures in terms of their 'avocational', 'occupational', and 'deviant' qualities (p. 543-559).

In the present research, reference to sport subcultures will include only one of Donnelly's (1985) three subcultural groupings. This study is solely concerned with hazing rituals conducted by occupational sport subcultures which include professional athletes in various sports, elite amateur athletes (e.g., in regional, national, or international competition), and athletes who engage in other fully rationalized forms of sport (e.g., youth, high-school, and varsity). One can argue, however, that Donnelly's (1985) subcultural groupings are not mutually exclusive from one another and that the possibility of overlap between the categories exists (an athlete could be classified as occupational and deviant, for example). It could be stated, then, that athletes in this study possess qualities which are most similar to the qualifications that Donnelly (1985:543-559) distinguishes as 'occupational'. Therefore, even though avocational subcultures (such as leisure and recreational sport subcultures) and deviant subcultures (such as gambling and deviant careers involved in sport) will not be referred to in this analysis of sport

subcultures, it is possible that characteristics from all of the groupings may be present at the same time.

Clearly, there are numerous membership roles within a specific occupational sport subculture (such as administrator, manager, owner, coach, trainer, and player), but the purpose of this study is to focus directly on the athletes involved in ritualized initiation practices. As research (Young, 1983; Donnelly, 1985) has shown, it is possible to speak, for example, of a subculture of football players, rugby players, or baseball players. A specific athletic team, such as the Calgary Stampeders or the Toronto Argonauts, would thus constitute a 'sub-unit' of a broader football subculture. What differentiates sport subcultures is the fact that athletes develop and share different value systems, meanings and beliefs, and use equipment, language, style, and symbols that are unique to their subculture (Donnelly, 1985:562). Throughout the following analysis, incidents of team (sub-unit) hazings will be categorized according to their respective subcultures.

It should be noted that an individual's mere involvement in sport will not always facilitate team membership. In his study of rugby players, Young (1983) discovered that identity formation and group membership was also based upon the social attributes of the individual - indicating that involvement in sport is far more than simply athletic. According to Donnelly and Young (1988), group membership is often based on subcultural values, beliefs and behaviors that extend beyond athleticism per se. The data emerging from this study will support this notion by reporting socialization techniques in which rookie athletes are expected to 'perform' in accordance with the social as well as the athletic standards of the subculture.

### **THE 'GENDERING' OF SPORT**

Feminist and other approaches to sport have consistently shown that sport operates largely as a male-dominated institution (Bryson, 1983; Sabo, 1987; Donnelly and Young, 1988; Sabo and Panepinto, 1990; Kimmel and Messner, 1990; Hargreaves, 1990; Messner and Sabo, 1990; Hall, 1993; Theberge, 1997). Specifically, research

demonstrates how sport contributes to the shaping of men's individual and collective behavior and consciousness along lines of male dominance and patriarchal values. Sabo (1987) addresses the deeply masculine nature of sport by claiming that "competitive sport has long been dubbed an area of social life that 'separates the men from the boys' (and from women as well)" (p.4, brackets in original). He further suggests that "today the social structure and norms of sport remain grounded in patriarchy" (1987:13). Despite a gradual shift away from a male-dominated competitive model of sport and, for example, increasing opportunities for girls and women in sport, Hargreaves (1990) claims that:

...the greatest power to control sport is still vested with men who hold traditional attitudes and who are involved in traditional sports and it is unrealistic to argue that entrenched practices which are underpinned by political and economic power can easily be changed. (p. 302-303)

Socialization processes<sup>1</sup> within sport subcultures may function to confirm an athlete's masculine identity, especially in cases of sports which are physically risky and produce high injury rates (Young 1993; Young, White and McTeer, 1994). For example, Sabo and Panepinto (1980) contend that some male athletes find a sense of pride through sport's "brutal, hard-driving aspects, its accentuation of physical strength and angry struggle" (p. 164), and Young, White and McTeer (1994) have shown how many male athletes find appeal and reward in physically dangerous sports, despite its association with injury, disability, and even death.

During the initiation process, rookie athletes who resist masculinist symbols and ideologies and are often perceived as 'too emotional' may run the risk of having their masculinity called into question or being labelled effeminate. According to Sabo (1987), this "loss of emotional control is looked upon as hindering performance" (p. 4). Young, White, and McTeer (1994) focus on the importance in male-defined sport of the use and performance of physical strength and force. According to them, players, coaches, and spectators in certain sports (such as rugby, ice hockey, and football) accept a 'symbolic masculinity' which rationalizes violence, aggression, and pain at all levels of competition (p. 176). Young, White, and McTeer (1994) claim that the norms of masculinist sport are

further reinforced by well-known media personalities such as football's John Madden and ice hockey's Don Cherry who routinely celebrate physical force and aggression as laudable qualities. Thus the dominant masculinist ideology that 'real' men play sport in an intensely aggressive manner echoes throughout the sport spectrum. Male athletes are socialized to believe, in Sabo's words, that "'being like a woman' can jeopardize their social standing and reputation" (1987:4). Messner (1990) adds that this ideology is not unique to a particular social class, but rather "[s]port serves the interests of all men in helping to construct and legitimize their control of public life and their domination of women" (p. 107).

From this vantage point, it comes as no surprise that the hegemonic belief system within traditional male sport subcultures places a considerable amount of pressure upon initiates to conform to these conservative values. Specifically, the identities neophyte athletes are pressured to formulate coincide with male-defined, patriarchal, and often sexist values and behaviors. As Sabo (1987) notes:

In sport, boys are taught to define themselves as members of the 'team'... They learn to identify 'up' (with coaches, first-teamers and superstars) and not 'down' (with women, third-teamers, losers and quitters). (p. 4, brackets in original)

Some of the techniques used by veteran players to pressure initiates into conforming with this belief system will be uncovered in the findings chapter (Chapter Five) of the thesis. Instances of non-conformity by neophytes will also be presented, underlining the fact that rookies do not always openly adopt this hegemonic belief system.

Recently, the sociology of sport, which in its formative years seemed limited to the study of men in sport, has seen an explosion of work on females and femininity (Hargreaves, 1990; Messner and Sabo, 1990; Kimmel and Messner 1990; Whitson, 1990; Curry, 1991; Hall, 1993; Hoffman, 1995; Obel, 1996; Theberge, 1997). These and other authors have uncovered ways in which sport contributes to male empowerment and female disadvantage, and to a general culture of inequity in opportunities and meanings.

One prominent rationalization for the oppression of women in sport has been the essential physical differences between the sexes. Characteristics normally ascribed to men (such as strength, aggression, and competitiveness) have often been associated with sport. Thus, coincidentally, the so-called 'natural' link between sport and the physicality of the body enabled sport to be defined as a domain largely appropriate for men and boys. The connection between manliness and the body, for example, is shown by Whitson (1990:16-20) as an attempt to socialize individuals to use their bodies in a forceful manner through the practice of sports. Whitson (1990) shows that male athletes are often socialized within the sports setting to believe that aggression and strength (traditionally masculine attributes) are essential to athletic success. It is precisely this point that feminist writers have problematized because physical selves are often associated with 'being a man' (Curry, 1991:119). For example, Obel (1996) describes how the body image of female bodybuilders threatens the association of a sporting body and masculinity. She claims:

There appears to be a 'danger' point at which a female bodybuilder ceases to be female and becomes associated too closely with the image of the male. This situation brings the gender of male bodybuilders into question as differences in body image between men and women appear to be minimised in bodybuilding.(p. 187)

Gender differences, according to Obel (1996:188), are maintained within the sport, however, as it is structured to include separate rules for each gender.<sup>2</sup>

Importantly, masculine ideologies admired by many athletes on the field may be extended into relations of dominance *off the field*. As the sports hazing literature (Young, 1983, 1988; Oliver, 1990; Nuwer, 1990; Gretzky and Reilly, 1990; *Macleans*, January 30, 1995:14; *The Toronto Sun*, February 28, 1995:5; *Lethbridge Herald*, March 18, 1995:A4, C1; *Calgary Herald*, March 16, 1996:D3) suggests, macho characteristics are often privileged, even required, in the socialization of rookie athletes. Previous works, as well as the data emerging from this study, will show that practices ascribed with masculine characteristics are encouraged and embedded in socialization techniques occurring

outside of the field of competition in many sports. Complementing Whitson's (1990) work, which focused solely on the socialization of athletes within the realm of athletic competition (games and practice), this study indicates that rookie initiations and the identity formation process reinforce hegemonic masculinity within the sport subculture and marginalize behaviors or attitudes associated with femininity.

This study assumes that rookie initiations are a strong contributor to a particular form of masculinity that athletes 'buy into' - in fact, they may be given little choice - when they enter their respective sport subculture, supporting sport's ability to reproduce male hegemony (Young, 1993:374). However, in order to tap how women experience hazing in sport, it is critical to also speak to female athletes and to explore female sport subcultures. Empirical research into hazing in sport may show that as women participate in the rougher, more physically demanding sports, more of their orientations and incentives, which may be articulated during events such as Rookie Night, will be closely aligned with traditional 'male' versions of sport (Young and White, 1995). On the other hand, female socialization techniques that differ from their male counterparts may also indicate an identity within sport that does not reinforce masculine traits but rather expresses a quite separate 'feminine' identity within sport subcultures.

### **SPORT AS A SITE OF POWER RELATIONS**

Of course, gender is only one site of power relations. The fact is that every subculture expects its newest members to learn the norms of the group, and uses veteran members to monitor and/or enforce these rules in a number of ways (Snyder, 1980:126). Potential inductees strive to establish a social position and a rank within the subcultural hierarchy. As Sabo (1987) suggests with respect to sport, socialization encourages initiates to think in hierarchical terms and "positively value rather than reject status differences" (p. 2).

In sport circles, the newest members of a team are given the label of 'rookie'. A rookie is a neophyte or potential member who is competing with a particular team for the

first time. In North American sport, this labelling process seems to occur irrespective of the age or athletic experience of the athlete. It is important to note that an athlete, as she/he progresses through her/his athletic career, may be labelled as a rookie several times - each time she/he joins a new team. Consequently, rookies progress to veteran status once they complete their first (rookie) season and continue to compete for an additional (one or more) season with the same team. Therefore, veteran players can range from second to fourth or fifth-year players<sup>3</sup>.

One of the roles of the higher ranking veteran players on the team involves teaching neophyte members rules of conduct both on and off the field. Specifically, veteran athletes often attempt to socialize new members through a series of 'initiation' activities. This allows the veterans to gauge how far rookies are willing to go in order to display commitment, desire, and fortitude. Faulkner's (1976) work on hockey players is relevant here as he addresses how players test each other's ability to "show themselves" to their teammates. He claims:

Like other occupational tasks organized around the theme of potential danger and crisis, a man's conduct on the ice is under close scrutiny of other interactants, and he is expected to demonstrate essential qualities... Sociologically, respect involves acting in terms of standardized expectancies so that others will impute to the actor the kind of identity he would want them to see him possess. Members learn, then, what identities are available to them, as well as the presentational resources at their disposal.(p. 96)

However, there are certain factors which consistently influence the effectiveness of this socialization process.

As a general rule, it is the rookie athlete's own perception of her/his degree of involvement in the team that directly influences how willing she/he is to participate in hazing activities (Sage, 1980:130). Rookies who judge their social and athletic skills to be below standard may not feel that they are an equal member of the team. 'Bench sitters' or players who are not fully engulfed in the team's social scene, for example, might simply withdraw from the team because, as they perceive it, it is easier to be a spectator than to

fail the rigor of socialization and be labelled a 'loser', "the epitome of criticism in our society" (Moore, 1973:38-42).

The duration of the individual's involvement in the sport may also be a factor in her/his decision to become a member (Snyder, 1980:126). If the rookie does not envision herself/himself as being a long-term member, banishment from the team may be easier to accept. The introduction of hazing rituals perceived as embarrassing or even degrading may be enough for the rookie to decide that she/he no longer wishes to be a member of the team. On the other hand, rookies with highly developed social skills or athletic ability may become more involved with the team, want to be a member for a significant period of time, and thus consensually participate in initiations and be socialized by the veterans into the subculture.

A key factor affecting sport socialization is the prestige and power of the socializer (Sage, 1980:133). Power, while not conceptually the same as prestige, involves the degree of control one person has over another (Sage, 1980:133). The amount of power a particular player may hold can be gauged in accordance with the level of athletic skill as well as social prestige the member obtains. In general, one would expect the players with the greatest athletic reputation to exert the greatest influence in developing the roles of subordinate members. Usually, the veteran is powerful because of her/his knowledge of the game, her/his skill, and reputation (as an athlete) within the respective sports group. In the case of sport, however, the acquisition of power often extends beyond the athletic ability of the player to include the amount of social prominence that the individual possesses within the particular team. These qualities invest in the veteran considerable control and influence over more junior members. Additionally, if the rewards and punishments are sufficient, striving for successful socialization may also increase proportionately (Sage, 1980:135). Apparently, the promise of increased privilege, status, and fame are significant factors for the neophyte player. Resistance and/or refusal to conform to the membership's expectations, however, is often met with relatively harsh

consequences. Thus, neophytes attempt to attain membership not only for its inherent rewards (social status, prestige, acceptance, power) but also to avoid punitive action. Veterans assert themselves as high-ranking members by administering various penalties (often physical) to rookies, as will be witnessed later in the thesis.

## **SPORT AND IDENTITY FORMATION**

As a largely symbolic interactionist literature has shown (cf. Stryker, 1967; Strauss, 1967; Meltzer et al, 1975), membership in groups requires participants to conform to the specific norms and roles of certain activities. The individual athlete, for example, experiences socialization through her/his involvement in a specific sport (Donnelly and Young, 1988:223) which produces and reproduces attitudes, values, knowledge, and behaviors that are related to the team in which she/he is a part and the roles which she/he will play in it. Thus, socialization through sport is the process through which an individual learns all that is required of subcultural membership (Sage, 1980:123).

Based on fieldwork with members of climbing and rugby subcultures, Donnelly and Young (1988:224) claim that identity construction within sport is a conscious act, rather than a passive process: "The act of becoming a member of a particular subculture is also the act of taking on an appropriate subcultural identity." Donnelly (1981) found:

Through a variety of means, the most significant of which is modeling, new members of subcultures begin to deliberately adopt mannerisms and attitudes, and styles of dress, speech, and behavior that they perceive to be characteristic of established members of the 'achieved' subculture. (p. 586)

However, according to Donnelly and Young (1988:224), neophytes' perceptions of their new subculture are often stereotypical and inaccurate. This modeling technique serves to signify that the neophyte has distanced her/himself from non-members, but the authors feel that this is only the first stage of the process of identity construction. They claim:

As if to symbolize the neophyte's position on the borderline between the larger culture and a specific subculture, identity construction is intended for two distinct audiences - members of the larger society and members of the subculture... The second stage, having the identity confirmed by actual

members of the subculture, is more difficult and, in the final analysis, involves ceasing to consider outsiders as a valued audience. (p. 224)

It is this second stage which is of utmost importance to this study. It is the process and the identities that confirmed members inscribe upon the neophytes that will be the focus of the thesis.

The process of ritual presents the opportunity for the veteran members to gauge how successfully rookies are being socialized into the sport subculture. Upon joining the team, rookie athletes formulate a new concept of self and establish a new identity within the subculture. This newly acquired identity is also acknowledged by the larger dominant culture by associating the rookie with the specific subculture (Donnelly and Young, 1988:223). For example, Young (1983) explains how rugby initiates are aware upon entering the subculture that the informal underlying principle of team/subcultural membership is simply "take it or leave it" (p. 132). In other words, rookies must be involved in the initiation process or risk being denied complete and open access into the subculture. Rugby rookies are expected to conform to a set of subcultural expectations and demonstrate "typical rugger behavior to other members of the group" (Young, 1983:132).<sup>4</sup>

Evidence unearthed to date shows that rugby initiates are continually faced with socialization rituals throughout the season, both on and off the field. As part of this process, rookies are tested and judged by their veteran teammates as to their successful socialization. If initiates are able to demonstrate appropriate roles and behaviors they become an accepted member of the subculture (Donnelly and Young, 1988:223-5). The strive for membership and the ability to accept power imbalances are key elements in the continued acceptance and execution of often degrading initiation events.

For Donnelly and Young (1988), a commonality among many hazing practices in rugby is the initiate's "flexibility toward activities that she/he usually considers negatively but which are condoned in the larger context of the subculture" (p. 229-32). The authors feel that this will ultimately determine the athlete's successful membership. Supporting

this drive for membership, potential inductees often participate in deviant activities (such as stealing, public nudity, and drug/alcohol abuse) because the subculture defines such acts as acceptable.

Individuals who are unable to convince veteran players that they have adopted the beliefs and behaviors common to the subculture may be confronted with physical and/or mental harassment from colleagues and, ultimately, be ostracised. Young, White and McTeer (1994) discovered certain "degradation ceremonies" (p. 190) among injured male athletes who were coerced by their teammates and coaches into returning to action. For example, injured athletes in their sample were ostracized at team functions, had segregated meal areas, and were routinely questioned by coaches (Young, White, and McTeer, 1994:190).

The consequences of an unsuccessful initiation process often involve accepted members punishing inductees by socially isolating them, bombarding them with verbal abuse, or even physically abusing them (sometimes disguised as 'intense play' during practice). The status of the nonconforming rookie remains tenuous until she/he conforms to the norms of the subculture or is forced to quit the team (Donnelly and Young, 1988:234-6).

The values, attitudes, knowledge, and behaviors that a specific sport team upholds are produced and reproduced through what Donnelly and Young (1988) refer to as an identity formation process. Sport's internal hierarchy of veteran and rookie athletes allow for the socialization of neophytes through the use of power and a rookie desire for acceptance and full membership status. Throughout a ritualized socialization process, veterans 'test' rookies and evaluate whether they have sufficiently adopted behaviors and beliefs which are common to the membership. Hazing, when met with resistance by neophytes, often involves incidents of physical and psychological punishment. In general, it is likely that the rookie athlete is forced to travel only one of two roads: 1) acceptance

and internalization of the standards set out by the veteran members; or 2) ostracism and eventual banishment from the team.

## SUMMARY

With its roots in the Chicago School of the 1920s and the early works of Milton Gordon (1947), David Arnold (1970), and others, the concept of subculture is defined by Donnelly (1985) as a small social structure within the larger dominant culture (p. 560-63). In general, subculture theorists claim that individuals within these structures share similar values, behaviors, attitudes, symbols and rituals. For reasons discussed above, only one of Donnelly's (1985:543-559) three subcultural groupings (occupational, avocational, and deviant) will be investigated in the context of this study. Occupational sport subcultures involve professional, elite amateur, and other athletes who engage in fully rationalized forms of sport.

Feminist thought on the 'gendering' of sport informs this study with respect to the patriarchal nature of sport and the ability of sports structures and processes to produce and reproduce limited (and limiting) 'masculinities' and 'femininities'. For example, studies (cf. Sabo, 1987; Donnelly and Young, 1988; Hargreaves, 1990; Sabo and Panepinto, 1990; Hall, 1993; Theberge, 1997) show that the socialization process within traditionally male-defined sport functions to create and confirm identities that are consistent with patriarchal structures more broadly. Power relations in the form of hierarchies on sports teams allow for the continued execution of hazing practices. The powerful and prestigious initiators (veterans) rely on the neophyte's avoidance of undesirable labels, harsh physical punishments, and their desire for acceptance in order to socialize them onto the team via ritualized hazing practices.

## NOTES

1. Sage (1980:123) defines socialization as "[t]he process by which an individual learns the cultural attitudes, values and roles of his group and thus acquires a unique personality and becomes a member of society. The activity of socialization is called cultural transmission, which is the means by which a society preserves its norms and perpetuates itself."
2. To prove her point, Obel (1996:188) reminds us that "[t]he most dramatic distinction between competitive men's and women's bodybuilding is the compulsory pose event which comprises one of the two to four main events in all bodybuilding contests. Men perform seven compulsory poses while women perform only five of these seven poses."
3. Because of the nature of sport and the various structured levels of competition, it is rare for an athlete to compete with a particular team or in a particular level of competition for longer than five years. The only exception here is professional and elite (Olympic) athletes who may compete in the same context for a longer period.
4. At the time of Young's research, Canadian rugby was far less professionally oriented than it is today and the social aspects of the sport more pronounced. In this respect, it is likely that current players not attracted to the subcultural aspects of the sport would no longer be harassed to the same extent or in the same way as they once might have been.

## **CHAPTER THREE: A HISTORY OF HAZING**

In order to examine the emergence of the phenomenon, hazing must first be placed in historical context. This chapter initially examines the historical roots of ritualized initiations in pre-industrial cultures, and then traces how modernization provided a change of venue and character for hazing. A compilation of known hazings in modern social institutions such as education, the military and sport will subsequently be highlighted in order to uncover the existence and patterns associated with membership initiations.

### **HISTORICAL/ANTHROPOLOGICAL CONTEXT**

#### **Rituals**

In a number of societies and cultures, veteran members of social groups consider group values and traditions to be significant guides for new members' behavior. For example, in North American society, when neophytes are introduced to a new group they are often exposed to some form of ritualized initiation. The values and traditions supported by the group are thus inculcated through these rituals which function to establish and solidify new identities for new members (Driessen, 1983:121-30; Sanday, 1990:33-40). Potential inductees are expected to form new 'selves' that are associated with membership. As Donnelly and Young (1988) indicate, "the act of becoming a member of a particular subculture is also the act of taking on an appropriate subcultural identity" (p.224).

Irrespective of the type of group conducting the rituals, neophytes have historically been confronted with enduring physical and/or verbal abuse as a condition of membership. Evidence of membership initiations in North America, Europe and Africa can be found throughout the historical and anthropological literature (Rosman and Rubel, 1981; Morinis, 1985:150-173; Toohey and Swann, 1985:327-34). Early forms of

ritualized initiations consistently involved young males as they were socialized into manhood (Toohey and Swann, 1985:328).

The historical period of the early 1800s was witness to various tribal initiation rites. For example, the older, experienced male members of the Zuni tribe in New Mexico wanted to ensure that their young boys would engage in appropriate behaviors, beliefs, and values as they matured. Conformity was encouraged by physically whipping the boys during initiation ceremonies. The young boys who successfully completed the initiation achieved the new identity of adult male (Toohey and Swann, 1985:328-9; Rosman and Rubel, 1981:78-81). The boys accepted their initiation as a necessary step to formulating their status as a grown, mature man. During the same historical period, veteran members of the Nandi tribe in East Africa tortured and circumcised young males during initiation ceremonies (Toohey and Swann, 1985:330). Rituals involving courage and the ability to endure pain were designed to set the boys apart from uninitiated boys and from women.

Coinciding with the modernizing process was the decline of tribal communities. The emergence of more modern 'civilized' cultures has not, however, eliminated the existence of ritualized initiations into group membership. Rituals previously present in tribal cultures have in many cases been retained and also have been transformed and adopted in modern institutional settings.

Harassment of French students in the early seventeenth century was called 'penalism' rather than hazing. Penalism was a socialization technique that involved members of a freshman class being initiated into an educational institution by the senior students. Older students regarded newcomers as savages who needed to undergo hardships in order to be worthy of the company of older educated men. Freshmen graduate students, for example, commonly needed to obtain a document that affirmed they had gone through a 'hell night' (Nuwer, 1990:117).<sup>1</sup> One French custom transported to North American educational institutions was the cap or 'beanie' that has been commonly worn by freshman students. The late 1800s saw the English practice of

'fagging' flourish in the public school system (Nuwer, 1990:117-18). An 1891 English campus newspaper, entitled *The Spectator*, defined 'fagging' as "the right exercised by the older boy to make the younger do what he likes, and what the younger one generally dislikes" (Nuwer, 1990:117). Each new student was to learn humility and etiquette by becoming a 'fag', or man-servant, to an upperclassman. The newcomer often ran errands, cleaned the senior's quarters or anything else that the upperclassman requested. It was common for senior men to physically and/or mentally abuse their 'fags'. For example, one practice at Oxford University was called 'salting and tucking'. This involved an upperclassman scraping the skin off a younger student's chin with a knife just before the young man chugged a schooner (mug) of salt water - the water that spilled from the container stung the man's exposed flesh (Nuwer, 1990:118).

American fraternities can be traced back to the establishment of Phi Beta Kappa<sup>2</sup> in 1776 (Nuwer, 1990:119). The original concept of fraternities had both an intellectual and social appeal (such as the appeal of socializing in an all-male setting). Later, its leaders added a system of noble and worthy values. Interestingly, one Phi Beta Kappa rule that was subsequently lost forever was a ten-shilling fine for drunkenness (Nuwer, 1990:119).

By the 1870s, fraternal hazings became more common in North America as fraternities broke with other fraternities and young men visited other colleges with a zeal to form new chapters (Nuwer, 1990:119). The University of Georgia's Zeta Chi, for example, tossed pledges high into the air on a quilt held by members. The University of Colorado student paper boasted in 1893 that the institution "has never had a case of genuine hazing" but by 1899 the paper said hazing was "a natural part" of student life, so much that the faculty unsuccessfully tried to abolish it in 1900 (Nuwer, 1990:120).

The first hazing death to reach the public eye in the United States occurred in 1873 at Cornell University, New York. In Nuwer's (1990:120) account, a pledge was blindfolded and taken for a long walk in the country by members of Kappa Alpha. The

blindfold was eventually taken off and the pledge tried to return to the campus in the dark. Unfamiliar with the terrain, he plunged down a slope and died from injuries sustained in the fall. In 1899, the same fraternity at Cornell again required a pledge to walk through unfamiliar terrain. Again, the young man died when he accidentally fell into a canal.

## EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS

### Universities

As college men went off to World War II, hazing incidents dropped drastically. Following the war, many veterans attending universities across the United States would not tolerate being hazed by 'kids' (Nuwer, 1990:121). Ironically, these same vets introduced violent physical hazing that gave fraternity pledge programs a 'boot-camp' aura. As fraternity membership boomed in the late 1940s, hazing also increased dramatically on campuses. A Texas A & M Dean complained to the press in 1947 that hazing had become worse than it had been in the previous ten years. The school blamed hazing for a forty-eight percent drop-out rate of dormitory students after the first semester (Nuwer, 1990:121).

Recent examples of catastrophic hazing outcomes are legion. On February 24, 1978, Chuck Stenzel sought brotherhood with Klan Alpine Fraternity at Alfred University in upstate New York. Stenzel was taken by surprise from his dorm and locked in the trunk of a car with two other pledges. Each was given a pint of bourbon, a bottle of wine, and a six-pack of beer. They were told that they would have to consume all of the alcohol before being released. The pledges were also without jackets in freezing February temperatures. This activity was supposed to make the inductee sick, induce vomiting, and fulfill a traditional part of the pledge program for the local fraternity. The 'brothers' opened the trunk forty minutes later and the boys were carried to their rooms in the Klan Alpine fraternity house where it was assumed they would 'sleep it off'. Shortly after, one

boy went into cardiac arrest, another was in an alcoholic coma, and Stenzel was dead of acute alcohol poisoning (Hornbuckle, 1988:2-3; Nuwer, 1990:47).

On January 26, 1986, a Delta Sigma Phi member was paralyzed when he participated in a stunt called 'stair-diving'. The game involved a person standing at the top of the stairs, diving, and attempting to break his fall (Nuwer, 1990:150). Another fraternity game conducted at the University of Oklahoma was called the 'Phi Delt Border Crossing'. After pledges were sent outside to make piles of snowballs and bring them into the house, they were treated like clay pigeons as they had to run back and forth across an open area one at a time while brothers blasted them with snowballs. One pledge had his organs crushed into his vertebrae when he slipped on the wet floor and fell down several stairs (Nuwer, 1990:198).

In 1987, a University of Mississippi pledge died after his Kappa Alpha fraternity brothers encouraged him to drink to the point of intoxication. School officials refused to call the death a hazing. Also in 1987 a Pi Lambda Phi pledge at the University of Lowell was forced to crawl inside a sleeping bag in a hot attic; after members added a heater, his temperature shot up to 109 degrees (Nuwer, 1990:260).

On February 11, 1988, Rutgers University's chapter of Lambda Chi Alpha served four teen-aged pledges an estimated three hundred 'kamikazes' (an alcoholic drink made of vodka, triple sec, and lime juice), encouraging them to drink all in one hour or until they vomited. One pledge was taken to a hospital and saved but another eighteen year old, James Callahan, was pronounced dead at 7:46 a.m. on February 12. His blood alcohol level was .43 (Nuwer, 1990: 260-61).

In 1992, a pledge at Frosberg State University died of a heart attack during a fraternity initiation called 'kidnap'. Nineteen year old J.B. Joynt took pills in order to help him stay awake for twenty-four hours, a requirement for the initiation. After he was forced to wrestle with senior fraternity brothers for over thirty minutes, Joynt collapsed and later died (Nuwer, 1990:220-222). That same year, the University of Texas at Austin

sanctioned a four-year suspension of the fraternity Phi Kappa Psi (PKP) after a PKP pledge died of exposure and acute alcohol poisoning. Fraternity members forced the inductee to drink an excessive amount of rum as part of an initiation ceremony (*University of Calgary Gauntlet*, September 10, 1987:36). Another serious instance of fraternity hazing occurred at Southeast Missouri State University in Cape Girardeau, Missouri in 1994 when a twenty-five year old male student died after being physically beaten during an initiation at Kappa Alpha Psi fraternity (*Macleans*, January 30, 1995:19).

In the United States, incidents involving predominantly black fraternities are just as alarming as those in primarily white fraternities. Nuwer's (1990:210) work highlights how predominantly black fraternities have been known to 'brand' their members. Branding is the burning of the Greek letter associated with the respective fraternity into the member's skin. The branding irons are merely wire hangers bent in the shape of the desired Greek letter. The procedure is often repeated until the brand forms a thick scar, known as a keloid. Traditionally, members get their first brands on their left bicep because that's the one closest to their hearts. Several sororities are also known to have branded women as part of the same ritual, usually on the inner thigh.

In 1987, a Ball State University student described his branding with Phi Beta Sigma in a student magazine:

Three seconds more - I wouldn't have gotten it..I was losing my nerve...The pain isn't intense. You just smell your skin burning and you hear it crackling. To some, that might be enough to drive them crazy. You can't move because they'll make a mistake. Once you move it's hard to correct the mistake. (Nuwer, 1990:210)

The pledge went on to explain that errors made while branding are simply blotted out with an X and the procedure begins anew on some other part of the body.

Examples of ritualized initiations in predominantly black fraternities reinforce the widespread existence of degrading and violent hazings in education settings. The University of Florida fraternity Omega Psi Phi engaged in a hazing that included

members being struck on the head with boards, beaten with fists, and hit with bricks. In 1979 a Tampa-based member of Sigma Gamma Rho sorority charged that she observed members being forced to drink large amounts of alcohol and to use drugs as a condition of pledging (Nuwer, 1990:212).

In 1983, Vann Watts of Tennessee State University died after what was described as an Omega Psi Phi hazing party. Watts had a blood alcohol level of .52 percent, and his body had been beaten. In 1989 a member of the same predominantly black fraternity claimed that he and another 'brother' had sold drugs to raise money for their fraternity (Nuwer, 1990:212), and in October of 1989, Joel Harris died after alleged physical abuse by members of Alpha Phi Alpha. Harris was one of nineteen members in his pledge class at Morehouse College in Atlanta, the alma mater of black leader Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. (Nuwer, 1990:216-17).

Reports of Canadian fraternity hazings include students at Memorial University in St. John's, Newfoundland, who claimed that they had molasses and feathers poured over them and had their residence rooms flooded by water hoses. Other fraternity initiates at Memorial University were hazed by being forced to jog around the campus naked (*University of Calgary Gauntlet*, September 10, 1987:36).

Hazing on campuses are not isolated to fraternity houses but also occur between classes (freshmen/seniors) of students in various social groups. For example, there have been isolated cases of college band hazing reported in the United States. From 1912 to 1918, The University of Gettysburg had a secret hooded group of sophomore band members whose function was to haze freshmen. One of the most publicized incidents involved the Florida A & M University band and its twelve-member flag corps entitled 'The Dirty Dozen'. Shaved heads were traditional with new members to the group and other reports included 'shakedown' for petty cash and compulsory polishings of older band members' shoes (Nuwer, 1990:258).

One study of medical students in June of 1927 reported that three interns at Kings County Hospital in Brooklyn were severely hazed by medical practitioners. The victims were hauled from their beds, bound, gagged and immersed in a bathtub filled with icy water. Two of the three were coated with ink. Six doctors arrested in the assaults had charges dropped in exchange for written letters of apology (Nuwer, 1990:255).

In 1975, a campus organization called the Sundowner Club at the University of Nevada-Reno conducted a sixty-five hour initiation in which five pledges were forced to consume eighteen quarts of hard liquor, sixteen gallons of wine and vast quantities of beer. The five men had been physically beaten, intimidated, and ridiculed by at least ten Sundowner members. At one point all five had been forced to consume flaming glasses of Everclear, a 190-proof grain alcohol. One pledge, unable to swallow the substance properly, had suffered chest burns. The ordeal ended with a twenty three-year old University of Nevada-Reno football player dead on October 12 (Nuwer, 1990:97).

In North America, many initiation incidents occur during orientation week, the traditional time for introducing new students to college life. During 'Frosh Week' in 1984, a male University of Saskatchewan student was found dead at the bottom of a seven-story elevator shaft with his body covered with whipped cream and fire extinguisher fluid (Nuwer, 1990:250). That same year, forestry students at Lakehead University in Thunder Bay, Ontario, were pressured to participate in an activity called 'The Shit Pits'. This involved repeated immersion of first year students in ditchwater filled with cow manure, fermented wheat, and sawdust. There was also a separate ceremony for women called the 'Miss D.B.H. Contest' in which their breasts were measured in much the same way that foresters measure the "diameter breast height" of a tree (Nuwer, 1990:250).

In 1986 an 18 year-old University of Toronto freshman endured having a pie thrown in her face, being forced to chug beer from an engineering student's hard hat, and having to wriggle on the ground like a bug. Other incidents of class hazings in 1986 included having freshmen dive into pools of Jell-O (University of Ottawa, Carleton

University), suffer yeast, rotten eggs, and fish heads poured on them (Trinity College), and being jammed inside a sweatbox with 160 other freshmen (McMaster University) (Nuwer, 1990:250).

At Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario, students commonly referred to their 'Frosh Week' as the "seven days of hell" (*Macleans*, January 30, 1995:18). Frosh Week, a 'welcome week' for first-year students that is typically held during the first week of university classes in the Fall semester, was the arena for Queen's students enrolled in the College of Engineering to conduct annual initiation rituals. Partially fulfilling their initiation requirements, first-year engineering students<sup>3</sup> were forced by their upper-year peers to climb a greased pole that sat in the middle of a pit full of raw sewage and animal parts. The initiates were told to retrieve a sacred tam-o'-shanter that was located on the top of the pole while onlookers pelted them with vegetables (*Macleans*, January 30, 1995:18).

### **High Schools**

High schools in North America have not been hazing-free. In 1905, for example, a thirteen-year-old boy from Lima, Ohio, died of pneumonia after "being 'hazed' by a number of schoolmates who stuffed snow into his clothing" (Nuwer, 1990:251). In 1924 two Brooklyn girls from Erasmus High School had Greek letters burned onto their foreheads with a solution of nitrate of silver and had crosses drawn on their backs. The principal of the school claimed that the high school had no ties to the sorority the girls were attempting to join (Nuwer, 1990:251).

Rookies on the Waverly school district's swim team in East Lansing, Michigan were hazed by upperclassmen throughout the 1988 swimming season. The freshmen had shampoo poured on their clothing, were urinated on, had toothpaste smeared all over their bodies, were tossed into the snow nude, were forced to do pushups while being whipped by towels, and were held down while seniors sucked on their necks to give them 'hickies' (Nuwer, 1990:251).

According to Nuwer (1990:189, 194) the National Future Farmers of America (FFA) has consistently hazed its membership as a necessary credential for admission into the nation-wide high school group. At Loris High School in Loris, South Carolina, admission involved crawling under an electrified cattle fence while wet and naked. The FFA at Eastern High School in Green County, Indiana, stuffed bananas into the nose of one initiate until his nose bled (Nuwer, 1990:189, 194).

Other FFA chapters have been known to conduct a hazing ritual called 'Greenhand' with their newest members. Cissna Park High School in Shabbona, Illinois, dressed candidates in 'official dress' and dipped both of their hands in green paint. McLean County High School, in McLean, Kentucky, painted the arms and hands of initiates green and made them pull their pants down and sit on a block of ice for five minutes while upperclassmen at Williamsburg High School in Warren, Kansas, blindfolded their freshmen and made them eat onions, toothpaste, and drink Sprite (Nuwer, 1990:195-96).

These kinds of initiation activities found in high schools and universities across North America appear to be far more systemic than isolated incidents. Although studies conducted at university settings seem to focus on male students and fraternity houses across North America, it is important to note that the lack of similar studies relating to female students on campuses should certainly not lead one to assume that female students have not participated in the hazing of new students.

## **MILITARY SETTINGS**

### **Canada**

In January of 1995, Canadians were shocked by the national broadcast of an amateur video which revealed members of the Canadian Airborne Regiment conducting initiations of their newest soldiers. The videotape brought a disturbing new dimension to an already existing series of allegations against the Canadian Airborne while on duty in Somalia in 1992 and 1993. At the time of writing, 13 members of the regiment have been

tried by military courts for various offences related to the beating death of a Somali teenager, Shidane Arone, in March, 1993 (*Macleans*, October 16, 1995:31). The trials found the prime suspect, Master Corporal Clayton Matchee, to be unfit for trial after his suicide attempt, following Arone's death, caused severe brain damage. A series of military police reports followed which showed that this was not an isolated incident. According to the reports, the commander of the Airborne at the time, Brigadier-General Ernest Beno, received photographs of several Somali citizens tied up and put on public display (*Macleans*, October 16, 1995:31). Further complicating the questionable operations of the Canadian Airborne were allegations by army surgeon Major Barry Armstrong that Airborne officials ordered the destruction of photographic evidence supporting the murder and abuse of Somalis by Canadian soldiers (*Macleans*, February 20, 1995:17, October 16, 1995:31; *Calgary Herald*, February 14, 1995:A2).

On January 15, 1993, while the Canadian Airborne Regiment was trying to soften these brutal images of torture in Somalia, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) showed a videotape of several members of the Airborne making racial slurs. The CBC broadcast featured Master Corporal Matt McKay, a former member of a white supremacist group called the Aryan Nations, claiming that he "ain't killed enough niggers yet" (*Macleans*, January 30, 1995:14).

The amateur video of the same Canadian Airborne Regiment conducting brutal hazing rituals was taken after the completion of training exercises at the Petawawa, Ontario, base during the summer of 1992, prior to the Airborne's departure for Somalia. A series of aggressive initiations involved drunken men being forced by colleagues to eat feces, vomit, and urine-soaked bread, conduct simulated sex acts, as well as having their heads shaved and being forced to undergo shock-testing during a beer-drinking party at the base. The video also featured a rookie black soldier being led around on all-fours with a leash while having the words "I love KKK" inscribed on his back (*Macleans*, January 30, 1995:15, October 16, 1995:31; *Calgary Herald*, February 14, 1995:A5).

Major-General Brian Vernon, head of the army in Ontario, was relieved of his duties in February, 1995, after he prepared a report for Chief of Defence Staff General John de Chastelain which rationalized the hazing as "innocuous" (*Calgary Herald*, February 14, 1995:A5). Vernon stood by his report and later claimed in an interview that "the tape shows nothing more than soldiers blowing off steam...a celebration after an arduous field-training exercise" and that "the total effect is one of the male bonding which is essential for teamwork and cohesion in fighting units" (*Calgary Herald*, February 14, 1995:A5).

Only weeks after the exposure of hazing in military settings, the CTV News broadcast another controversial video depicting sailors of the HMCS Yukon taking part in a ritual in 1991 after crossing the equator for the first time. The initiates were stripped to their underwear, smeared with chicken hearts and blood, and forced to drink something they were told was urine and feces. Navy spokesperson, Lieutenant Denise Laviolette, denied that the substance was urine and feces but did indicate that the video showed only a portion of this apparently centuries-old naval ritual (*Macleans*, February 20, 1995:15).

On March 22, 1996, the Canadian military confirmed that eleven officer cadets had been charged with abusing another cadet in a hazing ritual. The initiation occurred over several weeks in the summer of 1995 while cadets from the Royal Military College at Kingston, Ontario were involved in a training course at Canadian Forces Base (CFB) Gagetown<sup>4</sup> (*The Globe and Mail*, March 23, 1996:A7). Major Brett Boudreau reported that one incident involved the victim taped to a chair while his face was covered with toothpaste, shoe polish, foot powder, shampoo, camouflage paint, ink, and shaving cream. The cadet's underwear was torn off and sunscreen was applied to his genitals. A plastic bag was then placed over his head for a short time and he was later hauled into a shower and exposed to alternating blasts of hot and cold water (*The Globe and Mail*, March 23, 1996:A7).

On the same weekend that the eleven military cadets were charged, a base in New Brunswick investigated an incident where two rookie soldiers had to drop their pants and hang their buttocks over another soldier's face (*The Globe and Mail*, March 23, 1996:A7). The victim was described as a willing participant who was undergoing an initiation since he was not an original member of the group that trained in St.Jean, Quebec. The commanding officer of the unit, Lieutenant-Colonel John McEachern, claimed that the soldiers were notified when they began that the military has "zero tolerance" for hazing (*The Globe and Mail*, March 23, 1996:A7).

### **The United States**

In December of 1996, two female cadets were hazed by a male colleague at The Citadel military college in Charleston, South Carolina. The incident allegedly involved someone spraying new cadets with flammable liquid and setting their clothes on fire. Although officials did not report any injuries, the male cadet was suspended and three student officers were relieved of their military duties pending an investigation. The women were admitted to the state-supported military school soon after the college dropped its all-male policy (*The Star Phoenix*, January 20, 1997:A5).

Most recently, a videotape was released publicly on January 31, 1997 which revealed United States Marines conducting a bloody hazing ritual (*Calgary Herald*, February 1, 1997:A2; *Calgary Sun*, February 1, 1997:8). The tape depicted the newest members of a Marine Corps airborne unit in North Carolina grimacing and screaming in pain while they had pins of achievement smashed into their chests by veteran Marines. The violent initiation rite, called 'blood winging' or 'gold winging', was recorded by participants during two initiation sessions in 1991 and 1993 at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina.

The aforementioned literature on hazing events in various social settings suggests that new members are forced to face a series of abusive, unlawful, and potentially dangerous acts. However, over time, many of these groups have continued to champion

hazing rituals perhaps without realizing that they often contribute to criminal acts of harassment, negligence, and bodily harm. Additionally, a masculine ideology consistently appears as a common denominator among the various memberships. The evident similarities between ritualized initiations in educational and military settings hint towards sport subcultures possibly initiating their rookies in a parallel fashion.

## **SPORT SETTINGS**

Presently, our knowledge of the extent of hazing in sport is extremely limited and there is no conclusive or reliable evidence from which to predict the types of sports that consistently condone ritualized hazings, or the extent of sports-related hazing. The findings chapter of the thesis will address this issue as well as differences in the degree and nature of the hazing process. The following literature review indicates the knowledge that we have of hazing in sport. It will show a similarity between hazing activities found in sport settings and the aforementioned social settings.

### **Rugby**

One sport that has consistently incorporated hazing practices is rugby. Rookie players on rugby teams in many societies are consistently the target of hazing by veteran players. Young's (1983) study explored how rugby players typically initiate new members through tasks associated with alcohol consumption, nudity, and violence. Traditionally, rugby clubs have been characterized by vigorous post-game celebrations (Thomson, 1976; Donnelly and Young, 1988:227-30; Young, 1988:285). This is where the rookie players are commonly forced to consume vast amounts of alcohol prior to being forced to complete various initiation tasks. The veteran players exert a "take-it or leave-it" attitude and coerce the inebriated rookies into completing hazing rituals such as the infamous 'Zulu Warrior' (stripping naked), the shaving of head hair and eyebrows, eating goldfish, and carrying marshmallows coated with heat liniment between the naked rookies' buttocks who participate in races and other contests (Young, 1983:129-31).

Donnelly and Young (1988) cite one rookie rugby player recalling his first 'Rookie Night':

Well we (the rookies) were forced to chug three full beers right at the start...Then they (veterans) lined us up and brought out the goldfish. Live goldfish! We had to bite each fish in half with our teeth, chew them and pass them mouth to mouth among each other. I couldn't believe it. And it got worse! (p.227)

These rituals were conducted under the watchful eye of veteran ruggers who chanted sexually degrading songs and sprayed beer over the rookies.

### **Ice Hockey**

The literature on ice hockey hazing in North America predominantly consists of media reports of player misconduct surrounding initiation rituals; very little scholarly research has been conducted. In 1980 a University of Michigan rookie hockey player complained that senior players stripped him, shaved his body hair, and locked him in a car trunk for nearly an hour (Nuwer, 1990:257). The Kent State University hockey team was suspended for one year in 1988 following a hazing incident. Five rookie players were given mohawk haircuts, had pubic hair shaved, and were asked to drink a mixture of rum and beer. One player was hospitalized because of a violent reaction to alcohol (Nuwer, 1990:258). In October of 1994, four players playing with a hockey team in Chatham, Ontario, reported that they were forced to masturbate publicly. Thirteen people were charged with over 100 sexual offences in the case (*Macleans*, January 30, 1995:17). Three University of Guelph students were cut from the Gryphons hockey team because they refused to participate in an initiation party in the team dressing room on January 28, 1996. The party allegedly involved drinking through funnels and nude games that included players passing eggs from mouth to mouth and eating feces-contaminated marshmallows. In a 'letter of acknowledgment' to his superiors and the three former players, the coach of the team condoned the hazing: "The bottom line is [that] there is two kinds of hazing rituals, one is the degrading, damaging type, the other is fun and enjoyable. This was the fun and enjoyable type" (*The Toronto Sun*, February 28, 1996:5;

The 5th Estate, October 29, 1996). The suspended coach also attempted to rationalize the nudity issue by claiming: "They're naked together every day. They shower together." (*The Toronto Sun*, February 28, 1996:5; The 5th Estate, October 29, 1996).

Even National Hockey League (NHL) icons like Wayne Gretzky have not been immune to initiation events. As a player with the Soo Greyhounds in the 1977-78 season, Gretzky and another rookie teammate were ordered to strip and then streak through a local park. Just as they were heading back, two police cruisers arrested and jailed them. Two hours later, several veteran teammates showed up at the jail to 'rescue' their teammates. Much to the rookies' surprise, no formal charges were ever laid (Oliver, 1990:51). The two rookies, with the cooperation of the police officers, had been 'set up'.

Gretzky addresses hazing rituals in the NHL in his autobiography (Gretzky and Reilly, 1990:44). He admits to having shaving cream put in his hair, his eyebrows shaved, and his shoes stolen during his rookie season with the Edmonton Oilers. He feels that he was fortunate to have eluded the "ultimate hazing" (Gretzky and Reilly, 1990:44) - the shave. This is when a rookie's entire body is cleared of hair. Gretzky remembers other years when the incoming rookies were faced with having to strip, buy the veterans dinner, or have their hockey sticks sawed in half by a veteran only minutes prior to a game (Gretzky and Reilly, 1990:44,50). According to Ted Nolan, coach of the Buffalo Sabres, veteran players would deliberately run up the bill as high as \$15,000 at the annual dinner where first-year players are required to buy dinner for their veteran teammates (*Calgary Herald*, March 16, 1996:D3).

Oliver's (1990) study of a Canadian Western Hockey League (WHL) team shows how hazing can be a consistent occurrence that extends beyond the 'Rookie Night' ceremony. His work is a compilation of observations which emerges from his personal involvement with a WHL team. Oliver spent the greater portion of the 1989 season with the Saskatoon Blades attempting to document the lives of several veteran players who

had a chance of playing professional hockey. Throughout his book, Oliver (1990) examines various incidents where veterans hazed the rookie players.

Although it was not described in any specific detail, the Saskatoon Blades' Rookie Night did occur. The only mention of the event described a game called 'Red Rover'. This involves two naked rookies who conduct a tug-o-war while their penises are tied together with a skate lace. The loser of the tug-of-war must go on and fight the next awaiting rookie. Oliver (1990:43) was very brief in his analysis and made no mention of any other initiation rituals during the Rookie Night. It was unclear as to whether alcohol was present during the ceremony (perhaps because there were members of the club who were not of legal drinking age). However, what is clear is that hazing flourished throughout the 1989 season both on and off the ice.

Regular bus trips taken by the Blades provided opportunities for veterans to assert their superior status over the inferior rookies. For example, the veterans always had the first choice of seats on the bus, were served first at team meals, and never carried their equipment bags to or from the team bus - all tasks reserved for rookies. During team meals, veteran players would yell "shoe check" which was followed by one veteran diving under the table. The meal would end with one of the rookie's shoes being covered with either mustard or ketchup (Oliver, 1990:50). After a practice in Saskatoon, a player was stripped naked and taped to the net. The rookie then had a target painted on his chest at which the veterans could shoot pucks. Finally, the rookie was left out on the ice unable to be rescued by any of his rookie cohort. Rookies would also be required to play 'five-on-five' in a parking lot in their jocks in the middle of December.

More recently, another WHL team, the Lethbridge Hurricanes, conducted the same 'target' ritual with one of its rookie players in 1994 (*Lethbridge Herald*, March 18, 1995:A4, C1). Members of the Hurricanes also reported having their eyebrows shaved and marshmallows inserted between their buttocks. The Hurricanes' version of the 'Red

Rover' game involved buckets tied to initiates' penises and into which the veterans threw pucks.

## **Football**

Not surprisingly, given its culture of machismo, hazing is prevalent in football. In 1996, a freshman high school football player in Catlin, Illinois, suffered a lacerated spleen when a teammate jumped on him from the bleachers. The player also reported an incident from the 1996 season when older players forced freshmen to wear their helmets on a bus in hot weather (*Calgary Herald*, August 30, 1996:D2).

Some American college football teams have made their rookies bite the heads off live chickens in order to show their 'toughness' to the veteran players. Football rookies have also been coerced into conducting the 'elephant walk', an activity in which players are forced to parade naked in public while holding the penis of the player behind (*Macleans*, January 30, 1995:17).

Another documented incident of hazing in a different type of football includes the 1981 Toms River High School men's soccer team in New Jersey. In this case, rookies were forced to participate in a game called 'The Gauntlet' where newcomers were punched and kicked by veteran players. They were also hosed down and thrown in mud. The hazing ritual was entitled "Freshman Kill Day" (Nuwer, 1990:257-58).

## **SUMMARY**

In general, there is reason to believe that hazing in sport may be more prevalent than the literature suggests. Even given the limited sample employed here, there is reason to speculate that newspaper articles, television documentaries, autobiographies, and research have insufficiently acknowledged the existence of initiations in sport. Further, only a few types of male-dominated sport subcultures have been systematically studied as sites of rookie ceremonies (Young, 1983, 1988; Oliver, 1990; Gretzky and Reilly, 1990; Nuwer, 1990; *Macleans*, January 30, 1995:14-18; *Lethbridge Herald*, March 18,

1995:A4, C1; *The Toronto Sun*, February 28, 1996:5; *Calgary Herald*, March 16, 1996:D3). Indeed, it appears that the prevalence of initiations across the full spectrum of sport, including sports played by girls and women is an area of research yet to be explored. Only the most naive of readers would exclude sports other than rugby, football, or hockey, including those in which women participate, from the domain of hazing rituals. Female athletes and their teams also often operate hierarchically (Curry, 1991: 125), and women are increasingly competing in traditionally male-defined sports (such as hockey, rugby and lacrosse). Although the sport literature has not recognized female involvement in hazing, it seems reasonable to argue that females should not be excluded as potential participants in rookie initiations.

Demonstrating that hazing is not a new social phenomenon, the chapter traced initiation practices back to tribal groups in the early 1800s. Although these 'uncivilized' groups disappeared with the emergence of modernity, ritualized initiations of numerous groups continued to flourish. By the 1870s, educational settings in North America had become associated with various hazing practices. Soon after, it became evident that hazing was not specific to campus fraternities because sorority and class (freshman/senior) hazings were also occurring. The military is another modern setting in which hazing has a pronounced history. Although the predominantly male membership has recently been in the forefront of hazing-related controversies in both Canada and the United States, the chapter shows that hazing practices are not unique to the military.

At the very least, the examples of hazing in sport subcultures described in this chapter indicate that systemic hazing practices exist in the world of sport. Additionally, hazing appears to be particularly associated with the formation of traditionally masculine identities. The literature suggests that wherever initiations are found, they tend to function to maintain and support masculine traits and belief systems - rejecting any variation from the status quo.

The literature on hazing in sport subcultures is relatively limited, though, and is largely anecdotal. The present work is novel in that it studies hazing directly and provides data that adds to our understanding of the nature and extent of sports-related hazing as well as the meanings athletes attach to it.

## NOTES

1. Because there is only a scant literature on hazing, much of the material appearing in this chapter comes from Nuwer's (1990) comprehensive work.
2. Earlier social antecedents in America may be possible.
3. This particular source (*Macleans*, January 30, 1995:18) did not indicate the gender of the students.
4. Training over 20,000 soldiers each year, CFB Gagetown is Canada's largest army training facility.

## **CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH DESIGN**

This study begins from the premise that sociology is essentially a humanistic discipline. Whether quantitative or qualitative research methods are used, sociological inquiry can never be value-free. The researcher cannot separate his/her interests from the research process and must offer some form of explanation for a relationship. As Shaffir and Stebbins (1991) note, "the formal rules and canons of research must be bent, twisted, or otherwise abandoned to accommodate the demands of the specific field research situation and the personal characteristics of the investigator" (p. xi). In this respect, in the final section of this chapter, I will comment on how some of my own characteristics interacted with those of the respondents to, arguably, enhance the data collection process.

Following procedural recommendations set out in Berg (1989), semi-structured interviews were conducted in several Western Canadian cities (Saskatoon, Calgary, and Vancouver) between October, 1996 and February, 1997. The goal of the research was to: 1) acquire a broad understanding of the nature and extent of hazing in sport; and, 2) gain an understanding of the meanings that athletes attribute to initiation events in Canadian sport subcultures. An overview of the history and rationale for using a qualitative, semi-structured interviewing research approach follows.

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **Semi-structured Interviewing**

A semi-structured interviewing procedure was employed in this study in an attempt to uncover and understand the hazing practices of athletes as well as the belief systems associated with the phenomenon. Fieldwork has a wide variety of forms and uses which are employed by qualitative methodologists. Berg (1989) explains:

Qualitative researchers, then, are most interested in how humans arrange themselves and their settings and how inhabitants of these settings make

sense of their surroundings through symbols, rituals, social structures, social roles, and so forth. (p. 6)

Interviewing, one of several research techniques employed in field research, most commonly takes the form of individual, face-to-face verbal exchange. However, face-to-face group interviewing, mailed or self-administered questionnaires, and telephone surveys are also possible field strategies (Berg, 1989:14-15; Fontana and Frey, 1994:361). Charles Booth is credited with being the first researcher to develop a social survey that relied on interviewing techniques. In 1886, Booth combined statistical data with extensive interviewing and participant observation to complete a comprehensive survey of the economic and social conditions of the people of London. Following Booth's example, similar work ensued in the United States, including W.E.B. DuBois's study of the black population in Philadelphia in 1896 (Fontana and Frey, 1994:362).

Opinion polling was another early form of interviewing that took place in the early 1900s. The American Institute of Public Opinion was founded by George Gallop in 1935, supporting a trend in both psychology and sociology toward the study and measurement of individual attitudes (Fontana and Frey, 1994:362). Also at the turn of the century, researchers such as Anderson (1923), Park et al. (1925), and Thrasher (1927) sparked a number of community studies at the University of Chicago - later known collectively as the works of the Chicago school. The fieldwork emerging at this time still maintained the ideas of Weber, Simmel, Dewey, and other principal social theorists. Thus, scientific objectivity and natural science methods tended to dominate qualitative research in the early part of the twentieth century (Shaffir and Stebbins, 1991:9).

By the 1950s, interviewing began to lose the naturalistic perspective of Booth and the Chicago school and was used in survey research as a tool to quantify data. Led by the pioneering work of Paul Lazarsfeld, quantitative survey research came to dominate North American sociology for the next three decades while fieldwork was seen as a 'soft' and implicitly less valid approach (Shaffir and Stebbins, 1991:10). Nevertheless, this view was met with some resistance in the United States from humanists such as Blumer, Mills,

and Sorokin (Fontana and Frey, 1994:363). These individuals, among others, considered the role of human agency as key in examining issues such as race, class, and social inequality. Consequently, qualitative research began acknowledging individuals as actors responding rationally to personal life circumstances rather than being governed entirely by social structure.

In the last few decades, qualitative methodologists such as Glaser and Strauss (1967), Lofland and Lofland (1984), Adler and Adler (1987), Berg (1989), and Shaffir and Stebbins (1980, 1991) have supported the need for researchers to utilize unstructured and flexible research techniques while conducting exploratory studies - principally to allow respondents to speak for themselves using their own terms and categories. As our knowledge increases and theories develop, fieldwork techniques such as interviewing can then be set aside and more structured mechanisms can be used. While Shaffir and Stebbins (1991) acknowledge that "initial exploration has been the chief role of qualitative research", they emphasize that the exploratory stage of qualitative work is not "always 'preliminary' in its import" (p.11).

Influenced by this naturalistic approach, this field study explored hazing in sport using semi-structured interviews (Lofland and Lofland, 1984:3). Berg (1989) situates the semi-standardized (semi-structured) interview somewhere between the unstandardized (informal) interview and the standardized (formal) interview:

This type of interview involves the implementation of a number of predetermined questions and/or special topics. These questions are typically asked of each interviewee in a systematic and consistent order...the interviewers are permitted (in fact expected) to probe far beyond the answers to their prepared and standardized questions. (p. 17, brackets in original)

Rather than attempt to determine the frequency of preconceived topics (a more typical goal of the structured interview), Lofland and Lofland (1984) explain that the semi-structured interview should "seek to *discover* the informant's *experience* of a particular topic or situation" (p. 12, italics in original). McCracken (1988) further emphasizes the

strength of the qualitative method as it can "take us into the mental world of the individual, to glimpse the categories and logic by which he or she sees the world" (p. 9).

I applied a qualitative research method to my study of hazing in sport subcultures. A qualitative, exploratory field study enabled me to acquire a broad knowledge of the prevalence of hazing in sport. Also, in order to gain an understanding of the meanings that athletes attribute to initiation events, a semi-structured interviewing technique was implemented. The following section details the research procedures used for my study of hazing in sport subcultures.

## **PROCEDURE**

The semi-structured interview process first involved contacting athletes by telephone and setting up an interview with them at a time and location that was comfortable for them and conducive to relaxed conversation. For those athletes who were actively competing in their respective sport, the coaches were first approached in order to gain their approval of the interview<sup>1</sup>. Most meetings occurred on campus, either in the researcher's office or a vacant classroom, or in some cases and when requested, the athlete's residence.

Although every attempt was made to ensure the greatest possible representativeness of the sample, random sampling techniques were not practical or applicable to this study. While attempting to uncover the phenomenon of hazing in Western Canadian sport subcultures, this study included willing respondents from a large population of active as well as inactive athletes. This population was by no means a closed population that was documented and capable of random sampling techniques. Even if a random sampling technique had been applicable, this study did not have the (temporal or financial) resources to implement a method that ultimately would have required a much larger sample than was actually used. Additionally, this exploratory study is not concerned so much with quantitative representativeness as it is with

discovering and understanding hazing in sport subcultures. It is, after all, one of the first such studies to be conducted in Canada.

The sampling method employed was a convenience sample (Fowler, 1993:11-16) of members of athletic teams based out of three Western Canadian cities - Saskatoon, Calgary, and Vancouver. The sample was selected from amateur and professional teams competing in contact (football, basketball, soccer, hockey, field hockey, rugby, wrestling) and non-contact (volleyball, swimming, synchronized swimming, and water polo) sports. Various teams (male and female) were selected by the researcher and, subsequently, athletes (active and inactive) were approached in the hope of obtaining interviews. The sample does reflect the imbalance of sports actually played by males in the country as opposed to females. As the research progressed, 'snowball' sampling techniques (Berg, 1989:60) were also implemented as respondents disclosed other athletes to the researcher.

Individual athletes (female/male, rookie/veteran) were approached and asked to voluntarily participate in semi-structured interviews. As the slim literature on hazing rituals suggests, social groups which have uni-sex memberships have traditionally participated in initiations. Therefore, this sample was limited to male and female athletes participating on same-sex teams only.

In total, 30 athletes were interviewed from the above population between October, 1996 and February, 1997. The length of the interviews ranged from 35 minutes to 90 minutes, with an average length of 55 minutes. Of the 30 interviewees, 16 were male and 14 were female; 17 competed in contact<sup>2</sup> sports and 13 competed in non-contact<sup>3</sup> sports. Eighteen were veteran athletes and 12 were rookies; 17 were actively competing at the time of the interview and 13 were post-competitors<sup>4</sup>.

Although a list of questions (see Appendix B) was used to provide a basic structure to the interviews and to ensure that the same basic topics were covered with each respondent, the interviews were generally conducted informally (Lofland and Lofland, 1984:12, Berg, 1989:17). The interview schedule involved open-ended questions

and prompts which attempted to uncover the underlying purpose and meaning of hazing for both veteran and rookie athletes, but which were designed to accommodate a number of different conversational directions (Berg, 1989:13-41). The interview schedule was divided into three sections, each representing thematic interests.

The first set of questions consisted of background questions which also served to increase rapport between the researcher and the respondent (Berg, 1989:21). Questions such as "How old are you?", "How long have you been playing this sport?", and "What position do you play?", were simple questions which started the interviewees off by talking about something with which they were comfortable. Spradley (1979) calls this the 'exploration stage' of the interview. He believes:

Apprehension, the first stage, arises in part from simple unfamiliarity with the terrain of ethnographic interviews. Exploration is the natural process of becoming familiar with this new landscape. Although each party begins exploring immediately, there comes a point where they leave behind the feelings of uncertainty and anxiety to enter the fullblown stage of exploration. (p.80-81)

These 'simple' questions were intended to ease the respondents into the interview by not having to answer 'complicated' questions from the outset. This section also addressed the social interaction of teammates and, more specifically, the rookie/veteran hierarchy within the athlete's sport subculture. Here, the questions used expressions that were familiar to their sport subculture, contributing again to the respondent-interviewer rapport (Spradley, 1979:81; Berg, 1989:21-22). For instance, the questions "Are there certain groups of players (bench-sitters, starters, rookies, or veterans) that tend to 'hang out' together?" and "Are you familiar with the term Rookie Night or Rookie Show?", reaffirmed that the interviewer was an 'insider' who was able to 'speak the language'. The terms used in these questions are known to most athletes, easily understood by them, and helped initiate a strong communication link between the two parties. As Spradley (1979) states, "When a sense of sharing occurs, a moment of relaxation comes. Both can then begin to explore the territory with greater freedom" (p.81).

The second phase of the interview asked both rookie and veteran respondents to reflect upon their personal experiences with hazing. In order to 'tap' the nature and extent of hazing, the interview schedule contained several versions of questions that ultimately were addressing the same issue - rookie initiations. I first asked the question, "Have you ever witnessed or participated in any sort of initiation event(s) with this team?" Keeping the question broad allowed the respondent to define the event according to his/her experiences. It was important for this section to be scattered with scheduled prompts, encouraging the respondents to expand their answers (Lofland and Lofland, 1984:56-57). Prompts included, "Who else was involved?", "Where was it held?", and "What role did you play in the initiation event?" Additionally, if some form of initiation event did in fact occur, I made sure to ask "Does your team have a name for their initiation event?" so that I could subsequently refer to the ceremony using the appropriate 'insider' signifier.

The third phase of the interview schedule involved questions addressing the meanings the athletes attach to their rookie/veteran status and why they choose/refuse to participate in hazing ceremonies. The section began with the question, "What function do you feel rookie initiations play within sport?" Respondents were then asked "Are you in favor of sport teams conducting initiation events?," allowing for athletes to voice their opinion on hazing regardless of whether or not their particular team initiated their rookies. Once again, prompts of "Why or Why not?" were posed throughout this phase.

All of the interviewees signed consent forms (see Appendix A) prior to their interview. The interviews were audiotaped with the consent of the respondent (all consented), and later transcribed. Subjects were advised that their participation was strictly voluntary, that they could end the interview at any time, and that if they were uncomfortable with any question they could decline to answer. Since the identity of the subject was known by the researcher, anonymity could not be assured. However, any subsequent reference to subjects, places, or institutions throughout the thesis is made through the use of pseudonyms in an attempt to keep all identities confidential.

## METHODOLOGICAL EXPERIENCES

The fieldwork strategy adopted in this study follows the steps identified by Shaffir and Stebbins (1991). These include at least four separate stages: 'getting in', 'learning the ropes', 'maintaining relations', and 'leaving and keeping in touch'. My role in the fieldwork process was that of a researcher involved in a social relationship with various athletes and coaches. I will briefly discuss my experiences at each of these four research stages, identifying problems and successes that I had while in the field studying sport subcultures.

### Getting In

Described as "the first truly social moment of naturalistic investigation" (Lofland and Lofland, 1984:20), 'getting in' is the ability to gain the acceptance of the individuals one wishes to study. Possibly, the likelihood of me gaining smooth and successful access was increased since I entered the field as a former athlete and coach. In Berg's (1989) words, "knowledge about the people being studied and familiarity with their routines and rituals facilitate entry as well as rapport once entry has been gained" (p.58). Lofland and Lofland (1984) also value the "emotionally engaged" field researcher and support the fact that many social science research projects have been grounded in the researcher's personal biography (p.8).

Shaffir and Stebbins (1991) address cultural and ascriptive differences between the researcher and the researched, "where these differences are minimal, access and even acceptance are likely to be enhanced..." (p.26). Being a white, middle-class, male, university student in my mid-20s (that is to say, sharing demographic characteristics with most of the respondents) perhaps further enhanced my ability to enter the field and be accepted by the respondents.

Before contacting athletes who were currently competing in their respective sport, I approached their coaches (or 'gatekeepers' as I came to see them) in order to be

granted access (Shaffir and Stebbins, 1991:28). Once aware of my identity and goals, the majority of coaches openly approved of my study and willingly helped out with pertinent information (such as athletes' names and phone numbers). Several coaches chose not to provide me with the home phone numbers of their athletes but instead approached the athletes with my name and number after which the athletes subsequently contacted me. There were two male 'gatekeepers', however, who were very inquisitive and reluctant to allow their male athletes to participate. Although I feel that they may have eventually allowed me to approach their players, I accepted their initial responses, thanked them for their time, and did not further pursue interviews. I found these incidents rather informative and, on the basis of their reluctance and information furnished in other interviews by respondents aware of hazing events on teams coached by these people, suspect that the coaches' defensive attitudes toward the issue of hazing may be indicative of their attempts to force the phenomenon underground or, at the very least, of their concern regarding possible public disclosure of hazing on their team.

Without exception, all of the athletes that I contacted willingly agreed to participate in an audiotaped, semi-structured interview. I also had no difficulty with the signing of the consent form (which I presented to the respondents prior to the interview). I feel that my friendliness, openness, and willingness to meet with the informants whenever and wherever they wanted quickly established a rapport with the athletes (Lofland and Lofland, 1984:27).

### **Learning the Ropes**

According to Shaffir and Stebbins (1991:83), this stage of the research process starts when the researcher begins to learn about the setting, the people, their activities, and his/her relationship to them. Shaffir and Stebbins (1991:84) feel that the time needed to 'learn the ropes' varies with every study because the personality of the researcher, the research setting, and the respondent's feelings about the study all contribute to the fundamental social basis of the research process. As a former athlete and coach, I entered

the field with what Lofland and Lofland (1984:11) call an 'intimate familiarity' with the research environment. Contrastingly, an 'outside' fieldworker who may not be accustomed to the setting, lifestyle, language or argot, and interests of the sport world would have to acquaint him/herself with the subculture prior to entry.

Since I am a researcher who has personally experienced athletic subcultures and, more specifically, ritualized initiations, my role during the 'learning the ropes' stage was not concerned with 'learning' but rather making sure that I did not appear to be an expert on the topic so the subcultural members would be unlikely to 'teach' me about their world (Lofland and Lofland, 1984:26). Several researchers (Lofland and Lofland, 1984:16; McCracken, 1988:22; Berg, 1989:20) have cautioned that the interviewer who is an 'insider' to the setting must 'manufacture distance' from the respondents. The researcher needs to incorporate a neutral attitude toward the interviewees - "'appreciating' the situation rather than 'correcting'" (Berg, 1989:56). This can easily be achieved during the interview through prompts that are incorporated into the interview design (see Appendix B). Along with possibly providing richer data, prompts allow for the respondent to articulate what he or she may take for granted. They also assist in conducting a consistent interview that is assumption-free and focuses on listening, attending to theoretical concerns, and recording field notes (McCracken, 1988:24, 25).

### **Maintaining Relations**

During the course of the research, I followed McCracken's (1988:26) advice on the researcher's presentation of self. Rather than presenting myself in a formal manner, I maintained a balance between formal and informal dress. This allowed for a synthesis between the athlete and myself. Any apprehensions the respondents may have had during what Spradley (1979:81) calls 'the exploration stage of the interview' would have been softened with this first impression of similarity in dress. I feel that this approach to the interviews gave the respondents a feeling of comfort knowing that the interview was neither a cold, scientific affair, nor very unprofessional and indifferent. It became evident

that the respondents were comfortable with the interview and in my presence later on as several contacted me after the interview with the names and numbers of other athletes whom they felt I should interview. This openness and willingness to disclose personal experiences of hazing by respondents facilitated a 'snowballing' sampling technique (Berg, 1989:60) which I initially did not expect to proceed quite so smoothly. One interviewee even insisted that she bring me across campus to meet another athlete who, in her words, "had some good stories."

Reciprocity is also a way to maintain relations with respondents. This occurs when the researcher provides something useful to informants in exchange for their cooperation. In my case, I offered to buy the respondents a coffee or other beverage. In some cases, a simple offering of a piece of gum before the interview got underway appeared to have a positive appeal. In over 85% of the cases, this offer was declined but I feel that it also contributed to rapport prior to the interview being conducted.

Rapport also appeared to be consolidated at the end of the interview when I asked what the respondent thought of the interview questions and if there were any questions he/she thought I should or should not have asked. I finished the interview with the question, "If you were to conduct a study similar to this, is there anything that you might do differently than I have done with my study?," followed by "Are there any questions you would or would not have asked?" I feel that this conveyed the impression to respondents that they were truly contributing to the research process, and in addition to providing me with valuable data, underscored that they were also being assisted through the research. I quickly discovered that respondents were quite comfortable with how the interview was conducted and the questions that were posed to them. As a male hockey player remarked, "I think it is fine. I wouldn't change a thing." Other athletes showed a genuine interest in the subject of inquiry. One female soccer player remarked, "I think what you are doing is great. I would really be interested to see what you come up

with after you are done." All of the answers to my final two questions were positive and reassured me that the interview was a somewhat pleasurable experience for the athletes.

### **Leaving and Keeping in Touch**

Shaffir and Stebbins (1991:207-210) stress that the researcher's departure from the setting is a significant but marginalized aspect of qualitative field research. The process of disengaging from the field, according to Maines, Shaffir, and Turowetz (1980), is related to the nature of the relationships that were formed: "The leaving process is an aspect of an ongoing interplay between field circumstances and the way in which the researcher negotiates social relationships and a workable identity " (p.273).

Throughout the research, I was able to use my insider status to my advantage. Familiarity with the setting, lifestyles, and in some cases, values of the athletes enabled me to focus on critical insight into the dynamics of the subcultures (Lofland and Lofland, 1984). Also, the short-term, overt nature of my relationship with respondents and the distance that I maintained throughout the interviews allowed for leaving the field to be a relatively unproblematic process.

Although I was able to collect a rich data set, what Snow (1980:102-105) calls 'saturation' was not a contributing factor in terms of exiting the field. The data collected, and subsequent patterns developed in my data analysis, are not meant to be generalized outside of the sample population. There are certainly avenues of the research that remain unexplored. I would, for example, like to enter the numerous sport subcultures that were not included in this study due to financial and temporal constraints.

As something of an insider, I confess that I am not completely leaving the field (Stebbins, 1991). I have continually encountered interviewees at the gym or on campus, for example, reinforcing my rapport and status as 'insider'. This ability to re-enter the field with relative ease, perhaps to acquire missing data, to ask brief follow-up or confirmatory questions, or follow the career of an athlete, is one of the advantages of remaining in touch with informants (Gallmeier, 1991:224-31).

Following the data collection process, the transcribed interviews and fieldnotes were analyzed in terms of the concerns which were identified in the substantive and theoretical literature. Patterns and themes associated with the population's initiation practices evolved during the data analysis. Each transcribed interview was reviewed for content regarding the nature and extent of hazing, as well as meanings members associated with the phenomenon and with their respective subcultures more broadly. It quickly became evident that hazing practices occurred but in varying degrees across the sample. Additionally, subtle variations in the nature and extent of hazing also became obvious during the analysis. It should be noted that the researcher's 'insider' status presented the opportunity to confidently recognize and develop themes in the data which an 'outsider' may have either misinterpreted or overseen. The data presented in the following chapter illustrate the existence of hazing in Western Canadian sport subcultures, and the meanings associated with involvement in these subcultures as articulated by their members.

## NOTES

1. The investigator-respondent relationship (McCracken, 1988) was extended in this study to involve the coach of those athletes who were competing at the time of the interview. Coaches were approached either in person or by telephone in order to minimize any risk of what Lofland and Lofland (1984:22) refer to as the "spy" quality of covert research in closed settings like sport subcultures.
2. For the purpose of this study, sports designated as 'contact' included football, ice hockey, field hockey, soccer, basketball, rugby and wrestling.
3. For the purpose of this study, sports designated as 'non-contact' included volleyball, swimming, synchronized swimming, and water polo.
4. Post-competitors were athletes who were no longer involved in competition at the time of the interview. This does not include absence from competition due to personal injury or off-season.

## **CHAPTER FIVE: SPORTS-RELATED HAZING**

This chapter examines the locations and contexts of sports-related hazing, and the various activities that veterans used in order to initiate their newest members onto their respective teams and into the subculture more broadly. The significance of these hazing events and the meanings that the athletes attach to ritualized initiations are also addressed. Finally, the temporal limits of the hazing process are discussed, and incidents of hazing that extend beyond specific 'Rookie Night' events are highlighted.

### **THE CONTEXT OF HAZING**

#### **Timing**

Sports-related hazing takes a number of forms and, as will be discussed, may be an ongoing component of socialization. However, most sport subcultures 'hazed' initiates during the by-now institutionalized setting - Rookie Night. For all of the sport subcultures studied, the hazing process began as soon as the pre-season 'try-outs' were finished and the respective teams' rosters were finalized. With the exception of football's so-called 'Rookie Show', and rugby players who, in Karl's words, "don't really call it [initiation] anything," athletes consistently termed their respective initiation ceremony 'Rookie Night'. In the words of a male soccer veteran, "It's only a label...I guess we could call it anything, but just through tradition we call it Rookie Night" (Dave). Although the terminology may differ slightly across sports groups, there is certainly no obvious attempt by veteran players to conceal the inevitability of some sort of initiation event for incoming players. Senior members communicated to their rookie teammates, either verbally or by posting a notice in the team-room, the date of their initiation often well in advance. As Donna, a rookie female soccer player, remarked, "I think they [veterans] wanted to warn us [rookies] ahead of time...so we could cancel any plans we might have had and make sure that we could make it."

Some senior players on a variety of teams even went as far as posting a list of props that the rookies needed to bring to their initiation event. For example, rookie male swimmers were required to bring an extra pair of underwear, condoms, and their own beer glass to their Rookie Night. It turned out, as rookie swimmer Quinton explained, that only the glass was actually used throughout the night: "I think they [veterans] were just trying to scare us by not telling us what we needed those things for." Several women's teams told their rookies to bring "whatever they wanted to drink" to the event. According to one neophyte field hockey player, it was implied that they were to bring alcoholic beverages, but one rookie did not drink and subsequently was allowed to drink soda while the others (including veterans) consumed their alcoholic drinks.

One evident pattern emerging from the data was that veterans tended to schedule Rookie Night on a Friday or Saturday evening, relatively early in their respective athletic seasons. Ursula, a female veteran volleyball player, rationalized such scheduling of the event in the following way: "We try to do it at the beginning of the season in hopes that this gathering will ease tensions or make friends." Clearly, this underlies one and perhaps the major goal of initiation events - to enhance group solidarity for the upcoming season.

Some teams appeared to rely on established cultural norms and conventions within their groups for the scheduling of their particular event. Professional and amateur football players, for example, always held their 'Rookie Show' on the last day of training camp. Likewise, as Loren explained, men's basketball players in the sample initiated "on the first Friday after the team has been made...right after practice." Both the men's and women's rugby teams in the sample initiated following the team's first game. Men's soccer and men's hockey teams conducted initiations "on the first road trip" (Dave) while the women's soccer team "always do it on a night when there's a cabaret" (Tanya). Cabarets are dances/fundraisers that are organized by a university team or club and are attended predominantly by university students. (It will become more evident as the data unfold that cabarets were very popular venues for university athletic teams to initiate their

membership.) Other teams appeared to schedule their events on a day which seemed to be agreed upon as "good for everyone" (Ursula). It should be noted, however, that "everyone" constituted only veteran players as rookies were not involved in deciding when or where the Rookie Night or Rookie Show event would take place - they were simply required to be there.

One exception to this pattern of initiating early into the athletic season was the women's field hockey team which conducted its initiation over three weeks after its outdoor season had actually been completed. What might appear as a rather odd timing for this particular rookie night was explained by Tamara, a veteran player:

We usually do it [Rookie Night] a lot earlier in the season but we didn't have time to do it. We found out that the soccer cab[aret] was on Saturday so we [veterans] decided that was the best time to do it.

More disparate than the timing of Rookie Night, the socialization of rookie athletes took place in a variety of locations. Although these settings will be classified as either 'public' or 'private', some initiation events involved more than one venue and a team's Rookie Night may not be exclusive to either venue or location. The following is a discussion of the settings for the respective hazing events.

## **Location**

### **I. 'Private Shows'**

'Private shows' involved rookie ceremonies that were conducted behind closed doors in locations such as the team's dressing room, the home of a veteran player, the team bus, or a hotel room while the team was on a road trip. These relatively private settings enabled the veterans to more fully control the event by confining the inductees to an enclosed location. It also allowed them to control who witnessed the initiation activities and thus to preclude public viewing and, crucially, public scrutiny. Attendance at these private locations was usually open to team members only, as Ursula, a female veteran volleyball player, reported: "No friends. Boyfriends or girlfriends are [asked] to stay at home. No coaches are aware of what goes on." Some hockey players did allow for

what might be seen as peripheral members of the group such as ex-players and trainers to attend their private rookie event.

For several varsity teams, dressing rooms served as key venues for initiation events early in the evening, although they generally spilled over into the public sphere at some point. The team's dressing room was used by the women's field hockey and soccer teams as a meeting place, a place to discuss schedule and strategy before venturing into the public sphere. According to female rookie soccer player Donna:

The veterans were supposed to be at our locker room at 7:00 [pm] and we [rookies] were supposed to be there at 7:30 [pm]. They made us wait outside while they got everything ready.

While football rookies were initiated only in their team room, Rookie Night signified the first time that the men's basketball rookies were even allowed to enter their team's official locker room. Throughout the team's pre-season period, the rookies were segregated in an adjacent classroom while the veterans dressed in the main room. However, the basketball rookies' time spent in the team room that night was short-lived as their initiation also became public later in the evening.

Some teams preferred the privacy of a veteran player's home to conduct their team's Rookie Night<sup>1</sup>. Both the men's and women's swimming and volleyball teams in the sample have traditionally initiated their rookies on the same night but at a house of a team member. During the season prior to the research, two swimming teams initially had hoped to meet up with each other later in the evening. As female rookie swimmer Mary recalled:

We all met at a girl's house for dinner. They started planning what we [rookies] had to do and we were supposed to meet up with the guys later 'cause they were doing [initiating] their rookies that night too.

Hockey players also used a fellow teammate's house for some of their initiations:

Then we had our rookie party which was strictly the guys on the team - it was at one of the guy's places. As soon as you [rookies] got there you were geared down to your underwear and put in the garage. (Dan)

A veteran volleyball player hosted his team's Rookie Night at his family's cabin. Despite the obvious inconveniences of transporting the entire membership to a location that was over an hour's drive away, everyone from the team attended.

In this sample at least, hockey hazings appeared to be unique in the sense that they were conducted on a bus while the team was travelling to or from a game. Perhaps given the nature of the sport (i.e., the vast amount of time that many Canadian hockey players spend travelling), the bus may be simply replacing another private setting such as a house or a hotel room. Similarly, the men's soccer team, which also travels extensively, held some of its initiations in a hotel room:

This was our pre-season trip to the coast. Yeah, in our hotel. We actually got really lucky this year - we got the entire bottom floor to ourselves. That's why we did all the [initiation] events 'cause we really didn't disturb anybody. We kept everything on our floor. (Dave)

This 'prime' situation enabled the men's soccer initiation event to spill out into the hallway of the hotel as well.

While the majority of the teams performed some form of initiation in both private and public settings, football initiations were held exclusively in private settings (again, in dressing rooms). Although this sport appears unique with respect to where its players held initiations, the section of this chapter that focuses on the specific initiation practices conducted by athletic teams will show that it was not drastically different from the rest of the population studied.

## II. 'Public Shows'

Several hazing locations could best be classified as 'public' because they enabled outsiders to witness the socialization activities. As previously mentioned, university cabarets (held both on and off campus) and local bars appeared to be the most common venues for public initiations by varsity teams. Teams that ventured out into the public arena after the private segment of their Rookie Night invariably ended up at either a university dance or bar. Men's soccer and basketball as well as a women's swimming

team initiated at a city bar while the women's field hockey, soccer, and volleyball teams all chose cabarets that were being held on campus.

Several teams used other publicly staged sporting events to initiate their rookies.

For example, hockey player Dan recalled his initiation held in public:

We started with a women's volleyball game. All the rookies were given women's clothing. Lipstick and various make-up was smeared on our faces and we had to go out to the volleyball game...there's probably a few hundred people. And we were told to be the loudest cheerleaders.

Similarly, the men's basketball rookies were also required to 'dress up' in women's clothing for an entire day of university classes.

Other isolated incidents occurred in public places such as parking lots, highways, local bars/pubs, and shopping malls. It was evident that all of these public venues were deliberately selected by the veteran membership to publicly embarrass the rookies. Although, from one point of view, there seemed an obvious attempt to degrade and isolate rookie athletes, one male veteran soccer player (Dave) rationalized public initiations in a slightly different way:

I myself look at it as a way of advertising, to show that our team is there at the bar and these are our players coming onto the team. Like, we don't look at it as [though] they are anything worse or anything lower. They are just the new players.

However, not all rookies interpreted forms of public hazing quite so favorably. According to rookie volleyball player Shawna, for instance, being "dressed up really ugly" and then taken to a public place was an unpleasant experience:

All of the veterans brought old clothes to the team room. I couldn't believe some of the stuff. It was awful... So all of us [rookies] had to put these clothes on before we went out. We had to wear really bad outfits. Our hair was all hairsprayed and we had to wear tons of make-up. All of us looked pretty bad...The veterans thought it was pretty funny. It would have been good if we could have taken the make-up off and put our own clothes back on when we went to the bar, but they [veterans] made us keep it all on...It was really embarrassing.

On the other hand, some rookies, such as a male hockey player, enjoyed their public display and felt that it was associated with certain social rewards:

It was embarrassing for about the first ten minutes. After that, everyone noticed that you were on the team which is a good thing. It almost makes you more popular. People see you as being part of the team. That is a good feeling. (Steve)

Of all the teams in the study, male wrestlers and both men's and women's rugby teams were the only groups that conducted exclusively public initiation events. In these cases, Rookie Night was always held at a city bar and in public. According to one wrestler who had been with his club for five years, part of the 'testing' mechanism taking place involved the fact that veterans value how rookies 'perform' in a social setting, almost as though performance during Rookie Night was a test of nerve, or a test of one's ability to perform socially:

It's more than just having to prove yourself in the wrestling room, 'cause that's always a tough thing to do. But you are in a social setting - this is where you are going to make it or break it with these guys [veterans]. (Neil)

In these ways, and confirming the earlier work of Donnelly and Young (1988), it is clear that *full* subcultural acceptance in rugby at least requires far more than ability and willingness to perform athletically.

The men's and women's rugby teams in the sample initiated their rookies at a bar that was frequented by their memberships several times a week during the season. As rugby players Henry (veteran) and Karl (rookie) explained:

Every team has a local pub that they go to. None of us have clubhouses, that's the problem. So instead, we all just go to our local bar. Some nights it's pretty much our bar. We've been coming here for years.

Yeah, we all go to The P\_\_\_ after the game for some beer. Sometimes there are veterans already at the bar before the team gets there because they [veterans] didn't play with us that night - either they were hurt or it was a Division II game and they only play Division I. So they just go straight to the bar and don't even come out and watch our game. They'll be there all night...It's like they hang out at the bar more than they do at home. And it is the same bar every time. No questions asked. After the game or the odd practice, it is just expected that everyone is going to go to The P\_\_\_.

In light of comments made by some of the respondents about their team's public initiations, whether one can consider the aforementioned venues as truly 'public' is

questionable. The mere fact that these teams chose to initiate their rookie teammates in places that were familiar and comfortable for at least the veteran membership suggests that some veterans favor a rather cautious approach to their initiation ceremonies, as compared with, for example, the flagrantly public hazings perpetrated by rugby players in Young's (1983) sample. The widespread use of cabarets and local bars often populated by students rather than social settings that are perhaps less familiar and more heavily populated with outsiders indicates that the memberships strive to initiate where their team may be recognized, and perhaps, empathized with. The explanations of a female varsity soccer player support this notion of what might be called 'strategic initiation' in a comfortable and predictable setting:

It is at the university. People just have to ask and know what's going on. It's not as if we [veterans] drag them [rookies] down town and make fools of them in front of all these people they don't know. (Tanya)

Of course, not all players agreed on the most appropriate setting for initiation events. For example, soccer player Dave felt that initiating anonymously in a 'foreign' public setting, "in front of people you don't know," was actually *less* humiliating for rookies. Dave's team used their first road trip to publicly initiate one of their rookies:

They [veteran soccer players] took him [rookie] on the bus-boy's cart that they take the bags on and taped him up...in just his underwear and pushed him around downtown...It wasn't that bad for him I guess. I mean really, who is he gonna know? He might know the odd person, whereas if they did something like that here his chances of being seen by a few people he knows would be a little higher.

However, this same team also initiated all of its rookies at a university cabaret several weeks later, supporting the apparently cautious tendencies of public initiations by some sport teams.

## THE HAZING PROCESS

This section describes the various hazing incidents that were reported by the respondents. It is arranged according to sport, but in no particular order, with both male and female athlete experiences represented whenever possible. Throughout the section, incidents and terminology will recur across sports and, even more specifically, across teams. Some incidents will also bear some similarity to the earlier literature review of hazing incidents both in and outside of the sports world. However, for reasons stated in Chapter Four, these data may not be generalizable outside of the studied population and are to be viewed as contributing to the relatively unexplored phenomenon of hazing in sport subcultures.

### Soccer

The men's amateur soccer team first initiated its rookies during what players called the 'Rookie Olympics'. This consisted of various games in which the rookies had to compete. One veteran player explained:

This year we had the Rookie Olympics at the hotel. We just made up events as the night went on. After every round or event they [rookies] all had to have a shot [Sambucca liqueur]. They basically got drunk on us. It was a fun way of doing it [initiating]. (Dave)

Apparently, the evening began with all of the rookies placing Twinkies under their armpits and running relays in the hotel hallway, grabbing socks placed at either end. The losers of the 'race' "had to collect all the Twinkies and take a bite out of each Twinkie" (Dave).

Another event was held in the bathroom, as rookie Tom reported:

A veteran had already taken a dump [deficated] in a bag and put it on top of the toilet. They [veterans] cut up some bananas and put them into the toilet and then told us that we have to reach into the toilet for a beer, pull it out and drink it. We did all of this blindfolded.

The intent of this 'game' was to have the rookie believe that he was reaching into a toilet full of feces. It seemed as though veterans used these events to test exactly how much abuse rookies would take before they refused to participate or, in other words, to test their

intensity and commitment to the team. Veteran players evidently enjoyed placing rookies in a position where they, in one veteran's words, "struggled" and could not complete the task. As Dave explained, some players were understandably repulsed by the task:

There were guys [rookies] who went straight into the bathroom and reached into the toilet without any complaints. They were crazy, they didn't really care. But there were some guys who were going "No, I can't do it." They really got freaked out. As soon as they smelled shit, they started to panic... It was hilarious.

Most of the events in this particular initiation were based upon a 'standard' which was set by the veteran players and which the rookies had to attempt to adhere to. This was more evident when veterans challenged rookies to sit in a hot-tub filled with ice and water for one minute. Those who failed the first time were penalized by having to consume more alcohol and being forced to try again multiple times.

A second initiation event occurred for the male soccer rookies several weeks later when the team held its 'Rookie Buy Night'. In Dave's words:

The Rookie Buy Night is more of a tradition whereas the Rookie Olympics we [veterans] just came up with this year. It was just our way of initiating everybody...The rookies have to buy the older players, each one, a drink.

The rookies were also doubly humiliated in the public bar by being dressed up in women's clothing and having the word "rookie" written on their faces with a marker.

Rather than initiating the entire group of rookies together, another men's soccer team initiated its rookies through separate acts of public humiliation. These events included one rookie who was taped to a chair, with the letter 'R' (for rookie) shaved into his chest hair, and left in a hotel hallway. Other rookies were taped together and taken to a hotel room that was inhabited by the women's soccer team. Consistent with the taping theme, yet another men's rookie soccer player was taped to a baggage cart in his underwear and pushed around in the downtown area.

The women's soccer team followed a similar pattern to the men's team with regard to initiating its rookie players. The first road trip was replete with practical jokes that included having ice and granola placed in the rookies' hotel beds. The team's Rookie

Night, held several weeks later, began with the team first meeting in the dressing room for some initiation 'games'. Here, rookies had to participate in competitions such as eating peanut butter off the floor without using their hands. The losers had to place a dollop of peanut butter under their armpits and keep it there for the rest of the night. As an indication of the implicitly heterosexist underpinnings of many of these sports hazings, the only way that the peanut butter was allowed to be removed was if a male stranger licked it off. The team also held what it called 'The Pickle Race', which involved rookies running against one another down a hallway, while they had pickles inserted into their (clothed) buttocks. The overall loser of the races was punished by having to eat their own pickle.

Although alcohol featured centrally in the activities of the women's Rookie Night, one neophyte explained, "No one got punished [by] having to drink something. You could drink if you wanted to but didn't have to." The veterans then "rookied us one by one...They [veterans] put us in our own [washroom] stall so none of the rookies could see" (Donna). What happened next was called 'Kangaroo Court'. As Tanya, a fourth year player, described:

We usually do it in the shower 'cause we use candles; there's no lights. We [veterans] all sit around and the fifth years are the judge and jury. They [rookies] come in individually and they're blindfolded...then we 'charge' them with things... just like for dating somebody on the men's team or something...we all start chanting and stuff.

The 'sentences' imposed by the veterans were 'shots' of unpleasant-tasting condiments.

One rookie tried to describe what she was forced to drink:

One of them was, I think, salad dressing, oil and vinegar, one was like soy sauce, and I don't even know what the other one was. They weren't alcohol. Then they gave us this gum that made our teeth black. (Donna)

Following the completion of the 'games', the female rookies were dressed up prior to going to a cabaret:

I was wearing tight gold shorts, red and black lingerie, over that a see-through shirt with ruffles, and bright yellow snow boots. My hair was teased and hair sprayed out to here and sprayed green...and I had a red purse with a real [dead] fish in it. The fish stank. I had to go around and

ask guys to pet my fish whenever she [a veteran] said...Another rookie had tampons wrapped in her hair and had to carry a bag with a Swank [pornographic] magazine in it. (Donna)

The 'games' continued throughout the cabaret. A 'Scavenger Hunt' game had the rookies obtain an unused condom, signatures (on their bodies) from two male hockey players known to them, and the signature of a stranger, in this case someone named Travis or Bill (two randomly chosen names). Later in the evening, veterans actually assumed ownership of rookies. For example, one veteran player "wouldn't let guys talk to 'her' rookie - a guy ended up paying the vet three bucks to talk to her for one minute...she [veteran] ended up making thirty bucks."

For the men's and women's soccer teams in the sample, initiations occurred several times at several locations, and both sets of teams initiated its rookies on the road as well as in their private dressing rooms. Similarly, both men's and women's teams used games (i.e., Rookie Olympics, Scavenger Hunt) in order to initiate their newest members. However, while the men tended to include more physical punishments in their initiations, the women relied on less physical events such as dressing-up their rookies in unfashionable and unattractive styles of women's clothing prior to venturing out into the public sphere.<sup>2</sup>

### **Ice Hockey**

A veteran and a rookie playing women's hockey had not participated in any Rookie Nights throughout their years of playing the sport on several national and club teams. Kelly, the veteran, offered an explanation as to why she felt the team did not 'haze' its rookies:

No, I never have [participated in an initiation event]. I know the guys do but we never did on any team I was on. 'Cause we aren't really together for very long. We don't know each other all that well. We don't spend a lot of time together...just practice and play and travel.

Although the women hockey players in the sample did not indicate any Rookie Night events, it appeared that the team used more subtle socialization techniques than their male

counterparts.<sup>3</sup> As will be revealed later in this chapter, the veteran women hockey players relied on having the rookies perform tasks (pick up pucks, and cook meals) throughout their season. The completion of these tasks served to inscribe the team's belief system upon neophytes and maintain a hierarchical relationship between members.

On the whole, however, the male hockey players had an abundance of initiation stories to tell. One 22 year old player, who was classified as a rookie at the time of his interview, explained his numerous experiences as "a potpourri of hazings:"

Initiations! Man, did I experience initiations. I have been initiated on five or six different teams over the past ten years. I don't even know where to start. How much time do you have? (Dan)

As the study progressed, it became evident that Dan's frequent hazing experiences were common to all of the male hockey players in the sample.

Although the data on hockey hazings came mostly from four players who have been members of over eight different teams in five different leagues, their stories were surprisingly homogeneous. For example, all of the male players recalled being involved in an event known in hockey circles as the 'The Holocaust'. This initiation event which occurred, for example, on the team bus while travelling to or from a game, was described in the following way by Vince:

The rookies would strip down and we would turn on the hot water in the bathroom. We would take all of their clothes and tie them up in balls, wrap them up in hockey tape and throw them in there [bathroom]. The rookies would be in there with all the lights off and they would all have to put their right clothes on and come out, and they would have a time limit.

Another hockey team also implemented 'The Holocaust' but with a twist - instead of throwing the balled clothes into the washroom with the rookies, the veterans threw them out of the bus and into the ditch. In Tim's account: "They [rookies] would have to go out there and get them, change and come back...oh yeah, it's cold. January or February."

The team bus was also the setting for what one team called 'The Impossible Sit-up'. First, a veteran would lie down and pretend that he could not complete a sit-up while he was blindfolded and had his arms crossed over his shoulders:

Like it's easy to do, there's no trick to it, but the vets would go down and try and try and pretend they couldn't do it...A rookie would go "I will! I will!"... So a rookie would go down, we'd band up his eyes...the veteran would take off his pants and put his ass right above where the the guy's head would go up...the rookie, nose right up the ass, easy. (Vince)

While 'The Impossible Sit-up' was an initiation event that involved only one rookie player (witnessed by all of the membership), there were additional events which encompassed all of the hockey initiates.

As previously mentioned, hockey teams also conducted their Rookie Night at private residences. For example, one team had a unique 'welcome' for the rookies once they arrived at a player's home. The rookies were expected to strip naked as soon as they entered. One veteran player dressed himself up as doctor and, in Steve's account, "he'd have surgical gloves on and we [veterans] would put a dumb-bell [circular weight with a hole in the middle] over the rookies' dicks and shave around it." The shaving of rookies, 'The Impossible Sit-up', and other 'tasks' and 'games' show a consistent attempt by hockey veterans to introduce nudity and what can only be considered physical harassment into their initiation activities.

All of the hockey players recalled playing the so-called 'Gong Show' at least once during their careers. Similar to events that take place in other sport subcultures, the object of the game is for the rookies to humor the veterans by doing "whatever it takes." Predictably, the Gong Show is often an opportunity for vulgarity and excess. For instance, one rookie "placed a piece of paper on the floor in front of him and shit on the paper, in front of all the veterans. We laughed" (Vince). Another rookie had a bucket tied to his penis with a hockey skate lace. The bucket was then hung over a hockey stick that was resting across the backs of two chairs. The apparent objective was for the veterans to slowly throw pucks into the bucket, pulling on the rookie's penis, until the rookie could make the veteran players laugh.

One rookie who played hockey at a university in the United States for a year revealed additional initiation experiences that the other three players did not share. For

example, his team's Rookie Night enforced various 'rules' which, according to the player, included some of the following events:

Everyone had to puke...it was not good. To make us puke they would stand us up on chairs [in the garage] one by one. They had a pitcher of their own concoction, we had no idea what it was, and by this time we were too drunk to decipher whether it was alcohol or not. We had to get up on the chair and chug it while the vets were smoking cigars and blowing it in our face...Because the purpose was to make us puke...Some of the guys were puking right there. Others, like myself were happy because we didn't, it was like our goal. But then I puked about a minute later. (Dan)

In this case, Rookie Night ended for the hockey player by being stripped naked and having various obscenities written on his body with a permanent marker. Ironically, the veterans had planned the team's initiation on a night that preceded a mandatory alcohol and drug abuse session for the players that was to last for eight hours. The rookie explained how the next day unfolded:

We [rookies] only got a couple of hours of sleep and then we had to get ourselves together before we were to be at the meeting at eight o'clock in the morning. I personally lasted about half an hour before I had to leave and go into the car and sleep it off. I had the cold shakes and everything...it was awful.

Months after his initial Rookie Night, there was one more initiation incident that this rookie had to participate in called 'The Bear Lake Run'<sup>4</sup>. During the month of November, the rookies were notified by the veterans that they had to go for a run:

So we [rookies] got out to the edge of the lake and we had to gear down [strip down to their underwear] and swim out to the edge of the lake, grab lily pads that were in the middle of the lake, put them on our heads, hold hands in the middle of the lake and sing a song. Then once we were done they took all of our clothes and threw them into the forest which was adjacent to the lake and we had to go get them. (Dan)

Although the women hockey players in the sample did not report Rookie Night experiences while they were playing the sport, this chapter will show later that the women did in fact socialize their newest members, often using what might be seen as more subtle forms of power relationships. The men, on the other hand, reported an abundance of aggressive and degrading initiations, similar to cases cited in the literature on hockey hazings (Nuwer, 1990; Gretzky and Reilly, 1990; *Macleans* January 30, 1995;

*The Toronto Sun*, February 28, 1995; *Lethbridge Herald*, March 18, 1995). Almost exclusively held in private settings (which includes the unique setting of the team bus), men's hockey initiations tended to include nudity, physical punishments, and excessive amounts of alcohol consumption - perhaps more so than any other sport in the sample.

### **Wrestling**

According to one five-year veteran, the men's wrestling team in the sample had consistently held a 'Rookie Buy Night' at a local bar as part of its annual initiation events. Although some of the same rules applied to the wrestling rookies as to the soccer rookies (i.e., each rookie had to buy each veteran a drink), the wrestling rookies changed the structure of this game so that they had to *steal* beer for the vets. According to veteran Neil, "Some of them [rookies] were really good at it." Attempting to explain why this version of the game suddenly became more preferable for veterans, he noted, "The whole idea is that everyone is trying to be as deviant as possible."

Wrestling veterans would often "set the tone for the night" by challenging teammates (veterans and rookies alike in this case) to guzzling contests. Neil explained how the rookies would "try and follow" the veterans:

Usually within the first couple of minutes that we are at the bar, one of the vets will challenge somebody to try and beat him in a guzzling contest. Sometimes it involves glasses of beer, sometimes jugs of beer. Sometimes it is shots of alcohol...and it usually isn't just one race either. Sometimes guys will race five or six times. Now the vets doing this are very good, and can drink very fast and drink a lot. The rookies are, I think, quite intimidated by this at first. They don't want to get sick in front of the guys, but they also don't want to back down to the challenge either. In all of my years of wrestling I don't think I ever saw a rookie defeat a vet in a drinking race.

In a further demonstration of machismo, veteran wrestlers would also dare the rookies to approach women they didn't know in the bar:

All throughout the night, the vets would just pick a girl in the bar and lay out the guidelines for a rookie... Like, "I dare you to go up to that girl and get her to buy you a drink," or "I dare you to go up to that girl and ask her if you can sit on her lap"...Stuff like that, just to see if the guys would do it. Once again if there isn't a rookie that is willing to do it, a veteran might go up and do it instead, so as just to show-up the rookie. But it's not the

same 'cause there's a good chance that the guy [veteran] knows the girl or vice versa. It's harder for the rookie to do it 'cause he's younger and doesn't know anyone in the bar. Sometimes it gets pretty outrageous and the women get really pissed-off at us. Many rookies have been told-off or slapped. All the veterans want them to do is try, right. It's almost as if they [veterans] would rather see somebody get slapped than succeed in doing their task. (Neil)

Initiation for male wrestlers differed from various other teams' rookie initiations in the sense that wrestling veterans actively participated in the initiations. The trend for other male and female teams in the sample was for the veterans to usually sit back and simply observe the rookies rather than be a participant per se. Additionally, wrestlers were somewhat unique since they held their initiations only in public settings. Unlike the hockey players in the sample, wrestlers did not physically harass rookies throughout their initiation events, but rather, they relied on heavy alcohol consumption and the harassment of female strangers as a main ingredient of their initiation activities.

### **Volleyball**

As part of the hazing process, the women's volleyball team met at a veteran player's home prior to taking the 'dressed-up' rookies to the men's volleyball game so that they could be seen cheering by other fans in the stadium. At this game, and in Shawna's words: "We [rookies] would have to do individual acts in front of the crowd, a solo cheer, or drink more." Then, as Shawna explained, the rookies were taken to a cabaret where they had to flirtatiously approach "guys and ask them to buy us [rookies] drinks." When asked if alcohol was a common ingredient to the team's Rookie Night, a veteran player replied, "Yeah, it's the highlight of the party it seems" (Ursula).

Ursula recalled her initiation onto a different volleyball team the year before:

Last year when I was 'rookied' they had this whole agenda where you had to do a shot and run around and do this little circuit [race] - the idea was to get everyone to puke that night or just get totally hammered...the majority of the people [rookies] were knocked out by ten o'clock.

This year's initiations progressed to a local bar after a men's volleyball game and involved more alcohol. Again, in Shawna's words: "Then they [veterans] took us to the bar and

from then on people had to go home early. It was messy. Yeah, people [rookies] were puking." Despite detailing rigorous initiations for her rookie teammates, veteran Ursula felt that the most recent initiation event "was pretty quiet" compared to the previous year.

One veteran male volleyball player, who had just returned from playing professional volleyball overseas, recalled his days with a varsity volleyball team as being rather uneventful in comparison to what he knew of events on the women's team:

We didn't really do that much back then. My last year was about the only time I can remember having a party. That's because we went to my cabin and had a Rookie Night out there... We just had games, relays in the snow, played one-on-one [basketball], that's about it. Not any initiation stuff.  
(Curtis)

Curtis' response is a clear example of the normalization techniques that are often used by athletes as they describe their initiation experiences. Although the accounts of athletes seem to undermine or trivialize the potential seriousness of the hazing process, the data suggest that enforced hazing events are central features of the membership process in sport to which would-be members must conform.

When asked about his rookie year in the professional European volleyball league, Curtis suggested a difference in the hazing process for amateurs and professionals:

No, nothing [initiations]. It's different over there. Everyone is older and has a family... Remember this is their job to play volleyball, they don't worry about initiating and maybe getting somebody hurt.

The respondent in this case believed that the absence of initiation events was indicative of most elite levels of competition. However, what we know from the literature on sport hazings indicates that elite (including professional) athletes are also centrally involved in the hazing process. Although research has not considered volleyball players per se, the current data do not suggest that the level of competition determines participation in hazing in any exclusive way.

The female volleyball players in the sample conducted ritualized hazings that included various games (dressing-up, drinking games) played while copious amounts of alcohol were consumed. They indicated that they experienced some form of initiation

every year that they were involved in the sport although, again, veteran Ursula felt that previous years were "harder than this year."

The male respondent in this part of the sample had competed in three levels of volleyball competition, including a European professional league. According to him, the initiations that he experienced were very minimal and, in his words, "boring." However, it appeared that his experiences were the norm rather than the exception. Contrary to one athlete's attempt at normalizing and downplaying the socialization process, Rookie Night did exist for both the male and female volleyball players in the sample. More importantly and perhaps surprisingly given the literature, initiations existed in this non-contact sport and the events were not noticeably passive when compared to the initiations found in contact sports such as soccer or basketball.

### **Field Hockey**

The theme of dressing up rookie players was also found with female field hockey players. This time, rookies were required to don outdated women's clothing, and had a couple of drinks while they prepared to attend a cabaret:

People [veterans] brought alcohol and clothing. Everyone was drinking. We dressed them [rookies] up in just gross polyester dresses and someone had brought some make-up. Most of them got 'rookie' painted on their forehead. One girl got a wig put on her. All of them had really bad make-up put on them. (Tamara)

As the team arrived at the cabaret, the field hockey rookies were

...paired off with one or two veterans and given a Scavenger Hunt list. They were told that they had to go and find these things...condoms, a t-shirt, and drinks that they get somebody else to buy and give them to the vets. (Tamara)

Although alcohol clearly played a part in field hockey initiation 'games', veteran player Tamara felt that it was monitored closely: "Nobody got sick or anything. We weren't pushing them to drink and get sick." Although Tamara felt that the rookies "weren't forced to do anything too bad," rookie Debbie described a somewhat different experience:

All the time we had to drink gross stuff, I don't even know what it was...We [rookies] had to shoot drinks together. We did that a couple of

times. Some of the girls were almost gagging. I think it's worse when you don't even know what you are drinking.

Debbie's initiation experiences were similar to many of the other rookie respondents in the sample who had to consume (alcoholic or non-alcoholic) 'shots' and dress-up in unfashionable clothing. The Scavenger Hunt game played in this case was similar to the version played by the female soccer rookies who also searched for specific items while they attended a cabaret.

Again, indicative of many veteran athletes' attempt to play-down events they had been directly involved in, Tamara trivialized the field hockey initiation games by claiming that this year's rookies "got off easy, compared to other years." Rookie field hockey player, Debbie, however, described her initiation as quite gruelling and uncomfortable. And according to Debbie's peers more generally, field hockey, a sport often played by females, appeared to have a rich history of sport hazings.

## **Rugby**

The male and female rugby players who were interviewed proved to be unique in the sense that they were members of teams that both practised *and* socialized together. Henry, a veteran male rugby player explained:

When the women's teams began to emerge in the city about seven years ago, they began to attach themselves with one of the men's teams so they could learn the game better. We [men's team] practice with them [women's team] a couple of times a week... They come to our games and we watch some of theirs... We all usually go out together after games or hold dances [fundraisers] together.

This indicates that this particular component of the rugby subculture is perhaps not representative of the sport in many other settings in Canada (Young, 1983; Donnelly and Young, 1988). Specifically, the rugby players in the sample compete in a setting which does not seem as replete with the subcultural trappings traditionally associated with the game. The activities and traditions of the respondents, therefore, may not be representative of the majority of teams which are mentioned in the literature on rugby subculture in Canada. It must be noted, then, that the problem of generalizability

discussed elsewhere in the thesis, is exceptionally relevant with respect to the rugby players in the sample.

Although neither the men's or women's teams consistently used a formal term such as Rookie Night to describe their initiating activities, they did segregate their newest players and haze them after one of their first games of the season<sup>5</sup>. Since the women's team was somewhat incorporated into the men's, predictably there were very similar initiation practices held by both squads. Both the male and female players indicated that they initiated their rookie players exclusively in the social realm of their membership. In other words, initiations were exclusive to the post-game 'get-togethers' as Henry, a veteran male player, reported:

We don't really do much for initiations. We make sure that when the rookies do come out with us [veterans] after a game, they guzzle some beer. We usually make them race against one another. That's it. Just some drinking.

Tina, a veteran player on the women's team indicated the same drinking ritual for female rookies, and added:

Rookies are a little scarce for us [on the women's team] because we are such a new sport for women. It is really hard for us to recruit new players. Last year we only had one new player so we couldn't really have a drinking race - we just made sure that she came out with us and had some shots [alcohol]. She always came out anyways.

It appeared that the post-game gatherings were the only arena for rugby initiations; there were no other reports of initiations outside of these few drinking activities.

Additionally, the male rugby players have a Division I and Division II team, with a considerable overlap of players between the two. Interestingly, both veteran and rookie players agreed that there should not be an initiation for players who were playing on the more competitive, higher level, team for the first time. According to one male rookie:

We are really only one team with two different squads...Therefore only one initiation is necessary. The two teams are really similar with the exception of some veterans who never play Division II and some rookies who might not ever play Division I. (Karl)

Although the initiations reported by both male and female rugby players in the sample did not coincide with the rigorous events that have been traditionally linked with the sport of rugby (Thomson, 1976; Young, 1983; Donnelly and Young, 1988), rookie initiations did take place for the athletes in the sample, though perhaps in a less aggressive manner. Situated in a rather unique setting, male and female players socialized both on and off the field together, and in a similar fashion. Rugby initiations, like wrestling, were confined to the public sphere and largely involved various games and tests of fortitude in the context of expected/enforced alcohol consumption.

## **Basketball**

One men's basketball team's Rookie Night actually began during the day as a former player described:

We dress up all the rookies as women and they have to go to school wearing all that shit - make-up and everything...They have rookie written on them somewhere, they are either [wearing] a sign or [have it written] right on their face. (Loren)

Similar to the women's soccer team's 'money-making cabaret game', the men's basketball Rookies' Day consisted of attempting to collect as much money as possible from fellow students and professors in order to cover the costs of the Rookie Night.

The evening's events started off with the rookies having to strip down to one piece of clothing. In veteran Loren's words: "whichever piece they wanted, so basically, their underwear. There was tons of booze, and the rookies couldn't sit on the chairs or couches, they had to sit on the floor." Later on, the rookies had to participate in a game which required them to roll two dice - the total number that was rolled corresponded with a 'task' that the rookie had to perform. Loren explained:

One was called 'Find the Ball'. We waited until four guys rolled this one, it was like a seven or something. Once four guys rolled it they were told that there was a basketball hidden somewhere in the bleachers and they had to find it - the guy who found it didn't have to drink...So they stripped naked and were sent into the gym where the women's team was practising...Of course, there's no ball. So they eventually come back.

Another 'task' involved with the same game was called 'The String and Pen'. Here, the rookie had to tie a marker onto his penis with a short string and go to the library. Loren explained the purpose of this activity: "They [rookies] had to go out and get a girl to write her name and phone number onto his chest with this pen." Meanwhile, while this game was going on, the rest of the membership congregated in the dressing room to drink alcohol.

After all of the games were completed, according to the veteran, 'The Annual Naked Run' occurred:

This is the big tradition every year at D\_\_\_\_. All the boys are boozed by this time and we get a half-ton truck and put all the rookies in the back [wearing] just a towel and their running shoes. They are dropped off all around the campus and they have to run back to the room. (Loren)

Once the rookies find their way back to the dressing room, they are required to perform a skit as part of 'The Gong Show'. As Loren noted, rookies are "told ahead of time to prepare something...they might sing a song or something and then the best skit isn't punished by drinking." When asked if it was common to punish the 'losers' by making them drink more, the veteran replied, "Yeah, otherwise the guys won't try as hard."

Traditionally, the men's basketball Rookie Night has concluded at a local bar, but on the most recent occasion:

That didn't quite work this year though...Three out of the four rookies didn't make it and were passed-out or sick in the team room...One was in the shower, one on the toilet and one on the floor...It was ugly, man. (Loren)

Unlike veterans Tamara (field hockey) and Ursula (volleyball) who felt that past initiations were more demanding and punitive, Loren described his team's Rookie Night as one of the harshest since he joined the team.

During his senior high-school year, rookie player Sam had his legs taped together and had to untie himself within 30 seconds or else be faced with having to perform the task again. He was unsuccessful: "I ended up having to do it three times." Hazing experiences continued for this player as he began varsity basketball. During Rookie

Night, held at a veteran's home, the rookies on his team were taken outside where they had to complete 'The Yard', an event involving a glass holding five pints of beer:

There were rules. Finish it, don't spill, and it was timed. I did it in 47 seconds...There was a lot of puking going on by then...All the rookies then had to race against each other and guzzle a beer, this determined the order for getting dressed.

The winner of the drinking contest was taken inside and returned shortly thereafter wearing a female one-piece bathing suit. Sam was dressed "in Minnie-Mouse tights and a cardigan sweater that barely covered my body." The rookies were then taken to two bars that were frequented by other university students, as Sam recounted:

When we got to the second bar, the DJ announced our arrival to the bar...We had shooter races, like four heats, and the losers had to keep going. Nine or ten shots later, for me anyways...We had to keep on drinking, we were given beers and expected to drink them.

Although they were members of basketball teams that competed in different cities, both Sam and Loren reported numerous initiation experiences while they were on their respective basketball teams. Rookie Sam reported several incidents in which he was forced to consume large quantities of alcohol, either as part of an initiation game (such as The Yard) or at a local bar (while dressed-up in undersized clothing) frequented by university students. The rookies on veteran Loren's team also were forced to consume alcohol throughout their Rookie Night but participated in a greater number of initiation games (including The String and Pen, The Naked Run, and The Gong Show) than Sam. With a void in the literature on basketball hazings, we can not be sure, but the data in this study suggest that basketball initiation practices can be as aggressive as those found in other contact sports like hockey, and soccer.

### **Swimming**

The rookie female swimmers were involved in two separate evenings that included initiation activities. First, the rookies had to 'sell kisses' at a local bar. As rookie Mary reported: "We had to walk around and sell them for a dollar each but the veterans collected all of the money." Predictably, the night's events also centered on tasks

involving alcohol. When asked about drinking that night, one rookie hinted at the intimidation produced by having to carry out this task: "It was way easier if we did [drink]." The players also had to go to a varsity football game and "do cheers and be really loud" while they had their faces painted various colors.

The second rookie night started at a veteran swimmer's house. In Mary's account:

One girl had to dress up in a bath robe, weird dresses and stuff. They [veterans] all had these stupid things that we had to do too - like pick your nose and eat it.

Before the team went to a cabaret, the rookies had to run around the neighbourhood, searching for items on a Scavenger Hunt list. One rookie explained, "Every item you didn't get you got punished for it. I got everything and I still had to do stuff. It didn't matter" (Mary). The punishment for the rookies was having to wear "more bad clothing or make-up" to the dance. Evidently, no alcohol was being consumed at the house. This was a rare occurrence compared to previous swimming initiations. According to Liz, she and the other veteran swimmers decided to 'tame' their rookie initiations this year "because last year a rookie got really sick from having to do [alcoholic] shots and they had to rush her to the hospital to get her stomach pumped."

The men's swimming team also met at a veteran's house for its Rookie Night. During the privately held event, the male rookies had to play the role of 'servant' to the veteran players throughout the party, specifically bringing the veterans a beer whenever they requested one. The night also included the veteran players challenging the rookies to numerous drinking games:

We would have to try and beat a veteran in guzzling a beer or doing like three shots in a row...This went on throughout the night. I don't think any of us [rookies] beat them [veterans]. (Quinton)

Quinton indicated that alcohol was consumed in large amounts by all of the members for over seven hours that evening.

Contrary to the women's team, the male swimmers in the sample did not venture into a public bar. Rather, the men's Rookie Night was brought to a close in a nearby park

in the middle of the night. Here the rookies were encircled by the veterans, all of whom held flashlights. Rookie Quinton tried to recall, "They did this chant, and then sang this little song that welcomed us onto the team. It was kinda neat." When asked to remember the song, the rookie replied, "I don't remember how it went, I was way too drunk."

Both the men's and women's swimming teams in the sample provided evidence of a history of initiation activities. Although, according to Liz, the women's swimming team apparently had a "tame" initiation this year, any toning down that took place was in direct response to the previously described episode that resulted in the hospitalization of one rookie due to an overdose of alcohol the year before. Swimmers seem to socialize their rookies along similar lines to the volleyball players in the sample. The respondents all described activities that were based predominantly on the consumption of alcohol and tasks such as dressing-up in unflattering clothing.

### **Synchronized Swimming**

Unlike some of the other sports sampled that were clearly rich in initiation traditions, there appeared to be very little continuity in the synchronized swimmers' initiation experiences. However, all of the swimmers (all female) indicated that they had either witnessed or participated in initiation events while they were swimming competitively. One former swimmer who competed and coached for over 15 years recalled how she and her teammates used to initiate rookie swimmers while she was a veteran:

I was right in there when it came to initiating. We weren't too crazy...not like football or hockey players, that's for sure. For our Rookie Show all we did is make the rookies jump off of the 10m diving board...Some of them had never done it before and were terrified, others did it no problem. That's all we did, no booze or anything else. We were pretty tame back then, actually. (Tracy)

Interestingly, Tracy could not recall any instances when the team that she was coaching conducted any sort of initiation ritual. However, as she acknowledged herself, the transition from player to coach had perhaps dislocated her from exposure to team

initiations - supporting the apparently increasingly common tendency for athletes to conceal the event from coaches and administrators.

Another synchronized swimming veteran and current participant, Ingrid, explained how her team held its Rookie Night on its first road trip:

All of the girls were in one of the hotel rooms and we [veterans] dressed all of the rookies up with funny make-up and hair styles. Then we made them go across the street to the store [together] and buy us chips, drinks, whatever the veterans wanted...Some of us were drinking but alcohol wasn't really an issue.

Ingrid also explained how initiations on her team were strictly limited to isolated events: "something that happened on only one night and never happened after that." She recalled her own rookie initiation when she and other rookie swimmers on her team had to drink shots of alcohol at a local bar. According to the synchronized swimmer, the veterans did designate the evening as a Rookie Night, but Ingrid felt that there was no serious, meaningful, or excessive initiation occurring: "I don't even know if you can call it an initiation...We didn't really have to do anything bad. The veterans even paid for it." Ingrid did not recall any other event in which she or any of the other rookie swimmers felt that they were being initiated onto the team.

## **Water Polo**

A water polo player interviewed experienced initiations while he competed at the varsity and national level with several different teams. Sid, a veteran still actively competing, described his interpretation of hazing in the following way:

Very painful, to put it lightly. It's just a matter of time before everyone [rookies] gets it. The big game is you never know when. The veterans constantly have you on the edge of your seat. It's almost like you just want it to happen so you can get it over with. The vets sometimes try to attempt it and then pull back. They are always threatening to do it. Some guys get it right at the beginning of the season, others get it later, which I think is the worst because then you are constantly threatened by the vets. It is almost prolonged too long sometimes.

The specific initiation event that Sid was referring to in clearly anxious ways is known in water polo circles as 'The Ginch Pull':

The vets, whenever they do decide to get you, hold you down and pull your ginch [underwear] up your ass as high as it will go, of course it is pulling everything else up too - your testicles most importantly. There's no way you can get out of it once they have you 'cause it's you against about six or ten of them. Sometimes other rookies will jump in and try to save the guy who is getting initiated. Then the whole thing turns into a brawl and eventually nothing else happens. The rookies just get the shit kicked out of them and then they don't do it [interrupt] again. (Sid)

Once again, and similar to other sports in the study, the water polo teams that Sid competed for did not refer to these and other events as Rookie Night. Simply, rookie initiation for the water polo players in this sample solely involved the completion of 'The Ginch Pull'. This, once again according to Sid, has traditionally occurred in hotel rooms, and dressing rooms.

These data indicate that water polo teams conduct some form of initiations with their newest members. However, pulling largely from the experiences of one veteran player, water polo did not seem to initiate its rookies in a structured, traditionally motivated fashion like many other teams in the sample. According to Sid, water polo circles did not use the term 'Rookie Night' nor did any of the teams that he was a member of actually organize a specific initiation event that encompassed 'The Ginch Pull'. Again, further exploration into this under-researched sport is needed in order to pinpoint whether a more rigid initiation process occurs within water polo, if in fact one exists at all.

## **Football**

By comparison, rookie football players in the sample reported initiation through a very structured Rookie Show event. A former football player who played both varsity and professional football experienced only subtle variation throughout his initiations with various teams. His varsity and professional experiences all occurred during the pre-season:

My rookie year...we had to sing at lunch time. I had to do a vet's laundry. Take it home with me every day and clean it for him. Rookie Show was the last night of training camp...We had to do skits. Skits are usually when they [rookies] make fun of veterans. (Scott)

Although the rookies were being humiliated in front of their teammates and coaches, one interesting aspect of the skits was that the rookies were able to 'poke fun' at the veteran players. This type of initiation seems unique to the football subculture. Scott recalled another year, when he was a veteran with a varsity team, where a rookie tried to imitate the head coach during his skit:

One rookie painted his ass...our head coach was bald. He somehow used his ass and his dick to look like the coach somehow. But he went way too far... I'm sure it didn't help his chances to stay [and] he did get released.

Other events during varsity football Rookie Shows included a relay race involving naked players with LP records inserted between their buttocks. This event was described by Harry, a veteran player who competed in a different league than Scott. However, the two players reported similar experiences:

All of the rookies are stripped naked and paired-up with a partner. One rookie is at one goal line and the other is at the other goal line [110 yards apart]. The veterans are lined up all the way down the field so they can watch and judge the competition. The rookies had to run to their partner at the other end with LP records in their butts. Once they inserted it into their bum they couldn't touch the record again. If it fell out while they were running, they had to go back to the line [where they started] and begin again...Almost everybody drops the record at least once. Then when they get to their partner, the two of them have to exchange the record between their bums without using their hands. If it's dropped, same thing, the guy has to go back to the line and start again. The race takes quite a while, you almost forget that they [rookies] are naked after a while.

The rookies had to go buck [strip naked] and we had olive races between the rookies. There's a chunk of ice at one end of the field and you have a bunch of olives sitting on top of it. Rookies have to sit down and pick one up with their ass and run across [the field] and put it down on the other side. You can't touch the olives with your hands or else you have to start again. The first one to move three olives wins the race. The problem is that the ice is so damn cold on your ass, it is really hard to pick them up. Making them stay in your ass while you're running is another thing. (Scott)

The professional teams that Scott played for also had their rookies perform skits during team lunches and dinners. Scott explained what the football players called 'The Gong Show': "Every lunch time somebody [rookie] was singing or performing some sort of skit. They would either get a thumbs-up or thumbs-down from the veterans." Scott

recalled one rookie who, as part of his initiation process, had to bring donuts to several veterans every day while the team was in training camp:

So for a rookie skit in The Gong Show he had a slide show. He had as many donuts as he could get on his dick and had different pictures of him putting them back into the donut box. At the end he narrated "how were those donuts all year long."

This incident was the only reported example of a rookie player ultimately avenging the veteran players who were initiating him. Scott could not recall any punishment being meted out to the player in question. In Scott's words: "I think the guys just accepted the fact that he [rookie] got the last laugh."

Scott also recalled the rookies having to clean the veterans' plates and bring food to them during these team meals. When asked about the role of alcohol during the football Rookie Nights, Scott replied,

Oh yeah, lots of alcohol. Always, always beer. It was either you drank beer 'cause the skits were bad or they [veterans] sprayed beer at you...If you did a good job you'd maybe only drink one beer, a poor job maybe four beers.

Scott explained that there were numerous veteran players on every professional team that he played for that chose not to drink alcohol, often as a result of their religious beliefs. He stressed, however, that he could not recall an initiate who did not drink, for religious or other reasons.

Reports unearthed in this study of aggressive hazings by football players certainly coincide with information that is available on initiation events by football players on other teams across North America. Worth noting here is the uniqueness of football's Rookie Show and how it is exclusively set in the private domain (dressing room). Additionally, football provided the only example of rookie retaliation that did not prompt any punitive reaction by the veteran players who were initiating him.

## INTERPRETATIONS AND MEANINGS

### Why does hazing take place?

Regardless of gender, sport, or level of competition, ritualized rookie initiations were consistently interpreted by athletes as both rites of passage for neophyte members and a way for established members to consolidate their own place in the subculture. Many of the respondents viewed initiations not just as an accepted ingredient but as a necessary ingredient to play a particular team sport. The importance of team "tradition" and solidarity consistently echoed from athletes as they explained why hazings occur within their particular group. Athletes routinely referred to the normative character of hazing and to the membership's strive to collectively galvanize their identities around a common experience. Dave, a 21-year old male veteran soccer player explained it in these terms precisely, emphasizing what seems to be an uncritical approach toward hazing by many athletes:

It is just expected that you be initiated. It's tradition. The veterans had to do it when they were rookies...I guess it's like a rite of passage, everyone just has to do it.

According to most respondents, the earliest signs of team solidarity appear to emerge out of initiation events which, as previously mentioned, often occur prior to a team competition or the opportunity to even don team uniforms. Both rookie and veteran athletes emphasized that Rookie Night contributed to the construction of a team cohesiveness that is undetectable prior to and, so the argument runs, impossible without the initiations. A 22-year old female veteran volleyball player, Ursula, explained how she felt that rookie initiations functioned to introduce an important sense of team cohesiveness that might not have been present otherwise:

It's really the first time that we get to do anything as a team. Try-outs focus a lot on individuality. So as soon as the team is made, I think it is important to do Rookie Night so we can become a 'team' as soon as possible and get on with the season.

The chance for the membership to share at least one "bonding" experience through an initiation process was commonly described by athletes in the sample as a positive and necessary function of rookie initiations.

Additionally, it was suggested by many rookie respondents that there was an appealing quality to hazing events. Indirectly consolidating the status and power of the veteran socializers, several rookie athletes felt it satisfying to have the opportunity to interact with the older, and in most cases, socially prestigious veterans. Irrespective of the actual initiation events, rookies felt privileged to be 'hanging out' with the veteran players, especially in public settings. For instance, Karl, a rookie male rugby player, disclosed how he did not regret participating in initiation activities:

It's hard to describe why you want to go through initiations. You just have to experience it. I think it's more than just having to go through one night of initiating. That is what many people don't understand. It's being seen with the team and being initiated in front of others [non-members]. It makes you feel good to know that you are one of the guys. People [non-members] don't know what it's like to feel like part of a team. After it was over I was really glad I did it. I think that being initiated at The P\_\_\_ [public bar] has made me more popular.

For Karl and many other rookies participating in initiations, it was important that non-members were able to recognize him as a rugby player. The ability to sustain the often degrading initiation events and become an accepted member apparently provides neophyte members with a sense of pride and triumph while at the same time, and symbiotically, confirming the place of veteran members in the group. For most rookies, achieving a new label and identity is the ultimate goal of participating in initiations.

Many male and female rookies tended to legitimize their participation in the events with favorable explanations of how "fun" or "useful" the evening was for everyone who participated. The social event allowed for many rookies to be recognized in the public sphere as a team-member for the first time. Despite experiencing some "degrading and embarrassing" initiations, Debbie, a female field hockey player, and Tom, a male rookie soccer player, both reported that they were delighted with the outcome of their initiations:

The whole night was pretty fun. We all got really drunk and laughed our heads off. So we [rookies] had to do some stupid and embarrassing things... The dance was the best 'cause everybody was looking at us and asking us who we were. The veterans introduced us to a ton of people. At the very least we all had fun and we got to meet a lot of new people.

It makes you feel good to be recognized as a [team-member]. You want everyone to know...After you get through Rookie Night you feel like it is somewhat of an accomplishment...I didn't mind going through that shit for one night, 'cause now I'm a [team-member].

Perhaps due to what may be a somewhat superficial assessment of the underlying social themes being acted out in initiations, inductees tended not to recognize the much more complex, often power-laden social process taking place. As was recognized in earlier work on initiations in sport subcultures (Donnelly and Young, 1988), woven into rookies' explanations for participating in initiation ceremonies is a quest for membership, increased status, and a team identity. Players clearly stressed a need to conform and cooperate throughout the initiations. Responses usually reflected an attitude whereby it was easier to "go along" with the initiation rather than try and oppose or resist being 'hazed'. Players hinted at being willing to accept degradation and humiliation in exchange not only for a place on the team, but also increased rank, privilege, power, and ultimately a recognizable identity within the membership. Also weighing heavily on the shoulders of initiates was the possibility of being labelled by the membership as 'different' or 'not accepted'. As Tim, a male veteran hockey player explained, during initiations "you don't want to be the only guy who didn't do it." Most players indicated that throughout initiations, conformity is favored over individuality. All respondents supported a belief system in which initiates would be accepted if they displayed fortitude and a will to abide by the rules of the group. In other words, attempting to ensure that the behaviors of the group are upheld, veteran members of sports groups use initiations to expose rookies to this new belief system and 'test' their ability to incorporate institutionalized rules and goals into their developing sports identities.

## **Resistance to Hazing**

However, by no means were all attempts at initiation approved by initiates openly and willingly. Some initiation events were questioned or directly opposed by rookies. Typically, these examples of resistance to the socialization process involved the power-laden veterans enforcing the group's belief system until either the rookie assimilates or removes him/herself from the group. The rookies were continually 'tested' by veterans until they were co-opted, as was witnessed in the examples of soccer, basketball, volleyball, swimming, and rugby. These incidents illuminate the hierarchy and power that is enforced by veterans upon rookies to conform and participate in initiations.

Some acts of rookie opposition were met with persistent and often more coercive responses on the part of veterans. Sam, a rookie basketball player, recalled his initiation with his high-school team:

For my rookie initiation in high-school, a couple of us [rookies] had to run through the hotel hallways naked...We thought it would be no problem but the vets would knock on the room doors [strangers' doors] just before we ran by. Some of the other rookies avoided their initiations completely 'cause they locked themselves in their rooms all night and wouldn't come out.

According to Sam, as a penalty for their resistance, these neophyte members were 'hazed' the following weekend by having their head hair shaved off.

The same rookie also explained how he himself had tried to avoid consuming alcohol during his initiation onto a varsity basketball team:

We all had to pitch-in money to cover the costs of the booze...The vets split the money that was left over...Once we [rookies] arrived at the house, we were bombarded with alcohol...unless you could reliably prove that you were of a religious belief - you could drink coke. I expressed to the veterans that I didn't want to drink, the vets told me "then you'll just have to drink the biggest shit-mix"...Tabasco, toothpaste...I decided I probably could handle drinking for one night.

Although most rookies did not directly challenge their veteran teammates' demands, Sam's confessed trepidation is likely a common feeling among most rookies undergoing often daunting initiation experiences.

One 19 year-old rookie female volleyball player was opposed to wearing the revealing clothing that her veteran teammates required her to wear. After what Shawna described as "a brief confrontation," the veterans co-operated with her by allowing her to put on a sweater before she was escorted to a cabaret with several other rookie players apparently with no further action taken.

Hockey veteran Vince recalled an incident where a rookie refused to participate in the team's Rookie Night and how the veterans simply persisted forcing the rookie into complying with the team's initiation 'policy':

There were guys [rookies] who struggled with initiations but then they would just get it worse. One time one of our players didn't want it to happen and he actually left. Then when we took a trip to N\_\_\_\_\_, we got into his room at night and we shaved his eyebrows off - this is a good four months into the season.

Vince's example shows how veteran players will often extend the initiation process outside of the traditional pre-season period if the need arises. The veterans accept the challenge set forth by the rookie and pursue her/him until their standards of acceptance are met.

One unique example of resistance to initiations involved a male hockey team. During their Rookie Night, all seven rookie players refused to conduct the 'Elephant Walk'<sup>6</sup> around a veteran player's home. As Dan, one of the rookies, explained:

We [rookies] just all agreed that that was going too far. The vets didn't really push it all that much since all of us refused...They just made us drink more instead.

Perhaps attempting to prevent a similar incident where rookies collectively resist the veterans during their Rookie Show, one varsity men's basketball team invited former (veteran) players to the party, in Loren's words: "Otherwise rooks [rookies] would have outnumbered vets and they [rookies] might not have cooperated."

Other cases were reported where rookies displayed a higher level of resistance to initiations, resulting in veterans reacting with obvious acts of revenge and coercion. Scott,

a former veteran professional football player, recalled one incident where a rookie refused to participate in any form of initiation:

Every lunch time someone [rookie] is singing. Those who don't and think they're above that - then the veterans will get them. I know one year this guy wouldn't do it so one of the veterans went to an agricultural school and got a bunch of cow shit...stuffed his helmet full of shit, stuffed all of his shoes, all of his cleats full of shit. He comes in in the morning and he's got no shoes. So the helmet he can wash out, he's got no shoes and he's late for practice. The coach wants to fine him, says "you can't be late for practice."

This incident involved not only the players reacting to the rookie's refusal to participate in initiation events, but the administrators of the team also became involved. The football veterans ultimately introduced a member whom the rookie could not refuse, the coach, who apparently complied with the hazing of the player in question.

Although there were other rookies belonging to teams who were, according to veterans, not fully participating in some of the initiation events, this was the only case where a player categorically refused to participate. The veteran players felt that this particular rookie "just wasn't part of the guys"; perhaps uncoincidentally, he was 'let go' from the team only a few weeks after this incident. This is an obvious, yet inaccurate, attempt by many people involved in sport subcultures to associate a player's willingness to undergo hazing rituals with her/his ability to perform on the field as an athlete. Similarly, the literature has shown isolated cases where potentially non-complying inductees have been ostracized and forced out of their respective groups. Of course, where sport subcultures are concerned, it is difficult to find and interview such athletes because their unwillingness to participate in expected conventions and rituals such as hazing likely means that they are no longer a part of the team or the sport more generally.

### **The Continuous Nature of Hazing in Sport**

Although many respondents reported that their team's initiations were limited to one or more specific events, it is important to note that hazing often occurs beyond the confines of Rookie Night. Many athletes only recalled their team's most prominent

initiation activities and failed to directly acknowledge more subtle hazing activities held at other times. One veteran football player's comments exemplified what many athletes felt about the scope of rookie initiations:

Once rookie show is done, then it [initiation] was over. No more rookies/veterans... Everyone is equal for the rest of the year. You have to focus on the team now, not initiating. (Scott)

However, with synchronized swimming being the only exception, 92% of the teams represented in the sample expected their rookies to perform other 'tasks' to consolidate the rookie/veteran hierarchy throughout the sporting season. For example, it was assumed that the men's and women's basketball and volleyball rookies complete the daily job of picking up balls after practice. Similarly, the men's hockey rookies had to collect pucks after practice as well as clean the dressing room once a week, as one veteran player described:

They [rookies] have to vacuum the team room, clean the toilets, sinks, showers...It's just so they learn to respect the team and our facilities. They only have to do it for the first year, then next year's rookies will do it. (Steve)

According to one initiate, the women's field hockey rookies "had to cook dinner and clean for the veterans and coaches" during their first road trip. They also were responsible for gathering up equipment after practices.

Despite Scott's argument above, of the teams in the sample<sup>7</sup>, 75% segregated their rookie players in some form whenever the group was travelling to play a game throughout the season. Consistently, respondents made reference to having rookie players perform menial tasks such as "carry the extra bags filled with equipment, and the medical kit and load it onto the bus" (Dave). The men's football and hockey veterans often made the rookies carry their own personal bags as well.

Seating arrangements on buses and planes were also found to be contingent upon rookie/veteran status. For example, Vince explained the ritual for his hockey team on the team bus:

The vets are always at the back of the bus...This is where the card tables are and the music. The rookies stay at the front of the bus with the coaches...We [veterans] can also see the television better from the back...Rookies aren't allowed at the back of the bus except to go to the washroom - they don't even play cards with us unless they're invited.

This was consistent for all of the teams that used buses to travel to and from away games. Teams that travelled on airplanes also allowed the veterans to have preferential selection of seats. Loren, a 23-year old veteran basketball player explained how he and his other veteran teammates always get preferred aisle seats:

We want the aisle so we can stretch out more. Second choice is the window. Single seats are always given to the rookies, so they have to sit beside people they don't know.

For many teams, team meals were also sites of power relations and preferential treatment. Female veteran volleyball player, Ursula, noted, "Veterans always eat first. Rookies last. That's just the way it is." Elsewhere, events such as team fundraising events including bingos were mandatory only for the rookie players. Dave, a 21-year old veteran soccer player explained the thinking behind this arrangement: "Rookies have to run the bingos, a couple of veterans will go, usually the captains. We [veterans] have done our time, now its their [rookies] turn."

Even privileges such as first selection of jersey numbers and locker room stalls were found to be reserved for the veteran players in all sports, with rookies getting "whatever is left." Many players described the actual layout of their team-rooms in a similar fashion with the rookies located in a particular section such as, in the case of a football team, a corner at the back of the room. In the words of a male veteran hockey player:

This year we didn't have enough room for all of the rookies, so most of them had to share lockers and some of them even had to change next door. All of the veterans had their own stall...Rookies are always in the corner by the bathroom. (Vince)

Such examples of conscious and enforced segregation between rookie and veteran players suggest that hazing functions not as an isolated but as a *continuous* socialization technique that extends beyond the initiation events that athletes disclose. Tasks such as

these were repeated in most sports (not including synchronized swimming) in this sample, were consistently reserved for the newcomers, and were performed throughout the sporting season. The identity formation process is first introduced to rookies by their veteran teammates during initiation events early in the season. It appears that this socialization process, although perhaps in a more subtle form, continues as long as the membership is together. The presence of further forms of harassment and power relations indicates that the rookie/veteran hierarchy does not dissipate once Rookie Night is completed and all initiates are co-opted.

## NOTES

1. In several instances, the veterans were actually living with parents while they hosted Rookie Night. Crucially, this points to an obvious level of parental complicity in some initiation events.
2. It is important to acknowledge here and throughout the study that the men's and women's initiations are not exclusive to one another as the male soccer rookies in this case were also dressed-up in women's clothing.
3. In contrast to most teams which congregate for several months, a Canadian national team often has its entire membership together for only several weeks during which many players will be away from home. Therefore, the length of time that a team is together may be a cause for differences in hazing practices.
4. In order to maintain confidentiality for the respondent and team, the actual name of the event has been changed.
5. The absence of the term Rookie Night violates the traditions of this sport which both in Canada and abroad has always been known for its hazing practices (Thomson, 1976; Young, 1983; Donnelly and Young, 1988).
6. The Elephant Walk involves all of the rookies stripping naked and slowly walking in a line in public while each rookie is holding the penis of the individual behind him.
7. Some of the rugby (Karl, Tina) and swimming (Quinton, Mary, Liz) athletes in the sample could not accurately report on team trips to away games because they did not experience travelling with their teams outside of their urban center.

## CHAPTER SIX: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

A relatively recent increase in public exposure to hazing activities in social institutions such as education, the military and sport has produced a closer policing of hazing-related practices by various influential parties including parents, coaches, teachers, institutional administrators, and legal officials. This study unearthed numerous cases of subtle changes being introduced by sports teams with respect to their initiation traditions and practices - a result, it seems, of these intensified policing techniques. In an attempt to conceal the event from coaches or authorities, the data revealed at least one case where players had re-labelled their Rookie Night. Although the socialization process itself was not drastically altered, the new term 'Veterans' Appreciation Night' was used to avoid critical judgement by outsiders.

Several veteran respondents indicated that their team had "toned down" their Rookie Night in comparison to previous years. For instance, one female veteran volleyball player and a male veteran basketball player explained their teams' Rookie Night events in the current season in the following way:

This year we [veterans] didn't make the rookies drink as much because of what happened last year... Last year one rookie had to go to the hospital and get her stomach pumped because she drank too much during Rookie Night. The coach warned us to take it easy this year. So we thought we would cool it a bit this year with the alcohol. (Ursula)

[The] coach told us to take it easy and make sure that we didn't get out of control. I guess ultimately he is responsible for what we do on Rookie Night, even though he doesn't really know what happens. We [veterans] just made sure that it didn't get out of hand and nobody got hurt. I think most of the teams are taking it easy these days and aren't as bad as they used to be. (Loren)

Although these responses indicate a greater social control of hazing events and shifts in the nature of hazing, the data also suggest that the informal policing of hazing by coaches in a number of sports had not functioned to abolish the process completely. Sometimes a lack of effective policing seemed a result of the fact that the coaches either 'turned a blind eye' toward initiation events or were deliberately kept in the dark by players, as volleyball

player Ursula disclosed. Of course, the data also uncovered examples of the implicit or explicit complicity of coaches and parents in the hazing process. In Scott's (football) account, some coaches even became directly involved in initiating/socializing events. This should come as no surprise since, after all, coaches belong to the same culture as their athletes and possibly have an intimate knowledge of initiations through being hazed themselves earlier in their careers.

An immediate problem in policing hazing practices in any social setting is the lack of formal and cohesive anti-hazing laws and policies. Only within the past few decades have preventive measures and policies begun to be implemented that deal specifically with the phenomenon of hazing in institutions such as education and the military. In 1978, for example, the United States had only six states with developed and enforced anti-hazing statutes. That number increased slightly to twenty-one states by 1988 (Hornbuckle, 1988:7). Contributing to what is clearly a complex social issue, these anti-hazing statutes are sometimes contradictory or unclear, and vary from state to state. Adding also to difficulties in defining and policing hazing in other social settings (such as the military and sport), existing anti-hazing laws have been developed from and are mostly relevant to fraternity/sorority hazings. In other words, regulatory practices may not be effectively transportable from one social setting to another.

Other social institutions that have a pronounced hazing presence in North America, like the military and sport, do not seem to possess any universal campaign against hazing activities. For example, Lieutenant-Colonel John McEachern's recent public assertion that the Canadian military has a "zero tolerance" orientation to hazing (*The Globe and Mail*, March 23, 1996:A7) appears to be an unsubstantiated claim as there is no formal law dealing with hazing in the Canadian military. Indeed, this seems to hold true with respect to most Canadian settings that are known to experience hazing-related practices, including forms of violence and abuse. Canada's Memorial University appeared to be an anomaly when it adopted rules for initiation rites in 1987 (*University of*

*Calgary Gauntlet*, September 10, 1987:36). Although it has developed policies on harassment, The University of Calgary, for example, does not have an official definition or policy that deals specifically with hazing practices on or off campus. In general, hazing incidents that reach the public eye tend to be re-defined as forms of deviant behavior highlighting what seems to be an institutional aversion to labeling incidents as 'hazing' per se (Nuwer, 1990:287). The point here is that increased policing of hazing activities appears, more often than not, to be an informal type of monitoring which is contingent upon both the social setting and the respective policing agents involved.

Where sport is concerned and, again, despite an increasingly disapproving social climate and evidence of closer policing of hazing by numerous institutions, the data in this study suggest that hazing continues to play a key role in the construction and confirmation of athletes' identities in sport subcultures. Although situated on the heels of national scandals connected to hazing in the Canadian military (*Macleans*, January 30, 1995:14, February 20, 1995:17, October 16, 1995:31; *Calgary Herald*, February 14, 1995:A5) as well as Canadian ice hockey (*The Toronto Sun*, February 28, 1996:5; *The Fifth Estate*, October 29, 1996), a significantly heightened exposure to the phenomenon of hazing did not appear to inhibit disclosure by respondents. Also, none of the respondents reported being a member of a team that enforced 'codes of silence' regarding team initiations. Competing in three Western Canadian cities, 100% of the athletes (16 male and 14 female) who participated in the study reported that they experienced some form of hazing in their athletic careers.

The study suggests that hazing is linked both to gender socialization and sport socialization. As one might predict from the discussion on gender and power relations in sport in Chapter Two, it remains the case that most neophyte athletes are socialized through hazing activities to adopt identities that are historically associated with the still male-dominated institution of sport. Both male and female veteran athletes supported aggressive and domineering methods as they initiated their rookie teammates. In many

sports, physical and emotional fortitude are valued qualities for successful socialization and to become a recognized member of the team and subculture more generally. During the initiation process, rookie athletes who resisted masculinist symbols and ideologies were labelled by the veteran members as weak and unwilling to 'take one for the team'.

Most notably, it appeared at least on the surface that both men and women athletes tended to exemplify what has been traditionally viewed as masculinist traits during their initiations. Upon further investigation of the more subtle differences between the genders, womens' initiations did differ in some ways. As the athletes described their hazing experiences, there were signs that women did not adhere as much as their male counterparts to exaggerated forms of machismo and aggression in their socialization processes. The women's soccer team's 'Kangaroo Court' which involved a candlelit room, the women's volleyball and field hockey ceremonies which involved head hair being sprayed (as opposed to the shaving of men's hockey rookies), as well as an overall absence of nudity by female players hint toward a somewhat more restrained version of hazing practices by women athletes in this traditionally male defined arena.

Although sport's Rookie Night and associated socialization processes are driven by power relationships between rookie and veteran players, the activities occurring in the sports setting likely share ties with power relations in other groups. The operations of power that are readily evident throughout most rookie initiations in sport are perhaps only exaggerated forms of what might be witnessed in occupational settings such as the office or the factory. Obviously, hierarchical relationships are not unique to settings that condone membership rituals. It seems likely that sport's exposure allows for the public eye to more critically evaluate its socialization process than those occurring in other social locations.

The hazing incidents described in this study demonstrate consistent attempts by successful members to embarrass or humiliate the neophytes in front of the broader membership and, sometimes, outsiders. The objective, it seems, is to test the individual's

fortitude and commitment to the team. Incidents such as the men's hockey 'Bear Lake Run' and 'The Impossible Sit-up', the men's soccer 'toilet game', or various rookie players being dressed-up prior to attending a public dance/bar were all attempts by veterans to gauge the dedication of rookies. Interestingly, the data revealed that these often publicly embarrassing events were met with both favorable and unfavorable rookie reactions. Volleyball player Shawna, for example, was exceptionally uncomfortable when she was dressed-up in outdated clothing and taken to a local bar. In comparison, other players, both male and female, explained that being initiated in public enabled them to reap some social benefits:

It was embarrassing for about the first ten minutes. After that, everyone noticed that you were on the team which is a good thing. It almost makes you more popular. People see you as being part of the team. That is a good feeling. (Steve)

The dance was the best 'cause everybody was looking at us and asking us who we were. The veterans introduced us to a ton of people. At the very least we all had fun and we got to meet a lot of new people. (Debbie)

It makes you feel good to be recognized as a [team member]. You want everyone to know...After you get through Rookie Night you feel like it is somewhat of an accomplishment...I didn't mind going through that shit for one night, 'cause now I'm a [team member]. (Tom)

Responses such as these suggest a perception on the part of players that outsiders exposed to initiation events view the phenomenon as "tolerable deviance" (Stebbins, 1988:3-4) and that a certain status is to be gleaned through being hazed publicly. Even cases such as the men's basketball and wrestling team, both of which blatantly harassed women, did not arouse any outsider intervention into the team's Rookie Night. Similarly, and supporting the heterosexist underpinnings of many sports-related hazings, the women's soccer and volleyball rookies approached male strangers at a dance in order to have drinks bought for them or to have the peanut butter that had been smeared in their armpits licked off without any apparent negative social reactions.

The power process between rookies and veterans also enabled veterans to arouse fear and anxiety in the younger players (as was witnessed in the cases of the synchronized

swimmers who were forced to jump off a 10m diving board, and the shaving of rookies' pubic hair by men's hockey veterans). Many of these daunting and degrading initiation events were rites of passage which possessed a symbiotic character for both rookies and veterans - rookies strived for acceptance and an identity within the membership, while the veterans also benefitted by having their dominant position within the team consolidated.

The data also suggest that hazing practices may be placed on a continuum ranging from harmless, high jinks games to more serious cases involving physically threatening and dangerous activities, and even illegalities. It is important here not to trivialize the fact that many hazing incidents involve physically risky and even life threatening activities which are understandably of concern to authorities, school administrators, and parents. For example, both the female swimmer who had to get her stomach pumped after being coerced into excessive alcohol consumption and the numerous other rookies who were pushed to their physical limits (i.e., required to vomit) could have conceivably died from alcohol poisoning. Yet, in what seems to be an illustration of what Sykes and Matza (1989) have called "techniques of neutralization," athletes appeared to consistently downplay or normalize the often excessive, risky, or illegal hazing process, as demonstrated by Curtis:

We didn't really do much back then. My last year was about the only time I can remember having a party. That's because we went to my cabin and had a Rookie Night out there...We just had games, relays in the snow, played one-on-one [basketball], that's about it. Not any initiation stuff.

As with the process of socialization itself, hazing is often a fluid and continuous process. The data reported in this study demonstrating the fundamentally ongoing character of identity formation and construction, call into question the view that Rookie Night signifies the end of ritualized hazings and inequalities between teammates; indeed, most subjects indicated that their team continued to operate hierarchically throughout the season. Rather than being isolated to one or two specific initiation events, hazing appears to endure throughout the sporting season, albeit in different guises. Most of the athletes referred only to the most identifiable context of initiation (i.e., Rookie Night), and tended

not to recognize more subtle forms of power relations as techniques through which they were being socialized per se. Indeed, there were some teams (such as women's hockey) which while not socializing their neophytes through the more traditional Rookie Night initiation event rituals, relied instead on less obvious but still coercive forms of identity construction that occurred throughout the sporting season.

Supporting the case for the *continuous* construction and confirmation of athletic identity in sports subcultures, all of the respondents in the sample disclosed incidents where rookie players had to perform certain tasks for the team during their rookie season. Sometimes, this involved veteran players coercing rookies into completing certain tasks and other times, as in one veteran hockey player's words: "You just do it. It's part of your job as a rookie. It is just assumed by everyone that the rookies pick up the pucks after practice. No questions asked" (Tim). In addition to such things as collecting equipment after practice, rookies were also required to clean the dressing room, carry extra baggage on road trips, and cook meals for the team. Also, in most cases most rookies were physically isolated from their veteran teammates during team meals, on the plane and bus during trips to away games, in the dressing room, as well as in hotel rooms. These findings confirm those of Young, White, and McTeer (1994) who disclosed various example of "degradation ceremonies" for injured athletes. In the present study, the data showed that even unrewarding privileges such as selection of jerseys were reserved for the veteran members.

Also emerging from the data, and consistent with the literature on sports-related hazings, is an apparent connection between the nature of certain sports and the nature of the hazing itself. In other words, the more violent and physical the game, the more aggressive, even abusive, the hazing seems to be. Athletes who competed in physical contact sports (particularly ice hockey, rugby, football, basketball, field hockey, and wrestling) tended to report more hazing incidents involving physical punishments and the infliction of pain than members of non-contact sports teams (such as volleyball,

swimming, and synchronized swimming). Among others, these incidents included hockey's 'The Holocaust' and 'The Gong Show', football's rookie relays, and basketball's 'The String and Pen'. Likewise, the disproportionate reliance on alcohol in hazing events could also be found in contact sports (for instance, basketball's 'The Yard', wrestling's 'Rookie Buy Night', as well as field hockey, ice hockey and rugby's drinking contests), whereas alcohol-absent hazing events tended to occur in non-contact sports. However, in this sample at least, hazing activities by athletes involved in non-contact sports tended to disproportionately involve other forms of control such as public embarrassment and degradation as represented in cases such as soccer, volleyball, and swimming rookies being 'dressed-up' in outrageous clothing prior to being taken out into the public sphere. Also worthy of note is the relationship of level of competition to the use of hazing. Supporting extant research, elite and professional athletes in this study were also found to be heavily involved in the hazing process. With elite athletes' disclosure of initiation activities, level of competition does not appear to determine participation in hazing in any exclusive way.

However, this apparent association between physicality in sport and excessive physicality in hazing is not a linear or unambiguous relationship. Indeed, there were significant contradictions and paradoxes within both the contact and non-contact sport groups. The women's ice hockey team, for example, did not report overtly aggressive or abusive initiation practices that one might expect given the aggressive character of their sport. This was in sharp contrast to their male hockey counterparts whose Rookie Nights were saturated with daunting tasks, physical punishments, and heavy alcohol use. Perhaps also related to reasons outlined by the athletes in Chapter Five, women's hockey did not socialize their neophytes through a structured Rookie Night event. Instead, more subtle socialization techniques were implemented throughout the season. In contrast, synchronized swimmers in the study reported separate incidents of consuming shots of alcohol and being forced to jump off an intimidating 10m diving board. In order to more

fully explore any relationship between the character of the sport in question and the character of hazing events, more empirically based case studies of sports-related hazings will have to be conducted.

Given its obviously lengthy history, and its presence in a variety of contemporary social settings, hazing remains curiously understudied. In the area of sport, the phenomenon is relatively untapped, which seems especially odd given the numerous scandals associated with sport over the years. Although knowledge and policing of hazing in educational and military settings has increased significantly over the past several years, information about hazing in sport appears to be lagging behind, and it remains true that next to nothing is known of women's involvement in hazing.

The historical literature on initiation ceremonies presented in Chapter Three supplies us with some common threads vis-a-vis the significance and meanings of hazing. Team unification and solidarity in a generally masculinist setting appear to be common threads throughout most membership initiations. Not dissimilar to other deviant activities, however, the phenomenon of hazing is quite difficult to measure and quantify. Therefore, very little is known quantitatively about the extent and frequency of hazings, especially with regard to sports settings. Additionally, the scant literature indicates that the knowledge of hazing in sport becomes more obscure as one moves away from the high-profile sports (hockey, football, basketball) and explores sport subcultures such as, for instance, water polo, field hockey, volleyball and synchronized swimming. This study attempted to clarify some of these unknown and ambiguous aspects of sports hazings by focusing on the involvement of athletes and sports teams in ritualized hazings. The findings suggest that ritualized hazings occur systematically in a wide array of sport subcultures and, in terms of the social processes taking place (identity construction and confirmation, group solidarity, hierarchical power relations, etc.) in a similar form to other social settings (i.e., the military) that are known sites of initiations.

As hazing becomes more frowned upon socially and legally, sport seems to have become somewhat of a "closed shop." Sport subcultures will likely become increasingly more cautious within the public eye - limiting their exposure to possible legal assessment and sanction. In fact, it is possible that the intervention of the authorities may further restructure athletes' socialization processes and intensify their reliance on what we have called 'strategic initiations'. Extracting hazing information from coaches and players and possibly even administrators (as was found in the recent Canadian military case) may become more and more difficult as punitive measures dealing with abusive 'hazers' become commonplace. In this sense, future studies of hazing in sport will arguably need to be conducted by researchers who possess what Lofland and Lofland (1984:11) call an 'intimate familiarity' with the research environment. My role as an 'insider' enabled me to enter and disengage (although not fully) from the population in an unobtrusive manner. As hazing-related incidents are forced underground, an 'outsider' role may not be sufficient to study the phenomenon in any systematic or efficient way.

Early signs of sports personnel suppressing, often very defensively and in at least one case aggressively, the reportage of hazing incidents arose in this study as several coaches refused to allow their players to participate. Possibly hoping to further silence the disclosure of hazing activities in sport, influential Canadian hockey figure Don Cherry has spoken up recently. Only days after a national broadcast about assaultive hockey hazings in the Ontario Hockey League, Cherry denied any truth to the televised stories although they were quite similar to other previous reports of hockey hazings in North America and not dissimilar to cases unearthed in this study. On his prime-time CBC television show, Cherry mocked the reports of brutal hazings as "National Inquirer stuff" (*The Fifth Estate*, October 29th, 1996). In an attempt to strengthen his claim, Cherry indicated that his son had played in the same league and that he had not been involved in any sort of initiation. It is likely that this type of public reaction, especially by such an influential hockey personality, inhibits serious investigation into the incidence of hazing

in sport. Rather than being understood as a relatively common experience, which this study certainly showed it to be (at least in its mildest forms), I feel that people (especially non-members) believe hazing in sport to be isolated occurrences. Again, further research into the phenomenon is necessary to more fully uncover the prevalence of hazing and other socialization processes in sport.

The purpose of this study was to explore the nature and extent of hazing in sport as well as the meanings that athletes attribute to ritualized initiations. A convenience sample targeted members of athletic teams based in three cities (Saskatoon, Calgary, Vancouver) in Western Canada. The athletes were actively competing or were post-competitors in both amateur and professional sports, though their serious level of involvement led me to categorize their general subcultural character as "occupational" according to Donnelly's (1985) typology. Adding an important dimension to the literature on sports-related hazings, the sample included a strong contingency of women athletes (14 out of 30 respondents or 47%).

As previously acknowledged, this study is not without its limitations, the most obvious being its generalizability. The data and interpretations unearthed and developed in this thesis are not intended to be applied to subjects or subcultures outside of the sample. In order to more fully elucidate the complex issue of the extent of hazing in sport and the meanings that athletes attach to it, more case studies of this nature are clearly needed. Another limitation is the researcher's lack of access to abused athletes who have exited their respective sport subculture as a result of negative hazing experiences. In a sense, these are the subjects that may best be able to speak about hazing and the victimization that sometimes accompanies it. If I had the luxury of conducting this research again with the knowledge I have now, I would certainly continue to explore sports teams which have yet to be tapped regarding their socialization of neophyte members. Also, missing from the scholarly work is an analysis of other views on hazing aside from players themselves (such as administrators and coaches). It is important to

recognize that this study focused solely on one angle of what is clearly a multidimensional issue affecting various roles and people. Further, the policing aspect of hazing needs to be more fully addressed to examine how or if hazing is changing as it becomes less socially acceptable in the larger society.

## REFERENCES

- Adler, P. and P. Adler. 1987. *Membership Roles In Field Research*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Anderson, N. 1923. *The Hobo*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Arnold, D.O. (ed.). 1970. *Sociology of Subcultures*. Berkeley, CA: Glendessary Press.
- Baron, S.W. 1989. "The Canadian West Coast Punk Subculture: A Field Study." *Canadian Journal of Sociology* 14: 289-316.
- Berg, B. 1989. *Qualitative Research Methods For The Social Sciences*. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn and Bacon.
- Birrell, S. 1981. "Sport as Ritual: Interpretations from Durkheim to Goffman." *Social Forces* 60(2): 354-375.
- Brake, M. 1985. *Comparative Youth Culture*. London: Routledge.
- Bryson, L. 1983. "Sport and the Oppression of Women." *Australia and New Zealand Journal of Sociology* 19(3): 413-426.
- Calgary Herald*. 1997 (February 1). "Brass call hazing video disgusting," p. A7.
- Calgary Herald*. 1996 (August 30). "High school footballer is injured," p. D2.
- Calgary Herald*. 1996 (March 16). "Class act," p. D3.
- Calgary Herald*. 1995 (February 14). "'Male bonding' Antics Doom General," p. A2.
- Calgary Herald*. 1992 (September 15). "Cutting Criticism," p. D1.
- Calgary Sun*. 1997 (February 1). "Hazing horror," p. 8.
- Cheska, A.T. 1979. "Sports Spectacular: A Ritual Model of Power." *International Review of Sport Sociology* 14(2): 51-72.
- Curry, T.J. 1991. "Fraternal Bonding in the Locker Room: A Profeminist Analysis of Talk about Competition and Women." *Sociology of Sport Journal* 8: 119-135.
- Donnelly, P. and K. Young. 1988. "The Construction and Confirmation of Identity in Sport Subcultures." *Sociology of Sport Journal* 5: 223-40.
- Donnelly, P. 1985. "Sport Subcultures." *Exercise and Sport Sciences Reviews* 13: 539-578.
- Donnelly, P. 1981. "Toward a Definition of Sport Subcultures." In M.Hart and S. Birrell (eds.), *Sport in the Sociocultural Process* (3rd edition). Dubuque, IA: Wm. C. Brown, pp. 565-588.

- Donnelly, P. 1993. "Subcultures in Sport: Resilience and Transformation." In A. Ingham and J.W. Loy (eds.), *Sport in Social Development*. Windsor, ON: Human Kinetics, pp. 119-147.
- Driessen, H. 1983-84. "Male Sociability and Rituals of Masculinity in Rural Andalusia." *Anthropological Quarterly* 56-57: 125-131.
- Dryden, K. 1983. *The Game*. Toronto, ON: Macmillan.
- Dryden, K. and R. MacGregor. 1989. *Home Game*. Toronto, ON: McClelland and Stewart.
- Farr, K.A. 1988. "Dominance Bonding Through the Good Old Boys Sociability Group." *Sex Roles* 18(5/6): 259-277.
- Faulkner, R. 1976. "Making Violence by Doing Work: Selves, Situations, and the World of Professional Hockey." In D. Landers (ed.), *Social Problems in Athletics: Essays in the Sociology of Sport*. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, pp. 93-112.
- Fine, G.A. and S. Kleinman. 1979. "Rethinking Subculture: An Interactionist Analysis." *American Journal of Sociology* 85: 1-20.
- Fontana, A. and J. Frey. 1994. "Interviewing: The Art of Science." *Handbook of Qualitative Research*. In N. Denzin and Y. Lincoln (eds.), Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, pp. 361-377.
- Fowler, F.J. 1993. *Survey Research Methods* (second edition). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Gallmeier, C.P. 1991. "Leaving, Revisiting, and Staying in Touch: Neglected Issues in Field Research." In Shaffir, W. and R. Stebbins (eds.) *Experiencing Fieldwork: An Inside View of Qualitative Research*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage, pp. 224-31.
- Glaser, B. and A. Strauss. 1967. *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies For Qualitative Research*. Hawthorne, NY: Aldine de Gruyter.
- Gordon, M. 1947. "The Concept of Sub-Culture and its Application." *Social Forces* 26: 40-42.
- Gretzky, W. and R. Reilly. 1990. *Gretzky: An Autobiography*. Toronto, ON: Harper Collins.
- Hagan, J. 1987. *The Disreputable Pleasures: Crime and Deviance in Canada* (second edition). Toronto, ON: McGraw Hill Ryerson.
- Hall, A. 1993. "Gender and Sport in the 1990s: Feminism, Culture and Politics." *Sport Science Review* 2(1): 48-68.
- Hargreaves, J. 1982. *Sport, Culture and Ideology*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, pp. 30-61.
- Hargreaves, J. 1990. "Gender on the Sports Agenda." *International Review for the Sociology of Sport* 25(4): 287-305.

- Hoffman, A. 1995. "Women's Access to Sport and Physical Activity." *Avante* 1(1): 77-92.
- Hornbuckle, B.D. 1988. *Death by Hazing*. Sigma Alpha Epsilon Fraternity (article written for Sigma Alpha Epsilon Fraternity Newsletter). Atlanta.
- Irwin, J. 1970. "Notes on the Present Status of the Concept of Subculture." In D.O. Arnold (ed.), *The Sociology of Subcultures*. Berkeley, CA. The Glendessary Press, pp. 164-70.
- Kimmel, M.S. and M.A. Messner. 1990. *Men's Lives*. New York: MacMillan.
- Lethbridge Herald*. 1995 (March 18). "Of hazing in hockey," p. A4.
- Lethbridge Herald*. 1995 (March 18). "Rites of Passage," p. C1.
- Lofland, J. and L. Lofland. 1984. *Analyzing Social Settings: A Guide to Qualitative Observation and Analysis*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company.
- Macleans Magazine*. 1995 (October 16). "Dubious Conduct," pp. 30-33.
- Macleans Magazine*. 1995 (February 20). "Exposing a military coverup?" pp. 14-17.
- Macleans Magazine*. 1995 (January 30). "Canada's Shame," pp. 14-18.
- McCracken, G. 1988. *The Long Interview*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Meltzer, B.N., J.W. Petras and L.T. Reynolds. 1975. *Symbolic Interactionism: Genesis, Varieties and Criticism*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Messner, M.A. 1990. "Masculinities and Athletic Careers: Bonding and Status Differences." In M.A. Messner and D. Sabo (eds.), *Sport, Men and the Gender Order: Critical Feminist Perspectives*. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics, pp. 97-108.
- Messner, M.A. and D. Sabo. 1990 (eds.). *Sport, Men and the Gender Order: Critical Feminist Perspectives*. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.
- Morinis, A. 1985. "The Ritual Experience: Pain and the Transformation of Consciousness in Ordeals of Initiation." *Ethos* 13(4): 150-173.
- Nuwer, H. 1990. *Broken Pledges: The Deadly Rite of Hazing*. Marietta, GA: Longstreet Press.
- Oliver, R. 1990. *The Making of Champions*. Markham, ON: Penguin.
- Obel, C. 1996. "Collapsing Gender in Competitive Bodybuilding: Researching Contradictions and Ambiguity in Sport." *International Review for the Sociology of Sport* 31(2): 185-201.
- Park, R.E., E. Burgess and R.D. McKenzie. 1925. *The City*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Rosman, A. and P. Rubel. 1981. *The Tapestry of Culture*. Glenview, IL: Scott Foresman.

- Sabo, D. 1987. "Sport, Patriarchy and the Male Identity: New Questions about Men and Sport." *Arena* 9(2): 1-30.
- Sabo, D. and J. Panepinto. 1990. "Football Ritual and the Social Reproduction of Masculinity." In M. Messner and D. Sabo (eds.), *Sport, Men and the Gender Order: Critical Feminist Perspectives*. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics, pp.115-127.
- Sage, G. 1980. "Socialization in Sport." In G. Sage (ed.), *Sport and American Society: Selected Readings*. New York: Addison - Wesley, pp. 130-40.
- Sanday, P.R. 1990. *Fraternity Gang Rape*. New York: New York University Press.
- Shaffir, W. and R. Stebbins (eds.). 1991. *Experiencing Fieldwork: An Inside View of Qualitative Research*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Shaffir, W. and R. Stebbins (eds.). 1980. *Fieldwork Experience: Qualitative Approaches to Social Research*. New York: St. Martin's Press.
- Snow, D.A. 1980. "The Disengagement Process: A Neglected Problem in Participant Observation Research." *Qualitative Sociology* 3: 100-122.
- Snyder, E.E. 1980. "Aspects of Socialization in Sports and Physical Education." In G. Sage (ed.), *Sport and American Society: Selected Readings*, pp. 126-30.
- Spradley, J. 1979. *The Ethnographic Interview*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.
- Stebbins, R. 1988. *Deviance: Tolerable Differences*. Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson.
- Strauss, A.L. 1967. "Language and Identity." In J.G. Manis and B.N. Meltzer (eds.), *Symbolic Interaction: A Reader in Social Psychology*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, pp. 322-328.
- Stryker, S. 1967. "Role-Taking Accuracy and Adjustment." In J.G. Manis and B.N. Meltzer (eds.), *Symbolic Interaction: A Reader in Social Psychology*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, pp. 481-492.
- Sykes, G. and D. Matza. 1989. "Techniques of Neutralization: A Theory of Delinquency." In D. Kelly (ed.), *Deviant Behavior: A Text-Reader in the Sociology of Deviance*. New York: St. Martin's Press, pp.104-111.
- Tanner, J. 1978. "New Directions for Subcultural Theory: An Analysis of British Working-Class Youth Culture." *Youth & Society* 9(4): 343-371.
- Theberge, N. 1997. "It's Part of the Game: Physicality and the Production of Gender in Women's Hockey." *Gender and Society* 11(1): 69-87.
- The Fifth Estate*. 1997 (October 29). Canadian Broadcasting Corporation.
- The Globe and Mail*. 1996 (March 23). "11 Cadets Charged After Severe Hazing," p. A7.
- The Star Phoenix*. 1997 (January 20). "Hazing of female cadets under investigation," p. A4.

- The Toronto Sun*. 1996 (February 28). "'Sick' ritual hurts Guelph U. hockey," p. 5.
- Thomson, R. 1976. *Sport and deviance: A subcultural analysis*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Alberta.
- Thrasher, F.M. 1927. *The Gang*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Toohey, D.M. and C.P. Swann. 1985. "A Comparative Study of North American Subcultures." *Comparative Physical Education and Sport* 3: 327-334.
- University of Calgary Gauntlet*. 1987 (September 10). "Memorial University Adopts Rules for Initiation Rites," p. 36.
- Whitson, D. 1990. "Sport in the Social Construction of Masculinity." In M.Messner and D. Sabo (eds.), *Sport, Men and the Gender Order: Critical Feminist Perspectives*. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics, pp. 19-30.
- Wolcott, H. 1990. *Writing Up Qualitative Research*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Young, K. 1983. *The Subculture of Rugby Players: A Form of Resistance and Incorporation*. Unpublished Master's Thesis, McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario.
- Young, K. 1988. "Performance, Control, and Public Image of Behavior in a Deviant Subculture: The Case of Rugby." *Deviant Behavior* 9: 275-293.
- Young, K. 1993. "Violence, Risk and Liability in Male Sports Culture." *Sociology of Sport Journal* 10: 373-396.
- Young, K., P. White and W. McTeer. 1994. "Body Talk: Male Athletes Reflect on Sport, Injury and Pain." *Sociology of Sport Journal* 11:175-194.
- Young, K. and White, P. 1995. "Sport, Physical Danger, and Injury: The Experiences of Elite Women Athletes." *Journal of Sport and Social Issues* 19: 45-61.

## **APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE**

### **SECTION I - BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

When were you born?

How long have you been a member of this team?

What POSITION do you play?

Do you consider yourself a "STARTER" for the team?

How long have you been playing this sport?

Do you compete in other sports also? Which ones?

Do you enjoy playing for this team? Why or why not?

Do you feel like you are part of this team?  
Why or why not?

### **ROOKIE/VETERAN DIVISIONS**

Do members of this team tend to "hang out" together in social settings off the field?

Do all of the players on this team get along with each other?  
Who doesn't get along with whom? Why?

Are there certain groups of players that tend to "hang out" together?  
How would you classify these groups (veterans/rookies, starters, play the same position)?

Who do you tend to "hang out" with the most on your team:

- other rookies or veterans?
- players the same age?
- other "starters" or "bench sitters"?
- people who play the same position as you?

Have you ever felt that you have been excluded from the rest of the team? If so, why have you felt that way?

Are the terms ROOKIE OR VETERAN used by you or your teammates?

If no - How do the older players refer to the younger players on your team?

What do you think the DIFFERENCE is between a rookie and veteran player?

Is there a definite DIVISION between the rookies and the veterans on this team?

How are the two groups DIFFERENT?

Do you feel that the rookie players on this team are treated differently by coaches and other players on and off the field?

-first choice of jersey numbers, equipment, seats on trips, hotel rooms, fund raising events?

Why?

## **SECTION II - ROOKIE INITIATIONS**

Are you aware of any event(s) where a TEAMMATE(S) has been subjected to an INITIATION event by another teammate(s)?

When did it happen? What happened? Who was involved?

Where did it happen (behind closed doors and/or in public)?

HOW OFTEN have these initiation events occurred with this team?

Have YOU ever WITNESSED OR PARTICIPATED in any sort of initiation event(s) with this team (including rookie night)?

If YES:

Was your participation VOLUNTARY?

Why or why not?

Who else was involved?

-veterans or rookies

- entire team? who was not present? Why?

What specifically happened during the initiation event(s)?

What role did YOU play during the initiation event(s)?

Do you feel that everyone who was involved was voluntarily participating?

Do you feel that you or anyone else was being forced to participate?  
How were you or they being forced?

What do you think the consequences were if you or they did not participate?

Do you feel that any of the initiation event(s) were unnecessary or excessive? Which ones and why?

Was alcohol present during the initiation event(s)?

Do you think that you or those involved would have participated if you weren't under the influence of alcohol?

Are you aware of what a 'Rookie Night' is?

How prevalent do you think 'Rookie Night' is in sport?  
Conducted by male and female athletes?  
Only found in certain sports?

Has there been a 'Rookie Night' held by this team while you have been a member?  
If NO -- does this team conduct one or more events that are associated with rookie initiations (dances, special dinners, other team functions or meetings)?

IF YES           Where was it held?  
Who attended (coaches)?  
What specifically happened?  
Was alcohol present?  
Do you feel that everyone who attended had a good time?  
Who didn't have a good time? Why?

Have you ever REFUSED to participate in an initiation event(s)?

Do you think it is acceptable for someone to refuse to participate? Why?  
If NO: What do you think should happen to those people who refuse to participate?

### **SECTION III - Meanings Associated With Initiations**

What function do you feel rookie initiations play in sport?

Why do you think 'Rookie Night' /initiations are performed by athletes?

Do you feel that initiations are imperative for a team to conduct in order to achieve "acceptance" of team members?

Under what circumstances might it NOT be?

(Any connection between rituals and team acceptance?)

(If initiations were conducted) Have initiations been a positive/negative experience for your team?

Are there any "codes of silence" on this team regarding public disclosure of initiations or any other team functions/events?

Are you in favor of sport teams conducting initiation ceremonies?

Why or why not?

Should 'Rookie Night'/initiations ever be stopped or changed in any way?

Why or why not?

What do you like about rookie initiations?

What don't you like about rookie initiations?

What concerns do you have about initiations?

If you were to conduct a study similar to this is there anything that you might do differently than I have done with my study?

(Any questions you would or would not ask?)

## **APPENDIX B: CONSENT FORM**

### **CONSENT FORM** **VETERAN/ROOKIE RELATIONS IN SPORT RESEARCH PROJECT**

**JAMIE BRYSHUN**

This consent form, a copy of which has been given to you, is only part of the process of informed consent. It should give you the basic idea of what the research is about and what your participation will involve. If you would like more detail about something mentioned here, or information not included here, please ask. Please take the time to read this form carefully and to understand any accompanying information.

The purpose of this project is to explore the existence of rookie initiations in sport settings and the meanings that you attribute to initiation events. Male and female athletes presently competing in a variety of amateur and professional sports within the cities of Calgary, Saskatoon, and Vancouver are being approached to voluntarily participate in personal interviews.

Participation will involve one personal interview (usually between one and two hours long) at a location that is convenient and comfortable for you. During the interview, you will be asked questions about incidents that may have involved personal embarrassment and even degradation to yourself or your teammates. This research project is investigating the nature and extent of such incidents as well as the meanings attached to them. You may refuse to answer any question or withdraw from the study at any time.

The interview will be audiotaped and later transcribed by the researcher into text form. You or the interviewer may choose to stop the audiotaping at any time during the interview. The audiotapes will be safely stored in a locked file cabinet at the researcher's residence, separate from the identifying list of subjects' names, and will be accessible only to the interviewer and his supervisor. Your name as well as your team's name shall remain confidential and any subsequent reference to you will be done through the use of pseudonyms. The finished thesis will be a public document and any further publications may include information gathered from the interviews. Despite every attempt to protect your anonymity, please realize that some readers may be able to infer your identity or the team's identity from your sport, gender, and the incidents you describe. Complete anonymity *cannot* be guaranteed.

You will not incur any financial costs nor receive any financial reward for participating.

Your signature on this form indicates that you have understood to your satisfaction the information regarding participation in the research project and agree to participate as a subject. In no way does this waive your legal rights nor release the investigators, sponsors, or involved institutions from their legal and professional responsibilities. You are free to withdraw from the study at any time. Your continued participation should be as informed as your initial consent, so you should feel free to ask for clarification or new information throughout your participation. If you have further questions concerning matters related to this research, please contact:

Dr. Kevin Young  
Dept. of Sociology  
University of Calgary  
220-6504

\_\_\_\_\_  
Participant

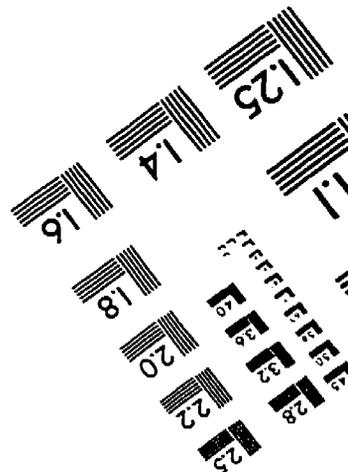
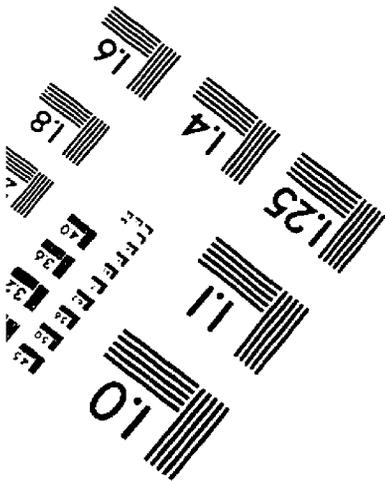
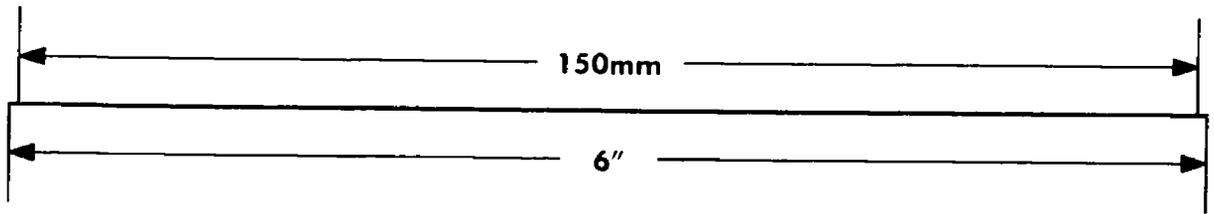
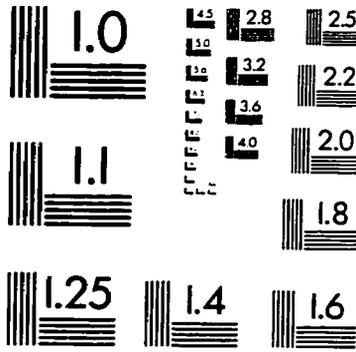
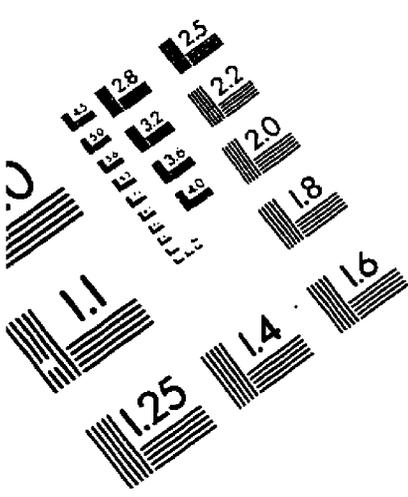
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Investigator

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

A copy of this consent form has been given to you to keep for your records and reference.

# IMAGE EVALUATION TEST TARGET (QA-3)



**APPLIED IMAGE, Inc**  
1653 East Main Street  
Rochester, NY 14609 USA  
Phone: 716/482-0300  
Fax: 716/288-5989

© 1993, Applied Image, Inc., All Rights Reserved