

Organized Sports Participation, Masculinity, and  
Attitudes Toward Women

by

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***ABSTRACT***

Sport is one institution in U.S. society that, through embedded patterns of behavior, may contribute to an ideology of acceptance concerning gender inequality. Organized sport participation, which has been historically reserved for men, incorporates young men and boys into an institution that has its own norms and socialization processes.

Research was conducted on college students currently enrolled at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. A survey was administered to these college students during regularly scheduled class time. The survey was in part adapted from The Attitudes toward Women Scale (AWS) as well as the Brannon Masculinity Scale (BMS).

Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, bivariate correlations, and multiple regression to see if there was a relationship between the control variables, the sports participation variables, the scores on the BMS which measures the acceptance of traditional masculinity, and attitudes toward women.

The results showed that gender and academic class are significantly related to the scores on the AWS. The results also showed that there were not any statistically significant relationships between the sports participation variables and the scores on the AWS. The regression analyses were consistent with these findings.

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## ***CHAPTER ONE: STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM***

The United States, as with almost every other society, is a stratified society. One way in which the stratified nature of the society is reproduced is through institutionalized patterns of behavior. The bases of social stratification can include, but are not limited to, such demographic characteristics as race, class, gender, sexual orientation, and age.

In spite of recent advances, gender inequality still permeates U.S. society. Women as a group are disadvantaged economically, socially, and politically. For example, Ross and Mirowsky (1996) state that on average female workers earn 76 percent of what male workers earn.

How is such gender inequality maintained and reproduced? While there are a myriad of possible sources shaping gender inequality, one area sociologists have focused is the gendered nature of ideology within major institutions.

Sport is one such U.S. institution that through embedded patterns of behavior may contribute to an ideology accepting of gender inequality. Indeed, gender inequality lies at the very basis upon which the sporting institution was founded. Organized sports were designed as an institution that prepares boys and young men for careers in politics and the business world (Mangan 1981). Participation in this sporting culture, which has been historically reserved for men, incorporated young men into an institution that has its own norms and socialization processes. According to Sabo (1989a), the sporting institution's normative system is acquired through a socialization process that involves the learning of aggressive behavior, emotional frigidity, and intense competition to be the best. Traditional masculine values such as taking orders, ignoring pain and other feelings, beating your opponent, taking the game seriously, and the sexual exploitation of women are encouraged in the male hierarchy of American sport. Sport teaches men this hierarchy and that excellence on the playing field is rewarded with acceptance by and promotion within the hierarchy.

With the advent of Title IX legislation, women have now had more opportunities to participate in sport from the youth leagues all the way through the collegiate ranks. As a consequence of this movement of women into the sporting culture, these women have had the opportunity to acquire the value system promoted by the male-dominated hierarchy. Unfortunately, the socialization processes working within the sporting institution may influence women as well as men to view the characteristics stereotypically associated with males as more superior to characteristics stereotypically associated with females.

Lois Bryson (1987) supports the above-mentioned position by stating that the maintenance of the hierarchal sporting culture is centered around the rituals that reinforce the values and norms of the sporting institution. The normative structure that develops may help perpetuate gender inequality. This normative structure as it pertains to men is upheld through the acceptance of traditional masculine values.

This study will use a socialist feminist theoretical framework to investigate the possible relationship between gender, sports participation, the acceptance of traditional masculine values, and attitudes toward women. Most work in the sociology of sport concerning gender issues has been guided by a liberal feminist theoretical perspective (Messner & Sabo 1990). Socialist feminism is different from liberal feminism in that socialist feminism looks at the nature of patriarchy and its relationship to capitalism. In contrast, liberal feminism's focus has been on the institutionalized gender differences that have their roots in the centuries-old battle concerning gender inequalities (Whelehan 1995). Liberal feminism wants to grant women the rights that are

"naturally" accorded to men (Whelehan 1995). However, the socialist feminist critique of liberal feminism states that the liberal feminists are too eager to welcome the male values that come with the opportunity for equal rights in a male system (Tong 1989).

Current researchers in sport sociology such as Curry (1991), Messner (1989 & 1992), and Sabo (1985 & 1989) use a socialist or radical feminist theoretical framework to investigate the oppressive nature of the sporting institution. These researchers argue that through sports males and females learn gender stereotypes, and since the stereotypes connected to men are considered more valuable than those connected to women, the maintenance and reproduction of gender inequality is aided by the normative and value structure of the sporting institution.

The resulting purpose of this research is to explore the relationship between gender, sports participation, and the acceptance of traditional masculine values which, in turn, will lead to more conservative attitudes towards the rights, roles, and privileges associated with women. To examine this question, a questionnaire will be given to a convenience sample of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University students. The questionnaire is designed to ask both male and female students about their amount and type of sports participation, their attitudes concerning traditional masculine values, and their attitudes toward the rights, roles, and privileges of women.



## ***CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW***

Feminist theory offers alternative explanations to traditional social theory regarding the study of gender inequality. Socialist feminist theory stresses men's historical control over the labor of women (Tong 1989). This control men have over women's labor came into being through the evolution of patriarchy and capitalism. Patriarchy and capitalism work together in order to maintain and reproduce gender inequality. The effects in which patriarchal capitalism has on gender inequality is played out within the structure of major U.S. institutions such as the educational system, the economic system, and the family. This study used a socialist feminist theoretical framework to look at another major U.S. institution, sport, because sport has a long history that is interwoven with patriarchal capitalism (Kimmel 1990). Before discussing socialist feminism in more detail, a brief description of liberal feminism is necessary because most of the advances for gender equality within the institution of sport has a basis in the theory of liberal feminism.

Liberal feminism has its roots in liberalism which is the school of political thought that asserts all individuals have the right "to exercise their autonomy and to fulfill themselves" (Tong 1989 p.11). Individuals (usually male) may acquire certain goods and services, but this exercising of free choice must not deprive others of their rights.

Liberal feminists argue that in western industrialized societies women are denied equal rights and are discriminated against due to their gender. The differences that arise between the genders are not innate, but the result of socialization and the learning of appropriate gender roles (Abbott and Wallace 1990).

There has been two basic groups of liberal feminists each concentrating on different sets of rights that are denied to women (Tong 1989). The first group, classical or libertarian liberals, believe that the state should protect civil liberties for both men and women. Examples of civil liberties would be the opportunity to have property rights, to have voting rights, and to have the other major rights accorded to people in the Bill of Rights. Classical liberal feminists did not want the state to give them a "gift" in order to provide these inalienable rights to women. They only wanted the state to provide "an equal opportunity to determine their own accumulations within the market" (Tong 1989 p.12). These liberal feminists desired the same freedom that was "naturally" accorded to men.

The other and more recent group of liberal feminists, referred to as welfare or egalitarian liberals, concern themselves primarily with economic matters instead of civil ones. Welfare or egalitarian liberal feminists see people entering the marketplace with different resources and abilities to compete. The state, in turn, must acknowledge these advantages and disadvantages and must intervene so that the marketplace will not perpetuate the inequalities currently present. Medicaid, Aid to Families with Dependent Children, and food stamps are governmental programs designed primarily to help women not in the marketplace (Tong 1989).

Egalitarian liberal feminism has been the theoretical stance behind most of the important advancements in the sporting institution. Messner and Sabo (1990) use the example of the passage of Title IX legislation in 1972 to show how a egalitarian liberal feminist theoretical framework was applied for positive action in the sporting world. Prior to 1972, women's athletic programs were not funded on par with the men's. The result in the following years after Title IX passed was an increase of 600 percent in the number of school age females participating in sports (Sabo 1988).

Even though the liberal feminists have had most of the tangible successes within the sporting culture, there are a few critiques concerning the liberal feminist position. Socialist

feminists critique the liberal feminists for being "too eager to adopt male values" (Tong 1989 p.34). According to Messner and Sabo (1990), this "eagerness" is most likely the reason liberal feminists have succeeded in implementing opportunities for women in sport. The male sporting culture is more likely to relinquish funding to women's athletic programs if these programs conform to the male sporting culture's ideology.

Also, socialist feminists critique liberal feminists for failing to change or transform patriarchal structures. The failure results in women adopting the patriarchal and competitive values of the male-dominated institutions such as sport (Messner & Sabo 1990). The argument here is that even though opportunity has increased equality has not increased at the same rate.

Compared to when Title IX was passed in 1972, the proliferation of athletic programs for women and girls has resulted in more and more women actually participating in sports. Messner and Sabo (1990) argue that these new athletic programs have developed similarly to men's. The possible consequence of patterning women's girls' athletic programs after men's is that the women and girls participating in these programs will be socialized by the sporting institution in the same manner as men.

The problem with the sporting institution socializing women in the same manner as men in sport has a dubious history of promoting traditional gender stereotypes regarding both men and women. In addition, if women are now participating within the sporting culture instead of being excluded as they have been, the resulting socialization of women by sport may include a more positive view of masculine stereotypes. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to see if women and men who have participated in organized sports adopt similar attitudes toward gender stereotypes (i.e. masculine stereotypes) which, in turn, will lead to more traditional attitudes toward women. The reasoning behind this investigation was deduced from the socialist feminist critique of liberal feminism. Liberal feminism may have sought legislation that changed sport by requiring the public sports institution to provide more access and funding to women. Even though the funding and the access has changed some, these "advances" do not change the patriarchal nature of sport.

### *The Male Sporting Culture*

Some researchers (Sabo 1989; Messner 1989; Messner 1992) have concluded that the traditional American male sporting culture perpetuates hypermasculine values that tend to objectify and sexualize women. The current American male sporting culture is the modern version of sport that has evolved from the playing fields of the all-male public schools of England in the nineteenth century (Hoch 1980) to the current multi-million dollar businesses that has its home in the heart of many American males.

In England during the nineteenth century, the purpose of the establishment of the male sporting culture was to properly train and socialize the all-male ruling class. The belief behind the English sports creed was that the rugby and cricket fields toughened up the males in order for them to be ready for the roles of leaders. These games were only open to young men from elite backgrounds. This permitted the elite young men to bond with other elite young men. These bonds that developed were believed to foster and prepare these young men for elitist rule. Women were not included in the sporting world of nineteenth century England because young girls were never admitted to the public schools in the first place (Hoch 1980).

During the late nineteenth century, American parents perceived women as "feminizing" the young male population, so the idea of the American sporting culture was borne out of a backlash

against these "feminizing" ways. The driving force behind the American sporting culture was the development of the urban middle class that occurred between 1880 and the end of World War I. The result of the new urban middle class was smaller families, the loss of servants, and the absence of working fathers which led to the notion that sons were spending too much time with their mothers (Hantover 1992). The overabundance of time sons spent with their mothers was seen as having a negative impact on the development of masculinity. The fathers who were raised during the Civil War had begun working in their early adolescence. These fathers now watched their teenage sons begin to develop in a world of dependency and inactivity due to the families' new-found middle class affluence. This inactivity and dependence set the stage for the development of such masculine activities as the Boy Scouts and organized sports (Messner 1987).

Hantover (1992) discusses another factor that fostered the growth of organized sports in America: changes in the nature of the work and the composition of the workforce. Work became more sedentary and dependent as the urban middle class grew. Work was now considered sedentary because the person was confined to an assembly line or an office. The worker became dependent on the wages from the company for the purchase of food, clothing, and housing that traditionally had been provided by the family's agrarian lifestyle. The sedentary and dependent nature of the work created a new sense of obligation in the male for the wages the company paid him. Compliance and obedience by the new middle class replaced the independence and self-reliance of the settlers as the hallmarks of the American working culture (Hantover 1992). Organized sports became one of the avenues to teach this compliance and obedience to the children of these new middle class workers.

Sabo (1989a) argues that the compliance and obedience as well as the other socially constructed values that created the organized sporting culture continues to maintain it. The young athlete of today is taught to accept the conservative values that are the cornerstones of American society. Sabo continues by claiming that organized sports teach young boys to ignore their emotions and continue through the pain. The basic principle in the sporting world is that pain is "good" and pleasure is "bad".

Sabo (1989a) criticizes the U.S. sporting culture even further by noting the similarities between coaches and the belief in a Judeo-Christian God. Coaches are permitted to be the patriarchal leaders of teams who may inflict pain upon their followers, the players. Even though these coaches can be capable of atrocious acts on their players, the players still revere them.

The values that are passed on to the players are described by Sabo (1989a) as values that allow the athlete to "take it". These values are as follows: taking orders, taking pain, immobilizing other opponents (taking them out), taking the game seriously, taking their place on the team, and taking women. If these young male athletes are not "man" enough to "take it", then the rewards of prestige, community recognition, and the possibility of financial remuneration such as scholarships and professional contracts are withheld (Sabo 1989a).

With the organization of the sporting institution and with the values the sports world passes from generation to generation, the modern male athlete is created, not born. It may be true that a child may be predisposed to jumping higher or running faster than the rest of the children, but it is the sporting culture that constructs the athlete. The sporting culture does not only exist on the playing field or in the locker room. It also exists within the athlete's family, peers, and community (Messner 1989).

The family exerts an incredible influence in the development of the male athlete and his socialization. Messner (1992) interviewed thirty men who had an athletic career. This career could be at either the high school, the college, or the professional level. Messner found that most athletes

had a brother, father, uncle, or close family friend that was a successful athlete. This person became the role model for young athlete. The young male athlete would emulate the behavior of the selected role model. The young boy would copy the way the role model played his particular sport. The young athletes even emulated the language and speech patterns of the particular role model (Messner 1992). According to Messner (1992), the father plays an especially important role in the socialization of the young boy into sport. The father usually either first exposes or eventually pushes the young boy into the sports world. The athletes interviewed by Messner revealed that excelling at sport in some way brought them closer to their fathers especially if their fathers also had an outstanding athletic career themselves.

The influence of the peer group also affects the degree of socialization a young male acquires from the sporting culture. Most of the athletes Messner (1989) interviewed noted that one of the reasons that they participated in sports was because "everyone was doing it". The organized sporting culture perpetuates the ambivalence towards intimacy that seems to characterize male relationships. This ambivalence can be described on one hand as closeness to teammates for a common cause, yet, on the other hand, there are firm boundaries and limits that keep these relationships in check.

The key to acceptance in the sporting world is simply being the best (Messner 1989). Competing with your opponent is not enough. The opponent must be beaten. The more handily an athlete beats his opponent, the better. Laitinen and Tiihonen (1990) found support for this in their study of men who were university students and their memories concerning sport. The most positive memories of sport concerned winning whereas the most negative memories were concerned about losing and injuries.

Winning is seen as a way to achieve status in the larger community. Winning is perceived as a means of achieving prominence and adulation. The athletes Messner (1992) interviewed felt that winning would cure their social inadequacies. However, in the sporting world, the adulation that comes with winning is fleeting at best. The athletes found out that they were only as good as their last game. The constant competition to be the best takes a toll on the athlete and socializes the athlete into a world of competition and conquest.

The value system associated with competition and conquest follows the athlete into other realms of his life. Sabo (1989b) wrote an essay describing the sporting culture's attitudes toward women. In Sabo's opinion, women are not seen as human beings in the eyes of the competitive athlete. They are seen as objects to conquer or "pieces of ass" to win. The traditional lore of the sporting culture promotes a myth of the sexual athlete. According to Sabo (1989b), this everlasting myth of the sexual athlete continues to persist because of the societal belief in the male athlete who is sexually adept because of his physical prowess on the playing fields.

The sexual nature of the athletic world surfaces at a very early age. Fine (1987) studied the interaction of preadolescent boys who participated on an organized Little League baseball team. Fine saw the talk concerning sex and the overt acts of aggression in preadolescent boys as a characteristic of peer interaction and the achievement of competence among those same peers. The structure and dynamics of the Little League baseball team encouraged the team members to act in this particular manner.

The young boys in Fine's (1987) study quickly recognized that becoming mature in our society meant exhibiting sexual prowess in relationships involving females. The language in the little league dugouts included talk about sexual knowledge as well as sexual activity. These preadolescent boys interviewed by Fine evaluated their peers' girlfriends, and only the high status

males in the group could actually get away with having a girlfriend without being teased. Yet all of the boys were supposed to have participated in sexual activity. Fine discusses that the interaction of the peer group protected against the young boys becoming too affectionate with girls. Talk was centered around aspects such as "cuteness" in order to objectify the possibility of intimacy with females.

Another lesson learned in the early years of male competitive athletics is the double standard between men and women. During Fine's (1987) research, the talk among the young male team members included conversations about sexual experiences. The double standard thrived among the boys of this little league team. The reputations of the boys were enhanced by sexual exploitation of the young girls, commonly referred to as "sluts". The preadolescent girl was seen simply as an object that served a purpose. That purpose was to enhance the status of the boys within their peer group, the team.

The sexist language that begins in the little league dugout continues throughout the locker rooms in high schools, colleges, and the professional ranks. Curry (1991) found that the language used in "big time" college sport locker rooms was essentially the same as on the little league fields. Men college athletes would dare not talk about a woman as a person in fear of being ridiculed and ostracized. Curry states that men collegiate athletes find their own masculinity by separating themselves through language and actions from women and homosexuals. Women are treated as objects to possess. "Success" is measured in the locker room by the amount of sex an athlete has had.

At the higher levels of athletic competition (i.e. high school, college, etc.), the athlete is expected to maintain a "rap" when it concerns women (Messner 1992). This rap is essentially a socially constructed dialogue in order to entice women into sexual relations. Most of the athletes Messner interviewed said they felt awkward around women but felt pressured into sexual relations by their peers.

The language of sexual conquest enhances status in high school, college, and the professional ranks as well as it does at the little league level (Messner 1992). This language erodes the possibility of an intimate relationship with a woman due to the objectifying nature of the exchange. In the sporting culture, men must negotiate their masculinity through the stories they tell of their sexual exploits. By telling stories of sexual exploits, the women included in the narratives become nothing more than objects with entertainment value. As pointed out earlier, Sabo (1989a) blames the objectification of women in these stories on the socialization process of the organized sporting culture.

Emotional intimacy with women is not a part of the locker room mentality. Intimacy is seen by the sports establishment as an emotional weakness. The sporting institution is not willing to deal with a parade of "pansies", "pussies", and "wimps". Messner (1992) points out that the use of derogatory names for feminine body parts as motivators in sport only helps to perpetuate the view of women as sex objects.

Hoch (1980) states that the media and the advertisers have to take some responsibility for the objectification of women within the sporting culture. The use of television cameras to focus on an attractive women so that the announcers can comment on her features during a sporting contest helps to recirculate the problem. Also, television commercials that show athletes as acquiring women continues the objectification of women via sport.

Hoch (1980) continues by stating that cheerleaders and band majorettes are also part of the problem. These women wear short skirts and tight sweaters to inject a certain amount of sexual

tension into the game situation. In Hoch's opinion, the purpose of the sexual tension is to remind the fans as well as the athletes that to the winner goes the spoils. The reward in this instance is the young cheerleader who is then seen by the athletes and fans as a sexual object for the taking.

The effect the sporting institution has on the attitudes of women has not been thoroughly researched. Elaine Blinde (1989) states that since Title IX legislation women's athletic programs have increasingly emulated the male model. The emphasis of the male sports model in women's sports has projected more traditionally masculine values on women's sport. These traditionally male values include but are not limited to an increased emphasis on winning, intimidation, aggression, commercialization, professionalization, and conformity.

It is the promotion of traditional masculine values by the sporting institution that this study aimed to investigate. If people participate in a patriarchal capitalistic institution such as sport, the values of that institution will be learned. Part of the values that are maintained and reproduced by the sporting institution include the beliefs that women are inferior as well as sex objects. The institution of sport will only have an effect on the person if he or she participates within it for a long duration (i.e. the number of hours a person participates within a given organized sport). Also, the type of sport one participates in is important. Houseworth, Peplow, and Thirer (1989) found that men who participate in sex-segregated sports such as football have much more traditional views of men and women.

### ***The Acceptance of Traditional Masculine Values and the Influence of the Sporting Culture***

The American sporting culture reflects the traditional masculine gender-role stereotypes accepted by the general population of the United States. The masculine gender-role stereotypes can be held and reinforced by both men and women. These hypermasculine traits can be represented in four major dimensions presented by Robert Brannon (1976). The four dimensions proposed by Brannon are antifemininity, success, inexpressiveness and independence, and adventurousness. Even though Brannon's theory looks as if there are five dimensions, inexpressiveness and independence are contained in one dimension, as I will discuss below.

These four themes of American masculinity result in twelve distinctive personality traits of the stereotyped American man (Kilmartin 1994). They are as follows:

Strength	Independence
Achievement	Hard Working
Dominance	Heterosexuality
Toughness	Aggressiveness
Unemotional	Physical
Competitiveness	Forcefulness

Patricia Murphy (1988) would call these stereotyped masculine personality traits "sport role enhancers". A sport role enhancer is any personality trait that improves the probability of excelling in a given sport. As mentioned in the previous section of the review of literature, men created sport to provide an arena for young boys to learn truly masculine personality traits. These personality traits are not originally part of the boy's psyche. Boys in the United States learn these masculine traits through avenues of socialization such as the family, school, and the sporting culture.

The first theme of Brannon's (1976) traditional American masculinity is one of antifemininity. He calls this "No Sissy Stuff". Males are encouraged to avoid the personality and other characteristics that are traditionally associated with women. An example of a characteristic

associated with females is emotional vulnerability that comes with a free expression of feeling. Homosexual behavior and feelings for other males is also strictly prohibited, and interests in stereotypical feminine occupations such as secretary and nurse are discouraged.

However, the acceptance of antifeminine masculine values does not totally limit the male from a open display of emotion. Fasteau (1974) argues that the sporting culture is one of the only institutions that a man can become truly emotional. Whether it is in a bar watching a football game on the television or on a softball diamond cheering on a fellow teammate, the sporting culture is one of the few major institutions that allows males to exhibit their emotions. This flow of emotions is not entirely free. There are limitations for these emotions. These limitations usually surface in the guise of stories and jokes among a group of men.

The second dimension is what Brannon (1976) referred to as "The Big Wheel". This theme revolves around the belief that a man's status is a result of being successful in everything he chooses to do. This is especially directed toward athletics and work. Traditional American masculinity dictates that men who succeed on the playing fields and in the business world must be respected by both males and females.

Fasteau (1974) agrees that work is the principle arena in which a man can prove his worth. However, Fasteau writes that sport is the training ground for these beliefs. Where work is falsely used as the yardstick for an adult male's moral worth, athletics is used similarly to deceive the young male into believing that success on the playing field translates into personal self-worth.

Brannon's (1976) third dimension of traditional American masculinity is one of inexpressiveness and independence. Self-control and the maintenance of emotional composure in the advent of adversity typify the American male. The adult male solves problems without help, keeps all feelings within himself, and will not tolerate any public display of weakness from himself or any other male. In this view, independence cannot be separated from inexpressiveness. Brannon named this theme "The Sturdy Oak" or "The Male Machine".

The difference between this dimension of inexpressiveness and independence and the emotional component within the first dimension of antifemininity lies in the nature of the emotions being withheld. In the first dimension of antifemininity, the emotions being suppressed are one of caring and emotional attachment to other human beings. The inexpressiveness of emotion within the third dimension involves the maintaining of composure in front of others. It includes the ability to act calmly in the face of adversity (Brannon 1976).

Jack Balswick (1988) calls this masculine trait involving the avoidance of emotional vulnerability and the resulting curtailment of emotional expression "the inexpressive male". The inexpressive male is the result of "the interaction between a male's conception of himself and his definition of role-appropriate behavior in life situations" (Balswick 1988 p.36).

The final theme of traditional United States masculinity discussed by Brannon (1976) is adventurousness. Masculinity can be achieved through the willingness to take risks. The major facet of this theme is violence. Violence is seen as a necessary evil. Males do not necessarily want to practice violence, but if they cannot achieve what they desire then violence is an acceptable alternative.

Kilmartin (1994) agrees that violence is an alternative that is not desired but is accepted. For example, he states that violence is used by "men who are unsuccessful by traditional social standards, who succeed but feel empty inside, and who are enraged by a sense that they are not valued" (1994 p.218). "Successful" violence allows the victorious male to diminish the opponent which in turn permits this victorious male to put aside the feelings of inferiority that led up to the

violence.

However, the hypermasculine qualities of men that are a part of the acceptance of traditional masculine values are not totally dysfunctional to the nature of society. They do have their place as part of the success of the participant in the industrialized societies of the west where there is a premium on aggressiveness and competition (Coakley 1986).

Traditional masculinity as observed in the United States is a construct that must be learned by the young person. Institutions such as the family, the school system, the media, as well as the sporting culture all contribute to the acquisition of masculine personality traits in young males.

The next section deals with the Attitudes toward Women Scale and its use in the study of gender relations and the sporting institution.

### ***The Attitudes towards Women Scale and Its Relevance to Sport***

In 1972, Janet Spence and Robert Helmreich published a scale that is designed to measure attitudes toward the rights and roles of women in contemporary society. The Attitudes toward Women Scale uses statements that respondents can indicate their agreement. The AWS is used to measure attitudes in order to show the prevalence of feminine gender stereotypes. This study plans to use the AWS as the dependent variable in order to measure the attitudes of the respondents as they relate to women.

The Attitudes toward Women Scale has been used in various contexts. It has been used to determine competence and interpersonal attraction toward women (Spence & Helmreich 1972b), to detect the difference between what men say and what they actually do (Leventhal & Matturo 1981), to investigate the knowledge of gender stereotypes among people (Innes, Dormer, & Lukins 1993), and, finally, the AWS has been used with the Bem Sex Role Inventory to investigate attitudes toward rape in both male and female undergraduates (Szymanski et. al. 1993).

This study, however, is looking at how the Attitudes toward Women Scale was used within the context of sport. There have been three studies which used the AWS in the context of sport that are pertinent to this study.

The first study was conducted by Uguccioni and Ballantyne (1980). They were examining the differences between females in competitive sports, females in recreational sports, and female nonathletes on sex role orientations. Uguccioni and Ballantyne used the Bem Sex Role Inventory as well as the AWS. It was found that competitive athletes scored highest on the masculinity category of the Bem Sex Role Inventory, while recreational athletes scored highest on the femininity category.

Uguccioni and Ballantyne found that, in regards to scores on the Attitudes toward Women Scale, the highest scores were held by competitive and recreational athletes classified as androgynous or female (1980). According to the Attitudes toward Women Scale, the high scores are considered to be associated with traditional attitudes concerning the rights and roles of women. Liberal attitudes toward women (low scores on the AWS) were held by competitive and recreational athletes who scored highest on masculinity.

The second study examined the validity of the various stereotypes concerning female athletes (Colker & Widom 1980). The Attitudes toward Women Scale was used as a part of a series of questionnaires to validate the stereotypes concerning female athletes. The results showed that female collegiate athletes were less feminine on their scores for the femininity subscale of the Personal Attributes Questionnaire (Spence, Helmreich, & Stapp 1974), but not more masculine



than a control group of women selected from the general college student population. This did not validate their hypothesis that female collegiate athletes were more likely to score higher on the measure of masculinity employed in the study.

There was also a significant positive relationship between the level of commitment an athlete had to her sport and the more profeminist attitudes she held. This means that the woman athlete who reported to have a high commitment to athletics was most likely to score lower on the Attitudes toward Women Scale, but this was not significantly different from that of the control group (Coker & Widom 1980). Coker and Widom conclude that even though athletes who report a high level of commitment have statistically significant more profeminist attitudes than athletes with low commitment, the self-reported high commitment athletes are basically no different than women in the general college population.

Houseworth, Peplow, and Thirer (1989) conducted a study involving the influence of sport participation upon sex role of males and their subsequent attitudes toward women. This study incorporated the Bem Sex Role Inventory as well as the AWS. They found that scores on the masculinity scale were not significantly different between male athletes and male nonathletes. They did find, however, that male athletes held a more conservative view of women than did nonathletes. The results did not support their hypothesis that males who participate in noncontact sports would differ in their sex role orientation and their attitudes toward women from males who participated in contact sports. Houseworth et. al. did find that track and field athletes held more liberal attitudes toward women than the other sport teams examine in the study. They concluded that the difference in the track athletes may be due to the fact that the men and women on track and field teams tend to train in close proximity to each other.

### ***The Goal of the Intended Research***

Since the liberal feminists want equal standing with men in society's major institutions and sport is a major institution founded on the ideology of masculine behavior, a social feminist theoretical framework would be correct by inferring that females who participate in sporting institution would adopt conservative male values as well as traditional attitudes toward women.

The purpose of this study is to see if there is a relationship between gender, organized sport participation, attitudes concerning the acceptance of traditional masculine values, and attitudes toward women. The control variables to be used in this study are as follows: race/ethnicity, academic class, and gender. The sport participation variables include the highest level of organized sport that the respondent participated, the type of which in which the respondent participated, and whether or not the respondent currently participates in unorganized sports and physical fitness. Also included within the sport participation variables are questions concerning the number of hours per week a respondent participated in various sporting activities. The following research hypotheses will be tested:

1. Respondents' answers on items concerning sports participation is positively related to the respondents' scores on The Brannon Masculinity Scale.
2. Respondents' answers on items concerning sports participation is positively related to the respondents' scores on the Attitudes towards Women Scale.

3. Respondents' scores on The Brannon Masculinity Scale is positively related to the respondents' scores on the Attitudes toward Women Scale.
4. Gender, the respondents' answers on items concerning sports participation, scores on The Brannon Masculinity Scale, and scores on the Attitudes toward Women Scale are all positively related when controlling for the effects of the other variables.

## ***CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY***

The methodology chapter is divided into three sections: the population and sample, the operationalization of the variables, and the plan for data analysis.

### ***Population and Sample***

The population was limited to students at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. The population was limited on two factors. First of all, due to lack of resources, a large representative sampling frame could not be obtained. Secondly, the population of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University students was chosen because of the cost and convenience for the researcher. The tradeoff for the lower cost for obtaining a sample and the convenience this type of sample gave to the researcher is that the findings from this study will not be generalizable to a larger population of Virginia Tech students or the general public.

The sample derived from the population can be classified as a nonprobability convenience sample. Henry (1990) describes a nonprobability convenience sample as "a group of individuals who are readily available to participate in a study" (p.18). Although this definition leads one to assume that this study's sample is less than optimal, Henry continues by explaining that convenience samples help a researcher decide if a problem exists or not. The sample was chosen from selected classes within the Colleges of Agriculture and Life Sciences and Liberal Arts and Sciences at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. The classes were chosen from the departments of History, Sociology, and Crop and Soil Environmental Sciences. The reason these particular classes were chosen in part because the study's researcher had a previous relationship with the chosen classes' instructors.

On the particular days that the questionnaire was distributed, 246 students were present. Of the 246 questionnaires completed by the students within these eight classes, 229 were included into the study. The seventeen questionnaires that were omitted had enough missing data to render their responses not analyzable.

### ***Operationalization of the Variables***

The instrument used was a self-report survey given to eight classes during their regular meeting times at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. The survey was designed to take 15 to 20 minutes because of the time restrictions involved for administering a survey during a scheduled class meeting.

The survey itself was composed of the four following sections: the block of questions concerning sports participation, the Brannon Masculinity Scale (Brannon 1985), the Attitudes toward Women Scale (Spence & Helmreich 1978), and the demographic control variables. See Appendix A for a copy of the survey instrument.

The scoring method used for both the Brannon Masculinity Scale and the Attitudes towards Women Scale consisted of a seven-point Likert scale. The items on both scales were scored in the same direction with one being the most liberal attitude and seven being the most traditional. The scale was reversed scored on a number of items within the two scales.

The items concerning sports participation and the control variables were different in form from the Brannon Masculinity Scale and the Attitudes toward Women Scale. These items were

scored in a forced-choice format with at least four choices per item. The most choices per item for these particular questions was seven.

### The Dependent Variable

The dependent variable is attitudes concerning the roles and behaviors of contemporary women. The attitudes concerning the roles and behaviors of contemporary women was defined as the subjects' self-report of their agreement with statements concerning the attitudes towards the behaviors of women in contemporary society. The dependent variable was measured by statements taken from the fifteen-item version of the Attitudes towards Women Scale (AWS) developed by Janet T. Spence and Robert L. Helmreich (1978).

The AWS consists of "statements describing the rights, roles, and privileges women ought to have" (Spence & Helmreich 1978 p.38-39). The statements focused on a wide range of roles and behaviors concerning women such as the acceptability of women to propose marriage or the equality of the work force concerning women.

The fifteen-item version of the AWS was derived from the original Attitudes toward Women Scale that was originally published by Spence and Helmreich in 1972. The original AWS consisted of 55 Likert-type items that measured attitudes toward behaviors of women in a wide range of areas. The areas of measurement in the AWS include the vocational, educational, and intellectual behavior of women; independence and freedom; dating and courtship; sexual behavior; and marital obligations. This form of the AWS was not the only form developed before the fifteen-item version was created and put into practice.

In 1973, Spence, Helmreich, and Stapp reduced the 55-item Attitudes toward Women Scale. The long form was originally put together in an attempt to measure behaviors "in all areas of activity in which normative expectations could be, in principle, the same for men and women" (p.219 Spence, Helmreich, and Stapp 1973). The first short form, however, was designed to be given as a single instrument or a part of a series of instruments. This short form consisted of 25 items taken from the original long form.

As mentioned earlier, the form being used for this study is the shortest form of the Attitudes toward Women Scale. This form of the AWS contains 15 items, of which 14 were chosen to be included in this study. The fifteen-item version of the AWS was originally created by Spence and Helmreich (1978) in order to be included in a battery of questionnaires that were given to juniors and seniors in five New England high schools. The fifteen-item version of the AWS was one of five total questionnaires included in the battery.

The purpose of studying the New England high schoolers was to distinguish between psychological dimensions of masculinity and femininity and masculine and feminine sex roles. It was found that masculinity and femininity was not two ends of one continuum, but two separate psychological conceptions (Spence & Helmreich 1978).

This fifteen-item version used in the New England high school study was found to have correlated with the original 55-item long form ( $r=.91$ ). This was consistent with the 25-item version of the AWS that was correlated highly ( $r=.97$  for male college students and  $r=.97$  for female college students) with the original 55-item long form (Spence, Helmreich, & Stapp 1973). Spence and Helmreich (1978) stated that their extensive data concerning the AWS provided ample evidence for construct validity.

As mentioned earlier, this study used 14 of the 15 questions from the shortest version of the

AWS. The only question omitted was a question that was deemed by the researcher as out of date. The fifteen-item form had a Cronbach alpha of .89 in a study conducted by Spence & Helmreich (1978). The fourteen items chosen from the fifteen-item scale was found to have a Cronbach alpha of .87. Each item was originally scored as a four-point, 0 to 3 Likert-type scale. However, a 7-point Likert scale is being employed in this study in order for the AWS to have the same level of differentiation as does the Brannon Masculinity Scale, that will be discussed later in the chapter. This is a change from the original scoring system which was only a four-point Likert scale with "Strongly Agree" and "Strongly Disagree" anchoring each end. On this 14 item version of the AWS, the scoring was the identical to that of the statements taken from the Brannon Masculinity Scale. However, almost half of the fourteen items were reverse scored. The questions that were reverse scored were as follows: 35, 36, 37, 39, 42, and 43. The fourteen questions derived from the Attitudes toward Women Scale are additive in the same format as the Brannon Masculinity Scale.

### Independent Variables

The first set of independent variables can be classified as control variables. The two questions used as control variables asked the subjects their current academic class (i.e. first-year student, sophomore, junior, senior, or graduate student) and their race/ethnicity. The two questions concerning the control variables were presented as the fourth and final part of the questionnaire.

Question 49 asked the respondents which academic class they were currently a part of at Virginia Tech. The answers were coded from 1 for a first-year student to 5 for a graduate student. The question on academic class was included in the survey because some liberal feminists argue that education can help eradicate inequality (Mill 1993, Tong 1989). Socialist feminists would not necessarily agree because education is an institution embedded with the ideology of patriarchal capitalism. Therefore, the need to control for year in school as a proxy for the potentially liberalizing effect of education.

The final item, question 50, asked the subjects about their race/ethnicity. Since the overwhelming majority of students who participated in the survey identified themselves as "Caucasian", the item was coded as a "dummy" variable. In this format, "Caucasian" was coded 1 whereas all the other responses were coded 0. This was done, in part, because the student body at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University is not a diverse population and many minority groups are underrepresented. This fact and the way this convenience sample was drawn did not permit many minority ethnic groups a chance to participate.

The independent variable of primary interest in the study was sports participation. The block of questions concerning sports participation consisted of six questions. The first four questions asked the subjects about their involvement in organized sporting establishments. The questions included asked the respondents about the highest level of their organized sports experience, the nature of sport in which they participated (i.e. contact, minimal contact, or noncontact), and the number of hours participated in a given week the team and on their own. Each question allowed subjects to state if they did not participate in organized sports. The remaining two questions asked the respondents if they participated in general physical fitness and if so, how many hours per week.

Question 1 asked the subject to state which was the highest level of organized sport that he/she had participated. The scoring went from 0 for individuals who never participated in organized sports to 5 for people who achieved the level of professional organized sport at one point

in their life.

The second question involved what type of sport did the respondent participate in question 1. The range of answers were as follows: 0 for never playing a sport, 1 for participating in a noncontact sport (i.e. tennis or golf), 2 for minimal contact sports such as baseball and softball, and 3 for participation in contact sports. The contact category included such organized sports as football, basketball, and wrestling. This question was included because it is believed that the masculine identity can be formed and perfected within a culture of sports (Monaghan 1983). Monaghan explains how sex-segregated sports such as the high contact sports of football, basketball, and wrestling enhances the young boy's sense of masculine identity. Coeducational sports can possibly even out the levels of ability between men and women. Monaghan states that for this reason it is not desirable to have women and men compete together. The description Monaghan gives supports the evidence that patriarchy plays a huge part of the sporting culture.

The third and fourth questions were similar in that they both asked how many hours the subject spent practicing or training for the particular sport mentioned in question 1. The third question concerned the number of hours the respondent spent practicing with the team. The fourth question dealt with how many hours the respondent practiced on his or her own. The scoring for both questions ranged from 0 for individuals who never participated in sport to 5 for subjects who practiced or trained with the team or on their own for 21 or more hours per week while they were a member of the team mentioned in question 1.

Questions 5 and 6 of the sports participation items were designed to ask the subjects about their sporting and physical fitness activities that did not involve organized sporting organizations. These questions were included to see if participation in unorganized sport and/or general physical fitness had any affect on masculine ideology. The purpose is to verify the fact that the structure of organized sport contributes to a conservative view of both men and women. The fifth question asked the respondents whether or not they participated in unorganized sporting activities such as pick-up basketball or general physical fitness. The item was coded 0 for a "No" response and 1 for a "Yes" response. This item was treated as a dummy variable in the regression analysis. The sixth question was similar to questions 3 and 4 in that question 6 asked about the number of hours the respondent participated in unorganized sporting activities or general physical fitness. The code was the same with 0 meaning that a subject does not currently participate in unorganized sporting activities and the highest score of 5 meaning that the subjects currently participate in 21 or more hours of unorganized sporting activity per week.

### Intervening Variable

The intervening variable consists of the feelings the subjects have about their acceptance of traditional masculine values. These feelings concerning the acceptance of traditional masculine values are classified as the intervening variable because the existence of these feelings are proposed, but cannot be directly measured due to the context of the independent and dependent variables (Weirisma 1991). Also, these feelings about the acceptance of traditional masculine values can theoretically be described as the intervening variable because it is possible to participate in sports and not have conservative attitudes toward women. This study is investigating sports participation in order to see if increases in the exposure of individuals to the tolerance concerning conservative ideology which exists within the acceptance of traditional masculine values. It is the exposure to the tolerance of conservative attitudes concerning the acceptance of traditional

masculine values that should lead to more traditional views concerning the rights, roles, and behaviors of women.

The instrument that was employed to measure the feelings about the acceptance of traditional masculine values was the Brannon Masculinity Scale (BMS). Brannon (1985) constructed this scale to measure the acceptance of traditional masculine values. This scale does not measure how masculine a person is, but instead the Brannon Masculinity Scale measures how much the respondent agrees or disagrees with stereotypical masculine behavior in men.

The main reason the BMS was chosen was because the scale does not compare men against women. It was designed to describe the degree in which a respondent approves or disapproves of traditional masculine values. For this reason, the BMS can be taken by either males or females (Brannon 1985).

The theoretical basis driving the choice of the BMS was the socialist feminist perspective. The socialist feminist perspective deals with the dual reality of both sexism and capitalism. Capitalism has its own kind of sexism that needs women to be subjugated in order for this economic system to continue to be dominate (Charlotte Perkins Gilman Chapter of the New American Movement 1993). The BMS measures the approval of masculine stereotypes within U.S. that is the result of the economic system and the unique type of sexism that is created by capitalism.

The second section of the survey was developed from the Brannon Masculinity Scale (BMS). The survey included 27 items from the original 110 item scale. The 110-item BMS consists of seven subscales. The subscales measure a wide range of topics: Avoiding Femininity, Concealing Emotions, The Breadwinner, Admired and Respected, Toughness, The Male Machine, and Violence and Adventure. Each of these subscales coincides with Brannon's (1976) major themes concerning the acceptance of traditional masculine values.

The Brannon Masculinity Scale was originally constructed by Brannon and Juni in 1984. The BMS was designed as a self-report scale that is based on Brannon's (1976) theory as to what an American man is supposed to be (Thompson, Pleck, & Ferrera 1992). The items on the scale were designed to have a male noun anchor the statement without a direct comparison to women. However, since this study was looking at both males and females responses to masculinity, the male anchor was changed to a gender neutral anchor. Each item is scored on a seven-point Likert scale. According to Thompson, Pleck, and Ferrera (1992), the test-retest reliability was .92 over a four-week period. Also, the BMS has an alpha of .95 supporting high internal consistency (Thompson, Pleck, & Ferrera 1992).

Due to the time restrictions in the administration of the survey, the 110-item Brannon Masculinity Scale was not a viable option. However, a short form of the BMS does exist. The short form consists of 58 items, but this was also not feasible for the study in question. There were other measures of masculinity that existed, but the majority of them were based on Brannon's (1976) theory of masculinity and/or modeled after the BMS (Thompson, Pleck, & Ferrera 1992). The resulting measure of the intervening variable that was used for this study was constructed of 27 items from three of the subscales. The three subscales that the items were taken from were as follows: Concealing Emotions, Toughness, and Violence and Adventure. These three subscales were chosen because I believed that the subscales of Concealing Emotions, Toughness, and Violence and Adventure were the most similar with the ideology promoted by the male sporting culture. The 27 items had an alpha of .89.

The items chosen from the Brannon Masculinity Scale were coded on a seven-point Likert scale format with "Strongly Disagree" and "Strongly Agree" anchoring both ends. This scoring

system was identical to the one used to score the 14 items from the Attitudes toward Women Scale. The questions were coded to reveal attitudes that ranged from liberal to conservative. The most liberal response was coded 1 while the most conservative was coded 7. Most items were scored to move from 1 as "Strongly Disagree" to 7 as "Strongly Agree". Only items 9, 12, 28, and 30 were reversed scored in this section.

The Brannon Masculinity Scale is additive in design. The score from each question in the scale was added together in order to create a total score. It was this total score of the 27 items that was used for the analysis of the attitudes of the respondents concerning the acceptance of traditional masculine values. The total score can be understood simply as the higher the scores on the items of the Brannon Masculinity Scale the more the respondent accepted attitudes concerning traditional masculine values. The opposite is also true in that the lower the score the less accepting the respondent is concerning traditional masculine values.

### *Plan for Data Analysis*

The data analysis was conducted through the use of descriptive statistics, bivariate correlations, and multiple regression analysis to see if there was a relationship between the control variables, the sports participation variables, the acceptance of traditional masculine values, and attitudes toward women.

This particular plan was chosen because it is necessary to see if a relationship between these variables exist. Other writers (Messner & Sabo 1990; Crosset 1990; Kimmel 1990; Bryson 1987) state that sport is an institution that maintains and reproduces a type of gender inequality that is unique to capitalism. This study wanted to investigate the relationship between the above variables within a context of the general student body.

### Factor Analysis

Factor analysis was used on the 27 items of the Brannon Masculinity Scale and the 14 items on the Attitudes toward Women Scale. The goal of factor analysis is to represent the relationships among the variables in the most parsimonious fashion possible (Norusis 1990). This allows for new insights to develop when certain factors can be determined.

The result of the factor extraction was that the Brannon Masculinity Scale produced seven factors with eigenvalues greater than 1.0. The next step was to transform the factors into a format that was easier to interpret. Varimax rotation was employed to identify which variables were highly related to the factors extracted. The result of the rotation phase was that the 27 variables were associated with the seven factors identified earlier. However, only six of these factors were included in the analysis because the variables that made up the seventh factor were not related. The six factors that remained dealt with emotional qualities attributed to masculinity (Cronbach's alpha = .88), risk taking behavior (alpha = .74), the amount of pain an athlete should endure (alpha = .68), whether or not a person should stand up for himself or herself (alpha = .66), whether or not fighting is an appropriate response (alpha = .62), and, finally, the one item asking whether or not a recreational sport should be competitive or just good exercise.

The Attitudes toward Women scale resulted in three factors with eigenvalues greater than 1.0. However, when the factors were rotated and identified, the resulting analysis did not provide the simplicity or interpretation necessary to warrant keeping the factors separate. The AWS was



kept together as one scale for parsimonious interpretation. This concurs with Spence and Helmreich's (1978) assertion that the 15-item version of the AWS does not break down neatly into easily identified factors.

## **CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS**

The purpose of this study was to see if there was a relationship between sports participation, acceptance of traditional masculine values, and attitudes toward the rights, roles and privileges of women. A particular interest within this study was to examine the effect gender had on the relationship between the above-listed variables. The results of the intended research are presented in this chapter as follows: descriptive statistics, bivariate relationships, and the multiple regression analysis.

### ***Descriptive Statistics***

Eight classes were surveyed from the Departments of Crop and Soil Environmental Science, History, and Sociology at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. There was 246 students present on the particular day the survey was handed out. Seventeen surveys were deleted due to an overabundance of missing data (i.e. one or more of the scales were not completed).

The sample consisted of 229 Virginia Tech students of which 55% (n=126) were female and 45% (n=103) were male. Of the females, 24.9% (n=57) were seniors as compared to 15.3% (n=35) of the males. The sophomores and juniors were the next highest groups represented with sophomore females accounting for 11.4% (n=26) of the sample and sophomore males accounting for 15.7% (n=36). Junior females accounted for 17.0% (n=39) and junior males accounted for 10.0 (n=23). There was an equal amount of first-year males and females with each group accounting for 1.7% of the sample respectively. There was only 5 graduate students in the sample, and all of them were males.

The sample was not racially or ethnically diverse. Of the 229 subjects in the sample pool, 200 were white, Caucasian Americans of European or Middle Eastern descent. The other race/ethnic groups were represented as follows: African Americans 3.1% (n=7), Asian Americans 2.1% (n=5), Hispanic Americans 1.3% (n=3), Native Americans 0.8% (n=2), and 5.3%, or 12, of the subjects classified themselves as falling into the other category.

Table 1 consists of the subjects' responses by gender concerning their highest level of sports participation. Males and females who played high school sports were the most represented groups with 64.1% (n=66) and 54.8% (n=69) respectively. College athletes made up the next largest group with female college athletes representing 16.7% (n=21) of the sample and male college athletes accounting for 13.6% (n=6) of the sample. Males and females who finished competing in organized sports at the youth level or middle school level were represented at the rates of 9.7% (n=10) and 7.1% (n=9) respectively for youth levels and 5.8% (n=6) and 11.1% (n=14) for middle school levels. There was one man who considered himself a professional athlete. Finally, there was 19 total people, 13 women and 6 men, who never participated in organized sport at any time in their lives. A T-test was conducted for the independent samples of males and females on the highest level of sports participation. There was no statistically significant difference between the means of males and females concerning the highest level of sports participation ( $t = -.85$ , prob. = .40).

Table 1: Percent of Men and Women Subjects by Highest Level  
of Sports Participation (N = 229)

	Never Played Sport	Youth League	Middle Or Junior High School	High School	College	Pro	Total
Women	10.3	7.1	11.1	54.8	16.7	0	100
Men	5.8	9.7	5.8	64.1	13.6	1.0	100

The respondents were asked to choose what type of contact sport (noncontact, minimal contact, or contact) did they participate at the level mentioned in the previous question. As seen in Table 2, nearly half of all of the respondents (48.5%) said that they participated in what could be considered a contact sport. Noncontact sports were more popular with women (38.1%) than with men (13.6%). Minimal contact sports such as baseball, softball, and volleyball constituted 20.4% of men and 12.7% of women respondents. As noted earlier, 19 individuals reported that they have never participated in organized sports. A t-test was also conducted for the independent samples of males and females for type of sport. There was a statistically significant difference (t-value = -4.15,  $p < .001$ ) between the men (mean = 2.35) and the women (mean = 1.80) and the type of sport in which they participated. This means that women were significantly less likely than men to participate in the more violent contact sports. Women were significantly more likely to gravitate towards sports that are considered noncontact. These noncontact sports can be traditionally viewed as more "appropriate" for women and girls because of our societal belief in women and girls as being less physical and aggressive (Lips 1993).

Table 2: Percent of Men and Women Subjects by Type of Sport

(N = 229)

	Never Played sport	Noncontact sport	Minimalcontact sport	Contact Sport	Total
Women	10.3	38.1	12.7	38.9	100
Men	5.8	13.6	20.4	60.2	100

Table 3 shows how many hours the respondents practiced or trained with the team and on their own while they were members of the team that they participated with at the highest level mentioned earlier. All respondents who participated in organized sport said that they practiced with the team at some point during the week. The most common response ranges for both sexes were 6-10 hours per week (27.0% of the females and 22.3% of the males) and 11 to 15 hours per week (27.0% of the females and 31.0% of the males). The subjects reported that the hours they practiced or trained on their own was less than with the team. The vast majority of both males and females (72.5%) said they practiced or trained on their own either not at all or for less than 5 hours per week. T-tests were conducted for the independent samples of males and females for both the number of hours practicing or training with the team or on their own. The difference between the men and the women respondents was not statistically significant for the number of hours in which they practiced or trained with the team. However, the difference between males and female for the numbers of hours in which they practiced or trained on their own was statistically significant ( $t$ -value = 3.34,  $p \leq .01$ ). These results show that men were more likely to take more time to practice their sport on their own. Women were less likely to take the extra time beyond the time spent with the team to practice their sport. The spending of extra effort by the men in the sample can be attributed to the value excellence in sports has for men in our society. Sabo (1994) states that men have become so personally invested in the sporting culture and that this investment becomes the pivotal point in shaping a man's view of masculinity.

Table 3: Number of hours subjects spent practicing or training  
either with the team or on their own

<u>Hours</u>	<u>With Team</u>		<u>On Own</u>	
	<u>men</u>	<u>women</u>	<u>Men</u>	<u>Women</u>
None-never played sport	6.8%	9.5%	5.8%	10.3%
None-played sport	0%	0%	9.7%	17.5%
less than 5	11.7%	16.7%	58.3%	58.7%
6 to 10	22.3%	27.0%	19.4%	12.7%
11 to 15	31.0%	27.0%	2.9%	0.8%
16 to 20	21.4%	13.5%	3.9%	0%
More than 21	6.8%	6.3%	0%	0%
Totals	100%	100%	100%	100%

The final two questions dealt with whether or not the subjects currently participate in any unorganized sport or other general physical fitness, and if they do, how many hours per week they pursue these sporting and fitness activities. Of the 229 respondents, 77.7% (84.5% of the men and 72.2% of the women) said that they do participate in some kind of unorganized sport or general physical fitness. On the other hand, 22.3% (15.5% of the men and 27.8% of the women) reported that they do not. Nearly half of the respondents (48.5% of the men and 46.0% of the women) said that even though they participate in some sort of unorganized sport or physical fitness, the participation is less than 5 hours per week. The subjects who reported that they engaged in these activities from anywhere between 6 and 10 hours accounted for 23.1% (28.2% of the men and 19.0% of the women). Men and women who said they participated in unorganized sports activity or general physical fitness for 11 or more hours a week accounted for 7.5% of the total sample.

Table 4 shows the hours per week subjects participated in unorganized sports or general physical fitness. Again, a t-test was run to see if there was difference between males and females. It was found that there was a small, but statistically significant difference ( $t\text{-value} = -2.12, p \leq .05$ ). Men, on average, spent more time participating in unorganized sports and general physical fitness than did females. This can also be attributed to the importance sport has in the lives of men (Sabo 1994).

Table 4: Hours spent participating in unorganized sport or general physical fitness (N = 229)

<u>Hours</u>	<u>% Men</u>	<u>% Women</u>
None	15.5	27.8
Less than 5	48.5	46.0
6 to 10	28.2	19.0
11 to 15	5.8	7.1
16 to 20	1.9	0.0
Totals	100%	100%

Table 5 shows the means, standard deviations, and total number of cases for the Brannon Masculinity Scale and the Attitudes toward Women Scale. The overall mean for the BMS was 113.55 while the overall mean for the AWS was 35.72. Table 5 also shows the means, standards deviations, and number of cases from the two scales as they break down for males and females. The mean for the males on the BMS was 124.05 with a standard deviation of 19.73. On the other hand, the mean for the women was 104.98 with a standard deviation of 19.90. The women's mean on the AWS was 29.51 and the mean for men on the AWS was 43.32.

T-tests were conducted to see if there was a difference between males and females for both the Brannon Masculinity Scale and the Attitudes toward Women Scale. The differences between males and females for both the BMS and the AWS were statistically significant (see Table 5). The differences are important here because it reveals that men hold significantly more traditional values when it comes to masculinity as well as when it comes to attitudes toward the roles and privileges of women. The research on this particular sample shows us that men still view themselves as the traditional men of times past while at the same time holding women to their traditional roles as well.

Table 5: Means and standard deviations for BMS and AWS (N=229)

	<u>Mean</u>	<u>Standard</u>	<u>Deviation</u>
BMS (overall)	113.55	21.95	
Male	124.05	19.37	
Female	104.98	19.90	
AWS (overall)	35.72	13.85	
Male	43.32	13.01	
Female	29.51	11.19	

T-test for independent samples male and female for BMS

T-value = -7.24  $p \leq .001$

T-test for independent samples male and female for AWS

T-value = -8.63  $p \leq .001$



### ***Bivariate Relationships***

One-way analyses of variance were run to test the means for the control variables of gender, academic class, and race/ethnicity on the Brannon Masculinity Scale as well as the Attitudes toward Women Scale. The results are presented in Table 6. Gender was the only control variable that was statistically significant at the  $p \leq .001$  level for both the BMS and the AWS. Academic class was significant at the  $p \leq .05$  level for the BMS and at the  $p \leq .001$  level for the AWS. Race/ethnicity was not significant for either the BMS or the AWS.

The differences noted between the men and the women in the sample concur with that of the t-tests used in the previous section. Men hold significantly more traditional values when it comes to attitudes concerning masculinity and attitudes involving the rights and roles of women in society.

A Scheffe` test was conducted to see which population means were different from each other concerning the variable academic class. It was found that both the first-year students and the sophomores were statistically significantly different from the seniors and the graduate students. The significance level for the Scheffe` test was set at .05. The results of the Scheffe` test show that students who were seniors and graduate students had significantly more liberal attitudes toward the role of traditional masculinity as well as more liberal attitudes toward women than did first-year students and sophomores.

The first hypothesis concerned the relationships between the sports participation variables and the Brannon Masculinity Scale. The type of sport ( $r = .30$ ) and the number of hours practicing and training on their own ( $r = .28$ ) were significant at the  $p \leq .001$  level. The number of hours spent practicing and training with the team ( $r = .14$ ) was significant at the  $p \leq .05$  level. Please see Table 7 for a complete listing of the correlations.

Table 6: Results of the one-way ANOVAs for control variables with the BMS and AWS as the dependent variable (N=229)

	<u>BMS</u>		<u>AWS</u>	
	<u>Mean</u>	<u>F Ratio</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>F Ratio</u>
<u>Race/ethnic</u>		3.24		2.16
Caucasian	120.38		39.24	
Non-Caucasian	112.57		35.72	
<u>Class</u>		2.50*		5.71***
first-year	128.25		47.75	
Sophomore	118.15		40.81	
Unior	110.05		33.66	
Senior	111.10		32.47	
Graduate	121.80		38.80	
<u>Gender</u>		52.46***		74.51***
Female	104.98		29.51	
Male	113.55		43.32	
Overall	113.55		35.72	

\* =  $p \leq .05$ ; \*\* =  $p \leq .01$ ; \*\*\* =  $p \leq .001$

The results found when testing the first hypothesis show that the more contact involved in a particular sport, the more time spent practicing in the traditionally male-dominated atmosphere of the team, and the more hours spent training by the person on their time are significantly correlated with the acceptance of traditional masculine values.

The second hypothesis this study wished to probe was concerning the relationships between the sports participation variables and attitudes toward women. There were not any statistically significant relationships between the sport participation variables and the Attitudes toward Women Scale.

The third hypothesis this study intended to investigate was whether or not the scores on the Brannon Masculinity Scale were related to the scores on the Attitudes toward Women Scale. The AWS and BMS were significantly correlated ( $r=.46$ ) at the  $p \leq .001$  level. This shows that if a person holds traditionally masculine values then it is likely that the person will also hold more traditional attitudes concerning the roles of women.

Table 7: Correlations for the sports participation variables, the BMS, and the AWS (N=229)

	<u>BMS</u>	<u>AWS</u>
Highest sport level	.13	.05
Type of Sport	.30***	.12
Hours spent practicing or training with team	.14*	.09
Hours spent practicing or training on own	.28***	.11
Hours spent participating in unorganized sports or general physical fitness	.11	-.08
BMS	---	.46***

\* =  $p \leq .05$ ; \*\* =  $p \leq .01$ ; \*\*\* =  $p \leq .001$

### ***Multivariate Relationships***

A series of regression analyses were run in order to calculate the effect of a variable on the Attitudes toward Women Scale while controlling for the other independent variables. The scores on the Attitudes toward Women Scale were regressed on the scores for the Brannon Masculinity Scale, the sports participation variables, and the three control variables. Then, the scores on the BMS were regressed on the sports participation variables and the three control variables. The variable asking the respondent whether or not they participate in unorganized sports or general fitness as well as the control variables of gender and race/ethnicity were entered as dummy variables. The remaining variables were all entered as interval data. The results can be seen in Tables 8 and 9.

Gender had a statistically significant effect on the BMS (Beta = .35, prob. = .0000). This was consistent with the findings reported in Table 6. However, the significant results academic class had on the BMS found by the one-way ANOVA was not supported by regression analysis. The effects of race/ethnicity on the BMS were consistent with the one-way ANOVA presented in Table 6.

The effects of the sport participation variables on the BMS were somewhat consistent with the bivariate relationships shown in Table 7. Type of sport (Beta = .16) and the number of hours per week spent practicing on your own (Beta = .17) had a significant effect at the  $p \leq .05$  level. The Pearson's r correlation had both of these two variables correlated at the  $p \leq .001$  level with the BMS.

Table 8: Multiple regression of AWS on the scores on the sports participation variables, the BMS, and the control variables (N=229)

	<u>Unstand. B</u>	<u>Standard. Error</u>	<u>Beta</u>
Highest sport level	.06	.94	.00
Type of sport	-1.35	.79	-.10
Hours practiced or trained with team	.69	.75	.07
Hours practiced or trained on own	-.38	1.13	-.02
Participation in physical fitness	2.78	2.37	.08
Hours participated in physical fitness	-3.41	1.17	-.22**
BMS	.19	.04	.30***
Gender	10.85	1.67	.39***
Academic Class	-2.78	.79	-.19***
Race/Ethnicity	-2.20	2.23	-.05
R-squared	.397		

Table 9: Multiple regression of scores of BMS on the six sports participation variables and the three control variables (N = 229)

	<u>Unstand. B</u>	<u>Standard. Error</u>	<u>Beta</u>
Highest sport level	.68	1.64	-.03
Type of sport	3.33	1.36	.16*
Hours practiced or trained with team	.22	1.31	.01
Hours practiced or trained on own	4.80	1.94	.17*
Participation in physical fitness	-1.14	4.12	-.02
Hours participated in physical fitness	.31	2.03	.01
Gender	15.33	2.70	.35***
Academic Class	-1.82	1.37	-.08
Race/Ethnicity	-7.16	3.85	-.11
R-squared	.268		

\* =  $p \leq .05$ ; \*\* =  $p \leq .01$ ; \*\*\* =  $p \leq .001$

The regression analysis revealed that even though the number of hours practicing with the team per week was correlated ( $r=.14$ ,  $p \leq .05$ ) with the BMS the effect this variable had on the BMS was not statistically significant.

The other three sport participation variables were found not to have a statistically significant effect on the BMS. This was consistent with the bivariate correlations. As noted earlier, the results of the regression analysis are presented in Table 8.

Table 9 shows the results of the multiple regression of the AWS on the score of the BMS,

the sports participation variables, and the control variables. Consistent with the one-way ANOVAs mentioned earlier, gender has a statistically significant effect on the AWS (Beta = .39, prob.= .0000). Again consistent with the earlier mentioned ANOVAs was the effect of academic class on the AWS (Beta = -.19, prob.= .0000). In addition, the effects of race/ethnicity on the AWS were also consistent with the one-way ANOVA presented earlier.

The effects of the sport participation variables shown in Table 9 for the AWS were consistent with the correlations presented in Table 7 except for the variable concerning the number of hours participated in physical fitness (Beta = -.22, prob. = .0052). This shows that the people who reported more hours participating in general physical fitness were more liberal concerning their attitudes toward women.

As in the case of the BMS, the other three sport participation variables were found not to have a statistically significant effect on the AWS. This was consistent with the bivariate correlations. As noted earlier, the results of the regression analysis are presented in Table 9.

Finally, the regression analysis did reveal a statistically significant effect of the Brannon Masculinity Scale on the Attitudes toward Women Scale (Beta = .30, prob.= .0000) when controlling for the effects of the other variables. This was consistent with the correlation coefficients listed in Table 7.

#### Additional Multivariate Analyses

Additional multivariate analysis was conducted using the factors extracted from the Brannon Masculinity Scale. The scores on the Attitudes toward Women Scale were regressed on the six factors extracted from the BMS, the six sports participation variables, and the three control variables. To state again, the six factors derived from the BMS are as follows: the emotional qualities attributed to masculinity, attitudes concerning risk taking behavior, the attitudes concerning the amount of pain an athlete should endure, whether or not a person should stand up for himself or herself, whether or not fighting is an appropriate response, and, finally, whether or not a recreational sport should be competitive.

The findings are shown in Table 10. Only the emotional qualities attributed to masculinity, gender, hours participating in unorganized sport or general physical fitness, and class had a significant impact on the scores of the AWS. The emotional qualities attributed to masculinity was the only factor that was significant among the six factors derived from the Brannon Masculinity Scale.

Table 10: Multiple regression of AWS on the six factors derived from the BMS, the six sports participation variables, and the three control variables (N = 229)

	<u>Unstand. B</u>	<u>Standard. Error</u>	<u>Beta</u>
Emotional Quality	.51	.09	.40***
Risk Taking	-.28	.17	-.10
Athlete's pain	.17	.26	.04
Fighting	.19	.27	.04
Standing up for yourself	-.08	.21	-.02
Getting good exercise	.65	.43	.08
Highest sport level	-.25	.92	-.02
Type of sport	-1.25	.77	-.09
Hours practiced or trained with team	.62	.73	.06
Hours practiced or trained on own	-.62	1.10	-.03
Participation in physical fitness	2.89	2.31	.08
Hours participated in physical fitness	-3.28	1.13	-.21**
Gender	8.97	1.70	.32***

	<u>Unstand. B</u>	<u>Standard. Error</u>	<u>Beta</u>
Academic Class		.77	-.19***
Race/Ethnicity	-2.53	2.16	-.06
R-squared	.455		

\* =  $p \leq .05$ ; \*\* =  $p \leq .01$ ; \*\*\* =  $p \leq .001$

These findings reveal that it is the traditional nature of the emotional qualities that have the impact on attitudes toward women. These traditional beliefs concerning the correct emotional behavior attributed to men seem to be the biggest predictor of conservation feelings about what women can or cannot do. Consistent with the other statistical analyses presented earlier, gender of the subject has a significant impact on the AWS. Men continue to hold a more conservative ideology when it comes to the gender roles of women.

Hours participating in unorganized sport or general physical fitness had a significant impact on the AWS. When controlling for the other variables, this variable revealed that people who participate in unorganized sport for recreation and/or general physical fitness were significantly more liberal in their views of what women could accomplish. Also, academic class had a similar outcome. Students who were in a higher academic class (i.e. seniors and graduate students) were more likely to hold liberal attitudes about women.

Another regression analysis was employed to see what impact there was on the factor concerning the emotional qualities attributed to masculinity by the sports participation variables as well as the control variables of gender, academic class, and race/ethnicity. Table 11 lists the results to this regression analysis.

Only gender (Beta = .39, prob.= .0000) and practicing and training on own (Beta = .15, prob.= .0365) had a significant impact on the factor concern the emotional qualities of masculinity while controlling for the other factors.



Table 11: Multiple regression of emotional qualities extracted from the BMS on the six sports participation variables and the three control variables (N = 229)

	<u>Unstand. B</u>	<u>Standard. Error</u>	<u>Beta</u>
Highest sport level	.26	.82	.03
Type of sport	1.26	.68	.12
Hours practiced or trained with team	-.02	.65	-.00
Hours practiced or trained on own	2.04	.97	.15*
Participation in physical fitness	-1.20	2.06	-.05
Hours participated in physical fitness	-.01	1.01	-.00
Gender	8.59	1.35	.39***
Academic Class	-.56	.68	-.05
Race/Ethnicity	-2.73	1.92	-.08
R-squared	.266		

\* =  $p \leq .05$ ; \*\* =  $p \leq .01$ ; \*\*\* =  $p \leq .001$

The fact that being a man has an impact on the emotional qualities attributed to traditional views of masculinity shows that men still acquire personas which represent the stoic, cold, and unflappable stereotype of a man. The significance of the variable, practicing and training on own,

indicate that an individual who dedicates oneself in such a way to a male-dominated institution such as sport will in some way acquire the attitudes and beliefs of that institution.

### ***Summary of the Results***

The bivariate results initially show that gender and class are significantly related to the scores on the Attitudes toward Women Scale. This indicates that being male and being in a lower academic class is significantly correlated with more traditional attitudes toward women. The multiple regression analysis also found hours participating in unorganized sport or general physical fitness in addition to gender and academic class to have a significant impact on the scores of the AWS when controlling for the effects of the other variables.

The multiple regression did not show that class or hours participating in general physical fitness had an impact on the BMS. However, the type of sport, the hours practiced and trained on own, and gender did when controlling for the effects of the other variables. These findings indicate that people who were involved in sports that required a vast amount of contact were more likely to hold more traditional views concerning traditional masculinity. Also, people who said they practiced and trained longer on their own held more conservative attitudes about masculinity. Finally, men held a more traditional ideology concerning masculinity than did the women.

The results of this research found that there were not any statistically significant relationships between the sports participation variables and the scores for the AWS. Multiple regression analysis was consistent with these findings when controlling for the other variables. This shows that sport itself is not the cause of people holding more conservative attitudes toward women.

## ***CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION***

The study of gender and sport in U.S. society does not have as large a knowledge base as one would expect. There are a number of studies concerning liberal feminist perspectives and how those perspectives relate to sport. For instance, the liberal feminist perspective concerning sport would include nearly all studies that involve the amount of participation and funding women receive in collegiate athletics. Most research involving Title IX would fall here. However, there is a limited amount of research concerning socialist feminist theories and how these theories pertain to sport.

The research that has been conducted using socialist feminist and even radical feminist theories concerning sport has primarily been qualitative in nature. Also, most of the research in that area has looked at women's role in the sporting institution. When it comes to men and masculinity, there seems to be a void in the literature concerning the sporting institution's role in developing, nurturing, and perpetuating the ideology that shapes gender inequality. Recently, however, there has been some change. Scholars such as Michael Messner, Donald Sabo, and Michael Kimmel, among others, have used socialist feminist perspectives to look at men, masculinity, and the institution of sport.

The socialist feminist perspective is necessary for an adequate understanding of the sporting institution. Sport has been founded on the ideology and behaviors of patriarchy and capitalism (Sabo 1989a). The maintenance and reproduction of gender inequality has historically been a part of the organized sporting culture. From their beginning of organized sport participation, young boys are taught the ins and outs of sexism and competition (Fine 1987). The sexism that is taught results in gender discrimination at home and in the workplace. The competition that sport provides prepares young boys and men for the harsh realities of a capitalist society. Liberal feminism does not account for the existence of patriarchy. A liberal feminist perspective would lead one to believe that if the financial provisions and the opportunity structure was equal between men and women then gender inequality would be remedied. The result of the patriarchal and capitalistic structure of U.S. society are particular notions of masculinity and femininity. This study planned to investigate the variables that could tap into the ideology of American masculinity and femininity.

The findings of this study are not generalizable to a larger population, but this research was an attempt to quantify sports participation, attitudes about masculinity, and attitudes toward women. This study investigated whether or not there was a relationship between gender, sports participation, acceptance of traditional masculine values, and attitudes toward women. Sports participation consisted of four primary variables: type of sport, the highest level of organized sport in which a respondent participated, the number of hours per week the respondent spent practicing with the team in the above mentioned sport, and the number of hours per week the respondent trained on his/her own to compete in the above mentioned sport. There were also two questions that asked whether the respondent was involved currently in general physical fitness or unorganized sport and how many hours per week did him/him actually participate. The measure of traditional American masculinity consisted of questions taken from the questionnaire based on Robert Brannon's theory of American masculinity. The dependent variable was the short form of the Attitudes Toward Women Scale (AWS). This scale measures people's attitudes in a Likert-type format on their attitudes toward the rights and privileges of U.S. women. The following were the four hypotheses that this study tested:

1. Respondents' answers on the items concerning sports participation are positively related to the respondents' scores on the Brannon Masculinity Scale.

The results of this study showed that there is a positive relationship between sports participation and an acceptance of traditional masculine values. Even though there was not a statistical significant association between the sports participation variables associated with highest level of organized sport achieved and with participation in unorganized sports and general physical fitness, there were significant positive correlations between the other sports participation variables of type of sport, of hours practicing or training with the team, and of hours practicing or training on your own. This means that the more a person participated in the variables mentioned above the more accepting a person was of traditional masculine values. These findings are consistent with the arguments made by Don Sabo (1989a) concerning the sporting institution's promotion of conservative values. Barbara Humberstone (1990) would agree by stating that within the sporting institution, as well as physical education classes, masculine hegemony is being maintained by reinforcing the cultural stereotypes of men and women. This is accomplished through gender segregated physical education classes as well as gender segregated sporting teams.

2. Respondents' answers on items concerning sports participation are positively related to the respondents' scores on the Attitudes toward Women Scale.

There was not a significant relationship between the sports participation variables and the scores on the Attitudes toward Women Scale. The variables involving highest level of sport achieved, the type of sport, the variables concerning the number of hours the subjects practiced or trained with the team or on their own was slightly correlated with the scores on the AWS. These relationships, however, were not statistically significant. The number of hours a subject spent per week participating in unorganized sports or general physical fitness was modestly correlated in a negative direction with scores on the AWS. This means that the more hours per week a subject participated in physical fitness or other unorganized sports the more liberal that subject's attitudes toward women would be. However, that relationship was not statistically significant.

These findings reveal that sport itself may not be the cause of conservative attitudes about women, their rights, and the roles that they play. Again Barbara Humberstone (1990) would agree that it is not the sport or physical education itself that creates the conservative ideology about women. It is the male hierarchy that controls sport. Michael Klein (1990) has also noted that sport emphasizes the "macho". Klein means that the sporting institution promotes the male-dominant and the aggressive values in males. This "macho" value system is the foundation for traditional U.S. masculinity which in turn leads to negative attitudes toward women.

3. Respondents' scores on the Brannon Masculinity Scale are positively related to the respondents' scores on the Attitudes toward Women Scale.

There is strong positive relationship between the acceptance of traditional masculine values and attitudes toward women. This was supported by both the bivariate analysis and the multivariate regression. People with more conservative ideology concerning masculinity in the U.S. will tend to have more conservative ideology concerning the roles, rights, and privileges accorded to women. The results here are consistent with one theme stated in Robert Brannon's (1976) theory concerning the traditional type of masculinity promoted in the United States. The one of his four major themes

applicable here is antifemininity. The antifemininity theme in U.S. masculinity requires males to avoid under any circumstances to give an impression of feminine behavior. This shows that the man is weak. Brannon's theme of antifemininity is consistent with Klein's (1990) "macho" aspect of a male-dominated sporting institution that was mentioned in the previous hypothesis' discussion.

4. Gender, the respondents' answers on items concerning sports participation, scores on the Brannon Masculinity Scale, and scores on the Attitudes toward Women Scale are all positively related when controlling for the effects of the other variables.

The regression analysis revealed that gender had an effect on scores from the Attitudes toward Women Scale when controlling for all of the other independent variables. Men had a more conservative ideology toward the rights, roles, and privileges of women than did women themselves. This finding of course seems obvious due to the nature of the questions. Why should men give up the advantageous position in U.S. society that they currently hold? The contemporary American society was founded on the rights of men for men. Liberal feminists fought hard and won rights for women to be included into the economic and political structure, but the rules have not been changed. A hegemonic situation still exists with men reaping the benefits. Socialist feminists and radical feminists have stepped up to say that it is not enough to be included into a situation where women are allowed to compete with men, but women should change the rules in order to include aspects of the feminine culture such as the nature of interwoven personal relationships (Tong 1989). Until that happens men will always have the current, and conservative, attitudes toward women that they now possess.

Academic class also had an impact on the scores from the AWS when controlling for the other variables. The findings revealed that people with a greater amount of education (i.e. higher academic class) have more liberal attitudes concerning women. This is a promising finding in that it shows education may help to enlighten people to other possibilities concerning the roles of women.

The sports participation variables did not have a positive impact. However, the variable concerning the amount of hours spent per week participating in unorganized sports and general physical fitness activity had an impact in the negative direction. What this finding suggests is that men and women who participate more frequently in the sporting culture in essence for recreation and health purposes have more liberal attitudes toward the rights, roles, and privileges of women. Also, these sporting activities are not as gender segregated as the organized sports. Houseworth, Peplow, and Thirer (1989) came to a similar conclusion in that athletes who participated in gender segregated sports such as football and baseball had more conservative attitudes concerning women. They came to this conclusion because their study included track and field athletes which has a long history of gender integrated practice. They found that the track and field athletes had more liberal attitudes toward women than did the segregated team athletes.

Another multivariate analysis was run where scores from the BMS was regressed on the sport participation variables and the control variables. Gender was the only control variable to have an impact on the scores from BMS while controlling for the other variables. This result occurs for much of the same reasons as does the impact gender had on scores for the AWS. As long as the dominant ideology is centered around males and being male, men will hold a conservative ideology concerning male behavior. Of the sport participation variables, only the type of sport and the number of hours spent per week practicing or training had an impact on the scores of the BMS. This is also consistent with the conclusions presented by Houseworth, Peplow, and Thirer (1989).

The type of sport is defined by how much contact is made between players during an athletic contest. The findings reveal that a person who participated in a contact sport would be more accepting of traditional masculine values. Contact sports are usually more gender segregated than noncontact sports because it is usually eluded to that women should not participate in such aggressive behavior (Humberstone 1990). Noncontact sports such as tennis, golf, and track and field are very gender integrated and allow the members of each gender to interact within the sports environment and to see what others can accomplish.

An additional regression analysis was run in order to see if the six factors derived from the Brannon Masculinity Scale had an individual impact on the scores from the AWS. Only the factor involving the emotional qualities attributed to masculine behavior had a significant impact on the scores from the AWS. The emotional qualities that are attributed to traditional American masculinity would also be the foundation for more conservative attitudes toward women. Jack Balswick (1988) notes in his study of male and female expressiveness that men are not as expressive as women across all of the situations he studied. This means that men who develop the inexpressive persona are significantly more likely to be socialized to hold more conservative attitudes toward women.

Don Sabo (1989a) describes how this socialization occurs in the sporting institution. He called the socialization of males in the sporting institution "taking it". The athlete is socialized to take the punishment and the emotional hardship that comes with being a subordinate in a patriarchal system and keep it inside. Because showing the pain and the frustration associated with failure is a sign of weakness in the sporting institution.

The final regression analysis was run to see if the sports participation and control variables had an impact on the factor concerning the emotional qualities attributed to the acceptance of traditional masculine values. The variables that had an impact were gender and hours practicing or training on your own for the sport in which you participated. Being male definitely had an impact, but it is the hours practicing that was interesting. This question asked the respondent to report the number of hours that the person trained or practiced while they were members of the reported sporting team. These people who would train while also being a part of an organized sports team showed dedication to the sport. Sabo (1989a) would argue that this kind of dedication would result in an acceptance by the athlete of the distorted values of homophobia and sexism that the sporting culture encourages. Dedication to the sport and acceptance of the value system will lead to promotion within the male-dominated sports hierarchy (i.e. in the form of scholarships, jobs, fame, etc.). Messner (1992) also would agree that the hierarchal structure of sport perpetuates homophobia and sexism within the context of everyday interaction and dedication to the hierarchy does come with some tangible rewards.

### ***Implications of the Research***

This study was designed to see if there was a relationship between gender, sports participation, acceptance of traditional masculine values, and attitudes toward women. The results seem to suggest that sports do have an impact on the acceptance of traditional masculine values. However, sports participation does not have a direct impact on attitudes toward women. Gender has an impact on both sets of attitudes. This is a promising finding in that it indicates that participation in sport itself is not impacting on the attitudes concerning a woman's place in U.S. society, but the finding indicates a possibility that the structure and nature of the male-dominated sports

establishment is the root to the conservative ideology embedded in the sport institution. Sabo (1989) concurs by stating that "[p]atriarchy is a form of social hierarchy" (p.160) and the social hierarchy of the sporting institution uses the sport itself as a tool to promote gender inequality.

### ***Limitations of the Study***

The sporting institution is only one such U.S. institution that shapes the attitudes and the value system of the people who participate in it. Other institutions such as the family, education, business, and politics have as much if not more influence on the person as a socializing agent as does sport. This fact leads this researcher to acknowledge that other socializing agents may have played a part in the results obtained here. Perhaps later studies could include other institutional factors in order to account for other socializing agents and their effects on the attitudes of masculinity and women.

Another obvious limitation is sample design. The fact that a non-probability convenience sample was used can subjectively bias the results. Also, only testing students from one college does not allow this research to be generalized to a greater population. A more meticulously designed sample would aid in the possible generalization of the results.

The fact that at Virginia Tech minority group representation is not strong along with the convenience sample did not allow for adequate inclusion of minority racial and ethnic groups. This limitation may have permitted the study a chance to observe an interaction between race and gender.

Another limitation includes other aspects of the sporting culture that were not tested. For example, questions about the language used within a locker room or by a coach during practice can shape a person's views. Also, other factors such as level of teamwork and the degree of violence associated with a particular sport could influence the results.

### ***Suggestions for Future Research***

There are numerous recommendations to further the intended research questions of this study. One would be to look at the gender segregated nature of athletic teams. Would it be possible to integrate athletic teams for the purpose to increase gender equality?

Another suggestion would be to qualitatively investigate the outcomes and structure of the male athletic experience. Messner (1992) and Fine (1987) have laid a strong foundation with their research, but the suggestion here is to study the day-to-day experiences that shapes an athlete's attitudes.

Finally, what affect does the athletic coach have on an athlete's attitudes? Is it the coaching style or is it the nature of the particular sport that leads to a more conservative ideological stance? The final point here is that research should move into studying the social hierarchy of the sports institution.

## *APPENDIX A*

### Sports Participation Survey

The following block of questions asks you about your sport participation. Please answer the following questions by filling in the corresponding number on the op-scan form.

1. Excluding intramural sports, what is the highest level of organized sports that you have participated in?
  - 1) Youth League (i.e. Little League baseball, Midget football)
  - 2) Middle/Junior High School
  - 3) High School
  - 4) College (either Community or Four-year)
  - 5) Semi-Professional or Professional
  - 6) Never played any organized sports
  
2. What is the primary type of organized sport did you participate in at the level mentioned above?
  - 1) Contact sport (i.e. football, wrestling, field hockey, basketball, soccer)
  - 2) Minimal contact sport (i.e. baseball, softball)
  - 3) Non-contact sport (i.e. tennis, swimming, golf, volleyball)
  - 4) I did not participate in any organized sport.
  
3. When you were participating in the sport reported above, how many hours per week did you practice with the team?
  - 1) None
  - 2) Less than 5 hours
  - 3) 6-10 hours
  - 4) 11-15 hours
  - 5) 16-20 hours
  - 6) 21 or more hours



The following block of questions asks you about your sport participation. Please answer the following questions by filling in the corresponding number on the op-scan form.

4. When you were participating in the sport mentioned in questions 2 and 3, how many hours per week did you train on your own?

- 1) None
- 2) Less than 5 hours
- 3) 6-10 hours
- 4) 11-15 hours
- 5) 16-20 hours
- 6) 21 or more hours

5. Do you currently participate in any other kinds of sport such as intramural sports, pick-up games, recreational sports, and/or general physical fitness?

- 1) Yes
- 2) No

6. How many hours per week do you participate in these other types of sports?

- 1) None
- 2) Less than 5 hours
- 3) 6-10 hours
- 4) 11-15 hours
- 5) 16-20 hours
- 6) 21 or more hours

This section is designed to find out your attitudes towards different kinds of people. Please fill out the corresponding number on your op-scan form. Use the following scale:

- 1) Strongly Agree
- 2) Agree
- 3) Slightly Agree
- 4) No Opinion
- 5) Slightly Disagree
- 6) Disagree
- 7) Strongly Disagree

7. I like the kind of person who doesn't complain or carry on much when he or she gets hurt.
8. A person should not make a habit of talking too much about his or her innermost fears.
9. A person should cry any time that he or she feels like crying.
10. When a person is feeling a little pain he or she should try not to let it show very much.
11. A person should try not to show that he or she is frightened.
12. I hate it when people act like they're feeling fine when I think they're really worried about something.
13. I might find it a little silly or embarrassing if a friend of mine cried over a sad love scene in a movie.
14. Nobody respects a person very much who frequently talks about his or her worries, fears, and problems.
15. A person should try not to cry in front of his or her friends.
16. It's better if a person can avoid getting too emotional in public.
17. It disgusts me when a person comes across as weak.
18. I like for a person to look somewhat tough.
19. A businessperson should be tough enough to fire an employee who is hurting the company, even if the employee has been sick and has personal problems.

This section is designed to find out your attitudes towards different kinds of people. Please fill out the corresponding number on your op-scan form. Use the following scale:

- 1) Strongly Agree
- 2) Agree
- 3) Slightly Agree
- 4) No Opinion
- 5) Slightly Disagree
- 6) Disagree
- 7) Strongly Disagree

20. A person should never back down in the face of trouble.
21. A person should not be too afraid to walk the streets at night.
22. It disgusts me to see a person show his or her weakness by giving in under a little pressure.
23. I admire the kind of athlete who will stay in the game, even when he or she has an injury that is causing some pain.
24. A person who backs down from something he or she wanted to do because that person found out there would be strong opposition would lose some of my respect.
25. A person must never let others push him or her around, no matter who they are.
26. A little physical pain should not stop an athlete whose team needs him or her.
27. Fists are sometimes the only way to get out of a bad situation.
28. A person should not care too much if he or she wins a tennis match as long as he or she gets some good exercise.
29. A person who has no taste for adventure would not be very appealing to me.
30. A person should always refuse to get into a fight, even if there seems to be no way to avoid it.
31. A person who is not willing to take risks is dull and boring.
32. Timid, cautious people sometimes annoy me more than aggressive ones.
33. I would not admire a person who was unwilling to take risks.

The statements listed below describe attitudes toward the roles of women in society which different people have. There are no right or wrong answers, only opinions. You are asked to express your feeling about each statement by indicating whether you:

- 1) Strongly Agree
- 2) Agree
- 3) Slightly Agree
- 4) No Opinion
- 5) Slightly Disagree
- 6) Disagree
- 7) Strongly Disagree

34. Swearing and obscenity are more repulsive in the speech of a woman than a man.
35. Under current economic conditions with women being active outside the home, men should share in household tasks such as washing dishes and doing laundry.
36. It is insulting to women to have the "obey" clause remain in the marriage service.
37. A woman should be as free as a man to propose marriage.
38. Women should worry less about their rights and more about becoming good wives and mothers.
39. Women should assume their rightful place in business and all the professions along with men.
40. A woman should not expect to go to exactly the same places or to have quite the same freedom of action as a man.
41. The intellectual leadership of a community should be largely in the hands of men.
42. Women should be given equal opportunity with men for apprenticeship in the various trades.
43. Women earning as much as men should bear equally the expense when they go out together.
44. Sons in a family should be given more encouragement to go to college than daughters.

The statements listed below describe attitudes toward the roles of women in society which different people have. There are no right or wrong answers, only opinions. You are asked to express your feeling about each statement by indicating whether you:

- 1) Strongly Agree
- 2) Agree
- 3) Slightly Agree
- 4) No Opinion
- 5) Slightly Disagree
- 6) Disagree
- 7) Strongly Disagree

45. In general, the father should have greater authority than the mother in the bringing up of children.

46. On the average, women should be regarded as less capable of contributing to economic production than are men.

47. There are many jobs in which men should be given preference over women in being hired or promoted.

Please answer the following questions by filling in the corresponding number on the op-scan form.

48. What is your gender?

- 1) Female
- 2) Male

49. What is your present academic class at Virginia Tech?

- 1) First-year student
- 2) Sophomore
- 3) Junior
- 4) Senior
- 5) Graduate Student
- 6) Non-student

50. What is your race/ethnicity?

- 1) African
- 2) Asian
- 3) Caucasian (European and Middle Eastern)
- 4) Hispanic
- 5) Native American
- 6) Other

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### ***VITA***

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