Coaches’ Influence: Addressing Male Athletes’ Behaviours and Attitudes About “Being a Man”

By

Curtis Holmes

A Thesis

presented to

The University of Guelph

In partial fulfilment of requirements
for the degree of
Master of Science
In
Family Relations and Applied Nutrition

Guelph, Ontario, Canada

© Curtis Holmes, December, 2019
ABSTRACT

COACHES’ INFLUENCE: ADDRESSING MALE ATHLETES’ BEHAVIOURS AND ATTITUDES ABOUT “BEING A MAN”

Curtis Holmes
University of Guelph, 2019

Advisory Committee:
Dr. Lynda Ashbourne
Dr. Robin Milhausen
Dr. Joseph Tindale

This study is a qualitative exploration of coaches’ influence on their male athletes to promote inclusive masculinity and to eliminate harmful effects of traditional masculinity. Ten University of Guelph Athletic coaches participated in semi-structured interviews which centred around the definition and manliness and their influence on their athletes. Thematic analysis indicated the challenge to the definition of manliness, the preference for an athlete to be a good person rather than gender, identifiable qualities of being a man, that coaches have a major influence on the behaviour of their athletes and that there are aspirational attributes that coaches would like to see from their athletes. These findings extend the limited research that does focuses on coaches and their perspectives on inclusive masculinity of their male athletes and provides new research coaches desire for their athletes to be a good person and to be more inclusive and positive. Future research should investigate direct actions of athletes and the measurable outcomes of coaches influence.
Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my thesis advisor, Dr. Lynda Ashbourne who has been a tremendous mentor for me since my undergraduate degree in Adult Development. Her patience and guidance has been instrumental in completion of my coursework and thesis. Our meetings will always be remembered as times when discussions of the relevance of this topic kept me focused on the importance of its completion and the need for this work to be disseminated.

Similarly, I would like to thank my committee member Dr. Josepeh Tindale. Since my undergraduate degree, he has been a great supporter of my academic work and has made a tremendous impact on my goal of being a graduate student. His guidance and input on this work is invaluable and appreciated tremendously.

I would also like to thank my other committee member, Dr. Robin Milhausen. Stepping forward during my first semester as a mentor was vital in the completion of this work, but also getting through that first semester. Her input and encouragement in completion of this thesis was incredible and was always appreciated.

I would like to thank Student Accessibility Services (SAS) at the University of Guelph and especially my advisor, Lynda Slater. Our meetings were usually far apart, but were always so encouraging and productive. The services of SAS were invaluable through my undergraduate and graduate degrees, and I would not have accomplished this without their assistance.

I would like to thank the University of Guelph Athletic Department for the assistance in the recruitment of participants and the 10 participants who were gracious with their time and input on this important subject matter.
Lastly, I would like to thank my mother. She has always been my advocate when others said I could not accomplish my goal of fulfilling a post-secondary education. She has always been there for me, even when I was a pain. I would not be here without your sacrifices and guidance.
# Table of Contents

Abstract.................................................................................................................................................ii

Acknowledgements............................................................................................................................iii

Introduction........................................................................................................................................1

Literature Review.................................................................................................................................3
  Critical Feminist Perspective.............................................................................................................3
  Review of the Research Literature.................................................................................................12
    Importance of Male Sports............................................................................................................12
    Harmful Aspects of Traditional Masculinity.............................................................................14
    The Influence and Role of Coaches............................................................................................20
  Rationale for the Research................................................................................................................24

Statement of Positionality....................................................................................................................26

Research Questions............................................................................................................................27

Methods...............................................................................................................................................27
  Recruitment and Sample................................................................................................................28
  Ethical Considerations...................................................................................................................29
  Conducting the Interview..............................................................................................................30
  Data Analysis................................................................................................................................32

Results................................................................................................................................................35
  Questioning the Definition of Manliness.......................................................................................35
  Being a Good Person.......................................................................................................................39
  Identifiable Qualities of Being a Man............................................................................................41
  Coaches Influence on Athletes .......................................................................................................46
  Aspirational Attributes....................................................................................................................51
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questioning the Definition of Manliness</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being a Good Person</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identifiable Qualities of Being Man</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coaches Influence on Athletes</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aspirational Attributes</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strengths and Limitations</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Areas for Future Research</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implications and Conclusion</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>References</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendices</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Introduction

Recently, Baylor University’s football team was presented by the media to have a culture of sexual violence amongst its players. Reportedly, this prominent Christian university’s football team had accepted and excused sexual violence as a bonding experience for its players. It has been alleged that at least 52 sexual assaults by football team members occurred between 2011 and 2014. Rookies were apparently encouraged to bring female students to football parties to allow for the violent acts to occur amongst the team members. Reporting of the incidents resulted in harassment of the female survivors and their families and created a climate of fear and intimidation for the females on campus (Bonesteel, 2017).

Male sports have gained a hero-worship status in contemporary society (Smith, 2016) and as evidenced in the example above, hero-worship has a darker side. There are many recent examples where male athletes have taken advantage of this power and exerted their influence over women and non-traditionally masculine males. Canadians are passionate about their heroes in the National Hockey League (NHL) and the Canadian World Junior hockey team (Blake, 2010). Excessive media coverage, funding of teams and athletes, and high stakes scouting of young athletes demonstrate Americans’ apparent obsession with male football players at the high school, college, and professional levels (Crepeau, 2014). The elevated status of male sports may create a context in which individual athletes feel entitled to use that privilege to dominate and abuse women and non-traditionally masculine males while being excused for their actions by societal members (Smith, 2016). In response to sexually violent transgressions, such as with the Baylor University football team, there have been some recent instances (Jaime et al., 2015; Steinfeldt, Foltz, Munro, Speight, Wong & Blumberg, 2011).
where athletic programs on university campuses and professional sports leagues have moved away from condoning traditional masculinity (violence, sexism and homophobia) and are instead aiming to foster more respectful and inclusive models of masculinity. Coaches are a key component to the success of these changes given their ability to mentor, model, and influence behavior, and create intervention programs for their male athletes (Jamie et al., 2015; Steinfedlt et al., 2016). Examining coaches’ perspectives and practice contributes to understanding the ways they promote inclusive and positive masculinities and ways they may address harmful aspects of traditional masculinity among their male athletes.

If social status, attitudes, and behaviours deemed acceptable for male athletes may be related to their risk of violence against women and others, how might this be addressed? In this study, I examined the intended behavioural influence of male varsity coaches on the University of Guelph campus to promote positive/inclusive masculinity and to diminish ideals of traditional masculinity in their male athletes.

This literature review will begin with outlining the key aspects of traditional masculinities and male sports in contemporary North American society that are highlighted by a critical and feminist perspective. This will be followed by a review of relevant and recent research on the elevated status of male sports, harmful aspects of traditional masculinity, and the role of coaches. Gaps in the current research literature will illustrate the need for this research. This section will include the research questions that guided the study and methodology for the collection and analysis of data.
Literature Review

The following section presents the concepts, theory, and current research related to male athletes and traditional masculinity. Use of a critical feminist theoretical perspective highlights particular aspects of traditional masculinity and male sports, followed by a review of current research.

Critical Feminist Perspective on Male Sports and Traditional Masculinity

Use of a critical feminist theoretical perspective can highlight certain aspects of the study of male athletes and traditional masculinity. This will be outlined below including: the historical context of male athleticism and traditional masculinity; the negative aspects of men in sports visible in critical feminist perspective (privileges, hierarchies and language within contemporary male sports); and the notable absence of intersectionality in the discourse of sports.

In Western (North American) society, the sports industry functions to idealize athletes, financial success, and access to higher levels of power. Those in male sports must conform to a belief in individuality and competition or risk being labelled as deviant and receiving abuse and criticism from those who favour traditional masculine values (Jamieson & Orr, 2009).

A key concept that has been linked to much of the research of male sports and male athletes is hegemonic masculinity. Hegemonic masculinity is defined as reinforcement of patriarchal relations in terms of unequal power, control and status over women and non-traditional masculine males (Bairner, 2009; Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005; Hoeber & Kerwin, 2013; Messerschmidt, 2012). This concept emerges in the underlining research through male athletes’ participation, ability and privileges afforded to them through sport and the
legitimization of their natural athletic ability and status in society as superior to women and non-traditional masculine males (Heober & Kerwin, 2013).

A critical feminist perspective considers the link between traditional masculinity and male sports, underlines the social status granted to male organized sports and male athletes, how this is influenced by social institutions such as the media and big business, and the implications for athletes’ behaviour and privilege on and off the field (Messner, 2007; Wellmer, 2014). A critical perspective highlights the various competing interests to gain status, power, and wealth through organized sports (Daly, 2007; Jamieson & Orr, 2009). Feminist theory more specifically examines how gender is used to establish superiority, power, and privilege for male athletes, referring specifically to patriarchy or male’s authority and superiority over women (Fuller, 2010; McDowell & Schaffner, 2011; Steinfeldt, Miller & David, 2016). Intersectionality regarding social identity identifies how gender intersects with ethnicity or racialized status, sexual orientation or identity, and social class in establishing a hierarchy of power and privilege that continues to be granted to older white males from more established or wealthy classes (Anderson & McCormack, 2010; Fuller, 2010).

Use of a critical feminist perspective highlights the historical aspects of male athletics and traditional masculinity. Historically, the privilege granted to organized male sports and male athletes legitimized their power and control over those with lower status (Smith, 2016). Societal dialogues maintain a general acceptance of ideas, especially those that help define gender and sexuality, and create and support social inequality (Hoeber, 2008; Schirato, 2013, Steinfeldt et al., 2016). Male sports have historically provided an avenue where males could escape the perceived feminization of society (femphobia) and maintain their dominant role in
society (Adams, Anderson & McCormack, 2010; Bandy, 2016; McCormack & Anderson, 2010; Messner, 2007; Steinfeldt et al. 2016). Similarly, male sports were popularized through the original or historical activities that emphasized male dominated activities such as war and hunting (Young, 2010). Sports such as football idealize winning, violence, loyalty to authority, team allegiance, and competition and further conforms to warlike and militaristic ideals (Beissel, Giardina & Newman, 2014; Fuller, 2010; Kidd, 2013; King, 2008 McDowell & Schaffner, 2011). Popular male athletes received devotion and admiration from the community, while those who were not considered to be sufficiently athletic were typically bullied (Jamieson & Orr, 2009). For example, Sonneborn (2012), an author on school bullying argues that male athletes tend to hold a privileged position in school and receive special attention from students and teachers. Those who are not athletes could potentially be subject to verbal bullying and sexual harassment by male athletes without ramifications from the school administration (Sonneborn, 2012). Conversely, when the elements of traditional masculinity began to diminish in a society (e.g., unemployment in industrial areas such as Pennsylvania) men have used sports as an avenue to re-establish social status in terms of masculine values (Beissel et al., 2014).

A critical feminist theoretical perspective points to some of the negative aspects associated with contemporary male sports. These include: the privilege granted to male sports and athletes by social institutions; physical and sexual violence by male athletes; negative perspectives on the female body, derogatory judgements of female athletes; and the exclusionary language of masculine sports (Messner, 2007; Steinfeldt et al., 2016).

Male sports are still granted privilege through institutional acceptance in society, thereby conceding special interests to male athletes. Brandy (2016) contends that male sports
were created to serve the interests of the elite and powerful in society, groups often comprised of men. As Brian Pronger (2002) argues, sport is an oppressive practice that promotes a sense of fascism that only favours particular muscular body frames of fit and powerful men, and excludes dominated populations that do not conform to ideal macho males. Older generations socialize younger generations to see that male sports, through exemplified attributes of winning, competition, and strength, play an important role and carry high status in society (Beissel et al., 2014; Hardin & Greer, 2009; Schirato, 2013). Idealization of male sports is confirmed via approval by societal institutions such as government, media, school, and religion (Anderson, 2010; Wellmer, 2014; Young, 2010). For example, women’s sports have been found to have very limited airtime on popular sports stations such as ESPN in America (Messner & Cooky, 2010). Similarly, women’s college sports receive relatively little attention in reference to attendance, advertising, and viewership on television (Fink, 2015; Shiifflett, Murphy, Ghiasvan, Carlton & Cuevas, 2016). In contrast, male sports bring a nationalistic pride to a nation and help develop a shared belief system amongst a nation’s members (Hawzen & Newman, 2017; King, 2008).

In the sporting environment, especially in violent sports, male athletes can internalize values associated with traditional masculinity. Also in these contexts, male athletes are exposed to ideas that legitimize harmful societal behaviours such as violence and aggressive or high-risk sexual actions (Steinfeldt et al., 2016). Messner (2007), in his critical analysis of male sports, compares male athletes’ tendency for aggression to Kaufman’s (1987) triad of male violence. He uses Kaufman’s theory to suggest that male sports encourage the use of violence to gain control in society. Kaufman (1987) outlines a triad of male violence, which can be comparable
to the beliefs and actions of many traditionally masculine male athletes, arguing that males will conform to violence against three different groups of individuals: women, other males, and against themselves (Kaufman, 1987). The acceptance of violence as part of sport and masculine norms with regard to violence against others contributes to a normalization of violence in the sporting community (Messner, 2007; Steinfeldt & Steinfeldt, 2012). Male sports can contribute to a protected misogynistic idea of male sexuality and dominance in reference to sexual violence and domestic abuse (Biessel et al., 2014).

Charlene Weaving (2010), a feminist sports scholar in Canada states, “Real men are aggressive in sex, real men are cruel in sex, real men use their penises like weapons in sex, real men leave bruises.” Sexually arrogant and superior male athletes impress societal members because their ability to be sexually aggressive reaffirms dominance (Jamieson & Orr, 2009). Loyalty to other men, aggression, and respect for authority are outlined as features of traditional masculinity, especially in American football (Adams et al., 2010). Similarly, amongst a male team, a team’s leaders who approve of sexually aggressive behavior can create a team environment that favours risky sexual behaviours (e.g., rape) for all members of the team (Jamieson & Orr, 2009). Their ability to “score” with women is seen as an achievement and sport on its own that is applauded by many in society (Weaving, 2010). It is an action that is sometimes overlooked because it can create an environment favouring team bonding, for example the excuses made for the Baylor University Football team’s sexual assault case in the media recently. Arguably, sex is seen as a game for the team and its members. Sexual assault by a male athlete may occur as a result of sexual rejection by a female acquaintance. Sexual rejection may be perceived as an assault on their ego, which has been supported by societal
attitudes valuing male sports and athletic prowess. Sexual aggression toward female acquaintance could be an act to maintain a male athlete’s ego and their ability to gain status amongst their teammates (Jamieson & Orr, 2009).

With regard to sports, a feminist lens provides a means for considering the body as a political tool to reinforce masculinity and its dominance in society (Amy-Chinn, 2012; Macro et al., 2012). Femininity and masculinity are defined based on the concepts of power, with masculinity granted power over femininity (Pattman & Bhana, 2010). Traditional masculine men in many contemporary societies are seen as having power because of their powerful body form while women, because of their grace and perceived weaker form, hold less power (Reifsteck, 2014). While there have been female gains in sports, traditional social institutions play a role in underlining that most women do not have the capability to play traditional masculine sports and only men have the physical ability to compete fully in the sporting world (Young, 2010). For instance, while there has been pay equity reform in professional tennis and increased popularity in female hockey, there are still limitations placed on female athletes’ participation. Women play fewer sets of tennis compared to men and there are body-checking limits in female hockey (Yip, 2016; Tuominen et al., 2016). In addition, threats to women’s reproductive health, for example the ability to get pregnant safely (Reifsteck, 2014; WHO, 2017), may be used to justify paternalistic protection of women’s bodies, protection that in fact further emphasizes their perceived weakness and frailty (McDowell & Schaffner, 2011).

Supporters of male sports want to see feats of strength, agility, and performance and it is frequently believed by traditional males that women cannot exert that strength (Adams et al., 2010). For instance, as football became more popular in American society, its use of extreme
strength and violence was something from which women were discouraged, allowing for wider separation between male and female athletes (Messner, 2007). Also, women are questioned by traditional males on their mental capacity to understand football with the frequent suggestion that it may be too complex for them (McDowell & Schaffner, 2011). For example, recently, Cam Newton, the quarterback for the Carolina Panthers mocked a female reporter for asking about his receivers’ routes and mentioned that it was surprising that this question came from a female (Hoffman, 2017). Even though there are changes in society with females playing and coaching traditionally masculine sports such as football, there are still questions surrounding their participation. If women are able to exert the power of a man, they are often ostracized and negatively labelled as a man, as seen with the International Olympics Committee’s (IOC) requirement for sex testing of female athletes who are deemed to be too masculine (Amy-Chinn, 2012). Furthermore, those who are too athletic have their femininity and sexual orientation questioned frequently in the media and in society (Cooky et al., 2010). Women who participate in hypermasculine sports (e.g., amateur wrestling) are seen as deviant in their challenging of the hegemonic masculinity afforded to the men in these sports (Macro et al, 2009).

Reifsteck (2014) argues that sports are a human right that should be available to all persons and from which women are often excluded. This deprives them of social freedom and opportunities that are granted to others in society, namely male athletes (Young, 2010). Sports are often perceived to be the opposite of femininity and some female athletes who do excel are deemed to be cheaters and their performance is not taken seriously (Amy-Chinn, 2017). While society acknowledges many female athletic accomplishments, there is still critique of those
deemed too masculine and muscular such as the 800 meter runner Caster Semenya and tennis player Serena Williams (Karkazis, Jordan-Young, Davis & Camporesi, 2012; Joseph, 2017). Instead, many female athletes are sexually objectified and not granted the ability to grow and change their status in the sporting world. This minimizing and objectification serves to grant more power and dominance to men (Mcleod, 2010). The 2010 *Sports Illustrated Swimsuit Edition* serves as an example, where female Olympic athletes were displayed in bikinis to promote the upcoming Olympics in Vancouver (Daniels & Wartena, 2011).

The language frequently used in male sports further demeans women. For example, the word “girl” is used as a lower status comment to those male athletes who are perceived as weak or non-masculine. Comments such as “you throw like a girl” are used to demean an individual person and, by extension, all women and non-traditionally masculine males (McDowell & Schaffner, 2011). Within male sports, specific and desired behaviours that exemplify masculine ideals are rewarded, and those that do not do so are punished (Cronn-Mills, 2017).

Sexual and homophobic jokes are traditional discourse for young male athletes to perform their hypermasculinity in front of their fellow teammates and classmates (Pattman & Bhana, 2010). Male athletes use their heterosexual ideals to marginalize traditional non-masculine males and those who do not conform to dominant masculine ideals (Adams et al., 2010; Hardin & Greer 2009; McCormack & Anderson, 2010). Those who do not conform are called derogatory names such as “fags,” “sissies,” and “poofs” and male athletes use this language to demonize the LGBT community and to reinforce hypermasculinity and patriarchy (Adams et al., 2010; McCormack & Anderson, 2010). Male athletes may use homophobic
discourse to disparage others even if it is not used to discriminate against a particular sexual orientation (McCormack & Anderson, 2010). Cronn-Mills (2017) argues that gay athletes, such as American football player Michael Sam, face more prejudice in the locker-room and society, and may, as a result of this discrimination feel that there is more pressure to perform successfully on the field. Professional LGBT athletes also express that they feel discriminated against because of their perceived deviant sexual behaviour, and as a result are not chosen for financially lucrative endorsement deals (Cronn-Mills, 2017).

Critical feminists are increasingly taking an intersectional approach and it is being used as a theoretical approach to examine contemporary sports. Intersectionality refers to social identities as not exclusive, with an individual’s multiple social locations granting complex intersections of privilege and marginalization. Identities of individuals are open to the subjective interpretation of those with relative power and are rooted in contextual, relational and historical conditions (Choo & Ferree, 2010; Few-Demo, 2014). Women from marginalized groups based on class, ethnicity, gender identity or sexual orientation are subject to further discrimination and reduced power because of their multiplying oppressions (Brandy, 2016; Choo & Ferree, 2010; Cooky et al., 2010; Messner, 2007). Male privilege may not be afforded to men who are members of oppressed groups. The social institutions of sports are an example of structural intersectionality. The connectedness of systems and structures within the organization of sports creates a society where individuals and groups are affected differently and have unequal access to power (Few-Demo, 2014). Sports administrators may discriminate against athletes who are members of minority groups because they do not bring financial success or a so-called positive public profile to professional sports teams (Cronn-Mills, 2017).
Cronn-Mills (2017) argues that LGBT athletes, especially gay males, are very likely to keep quiet about their sexuality in order to remain members of their team and to ensure a favourable view from their coaches and sport administrators.

In summary, a critical and feminist lens on male sports and masculinities highlights the importance of considering the influence of social institutions, normalization of aggression, physical aspects of human bodies, human rights, language, intersectionality, and corresponding privilege granted to male athletes. The following section will present research in these areas.

**Review of the Research Literature**

Most of the recent research in this area of male athletes, sports, and traditional masculinity can be grouped into three categories: the importance of male sports, harmful aspects of traditional masculinity, and the influence and role of coaches. In the following section, current examples of research conducted and relevant research results are presented with attention to gaps in the current research leading to the study’s research questions guiding this research study.

**I. Importance of male sports**

Research investigating media presentation of male sports, especially television coverage, exemplifies the power and privilege afforded to male athletes. Cooky, Messner, and Musto (2015) updated a longitudinal study of media coverage of sports over the past 25 years. They examined women’s sports coverage compared to men’s sports coverage on American network television news and *Sportscenter* on ESPN. Cooky et al. (2015) found that the predominant coverage of sports on *Sportscenter* was male. There were some peaks and valleys through the 25 year study with female sports gaining more coverage, but in the last 10 years
male sports dominated all the telecasts overall. Male sports still dominate the coverage during the off-season of the sport, with in season female sports getting very little attention comparatively. This study also showed male sports were reported with much more enthusiasm and excitement than women’s sports. Women’s sports were reported with dull undertones and referenced with many humorous statements about their actions on the playing field (Cooky et al., 2015). Shifflett et al (2016) found similar results, indicating that male athletes enjoy an almost 9:1 likelihood their sports will be covered relative to females in the media. This discrepancy may be heightened by the mutually reinforcing cycle of male sports in which television coverage is related to increased attendance, which then leads to greater media coverage and further increases in attendance (Wallace, 2016).

Supremacy of male sports is not only exemplified through the media but also through societal institutions, such as educational organizations. Even amongst Canadian university athletics, a report by Donnelly, Norman and Kidd (2013) argued that there is still a more favourable view of male sports over female sports in Canadian Interuniversity Sports (CIS). Through quantitative online and telephone surveys of athletic department administrators of all the universities in the CIS conference, the researchers compiled numerical data outlining gender comparisons in each athletic department. Donnelly et al. (2013) reported there were greater opportunities for male athletes on university campuses compared to female athletes. Even when the larger size of the football roster was factored into the statistics, this inequity was maintained. Furthermore, the researchers reported that athletic financial awards were disproportionately awarded to men, with women only receiving approximately 40% of the scholarship money. Lastly, even though there has been an improvement since 2011, women’s
positions in leadership roles in university sports were lacking. Athletic director and head coach positions typically were offered to men, with female leaders being a very small part of the athletic community (Donnelly et al., 2013). Having women in leadership roles is important because, as Burton (2015) notes, a male dominated managerial hierarchy supports a sporting environment that favours masculinity. This importance granted to dominant masculinity through the importance of male sports, through the media and institutions legitimates the harmful aspects of traditional masculinity.

Overall, the research indicates that there is a granted power and privilege to male athletes and male sports, as noted with the research on media attention from Cooky et al. (2015) and Donnelly et al. (2013) examination of female sports in Canadian universities. Through the media’s and social institutions’ over emphasis of male sports, especially over female sports, there is a privilege granted to male athletes that excuses their harmful actions toward women and traditional non-masculine males. By documenting the number of women in leadership positions in Canadian university athletic departments, Donnelly et al. (2013) and Burton (2015) develop an argument that social institutions favour masculinity which can eventually lead to harmful acts of traditional masculinity being legitimized.

II. Harmful aspects of traditional masculinity

Pattman & Bhana (2010) argue that masculinity is traditionally defined as the similar traits that all men share, making many traditional men act in the same way in most situations. Some male athletes tend to hold narrow and traditional beliefs on gender norms. They hold essentialist views that there are binary gender roles that normalize the idea that men should be controlling over women and that masculine sports are resistant to change (Hardin & Greer,
Hardin & Greer (2009) surveyed a sample of 340 college students who rated 14 different sports as feminine, masculine, or neutral. They labelled most sports as masculine and their responses conformed to the ideals of traditional gender roles. Research conducted with discourse analysis outlined similar results that traditional males tend to conform to hegemonic masculinity and the subordination of women (McDowell & Schaffner, 2011; Messner, 2007; Steinfeldt & Steinfeldt, 2012). Athleticism is seen as the ultimate form of masculinity by societal members that favour traditional masculinity and may encourage the individual to align with heteronormativity and hypermasculinity (Adams et al., 2010; McCromack & Anderson, 2010; McDowell & Schaffner, 2011; Messner, 2007).

Fogel (2011) identifies these themes of traditional masculinity in the sporting culture of football in his analysis of interview data with 81 Canadian players and administrators, and 20 published autobiographies of football players. One of the main themes he identified concerned how football serves to “separate out the men” (Fogel, 2011, p.2) creating a man and separating masculinity from femininity. Fogel describes this separation and hierarchy in terms of the need to promote ultra masculine sports such as football and give it a powerful position in society. As men tend to participate more in football, this powerful position is then granted to men to further allow oppression and dominance over women. There was also a theme separating masculine males and non-traditional masculine males. Similar to the previous theme, a hierarchy is created of men who excel versus those who do not conform to the ideal form of masculinity. Those who can conform to the ideal form of masculinity should dominate those who do not conform. Interviews with football players and the comments found in the autobiographies supported their need to exert a sense of superiority on and off the field in
areas such as drinking and multiple female sexual partners. Players outlined the game of football as a war-like activity with football imagery of weaponry, militaristic ideals and wounding your opponent. Folger (2011) maintains that it is understandable through themes such as these that sexual and domestic abuse towards women is normalized in the Canadian and American football culture.

A study by Steinfeldt & Steinfeldt (2012) indicated that there were conflicting ideals about traditional masculinity in the American football player population. American college football players (N=523) were asked to self-report aspects of their athletic identity and conformity to masculine norm scales using Likert scales. Masculine norm scales outlined attitudes about violent behaviour, sexual risk taking, perception about control over women, and attitudes about same sex sexual orientation. Athletic identity was correlated with most masculine norm scales. However, player characteristics varied in the degree to which they were correlated to masculine norms. For example, defensive line players, where more violent behaviour is encouraged on the playing field, tended to conform to traditional masculine norms that legitimized violence (Steinfeldt & Steinfeldt, 2012).

Harmful aspects of traditional masculinity have also been examined in other research. Beissel et al. (2014) found that male athletes who are witnessed partaking in risky behaviours (e.g., womanizing and heavy drinking) were seen as real men by everyday males and were seen as relatable individuals. Similarly, Flood (2011) references a number of studies whose authors have conducted meta-analyses of masculinity research in the last three decades and found that men who hold sexist, patriarchal, and sexually aggressive attitudes are more likely to engage in behaviours of violence against women. For example, one of the referenced studies by Murnen,
Wright & Kaluzny (2002) involved a meta-analysis of measures of masculine ideology and compared them to levels of sexual aggression in the male respondents from studies conducted in the 1980’s and 1990’s. In almost all indicators of masculine ideology, traditional masculinity was still associated with sexual aggression against women as previously reported in previous studies (Murnen et al., 2002).

However, male team leaders who do not favour aggressive sexual behavior tend to lead teams that do not conform to these sexual aggressive ideals (Smith & Stewart, 2003). Team morals can have a great influence on the behaviour of individual team members, especially when sexual ethics are exemplified with a particular set of values. Teammates can exert a lot of pressure on each other and keep a particular set of behaviours limited, especially sexually aggressive behaviours, by having positive team values and morals (Jamieson & Orr, 2009).

Education is a key component in combating harmful forms of traditional masculinity in athletes (Moynihan, Banyard, Arnold, Eckstein & Stapleton, 2010). Researchers conducted pre-test, post-test and 2 month follow up with 53 athletes taking part in a sexual and intimate partner violence prevention program and 86 athletes in a control group with no intervention. Results of the study revealed that the intervention program was successful in combating harmful attitudes relating to sexual violence (Moynihan et al., 2010). There were significant differences between the intervention group and control group on measures of rape myth acceptance and willingness to help victims of sexual violence (Moynihan et al., 2010).

Traditional masculine male athletes and coaches may use harmful discourse involving homophobic language to motivate team members and discriminate against non-traditional masculine males (McCormack & Anderson, 2010). To examine recent trends, a group of
international researchers examined attitudes and sports participation of LGBT and straight men and women engaging in organized team sports in Canada, Australia, Ireland, United States, New Zealand, and United Kingdom (Denison & Kitchen, 2015). They found that LGBT participants were involved in all organized team sports, particularly the most popular team sports based on nationality. At the same time, however, this online survey research of 7000 LGB and 2494 straight men and women demonstrated that LGBT athletes felt unwelcome in these sporting environments and that youth sports were particularly not inclusive (Denison & Kitchen, 2015). The results also established that male athletes were the most uncomfortable being openly gay in America and Australia, while Canadians were the most open to having LGBT athletes as teammates (Denison & Kitchen, 2015).

Luisi, Luisi, & Geana (2016) conducted a qualitative textual analysis about the attitudes of male athletes towards potential gay teammates in the National Basketball Association (NBA) and the National Football League (NFL). The researchers examined newspaper articles referencing Michael Sam and Jason Collins’ announcements of their sexual orientation. Jason Collins was a NBA basketball player who announced that he was gay when still playing in the league in 2013. Collins was the first openly gay player to play in one the four major professional sports leagues (NBA, NFL, NHL, MLB) in North America. Michael Sam was a college football player who announced he was gay before he entered the NFL draft in 2014. When he was drafted so late in the 2014 NFL draft there were questions surrounding potential homophobia in the NFL because he was projected to be a much higher draft choice. In the NBA, most newspaper articles made comments that were positive towards Collins from athletes, administrators, and other stakeholders to the league. Even though there were some negative
comments about Collins’ sexual orientation, the overall presentation of the NBA in the newspaper media was very inclusive towards the LGBT community. Conversely, the NFL stakeholders’ attitude toward Sam and the LGBT community was much more varied compared to Collins. There was a tremendous amount of negative commentary surrounding the sexual orientation of Sam. Although there was some support for Sam, it appeared that the NFL was not comfortable with a gay player on the field and in the locker room (Luisi et al, 2016).

The findings of other studies have varied with regard to the prevalence of inclusive environments for LGBT athletes and staff members. A Campus Pride 2012 LGBTQ National College Report indicated that LGBT athletes are more likely to experience verbal abuse in person and on social media and are widely pressured to remain quiet about their sexual orientation (Cronn-Mills, 2017). Cavalier (2011) reported mixed results in the culture of the locker room, with half of the gay staff members reporting a negative work environment in reference to discrimination against the LGBT.

The research in terms of harmful masculinity examines the privilege granted to male athletes and the excuses made for violence against women and non-traditional men. Those justifications for violence are exemplified through the attributes of many male athletes holding traditional views of gender and acceptance that sports typically promote masculine ideals and risky behaviours. At the same time, research demonstrates some positive societal changes in reference to education successfully addressing attitudes and beliefs of male athletes and potential shifts in homophobia in the team sports environment.
III. The influence and role of coaches

Coaches of male athletes are important in the context of this research because they have the potential to negatively and positively influence their athletes (Adams et al., 2010; Steinfeldt et al., 2016). In the recent research, there is evidence of negative and positive impacts coaches have on athletes. Coaches can have a negative influence with their athletes through voicing sexist and homophobic statements that promote violence and aggression towards themselves, opposing teams and societal members (Adams et al., 2010). However, some coaches are progressively changing their approach to influencing their team. They are being more open to limiting sexist and homophobic statements in the team environment and to promoting a more inclusive team setting (Jamie et al., 2015).

Adams et al. (2010) and Steinfeldt et al. (2016) outline that coaches can negatively influence their male athletes by way of their pregame and postgame speeches which may idealize war-like tendencies. Coaches use language to feminize their opponents and their own team and use misogyny to motivate their athletes (Adams et al., 2010; Steinfeldt et al., 2016). Through participant observation and informal interviews of 22 players on a semi-professional soccer team in a southwest region of England, researchers examined the discourse of coaches to their players. Adams et al. (2010) reported that coaches called opponents and their own team homophobic names to motivate and demonize. Steinfeldt et al. (2016) provided examples of coaches using extreme language in American college athletics in their conceptual analysis of masculinity in sports. Sometimes these homophobic expressions have consequences. A coach from Rutger’s basketball program and a coach from Eastern Michigan’s football program were individually dismissed for verbal abuse that contained homophobic and misogynistic overtones
(Steinfeldt et al., 2016). Coaches say that they use this negative motivation to teach players how to be a man in society (Adams et al., 2010; McDowell & Schaffner, 2011; Steinfeldt et al., 2011; Steinfeldt et al., 2016).

McDowell & Schaffner (2011) reported that male coaches tend to hold traditional ideals in reference to gender roles and sexuality. Using a critical discourse analysis, McDowell & Schaffner (2011) examined a reality show called *The Gender Bowl*, which exhibited a full-contact football game between men and women. Coaches who were analyzed in the show maintained a belief that male athletes’ manhood is challenged when women can play the sport. Coaches who are more likely to favour traditional masculinity will protect the game from women to ensure male dominance and the protection of the game (McDowell & Schaffner, 2011). Similarly, according to the Campus Pride 2012 LGBTQ National College Report, traditional coaches tend to be a major voice of verbal abuse towards LGBT athletes (Cronn-Mills, 2017).

Conversely, there is research demonstrating the positive effect male coaches can have on their athletes. Recent research has confirmed the importance of mentorship, guidance, and resources for male athletes from their coaches (Jamieson & Orr, 2009; Laios et al., 2003; Mastreleo et al., 2012; Steinfeldt et al., 2011). Coaches who have a positive impact on their athletes’ behaviour have specific rules and outlined preferred behaviour in the areas of respect towards others on and off the field. They reward positive behaviour and have the ability to modify actions of their athletes through verbal and non-verbal signals (Jamieson & Orr, 2009). Athletes who had excellent mentors were found to have more committed relationships with
others, were more respectful to others and were able to express their emotions more openly (Bloom, Durand-Bush, Schinke & Salmela, 1998).

Jamie et al. (2015) investigated an adolescent relationship abuse prevention program named Coaching Boys into Men (CBIM) with male varsity coaches to determine the impact the program had on potentially abusive behaviour by their male athletes. The researchers examined 16 high school programs in Northern California in a randomized trial of the prevention program. A sample of 176 coaches were randomly assigned to present the 60-minute CBIM prevention training program to the intervention or to the control group with their usual standard coaching activities. Coaches completed a baseline survey prior to their sports season and then completed a follow-up survey after their sports season. Afterwards, coaches from the intervention program were asked to participate in a semi-structured face-to-face interview about their experiences with CBIM program. The final results indicated that intervention coaches were more likely to have witnessed and recognized abusive behaviours among their male athletes compared to the control group. Intervention coaches reported that they were more likely to have conversations with their athletes about sexual violence against women and physical abuse on and off the field. Coaches from the intervention program further mentored their players to improve their behaviour around their respect for women in terms of their language and actions towards them (Jamie et al., 2015).

Flood (2011) examined the positive contribution men can make in creating an environment free of violence against women. In considering a variety of social initiatives, Flood came to the conclusion that men need to play a larger role in ending violence against women and suggests that this can be done through a variety of important steps. He stated that many
social institutions can contribute to strengthening the knowledge and skills of males in society. For example, coaches could develop programs for at-risk male athletes who have been aggressive towards other athletes, who have witnessed family violence in their households, and who may hold violence-supporting attitudes. Flood explained that community education is an important violence prevention strategy, and that male athletes who have participated in violence prevention programs at universities are less likely to support rape myths, have less rape supportive attitudes, and have more empathy with victims of sexual violence. Programs with the greatest impact are ones where there are face-to-face interactions with male students and administrators. Flood acknowledges that for these programs to be successful, administrators (and coaches) need to be educated on violence prevention and links to traditional views of masculinity. It would be very difficult to have a coach positively influence the behaviour of their male athletes when they do not hold similar values of ending violence. Lastly, Flood indicates that there needs to be institutional change that favours these prevention strategies. This might be exemplified by professional sports leagues and educational institutions accepting and advocating for change and implementing these programs at the level of the whole organization rather than at the level of individual coaches, teams, and sports.

Conversely, athletes are beginning to have the ability to question their coaches’ negative influence. Anderson & McGuire (2010) examined the gendered politics of men’s rugby in England. Their research indicated that athletes began to question the coaches’ homophobic and toxic masculine language. The players would question the coaches’ language and label it as inappropriate as they felt that they should support a more inclusive environment for all players.
The players would support and encourage each other to ignore the coaches’ language and to try create a more inclusive environment (Anderson & McGuire, 2010).

Coaches of male athletes have a unique position to negatively or positively influence their athletes’ ideals towards consent, violence, and relationships with others. Coaches can have a negative influence on their players’ behaviours through voicing sexist and homophobic speeches to motivate, using militaristic terms to encourage and holding traditional views of gender. Conversely, they can be a positive influence through their mentorship and guidance, the use of anti-violence intervention programs and acknowledging that males need to be contributors to anti-rape and anti-violence discourse and programs in society. Research has demonstrated the positive effects of preventative and change-directed programs on the attitudes and beliefs of both athletes and participating coaches. However, little is known about the experiences of coaches with regard to influencing their athletes’ behaviour in reducing attributes of traditional masculinity and promoting inclusive masculinity.

Rationale for the Research

The review of the research presented above demonstrates the power of male sports, the privilege afforded to male athletes (Smith 2016), the harmful aspects of traditional masculinity (Messner, 2007), and the role of coaches in influencing behaviour (Adams et al., 2016; Jamie et al., 2015). As well, the literature review points to some areas that require further investigation.

The literature on the importance of male sports exhibits that there has been very little change over the past 3 decades in the privilege male athletes have been granted in society. The literature confirms that there is a resistance to change as noted through Cooky et al’s. (2015)
analysis of male sports television coverage and Donnelly et al’s (2013) reporting of males’ greater access to university resources in athletic departments. This literature specified the positioning and privilege of male sports and athletes, however research has not been focused on the impact of this privileged positioning with respect to its effect on women and non-traditional masculine males. Research has not been conducted which examines coaches’ influence on rectifying this privilege with their male athletes and producing athletes that are more respectful to women and non-traditional masculine males.

Harmful aspects of traditional masculinity outlined in the literature by Fogel (2011) and Steinfeldt and Steinfeldt (2012) point to how traditional masculinity provides a justification for violence, homophobia, and risky behaviour in some male athletes. Masculinity research from scholars such as Messner (2007), Hardin & Greer (2009), and Fogel (2011) illustrates that there is a problem with attitudes and behaviours of male athletes. At the same time, these researchers have not investigated solutions to these problems. Much of the research reviewed here has examined the problem of traditional masculinity, particularly through the use of surveys, and not examined what possible solutions may be available to solve the issues. Therefore, this study will utilize interviews that invite coach participants to reflect on and describe how they respond or intervene in order to address the problems they see.

Adams et al. (2010), Steinfeldt et al., 2016, and Jamie et al. (2015) illustrates that coaches of male athletes are in the position to positively or negatively influence athletes’ behaviours, attitudes and actions. Coaches have a unique position to influence their athletes’ behaviour in reference to consent, violence and relationships. However, there is very limited research on what coaches are doing specifically to promote a change in the attitudes and
behaviours of their athletes. This research proposed here will contribute to identifying what coaches are seeing and how they are responding to their athletes’ behaviours, attitudes, and actions in terms of violence, homophobia, and risky behaviour.

This research study is aimed at illuminating the ways coaches may be intervening with respect to what they consider to be harmful and risky behaviours of their male athletes. Semi-structured interviews expanded on the limited research of inclusive masculinity in male athletes by asking coaches how they determine what is harmful or risky, what they intend to instill or model with regard to attitudes or behaviours, and how they judge successful outcomes related to inclusive and positive masculinities.

This study contributes knowledge based on coaches’ perspective and experiences in attempting interventions directed at promoting inclusive/positive masculinities. Analysis of these interviews with male varsity coaches provides direction to other universities’ varsity programs for establishing cultures of inclusivity and the promotion of positive relationships with others with male athletes.

**Statement of Positionality**

I conform to a critical perspective in which gender and sex roles are understood to be given powerful positions by social discourse and social institutions. I am an individual who has frequently challenged the status quo in terms of gender and sex, and I think that gender and sex roles should be explored and critiqued. I feel that traditional views of masculinity are used to create a power imbalance between males and females and are an unhealthy component of a family structure and in overall society. As an ex-varsity athlete who has always challenged traditional masculine values, the research I have conducted here engages me in personal
examination of ways to promote inclusive masculinity. I have a particular insight on the University of Guelph Athletic Department through my experience as an ex-varsity athlete and an employee on campus. My personal experience and conversations with others on campus lead me to believe that the University of Guelph Athletic Department is attempting to challenge traditional masculine values and aiming to produce athletes who conform to a more inclusive ideal of masculinity. Through this study, I wanted to hear what coaches were doing and what practices may be creating promising knowledge generation around inclusive masculinity and male athletes.

**Research Questions**

This research endeavored to answer two research questions:

1) What strategies, if any, do coaches of male sports use to promote inclusive and positive masculinities among athletes?
   a. How do coaches assess the use and outcome of these strategies?

2) What strategies, if any, do coaches of male sports use to address harmful aspects of traditional masculinity?
   a. How do coaches assess the use and outcome of these strategies?

**Methods**

In this study, I conducted an inductive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2013) of interview data with 10 male varsity coaches who work with male athletes on the University of Guelph campus. I used semi-structured interviews to explore these coaches’ perspectives on their athletes’ behaviour and how they perceive positive or inclusive masculinity [see appendix I for interview guide]. I asked about their own subjective definitions of what a man should be
and masculinity; their subjective experience of their role in addressing masculinity with their male athletes; and the strategies, if any, that they attempt to use in order to address what they perceive to be the harmful aspects of traditional masculinity (Andrews, Mason, & Silk, 2005). I received Research Ethics Board (REB) approval for the study in March 2018 [See Appendix II for the REB certificate].

Recruitment and Sample

Daly (2007) suggests that partnering with a social organization that will assist in recruitment, which delivers an ideal number and diverse group of participants for a study is a desirable goal for a researcher. To gain access to the sample, I used my connections on campus as an ex-varsity athlete and current university staff member, as well as the rapport I have built with the athletics department as a member of committees and panel discussions with senior athletics staff. I sent recruitment email letters (see appendix III for recruitment email) to the current coaches (18 in total) and asked the Athletic Director to be an advocate for the research to support these invitations to participate. After having limited response from head coaches for participation, I started to snowball recruit from some head coaches who advised that their assistant coaches might be interested in participation. I also went through the University of Guelph Athletics webpage directory of assistant coaches and emailed those assistant coaches who were listed to recruit for participation. In order to participate, coaches were required to be male varsity coaches currently working with male sports on campus. I recruited from different administrative levels (e.g., head and assistant coaches), and across all sports on campus, from the more conventionally considered central sports (e.g., football, hockey, basketball) to less central sports (e.g., golf, rowing). I labeled sports on centrality based on the financial success of
NCAA sports in colleges and universities the United States and their ranking by the Department of Education (Gaines, 2016). I also recruited from more physically aggressive sports (e.g., rugby, football, wrestling) and less physically aggressive sports (e.g., Nordic skiing, golf).

I interviewed 10 coaches from across various University of Guelph male varsity sports. This included 7 head coaches and 3 assistant coaches, as well as 3 of the more central and 4 of less central sports. This sample size was approximately two thirds the population of head male varsity coaches in the athletic department who work with male athletes. This number is just below the sample size recommended by Braun & Clarke (2013) for medium-sized research projects involving analysis of interviews. The interviews were conducted in the Winter semester of 2018 and early Summer semester 2018.

**Ethical Consideration**

There were no unforeseen ethical issues for the interview subjects. The participants were not vulnerable and there was minimal psychological risk to describing their coaching actions and perspectives. There may have been some apprehension from the participants with regard to divulging personal information about themselves and how they approach their work. It is important therefore, to acknowledge that interviewees might not have been completely forthright. I invited them to divulge only as much as they felt comfortable sharing, while also encouraging them to think about their experience and perception as potentially instructive and helpful to others in similar positions. At the beginning of the interview, coaches were assured that there are no right or wrong answers and that they were not judged personally or professionally for their responses. Coaches were invited to share their unique and diverse perspectives with the understanding that these enriched the data. The interview data collected
from the sample will remained confidential, the subjects were not identifiable in the final transcripts. Any personal information and the interview data itself were kept on an encrypted computer in a safe and secure location. I stored the names of the participants separately from the transcribed data. Transcripts were identified by numeric code to ensure anonymity and all storage was confidential and secure.

Conducting the Interview

Participants who expressed interest through email about being interviewed were screened to ensure they were a head or assistant coach of a male varsity sport on campus. Through email, participants and I arranged mutually suitable times for the interviews. Prior to the interview, I asked the participants to read through the information and consent form [see information and Consent Form Appendix IV]. At the beginning of each interview, I asked participants if they had any questions about the information and consent form or the research itself and obtained signed consent from them to record interviews with an encrypted digital recorder (Daly, 2007). Each participant coach received a $10 gift card to University of Guelph Hospitality Services as a thank you for their participation. The interviews took place in a quiet room to ensure confidentiality. I asked participants if they had a quiet room available to them in their workspace. If unavailable, I booked an interview room in the MacDonald Institute building on campus.

Prior to asking the interview questions, I ensured that the participants understood that they could refuse to answer any question that made them uncomfortable. I indicated that I would send them a copy of the transcription of the interview for them to approve, and that I would invite them to eliminate any portion of the transcript that they felt needed to be
removed (Daly, 2007). I mentioned that the interview would be split up into three components: definition of manliness, coach’s influence over their athletes and programming. Interviews lasted between 11 minutes (min length) and 71 minutes (max length), with a mean interview time of 32 minutes.

Interviews were guided by the two main research questions about strategies coaches of male sports use, if any, to promote inclusive and positive masculinity among athletes and strategies to address harmful aspects of traditional masculinity. I began each interview with a question about how the coach and their athletes defined what a man is and how they defined masculinity. I indicated that I was interested in how, as a coach, they respond to male athlete attitudes and beliefs about “being a man” and “how to be a man”, about sexual and close intimate relationships between male athletes and women, and about interactions between male athletes and non-traditional masculine men. I also indicated that the objective of the interview was to see how individual coaches, as mentors, could potentially influence athletes’ behaviour on and off the field, and what their views were with regard to their impact on athletes’ behaviour. The semi-structured interview was guided by an interview guide with main questions about a particular area and guiding questions for more detailed information [See Interview guide in Appendix I]. In conducting the interviews, I asked participants to elaborate on their responses (e.g., inviting more descriptions, asking for more detail, specific examples, and definitions of terms) over the course of the interview (Andrews et al., 2005; Daly, 2007).

Following each interview, I wrote a memo in a research journal about my experience with the interview participants and interesting components of the conversation. I used these
journal entries to augment and support my analysis of the transcribed interview data and description of the analytic themes.

Data Analysis

I transcribed interview recordings verbatim in the Summer and Fall semester of 2018. Transcribed interviews were sent to coaches to check for the accuracy of their statements through a technique referred to as member checking (Andrews et al., 2005; Birt, Scott, Cavers, Campbell, & Walter, 2016). Each transcribed interview was transferred to a password protected, encrypted laptop. Throughout transcription each interview was given a participant number to help identify content for data analysis and when including statements in the Results section.

As I conducted inductive thematic analysis of the transcribed interviews, I followed Braun & Clarke’s (2006) six phases of thematic analysis. These phases include: familiarizing myself with my interview data; creating initial codes from the data; begin looking for themes; reviewing themes based on the codes; operationalizing and labelling themes; and producing a final analysis that tells a narrative about the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

As a first step in coding the interview data, I read through the transcripts to get an overall sense of the interview content, familiarizing myself with the subjective responses of the varsity coaches and taking note of interesting or frequently used terms (Braun & Clarke, 2013, Daly, 2007). I read through them a second time to write memos and name potential codes and patterns.

In the second step, I used NVIVO 12 data analysis software as an aid. I uploaded the transcribed interviews into the program and highlighted ideas across the entire data set,
focusing on repeated patterns in the interview data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). I transferred some of my research memos into the program and read through the interviews, identifying more themes in the content. After going through all the transcripts in NVIVO and identifying initial codes, I went through the transcripts a second time to identify other codes that I may have missed. I initially identified approximately 430 items in the transcripts to be coded and identified 147 codes. I read through the identified codes and identified similarities and began grouping the codes together to categorize them into initial themes. I documented 7 initial themes with codes identified. I met with my advisor after identifying initial codes. I described the codes and presented specific examples to see if there were any potential codes I may have missed from the data. This step was important, as it verified and confirmed the codes that I presented and helped in checking my own subjectivity with the data.

During the third step, I created a hand drawn visual thematic map to identify individual themes, and subthemes, and the potential relationships among them. I also began to title themes and subthemes concisely and define these in more complex terms. While reviewing the themes, I looked for similarities and differences in the response with each theme, identifying and grouping the subthemes based on these connections. The initial themes were: Coaches’ Influence, Definition of Male, Positive Behaviour, Negative Behaviour, Programs, Instances of Behaviour and Indicators it was Working. I met with my advisory committee with these initial themes and there was some input to identify some more complex themes from the data. It was identified that the questioning of the definition of being a man and the aspirational actions coaches wanted from their athletes was a major component of the data. Programs and Instances of Behaviour were identified as non-major themes in the data. Positive and Negative
Behaviour and Definition of Male were identified as common themes to be categorized together. Finally, during a brainstorming session with the input of the committee, my advisor and I examined these similar themes and subthemes, and I developed a list of the five major overarching themes discussed in the Results section that follows.

In the fourth step, I developed an outline of the five overarching themes, with the themes and subthemes named and defined, and quotes from the individual participants included under each (Braun & Clarke, 2006). I shared this outline of analysis with my advisory committee, incorporating ideas generated during that discussion in the final analysis.

In the fifth step, I wrote the final analysis detailing the important findings from the coding of the interview data and used the previously written outline as guide to write an analytical narrative and story about the data from the interviews. This analysis presented themes and subthemes with supporting quotes from the participants as evidence of the narrative I was trying to tell about the data (Andrews et al., 2005; Braun & Clarke, 2006).

The final analysis included the following themes and subthemes: Questioning the Definition of Manliness (challenging the question, not ability to define), Being a Good Person, Identifiable Male Qualities (success/wining, leadership, traditional masculinity), Coaches’ Influence on Athletes (reinforce positive behaviours, modelling behavior, teach/mentor, ability to question coach), and Aspirational Attributes (improvement in own behaviour, create good people, respect). These are discussed in detail in the following Results section, with excerpts from interviews included as evidence of themes, and including a description of the relationships between these themes.
Results

In this section I outline the results of the data analysis and answers to the research questions: 1) What strategies, if any, do coaches of males sports use to promote inclusive and positive masculinity among athletes? 2) What strategies, if any, do coaches of male sports use to address harmful aspects of traditional masculinity? I focus on five thematic areas identified during my analysis: questioning the definition of manliness, being a good person, identifiable male qualities, coaches’ influence on athletes, and aspirational attributes. Each subsection below elaborates on the above themes and corresponding subthemes.

Questioning the Definition of Manliness

This research was designed to examine the coach’s influence on how their male athletes demonstrate masculinity, especially in terms of how “being a man” is defined, including positive and negative attributes. The participants, however, provided a surprising response to initial questions about this and those responses challenged the central interview question. At the beginning of the interviews, I asked, “what do you see or hear from your male athletes who you work with pertaining to their definition of being a man?” I was surprised when some of the coaches challenged the question itself and suggested that this ideology of “manliness” does not play out in the training of their athletes. Other coaches expressed that they were confused by the question. These coaches indicated they could not initially answer the question because they did not feel that they had an answer; “I do not think there is a clear definition or appropriate definition of being a man.” (Participant 8) Some of the coaches asked for the question to be repeated or to take some extra time to reflect on their answer. They would eventually have an
answer to the question, but their responses were not always clear or reflective of the original question. The theme of “questioning the definition of being a man” refers to participant coaches not knowing how to define what manliness is in relation to their male athletes; stating that their athletes should not be defined by gender but rather their personal qualities; and challenging the initial question of the definition of what is a man itself, suggesting that there is a lack of conversation with their male athletes about so-called manliness.

Many of the coaches suggested in the interviews that being a man was something neither they nor their athletes thought of in such terms. Participant 8 stated when referring to his athletes, “To be quite honest, I am not sure if I hear that commented on at all.” Similarly, Participant 6 said that he did not believe that his athletes deliberately think about manliness and what it means to them. “I do not think there is this conscious thought that these things make me a man.”

The coaches also stated that they really did not want to try to define what a man should be in society. For example, Participant 9 stated:

I do not differentiate between gender, sorry, you are an athlete, I am working with you. If you are sad, great, we can debrief on that later, right now we are at a national championship where decisions get made quickly.

Participant 9 then went on to argue:

So I do not interpret that way and I am not trying to be challenging to you. That to me supposes that we have certain – we have sort of this line and that on one
side of the line there is maleness and the other side of the line is femaleness and
there is a difference between them. So on the root of it – it is a question that I do
not quite know how to answer to you because my brain does not work that way.

Some of the coaches argued that being an athlete should not be the only identifiable
attribute to being a man, rather it was being an individual who competes in their particular
sport and becomes a productive citizen. Participant 2 argued after being asked about positive
attributes of being a man:

In the form of being responsible and taking accountability for your actions and I
think there are two huge things that are - I’m sorry those are the two biggest
things that is not necessarily about being a man, but being an adult who has
their stuff together and you know that can be a contributing member of society I
guess.

Some coaches state that they would have conversations that reflect on societal issues
that encompass some issues of gender, but as Participant 7 explains, the direct mention of
what it is to be a man does not necessarily come up in the conversation.

We have certainly had those types of conversations from a social standpoint,
umm but specifically what it is to be a man – I do not know if we have really had
that deep of a discussion about that.

In response to the question about being a man, some of the coaches suggested that a
more relevant question would be how to become a better person. I heard the participants claim
that being a good person was a core value that they feel our society should strive to obtain. For example, Participant 2 stated: “I do not think it is isolated to being a man.” Further, Participant 6 stated:

I would say for me it is similar to being a man, to try to not put a specific definition on it. I just think, like if you are fulfilled or happy with who you are and what you are doing and what your impact is on your environment. I think that it is your ultimate goal for being a human being.

It appears from these responses that a definition of maleness is not an attribute that the coaches, or their athletes, strive to obtain. Some of the coaches resisted the question about being a man, but most did eventually have a definition of manliness. For example Participant 6 stated when asked if manliness was an important factor for his male athletes; “Nothing particular comes to mind. It is not an overt discussion point in our group.” However, later in the discussion Participant 6 did emphasize that being a male athlete has a correlation with appearance.

Oh a lot of it is hidden behind this sort of self image – we are strong, we are powerful, we look good – they have to look good in the mirror or they would have not made it to this level of this specific sport context that I work.

There was something about the question that created resistance by the coaches because when asked less directly and they began to build upon other responses, the coaches tended to have an answer for the original question on the definition of being man. Even though they eventually provided a definition for manliness, the coaches tended to direct related
discussions to a focus on being a good person rather than gender stereotypes. This was a surprising start and important theme in that it suggests that gender was not an attribute that coaches even thought of, or which was at least secondary for them, when coaching their athletes.

**Being a Good Person**

As stated above, the coaches initially resisted providing a direct definition of manliness. They did, however, describe desirable qualities of being a good person without the emphasis on gender. As Participant 5 stated, “It is more about being a good person as opposed to being a man.” This theme of “being a good person” was cited by several participants and referred to having positive personal behavioural qualities and being an adult:

> I do not think there is a clear definition or appropriate definition of being a man.
> But I think in terms of being a good person – like if you check – those four boxes – honesty, integrity, responsibility and accountability – yeah then I think you could be a pretty good person or pretty good man. (Participant 8)

Being an adult was another quality associated with being a good person. For example, Participant 4 stated, “making right decisions, as being an adult – being a man versus woman does not matter so much.” Similarly, Participant 10 said that doing the right thing is an ideal quality of a good person.

> And whatever that right thing is – we do it! So that could be staying out of difficult situations, like being downtown in a bar fight, or something like that –
walking away. Not cheating on tests or exams, not lying about going to the
weight room or not giving your whole self to whatever you do. “Doing the right
thing!” is one of our mantras.

Being respectful and honourable toward others was similarly associated with being a
good person as opposed to being a man:

So for me manliness is an expression of respect and again it is the same as how I
would define a good teammate or define as being a good person........Again, I
think that the first things I talked about, the healthy behaviours – being an
honourable person, showing respect to others – whether it be male or female.

(Participant 5)

Participant 6 similarly maintained that respect was important by stating, “Treat and
respect their teachers, treat and respect their coaches and their fellow athletes.”

Comparatively participant 6 referenced being a good person and taking care of others when he
argued:

I think for me, when I associate someone who is a good man or a good person it
is someone who takes good care of the people around them and also takes care
of themselves.

Coaches appeared to ignore the concept of gender and argued that their athletes should
encompass qualities of being an adult, honourable, respectful and taking care of others.
However, as the discussion went further about their athletes, many coaches eventually
revealed that there were some qualities associated with being a man, including some qualities that were positive attributes and others that were negative.

**Identifiable Qualities of Being a Man**

Across the interviews, and despite some initial discomfort with the direct questions discussed earlier all coaches did describe qualities that they associated with being a male.

Success and winning was an attribute identified as a masculine trait:

But particularly in a sporting environment it is on display and you cannot hide from that. You are looking at what defines a man – and it is the one who wins or the ones that are successful. There is something right and something wrong in that. (Participant 6)

Participant 6 stated that winning and success was a major concern of the men on his team. He argued that many of male athletes he worked with or had seen on the national and international stage had the mentality that, “you are either the best or you are not good enough.” I questioned back, “Like the fastest man in the world?” Which he replied “Yup!” “Who knows who is the second fastest?” I asked. “We might remember that for like a month” participant 6 joked. He went further to identify this as a negative attribute of the masculinity in his male athletes, as they would overemphasize the need to win rather than improve other important aspects of their life, such as being successful in school and being a good teammate.

As participant 6 questioned a male athlete’s absolute need to be successful and always win, other participants pointed out that success can be a positive attribute in a male athlete’s
life. Being a man would reference the ability to do everything in their lives as best as they can and be as successful as possible through their efforts.

You cannot compartmentalize the success in your life – so if you cannot be successful in other parts of your life – that will lead to unsuccessfulness somewhere else. That means trying to be the best at what you are doing.

(Participant 2)

Participant 4 stated that using success as a motivating tool for his male athletes and the team was a goal:

At the end of every practice, we bring out a positive example. We will present someone in front of the whole team and let them break a whole team down – umm – whether they are (edited out) position on the team or (edited out) position on the team, if they did something positive, either on the (edited out) or in the community, we will kind of give them the moment to say or reinforce this is what we are looking for in a positive way.

Along with winning and success, coaches emphasized that leadership and honour were traits that were associated with manliness. For example, Participant 3 stated, “Leadership, a little bit of something, Yeah, leadership aspect as well.” Equally participant 5 said when asked about manliness qualities, “I would say a lot of it has to do with honour and respect.”
Similarly, coaches talked about accountability, responsibility, and reliability as a male trait. These participants responded to being asked for a definition of being a man in the following ways: “accountable for their actions” (Participant 2), and with more detail,

I think a lot of it being a man is around self-efficacy. Being able to be reliable, responsible, they are at their word, and that extends to everything like showing up on time, living up to their agreements. (Participant 1)

Even as many coaches stated explicitly that there is no definition of manliness, they would however admit that some of their athletes still exemplified or could exemplify notions of traditional masculinity – which they emphasized in the interview as “manliness” or “being macho”.

Manliness is perceived as the ultimate form of physical output that is looking, performing and better than everyone and thus having this social hierarchy displayed that coincides with that. You are either the best or you are not good enough. (Participant 6)

References to manliness were not necessarily negative in the view of the coach:

I think there will be different personalities amongst the men’s team and the women’s team and I think there will be that occasional time where they (men) will beat their chest and I think that it is ok every once and while. I will allow that on that rare occasion like in that case where they need to get pumped up and
full of adrenaline. As long as they are not making that a regular occasion - I am ok with that. So if they do get a little rowdy – keep them in check. (Participant 5)

The essence of male aggression was referenced as an occasional necessity in order to perform on the field. It was legitimized as having a role in their performance. Coaches stated that it was when the male athlete over-stepped the line with that aggression that the coach felt this behaviour would be inappropriate and could turn into negative macho behaviour.

While some of the coaches stated that traditional manliness was still a positive part of their definition of being a man, most coaches emphasized its negative attributes. Some of them would refer to a “macho” attitude. They would not always link the negative attributes of being a man specifically to terms like “toxic masculinity.” However, their definitions of negative masculinity were frequently similar to terms used by writers such as Wong, Ringo Ho, Wang & Miller (2016) who maintain that traditional masculinity encompasses: winning, emotional control, risk-taking, violence, dominance, playboy, self-reliance, power over women, disdain for same-sex relationships and pursuit of status.

It was widely stated by the coaches that not being inclusive was a negative attribute of a man. But this, the coaches meant “not having good relationships with women” or with “individuals of a different sexual orientation,” or “not being open to other cultures.” Participant 5 talked about being closed-minded as a negative attribute – that being discriminatory towards those who may be different than them in terms of sexual orientation or dietary needs (e.g. vegan).
I would say just being closed in general. Whether it is closed to different people from different walks of life or closed in the terms of not communicating with people you are not comfortable with. (Participant 5)

Sexism was an attribute widely discussed throughout the interviews of the respondents:

I think it can be often, it can often be with the relationships with females. You can hear the talk. Sometimes I think guys in the locker room setting have to perform the male bravado. (Participant 7)

Participant 7 described further about male athletes’ relationships with women by stating that:

They want to sound cool to the guys and will talk negatively about girlfriends, ex-girlfriends – those types of scenarios. I have certainly heard that over the years at times. I think that can be kind of a negative obviously.

Being selfish or not being a team player was a highly reported negative attribute of being a man as argued by the coaches. In the course of describing negative aspects of male athlete’s behaviour, participant 10 noted that, “Selfish! Guys can be pretty selfish!” Likewise participant 4 argued that:

Anything that is not putting the team first, which is the (sport edited out), the university, the City of Guelph, their family, if they are faithful and not considering those things around them when they are doing it.

Although coaches initially questioned the definition of manliness, throughout the interview they began to define attributes that were manly. They stated that some elements of
manliness, such as winning, success and aggression, had both positive and negative attributes. Participants openly stated that there were exclusively positive elements of manliness in reference to leadership, accountability, responsibility, and reliability. However, they also argued that there were exclusively negative attributes of manliness associated with harmful relationships with women and the LGBT community, sexism, and being selfish. As coaches identified and described positive and negative attributes of masculinity, they also highlighted their ability to influence their athletes’ behaviour in terms of promoting inclusive and positive masculinity.

Coaches influence on athletes

Several of the coaches indicated that they saw themselves as having a significant amount of influence on their male athletes. This can be divided up in two domains: 1) the personal qualities of athletes, and 2) the interpersonal behaviours of athletes and the coaches. Many of the coaches were enthusiastic when they described how and when they exercised influence.

When talking about the impact they had on the personal qualities of their male athletes, some coaches stated that they wanted to reinforce positive behaviours in their athletes:

And I love to hear when people say, “your guys are really good and polite and he did this.” And I will go back and give them this feedback and I will say here is some feedback from this person at this desk and how well you guys did, and thank you for doing that and representing us well. (Participant 10)
Other coaches talked about wanting to influence the personal qualities of their athletes by choosing to model the behaviour in front of their athletes:

I mean I am talking about my wife and daughters – and if they see me yelling at my wife – that is not positive and if they see that from me that is not good or the way I am with kids. (Participant 3)

Participant 10 even defined the attribute by stating: “I try to model it” – I use the term “model – coach - require”, so I model it, coached them to it, and then require it from them.”

Several of the coaches went on to argue, that in order to influence the personal qualities of their athletes, being a teacher to their athletes was a major component:

I think part of it is building a relationship with them, but as a result I start to see them doing things without me asking them. I see the ways they start to absorb the things that I have been teaching them. (Participant 5)

At the same time, it is not always simple to be a teacher to their male athletes:

The first thing we need to do is educate knowing full well that it will be heard by more by some than others. But educate and then again have the conversation in a group setting and have a conversation in a small setting. (Participant 6)

Coaches spoke of their influence on the interpersonal behaviours of athletes and how this also involved the coaches' own interpersonal behaviours. To influence the interpersonal
behaviours of athletes, coaches would report that they promote team values, a safe space, and inclusivity on their team:

This is the team, the team supports each other. And again lets be direct about it, it does not mean that everybody needs to be pals or best friends or anything like that, but we need to respectful, we need to be inclusive, and we want it to be safe. (Participant 9)

Participant 3 went further by using his own personal qualities as a way to promote these values. He stated:

I am setting a male example with them, you know the male example changed in the past few years, so maybe we had that your grandparents view of being a male was 40 to 50 years ago and think now, it is a bit more inclusive, it is a bit more open minded or just more 2018.

The coaches emphasized that, in order to promote interpersonal behaviours of their athletes, coaches need to be a mentor to their athlete(s). Participant 4 stated that “we mentor them, we coach them, we shaped them, who they are, not only as athletes but as young men.”

Similarly Participant 3 used himself as an example by stating:

I think as a coach that is something that you want to reflect – being yourself – I think that is what I am but that is what you wish to reflect to the kids so they are better equipped I guess for life.
Participant 6 similarly argued that he hoped his ability to mentor would lead to an influence for many years into the future:

I think that is what we want to do as humans, we want to leave behind – whether it is and not to bring it to the ultimate point – what we want to do before we die. Most people say that they want to leave an impacting impact, may be a child or children, but it also may be something you have done to any realm of your life that has left an impact.

Coaches described how they were able to influence interpersonal behaviour by forming a parental role with their athlete(s) and also were able to influence by using their own experience as a parent:

Or again the lens of the coach they know that they trust them and you become a father figure in that realm or a bit of a parental figure but more potent at that age than a parent. (Participant 6)

Using his own life as an example, participant 7 stated that “even for myself being a parent certainly changes my view.” Being a parent allowed for a different view of the way an athlete should behave on the field and in public. Using their own personal experience as a parent, coaches said they tried to influence behaviour of their athletes positively.

In a number of the interviews, coaches argued that their past behaviour influenced how they interacted and influenced their athlete(s):
I guess I was no better when I was a kid, you know. That is the advantage of being older, you have seen stuff, you have been in different situations in your life and you have seen both sides of the (inaudible) and if you do not stop it – then you do not know what could happen next. (Participant 3)

You know that is just an example. There have been many people with different cultures and sexual orientations on our team and years ago I may have felt uncomfortable. And now it is just part of the culture. And I think that has certainly benefited me. (Participant 5)

As coaches shared their own behaviour from the past, a few coaches talked about their present behaviour. A few coaches reported that they built good relationships with their athletes by allowing the athletes to question the coach when they thought he was out of line. An example by participant 8 was presented as:

But even the way – just talking to the guys you know, early on in my coaching career – like now I would make a joke or something and the guys would say, “Come on (name edited out)! It is 2017! Or 2016!” just to give me a hard time about it. Little things like that – that was language that I used when I was a player and things like that.

Participant 9 stated an example of this by saying:

We have had our ass kicked. I have had my ass kicked by people I care about and by people who are 18 and have enough balls to say (knocking sound), “I think we
screwed up. I think you are an idiot!” Oh boy, you go home these days and the first question is – are they right?” Is there truth to what they are saying? It is usually a grey scale and nuanced.

As coaches talked about perceived attributes of their male athletes presently, many of the coaches emphasized that they hoped their influence would create positive attributes for their male athletes in the future.

**Aspirational Attributes**

The coaches described throughout the interviews aspirational attributes: those traits that they said they wanted to see from their athletes and from themselves as opposed to the direct actions described above. Stating that it was in order to be more influential and to have more impact on their athletes’ behaviour, many of the coaches outlined the need for improvement in their own behaviour. For example, one coach stated that they wanted to learn correct language around transgender identity to create a safer and more inclusive environment on his team. He said that he initially wanted to reach out to the researcher of this study for assistance, because of the researcher’s role on campus, to help develop inclusivity training for his team and teams across the province.

That is the root why I reached out to you in the fall was about language I may not be aware of. It will not be a lack of trying, but my language might be old school in terms of how you understand gender identity or I might miss some things.

(Participant 9)
Participant 8 also stated:

So adapting the language to the group of people we have has been the biggest change for me and continually adapting the language every year to try to connect to the players and how they speak to one another.

The coaches stated that they wanted to create good people for future society, sometimes it was emphasized as good men, but mostly as good people.

We want to have every kid that goes through this program to go pro, but I also want them to one day be a great father and that is an important thing for them as well. So, for whatever it is that is important to them – whether it is a businessman or be a great father or be a great husband to somebody.

(Participant 4)

Resiliency was a major attribute that participant 6 emphasized for an aspirational attribute for his male athletes. He argued that, “For me, you have to be more resilient to be successful in this world.” He further revealed that he hoped his influence would bring about more reliance in his athletes, past and present.

I have left an impression on this world no matter how small it is. I think I know that I have done a good job when I see that a vast majority of people have left my program and I feel that I am confident in that I have made significant changes over time that they were here. They are happier, more skillset and more resilient.
A couple of the coaches stated that they would like to see their athletes act as active bystanders who intervene in the future when they see violence or hear discriminatory language towards minority groups, such as women or LGBT community. Participant 4 stated that he wanted to emphasize the need for his athletes to stand up against violence against women. He talked about campus programs involving his team that emphasized anti-violence initiatives. He stated that he hoped that team members could learn from this program and act as active bystanders who intervene and serve as allies for women. Similarly, participant 9 argued that a person, not a specifically a man should have these positive qualities, “But it is your ability to speak up when you think something is wrong and not be complacent about your silence.”

A few of the coaches emphasized the desire to support the development of empathy in their male athletes. When talking about a sexual violence program that their athletes had to participate in prior to the season, participant 7 argued that the main goal of the program was to develop empathy from their athletes and have discussions around sexual violence that could be occurring. “I think it was awareness – sensitivity to empathy, warning signs, things that initiate conversation.” Similarly, participant 10 emphasized empathy when mentioning what he would like to see as result of his influence as a coach. He went further to argue that being empathetic and responsible was a positive attribute because they are representing themselves, their families and the University of Guelph by being privileged to be a male athlete on campus. He stated, “So I always try to tell them to do the right thing – be responsible, be empathetic, try to be the best version of yourself that you can be.”
The responses of the participants provided data that directly answered the two main research questions of how coaches determine what are harmful or risky behaviours and how they intend to instill or model positive or inclusive behaviour in their male athletes. Some of the coaches stated that winning and being successful was a major attribute of being a male, while some said that this was a negative attribute. Similarly, coaches said that aggression and selfishness were usually negative attributes due to the negative impact on the cohesiveness of the team. Coaches also noted that not being open, or being sexist or discriminatory to the LGBT community were harmful attributes of a male athlete because it went against the ideals of an inclusive team and reflected negatively on the team on campus and in the community.

To instill positive behaviour the participants talked openly about being mentors, teachers, and providing a parental role to their male athletes. Similarly, the coaches provided educational opportunities about anti-violence initiatives in order to encourage empathy towards women and to provide ideas that would challenge rape myths and other traditional ideas that their athletes may still believe.

However, the sub-questions regarding how coaches judge successful outcomes related to inclusive and positive masculinities were not addressed well in the interviews. The participants appeared to have a difficult time answering this question because most coaches stated that they were still looking for positive attributes from their athletes and have not really seen these behaviours fully developed presently. The limited responses that were received centred around what they saw directly from their athletes and word of mouth from others. Participant 1 stated when asked about measurable outcomes, “Just how they show up!” He
talked briefly on what he sees from their behaviour in meetings and at their events. Similarly, participant 3 argued that outcomes could be measured through their observation of the locker room and the behaviour that is occurring amongst the athletes.

A couple of the participants talked about feedback they receive from others on the team and from the campus community. Participant 2 stated that he receives information from athlete leaders in the locker room about the behaviour of their fellow athletes. Participant 10 gauged outcomes through the conversations he has with fellow members of the Athletic Department and campus community. Both participants commented on how they will receive positive and negative information about their athletes and then decide if future actions are required to initiate more changes to the behaviour of their athletes.

Each theme detailed in the Results section highlights the influence coaches have with their male athletes’ behaviour in terms of identifying and acting to eliminate negative macho behaviour and promoting more open and accepting behaviour toward others. These include: questioning the definition of manliness, describing the value being a good person, identifying qualities of being a man, being intentional about their coaches’ influence on athletes, and working towards aspirational attributes.

Through the five themes identified, with the research questions in mind, the discussion section will examine how the results confirm, extend, and are contrary to past research in the field of male athletes and traditional masculinity.
Discussion

The objective of this study was to examine the role male varsity coaches play in promoting the development of inclusive masculinity in their athletes. This objective was highlighted through two main research questions: (1) what strategies, if any, do coaches of male sports use to promote inclusive and positive masculinities among athletes? (2) What strategies, if any, do coaches of male sports use to address harmful aspects of traditional masculinity? Even though there is research that demonstrates coaches are in the position to positively or negatively influence athletes’ behaviour (Adams et al., 2010; Jamie et al., 2015; Steinfeldt et al., 2016), there is limited research on what coaches are doing specifically to encourage changed attitudes and behaviour of their male athletes around issues of toxic masculinity, specifically violence, homophobia, and risky behaviour. The results of this study specified new understandings of the definition of a male athlete and the role coaches play in influencing male athletes’ attitudes and behaviour in this direction.

This discussion highlights the new research, the similarities and differences between the results of this study and related research published to date. The findings that highlight the concept of developing a good person and the coaches desire to influence inclusive behaviour in their male athletes is new research compared to the existing literature. Findings from this research are similar to the literature in accordance to male attributes relating to winning and success, the importance of developing empathy in male athletes, the benefits of mentorship of coaches and the ability of athletes to question a coach when they are not inclusive (Anderson & McGuire, 2012; Beissel et al., 2014; Flood 2011; Jamieson & Orr, 2009; Laios et al., 2012;
Mastreleo et al., 2012). The findings conveyed different concepts compared to the literature in relation to coaches’ inability to define manliness, sport being for both genders, the lack of internalization of violent qualities by male athletes and coaches being more proactive to stop violence. The Discussion follows the five thematic themes described in the results section above, namely: questioning the definition of manliness, being a good person, identifiable qualities of being a man, coaches’ influence on athletes, and aspirational attributes.

**Question the definition of manliness.** Where the research outlined that many coaches use sport to define what a man should encompass in society, the current findings reveal that these coach participants were uncomfortable defining what a man should be. Contravening what McDowell & Schaffner (2011) reported, that male coaches tend to hold traditional ideals around gender roles and sexuality, the participants of this study were uncomfortable conforming to a traditional definition of manliness. These findings also contradict Pattman & Bhana’s (2010) research with athletes that concluded masculinity is an idea that all men share, that they should all act the same way in all situations, and that some athletes hold narrow, essentialist views of gender. It is surprising to note that most coaches in this study describe that their male athletes even thought about gender as an issue. Conforming to a male ideal, such as traditional gender roles, heteronormativity, hypermasculinity and subordination of women (Adams et al., 2010; McCormack & Anderson, 2010; McDowell & Schaffner, 2011; Messner, 2007; Steinfeldt & Steinfeldt, 2012) was not an idea that most of these coaches thought their athletes prioritized in their athletic career.
The coaches did not mention that male athletes should avoid the feminization of society, or that they should differentiate themselves from feminine qualities as stated by others (Adams, Anderson & McCormack, 2010; Bandy, 2016; McCormack & Anderson, 2010; Messner, 2007 & Steinfeldt et al., 2016). Being classified as a male, as argued by the coaches, was not a characteristic that provides unequal opportunities that favour men. Some of the coaches argued that if an individual can compete in their sport successfully, it does not matter the gender of the athlete. This is antithetical to the conclusion that males are encouraged to participate in sports in order to escape the feminine characteristics of society and to afford them the unequal access of power in society (Hoeber, 2008; Schirato, 2013; Steinfeldt et al., 2016). Similarly, this was contrary to Pronger’s (2002) statement of fascism within sports, that grants males overwhelming access to sports over females and non-powerful men. The coaches in this study, especially those who coached co-ed sports, did not emphasize that sports were exclusively for males. According to the participants, gender was not a contributing factor for their athletes; rather their ability to perform in their sporting context was the important factor for the coach and athlete. Sport was considered as an opportunity to compete and to prepare themselves for the future, rather than an action to escape the feminization of society or become more manly.

**Being a good person.** The literature around male athletes tends to be very negative about their masculine behaviour and there was limited research on the coaches desire to influence their athletes to be good citizens on campus and the community. The limited research that is available argues that to produce positive behaviour in male athletes, mentorship and guidance is important (Jamisom & Orr, 2009; Laios et al., 2003; Mastreleo et al., 2012;
Steinfeldt et al., 2011). Similarly, dated research by Bloom et al (1998) stated that coaches who had committed relationships with their athletes had the ability to influence male athletes to have committed relationships with others, be more respectful to others and have the ability to be open emotionally. The current findings related to coaches’ initiative to support the development of “good persons” is consistent with this literature.

The findings related to what these coaches had to say suggested that they wanted to produce good people through their influence regardless of gender or performance. This element of good people is similar to the behaviours described in the above research. For instance, coaches argued that they wanted their athletes to be respectful to others and more open emotionally. Similarly, one of their primary goals in their programs was to develop positive behaviours in their athletes. When asked about the definition of maleness in their athletes and their ability to influence this, many of the coaches proudly stated that they wanted to produce good people rather than coaching for only success on the playing field or to be a good man.

**Identifiable qualities of being a man.** When the coaches identified qualities that were typically male, some of the respondents point to some attributes similarly identified by Wong et al. (2016). Being successful and winning, was one attribute that coaches identified that was similar to attributes identified by Wong et al. (2016). In this study, coaches ascribed both positive and negative consequences related to this male quality. As one coach noted, too much emphasis on success and winning could deter an athlete from being successful in other elements of his life, such as school and being a good teammate. However, other coaches
encouraged success and winning. These coaches described their desire to either promote being successful in all elements of their athletes’ lives and being the best that they can be at everything they endure, as well as being a role model to others on the team and the community through their success and winning attitude.

Previous research has demonstrated that male athletes can internalize values associated with traditional masculinity such as violence, aggression, and high-risk sexual action (Kaufman, 1987; Messner, 2007; Steinfeldt, 2016; Weaving, 2010). In the current study, only a small number of participants talked about aggression being present in their male athletes. As the literature tends to note, aggression is a negative attribute, but some of the participants argued that aggression is important in the sporting context to a certain point. Aggression was viewed by these coaches as beneficial to hype up athletes before a practice or a competition. However, they did note that this needed to be limited to a point short of showing off in front of teammates and other teams. Aggression was viewed by these coaches as being positive only to the degree that it helped the performance of the athlete. Beyond this, the trait was seen by the participants in this study as something to be eliminated in order to ensure it does not affect the athletes’ relationships and appearance to others on the team, campus, or in the community.

When referencing sexual violence in their interview, coaches did state that antiviolence initiatives were important to the training of the athletes early in the season. This training was in reference to the sexual violence courses that almost all coaches and University of Guelph Athletics have made mandatory for all their athletes. Some participants stated that the athletes took the courses very seriously and were very attentive when presented with the material. This
is consistent with research (Adams et al., 2010; Jamieson & Orr, 2009) regarding teams’ loyalty to their leaders. Jamieson & Orr (2009) concluded that loyalty to a team leader, such as a captain who favoured sexual violence, was often correlated to high-risk sexual behaviour (e.g. rape) amongst other members of the team. The results of this study suggest that when coaches explicitly indicate that they take sexual violence seriously by making training mandatory, for example, they can be similarly influential in supporting a more positive locker room culture.

When coaches talked about their athletes being potentially violent toward others, especially women and other men on campus or in the community, the coaches argued that this was not common amongst their athletes. The coaches take a more proactive approach to prevent violence and influence the attitude around violence with their male athletes. For instance, a few of the coaches described their own responses to their athletes by talking negatively about fights that might happen at the downtown bars or at a party with their athletes after practice or in one-to-one meetings. They went further, by stating that they try to persuade their athletes to leave the situation or act as active bystanders who intervene to try to stop the violence. Their actions, together with their team, included a more public and proactive approach around anti-violence against women in some cases. According to one coach, this team action had been in practice for a couple years, with coaches and athletes involvement with anti-violence initiatives on campus.

**Coaches’ influence on athletes.** Most coaches in this study revealed that sexual violence training was mandatory for their athletes to be proactive in preventing sexual violence and create empathy for those who may be victimized by the action. Some of the coaches argued
that the male athletes take the training very seriously and are very open about learning how to be an advocate for the cause. Similarly, coaches through these programs and guidance wanted to change the attitude of their athletes towards women, through the elimination of sexist comments on the playing field, on campus or social media. When considering the education of athletes, it appears that the coaches’ approach is very similar to the research of Jamie et al (2015) and Moynihan (2010). The results of both studies discovered that the intervention programs were successful in eliminating harmful attitudes toward sexual violence and more respect towards women in terms of their language and actions (Jamie et al., 2015 & Moynihan et al, 2010).

Similar to the research of Jamie et al. (2015), most of the participants stated that they chose to promote a more inclusive environment when talking to their athletes and talking about opposing teams. By inclusive, they were referring to not using language that insults women or members of the LGBT community. The coaches argued that using sexist and homophobic language was not beneficial to improve performance of their male athletes and did not allow them to model acceptable behaviour and act as a mentor in front of their athletes. This seems contrary to the analysis of Adams et al. (2010), Cron-Mills (2017) and McDowell & Schaffner (2011) demonstrating that sexist and homophobic language was a way to promote violence and aggression towards their teammates and opposing teams. The findings of this research suggest that coaches saw this type of language as counterproductive with respect to athlete performance and behaving with inclusivity in mind on campus and in the local community. To be better performers in the sporting context and to act as ideal citizens,
the coaches stated that they chose to promote inclusive language for themselves and their athletes.

The positive effect of coaches through mentorship, guidance and rewarding positive behaviour demonstrated in this study supports existing research. Jamieson & Orr (2009), Laios et al. (2003), Mastreleo et al. (2012) and Steinfeldt et al. (2011) all argued in their research, the benefits of coaches’ mentorship and guidance towards their athletes and their ability to teach them about preferred behavioural attributes and respect towards others on and off the field. The coaches stated that modelling preferred behaviour themselves in interaction with their athletes (e.g. not yelling sexist and homophobic language and displaying respectful language towards women) was a key way to show this mentorship and guidance. Some coaches also stated that they reward positive behaviour of their male athletes by promoting examples of this behaviour in front of the team at practice. They said that they wanted to use this promotion of behaviour as way to motivate other athletes on the team to become positive contributors on campus and the community.

According to the coaches participating in this study, both they and the institution were proactive in mandating violence prevention programs to modify the behaviour of their male athletes. The coaches described their hope that the outcomes of the programs would be consistent with the findings of Flood (2011), in reference to having male athletes who are less likely to support rape myths, have less rape supportive attitudes and more empathy toward female victims of violence. Flood (2011) demonstrated that men need to play a role in prevention of violence against women. He states that using intervention programs, coaching to
modify behavior, and institutional changes can effect change in individual athletes (Flood, 2011). Flood (2011) argues, for these prevention programs to be successful, that coaches need to have attitudes that comply with anti-violence behaviours. The theme of influencing athletes identified in this study demonstrates these coaches’ awareness that their athletes are influential in this area.

These findings extend the limited research of athletes’ ability to influence their coach’s behaviour. Similar to what Anderson & McGuire (2010) found in their study of male rugby players, the coaches interviewed in this study stated that their athletes were active in questioning the homophobic and toxic masculine language of the coach to ensure a more inclusive environment for the players. A coach admitted that being inclusive was not an attribute that he was accustomed to during his time as a player in the past. Similar to the research, the coach’s behaviour was deemed to be out of date with the players taking a more inclusive approach to developing their own sense of masculinity that included compassion toward others and free from discriminatory language.

**Aspirational attributes.**

Through education by the University of Guelph and outside sources about sexual violence and the guidance by the coach, coaches hope that their athletes will become citizens who advocate against risky behaviour such as violence and not view such behaviour as an act of a real man. The coaches in this study aspired to create active bystanders who intervene. This addresses the research by Beissel et al., (2014) which demonstrated that those who were witnessed partaking in risky behaviours such as being sexually dominant with women and heavy
drinking were seen as real and relatable men. While male athletes may see this behaviour as admirable when they witness a teammate or friend partaking, some of the coaches in this study stated their intention to influence their athletes to intervene when they are around others who are engaging in this type of risky behaviour. Similarly, the coaches in this study also aspired to support the development of empathy in their male athletes, particularly in response to those who may suffer from violence. As described earlier, they emphasized that prevention programs and coaches’ mentorship were important to supporting this development.

The appeal for coaches to improve their own behaviour to be more inclusive seems to be neglected in the literature. Much of the examined coaching behaviour tends to focus the use of negative language and behaviour to motivate male athletes (Adams et al., 2010; McDowell & Schaffner, 2013; Steinfeldt et al., 2011). However, in this study coaches wanted to improve their own behaviour in the future to create a more inclusive and open environment for all their athletes. Coaches sought to accomplish this through ongoing education about the changing language and societal norms of a progressive society.

The findings of this study do not directly reference hegemonic masculinity as being a contributing factor in athletes’ and coaches’ behaviour. There was no direct report of how male partrirarchy, that being male dominance over women and non-masculine males, was a accepted norm for coaches or athletes. Most coaches responded by saying that they wanted their athletes to have positive relationships with women and LGBT individuals, and also dictated that they wanted these type of relationships for themselves as coaches.
Intersectionality was not highly referenced in the interviews for this study. References to marginalized groups were usually in the context of singular identities. This was a relatively homogenous group of coaches working with male athletes primarily. The campus and surrounding community is not particularly diverse in terms of racialized states and class can be a barrier to university attendance and participating in varsity sports. The intersection of these various identities and related influences of discrimination or marginalization were not focused on to any large degree in the question or interview responses. This would be an important extension of the current research in future investigations.

The results of this study are in many ways contradictory to past research. This may reflect several influences. Participant 7 argued that we live in Canada, which is very accepting of diversity. Much of the previous research has been conducted in the United States, which may have a society more prone to challenging diversity. For example, the research of Denison & Kitchen (2015) noted that LGBT athletes were very uncomfortable coming out in the United States and most comfortable coming out in Canada. This current research study was also conducted at time where the political climate is centred around the sensitivity of gender-related issues, a much different climate from the context of previous research. The #MeToo movement and the challenging of gender binaries is very evident in 2019 North American society, and especially the workplace, so this could have affected the responses of the coaches, in that they responded in what they deemed to be politically appropriate terms. Similarly, the participants may be responding with some bias, intending to please the interviewer who is a member of University of Guelph campus community. There may also be a period effect in the participants’ responses compared to the previous research. Some of the participants were from
a cohort that have may be more educated in gender-related issues, especially around the challenge to gender binaries and may be more prone to answer in favour of more inclusive masculinity. Past research was conducted during a time when gender was not being challenged in the same ways at a societal level, and when coaches were more likely to be from a cohort with stronger acceptance of traditional masculinity. The University of Guelph may provide a more inclusive campus environment and athletic community than the schools where past research has been conducted. For example, the university has started a campaign called She’s Got Game which is raising money for women’s sports specifically. They have acknowledged that female scholarships are much less than male sports because of alumni members being more prone to donate to male sports. The university also has a campaign campus wide called I am a Gryphon. This campaign has been designed to encourage respect, engagement and caring on campus around diversity and making a positive contribution on campus and the community.

The findings of this study make some unique contributions compared to previous research. It was surprising to learn that coaches tended to choose to coach their athletes to be good people, rather than define them by gender or measure them by performance. The coaches described the need to influence their male athletes and themselves to be more inclusive in their behaviour in order to create a safe environment on the team. This is distinctive from previous literature. Similarly, the tendency for coaches to talk negatively about violent situations that an athlete may find themselves in and to serve as active bystanders that intervene was a unique finding of this study.
Strengths and Limitations

This study’s strengths can be stated as providing in-depth data in an area characterized by limited research. The study expands on the scant research on inclusive masculinity and coaches’ influence on the behaviour of male athletes to address harmful aspects of traditional masculinity. The semi-structured interviews encouraged open and subjective conversation with the participants. The participants’ level of comfort allowed them, in a few instances, to challenge the questions, and this contributes to a key finding related to the centrality of defining manliness.

The limitations of this study include its small sample size and potential participant bias. Recruitment efforts benefitted from the support of the Athletic Department, but the small sample reflects the relatively small number of coaching staff at the University of Guelph. Originally 18 head coaches were approached but only 7 responded; recruitment expanded to assistant coaches, and the resulting 10 participants represents a relatively robust sampling of the coaches of male varsity sports at this university. The sample of participants was not diverse. All participants were male, Caucasian and potentially from sports that favour inclusive masculinity over traditional masculinity. While reflective of the current coaching staff for elite male athletes on this campus, future studies that include a female perspective and a more diverse group of coaches would contribute to the diversity of the research and better understanding of a different perspective on masculinity. The coaches that did participate may have been from sports that already accepted ideals of a more inclusive team that supported same sex orientation and anti-violence initiatives. These programs may be more inclusive
because of their involvement with inclusive programs on campus (e.g. anti-violence against women initiatives) or game nights that promote progressive programs (e.g. Pride Night). The coaches that may have not accepted this type of masculinity may have been deterred to accept participation in the study.

There was potential bias in the response of the participants. The challenge the participants had in answering the definition of manliness may have been result of trying to configure their responses in a socially approved manner to reflect the morals of campus and society. The University of Guelph is known to be a very inclusive campus surrounding issues of gender and sexuality, and therefore coaches may have been reluctant to report their true opinions about masculinity to the researcher for fear of repercussions from the department. Similarly, the current political environment in Canada is very focused on eliminating toxic/traditional masculinity from societal discourse and social institutions, and this could have led to the participants answering the questions in a socially acceptable manner. They may also have been reluctant to answer truthfully because of my role on campus as an employee and volunteer, and the relationship I have with leading administrators in many departments.

Areas for Future Research

Future research in the area of inclusive masculinity and coaches’ influence on male athletes could be extended in at least three areas. Firstly, further exploration and analysis could be done of the positive direct actions of the athletes who were influenced by their coaches and reflect on the behaviour that is occurring presently, and not just aspirational behaviour. This could be done through more semi-structured interviews of coaches who witness positive
behaviours of male athletes in their programs. Questions specifically asking what they are specifically seeing and hearing from their athletes in terms of their behaviour would be beneficial in accomplishing this in the interview. Coaches could elaborate on the research of Flood (2011) and detail the observed behaviours of their male athletes being supportive and empathetic to women and non-masculine men.

Future researchers, after more inclusive and positive behaviours of male athletes are seen by coaches, could be better prepared to ask coaches how they assess the outcomes of their strategies to influence behaviour. Coaches in this study tended to be reluctant to answer what the observable outcomes of their athletes’ behaviour were because they had yet to see anything that could be measurable. Future studies with coaches who are more inclusive in their influence with their athletes’ behaviour and have more years of being proactive with educational programs around sexual violence could expand on the research of Moynihan et al. (2010). Measuring athletes’ responses to rape myths and being supportive to women could be an evaluative process to examine if a coach’s influence is working to modify the behaviour of their male athletes. Similarly, questions surrounding what they see or hear from their athletes pertaining to the coaches’ influence would assist in the evaluation on what strategies are successful.

Future research could elaborate on why coaches are being more inclusive around their athletes. This study did not elaborate on why there seems to be a culture of inclusiveness on this campus and the athletic department. Future research could have questions expanding on whether there are social or institutional pressures to be more inclusive. Similarly, expanding on
the ideas from this study that coaches have examined their own behaviour to be better mentors to their athletes to promote positive and inclusive behaviour would be an area that seems to have an opportunity for original research. Research answering why they have changed their own behaviour and what circumstances have led up to this change would be a new research area on masculinity.

Lastly, more in-depth questioning with coaches in a semi-structured interviews would allow for deeper analysis on coaches’ perspective on traditional and inclusive masculinity. This was the researcher’s first occurrence interviewing participants and as such he may have not been in-depth in asking probing questions about the subject. As the number of interviews increased, the ability to probe for more in-depth answers from the participants was achieved by the researcher.

Implications and Conclusion

This research will contribute findings to the gap in the research with respect to ideas about inclusive masculinity and addressing harmful aspects of traditional masculinities in some male athletes. The previous literature has generally found the acceptance of traditional masculinity by social institutions, coaches and athletes. The findings of this research expanded on the recent literature in inclusive masculinity by illustrating that proactive programs and coaches’ influence can help male athletes develop empathy and be more supportive towards women and non-masculine males. These findings provide direction for male athletes through their coaches’ influence, to be good people and be more open to inclusive environments on their team by providing a safe space for those who may not be masculine males.
This study’s contributions of knowledge and applied practice of coaches being proactive with anti-sexual violence initiatives, being mentors to their athletes, and evolving their own beliefs on inclusivity provides suggested interventions and/or responses to coaches or those in mentoring positions with male athletes in the area of positive and inclusive masculinity. These findings expand on existing research to highlight that coaches have a major influence on their athletes’ behaviour. As noted in this study, coaches can contribute to the development of empathy and support for women and others, by being proactive in curbing violent actions and creating good citizens.

The results of this research will contribute to the design of future studies that will expand upon the findings of this study. Future research on empathetic and supportive athletes, the creation of inclusive and safe environments, and the major influence of male athlete coaches found in this study provides knowledge that can be expanded upon to learn what message influences male athletes to behave positively on campus and in the community.

Knowledge mobilization from this research could be directed at sharing information about these findings of coaches describing how they wanted to create good people through their influence to create empathy, supportive attitudes, inclusivity and other forms of positive behaviour. Knowledge mobilization will involve sharing the results of this thesis with all the coaches at the University of Guelph and other athletic administrations in the area, potentially presenting at conferences, and publishing an article in an academic journal related to sports or gender. These findings will assist in the knowledge of how coaches can reflect on their own behaviour and influence, and how to create a more inclusive environment on their teams as
noted in this study. Such information-sharing of subjective experience and coaching intentions from this study could encourage current and future coaches to foster positive attitudes and behaviours with male athletes in high school or university, amateur, and professional team settings.
References


Galder & Society, 19(6), 829-859.


Few-Demo, A. L. (2014). Intersectionality as the “new” critical approach in feminist family


for coaching first-year athletes. *Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise and Health, 8(4), 394-408.*


Murnen, S.K. Wright, C. & Kalunzy, G. (2002). If “boys will be boys,” then girls will be victims? A meta-analytic review of the research that relates masculine ideology to sexual Aggression. *Sex Roles, 46* (11/12), 359-375.


Shifflett, B., Murphy, D., Giasvand, F., Carlton, M. & Cuevas, M. (2016). Gender bias in sports


Appendix I

Interview Guide

I’m going to begin by asking about your athletes....

1. What do you see or hear from the male athletes you work with pertaining to their definition of “being a man”?
   • Can you give me a specific example of how athletes tell you that (toughness, for example) is part of being a man? Are there other ways they tell you this?
   • Can you give me an example of what you see athletes do that shows you that (toughness, for example) is part of being a man? Are there other ways they show you this?
   • Are there other aspects of ‘being a man’ that athletes tell you or show you less often?
   • (possible) do you think “being a man” is something they even think about or see as important?

Now, I’m going to ask about you as a coach...

2. As a coach, what influence do you think you have, if any, in influencing your athletes’ behaviour or attitudes?
   • Can you give me a specific example of how you have this influence?
   • How do you know that your words/actions have an influence? (what do you see, hear from athletes, others?)
   • Are there other aspects of your own life that have shifted your views over time (or what you do/say)?

3. What do you consider to be healthy behaviours or positive attitudes about “being a man”? (Your own views)
   a) How do you promote healthy and positive behaviours and attitudes as a male varsity coach?
      • Can you give me a specific example of how you do this? What else do you do?

4. What do you consider to be negative attitudes and behaviours for male athletes? (Your own views)
   a) How do you address negative attitudes and behaviours of your male athletes?
      • Can you give me a specific example of how you do this? What else do you do?

Finally, I want to ask you about programming...

5. Are there specific programs (e.g., anti-sexual violence training) that you or someone else on the coaching staff delivers to your male athletes to influence their attitudes and behaviours?
   a) If yes...
      • what are these, where did you get them, how long have you used them?
• Delivered by you or someone else – if someone else, who is that and what is their training?
• What is the primary intent or message of the program.
b) If no, what guides your coaching practice in the area of masculinity (if this is an area you focus on)?
• In the absence of program, what do you do/say?
• What is your message?
• When, how do you deliver it?
c) What indicators do you look for to indicate whether your efforts to influence behaviour are working?
• How do you know what you’re doing is effective? What do you look for?
• In the absence of something you can see or hear, what keeps you doing what you’re doing?
• If “hope, for example” is what keeps you doing what you’re doing, can you describe what that “hope” is based on?
Appendix II

RESEARCH ETHICS BOARDS
Certification of Ethical Acceptability of Research
Involving Human Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>APPROVAL PERIOD:</th>
<th>March 16, 2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EXPIRY DATE:</td>
<td>March 15, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REB:</td>
<td>G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REB NUMBER:</td>
<td>17-12-022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TYPE OF REVIEW:</td>
<td>Delegated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR:</td>
<td>Ashbourne, Lynda (<a href="mailto:lashbour@uoguelph.ca">lashbour@uoguelph.ca</a>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEPARTMENT:</td>
<td>Family Relations &amp; Applied Nutrition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPONSOR(S):</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TITLE OF PROJECT:</td>
<td>Coaches’ influence: Addressing male athletes’ behaviour and attitudes about “being a man”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The members of the University of Guelph Research Ethics Board have examined the protocol which describes the participation of the human participants in the above-named research project and considers the procedures, as described by the applicant, to conform to the University’s ethical standards and the Tri-Council Policy Statement, 2nd Edition.

The REB requires that researchers:
- Adhere to the protocol as last reviewed and approved by the REB.
- Receive approval from the REB for any modifications before they can be implemented.
- Report any change in the source of funding.
- Report unexpected events or incidental findings to the REB as soon as possible with an indication of how these events affect, in the view of the Principal Investigator, the safety of the participants, and the continuation of the protocol.
- Are responsible for ascertaining and complying with all applicable legal and regulatory requirements with respect to consent and the protection of privacy of participants in the jurisdiction of the research project.

The Principal Investigator must:
- Ensure that the ethical guidelines and approvals of facilities or institutions involved in the research are obtained and filed with the REB prior to the initiation of any research protocols.
- Submit an Annual Renewal to the REB upon completion of the project. If the research is a multi-year project, a status report must be submitted annually prior to the expiry date. Failure to submit an annual status report will lead to your study being suspended and potentially terminated.

The approval for this protocol terminates on the EXPIRY DATE, or the term of your appointment or employment at the University of Guelph whichever comes first.

Signature: [Signature]
Date: March 16, 2018

Stephen P. Lewis
Chair, Research Ethics Board-General
Appendix III

Interview Recruitment Message

Family Relations Applied Nutrition [FRAN] Graduate Research Thesis

Student’s Project Title: Coaches’ Influence: Addressing male athletes’ behaviour and attitudes about “being a man”

Dear University of Guelph Male Varsity Coach,

My name is Curtis Holmes, and I am a graduate student in the Department of Family Relations and Applied Nutrition [FRAN] at the University of Guelph. You are invited to take part in my Masters’ thesis research studying coaches’ perspectives and experiences in attempting to promote inclusive/positive masculinities with male athletes. Dr. Lynda Ashbourne is my advisor and the lead investigator for this MSc thesis research.

The purpose of this message is to provide you with information you require to make an informed decision on participating in this research.

This study will be conducted at the end of the Winter 2018 and beginning of the Summer 2018 semester. I am looking for twelve to fifteen participants who are male varsity coaches at the University of Guelph. Participation will involve approximately 1.5 hours, during which time I will interview will be recorded and transcribed, and will have an opportunity to review the transcript following the interview. The data collected from these semi-structured interviews will be used in my analysis for my FRAN graduate thesis.

If you are interest in participating in this research, please email me. I am planning to complete my interviews by the end of May. Participation in this research is voluntary, and will not affect my ability to graduate if you decide that you do not want to participate, or decide to withdraw part way through the study. Should you have any questions regarding the research, please contact me.

Sincerely,

Curtis Holmes

holmesc@uoguelph.ca

Student Investigator: Curtis Holmes, MSc Candidate, Department of Family Relation Applied Nutrition University of Guelph
Should you have concerns regarding this research, please contact:

Principal Investigator/Faculty Instructor/Supervisor: Dr. Lynda Ashbourne, Associate Professor, Department of Family Relations Applied Nutrition, University of Guelph, 
lashbour@uoguelph.ca, 519-824-4120 ext. 54237.

REB 17-12-022
Appendix IV

Letter of Information and Consent

You are invited to take part in a University of Guelph master’s thesis project on male varsity coaches’ view of masculinity in their athletes.

The purpose of this letter is to provide you, as the subject, the information needed to allow you to make an informed decision on your participation of this research project.

Purpose of Research

The purpose of this research is to provide data for a master’s student’s thesis in the Family Relations and Human Development (FRHD) program. The research will examine male varsity coaches’ perspectives and experiences in attempting interventions directed at promoting inclusive/positive masculinities in their male athletes at the University of Guelph. In addition, this study will examine how coaches may be intervening with respect to what they consider to be harmful and risky behaviours of their male athletes.

The Researchers

Principal Investigator: Dr. Lynda Ashbourne, Department of Family Relations Applied Nutrition, University of Guelph, lashbour@uoguelph.ca, (519) 824-4120 extension 54237

Student Investigator: Curtis Holmes, Master’s Student in the Department of Family Relations Applied Nutrition, University of Guelph, holmesc@uoguelph.ca, (519) 835-7257.

I am a MSc Master’s Student in the Department of Family Relations Applied Nutrition and I will be collecting data for my master’s thesis which is supervised by Dr. Lynda Ashbourne.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the principal investigator, Dr. Lynda Ashbourne.

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

You are receiving this invitation due to your position at the University of Guelph as a male varsity sport coach. If you are below the age of 18 and/or not a male varsity sport coach at the University of Guelph you are not eligible to participate in this study.
Procedures

If you agree to participate in this study, I will ask you to do the following:

We will meet on the University of Guelph campus in a location of your choosing where we will discuss your views of healthy and positive behaviours and attitudes about masculinity (‘being a man’) that are demonstrated by your athletes. We will discuss how you promote these. We will also discuss your views of unhealthy and negative behaviours and attitudes linked to masculinity and how you address these with your athletes. The interview will be approximately 1 hour in length and will be audio recorded on an encrypted audio device.

The interview will consist of open-ended questions and you are free to refuse answering any questions of your choosing.

After the interview and transcription of the data collected, you will be sent a copy of the transcript to ensure your comments from the interview are accurate.

After completion of the data analysis and writing of thesis, you will be provided with a summary of the interview results from all the participants with all identifiers and names deleted.

Potential Risks and Discomforts

There will be no more than minimal risks for the participation of this study. You can choose to not answer any questions during the interview. However, answers to some of the interview questions may negatively affect your self-image and reputation if names and identifiers were released. The potential of your identity being identified will be minimal and every effort will be made by the researchers to ensure your identity remains private and confidential.

This study will involve some sensitive, but non-incriminating questions. There will be no deception or physically invasive contact of the participants for this study.

Potential Benefits to Participants and/or Society

There are no direct benefits to the participants.

This research has potential benefits to the coaching discipline through increased knowledge based on the experience of all of the participants. This can used to develop training opportunities for athletic departments in university settings to improve behaviour and relationships of male athletes.

This research has potential benefits to society because it could lead to early intervention and prevention in areas of positive relationships with women, the LGBT community and traditionally non-masculine males. This research could help in the prevention of violence and discrimination in the community and the increased acceptance of inclusive behaviours in males.
Payment for Participation

As a thank you for your participation in the study, you will be presented with a $10 University of Guelph Hospitality gift card.

Confidentiality

Every effort will be made to ensure your identity and name will remain confidential from the information you provide in connection to this study.

Your name will be replaced with a numeric code in the data and in my thesis. Listing of the names and numeric codes will remain separated in locked cabinets. Interviews will be recoded on an encrypted audio digital recorder. The digital recording will be transferred to my encrypted, password protected laptop that only I have access to during and after the study. Individual transcripts will be emailed to you with no identifiers present and will be emailed to you only to ensure confidentiality. I do intend to use direct quotes from the interviews, but all identifiable material will be erased. When the research is complete and the thesis is written and presented, the data will be protected in a locked cabinet on campus with access only available to the principal investigator and me at the University of Guelph.

While the research team will take care to remove any information which might identify you, be aware that because there are only a few male coaches at the University, and because you know each other, others might feel they can identify information you provided.

The results of the study will be published and presented without your name or any identifiers and your identity will not be disclosed without your permission to disclose.

Participation and Withdrawal

Participation in this study is voluntary. You may refuse to participate in the study, decline to answer any question or withdraw from the interview at any time with no effect on your position at the University of Guelph Athletic Department. You have the opportunity to withdraw your information from the study and collection of data for 2 weeks after the interview. After this time period, it may be challenging to remove the information from the data collection because the information will begin to be disseminated. To withdraw from the study, please contact the student investigator to have your data removed from the collection of data.

Research Results

The results of this study will be included in my, Curtis Holmes’, master’s thesis for graduation in the Family Relations Applied Nutrition Department. This study will be published and will be presented at my defense in 2018. This research may also be presented at academic conferences or published in peer-reviewed academic journals in the future.
Ethics Clearance

This project has been reviewed by the ethics Research ethics Boards for compliance with federal guidelines for research for research involving human participants.

Please note that confidentiality cannot be guaranteed while data are in transit.

You do not waive any legal rights by agreeing to take part in this study.

If you have questions regarding your rights and welfare as a research participant in this study (REB#17-12-022), please contact Director, Research Ethics; University of Guelph; reb@uoguelph.ca; (519) 824-4120 (ext56606).

Signature of Research Participant

I have read the information for the study “Coaches’ Influence: Addressing Male Athletes’ Behaviour and Attitudes about “Being a Man” as described above. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction and I agree to participate in this study. I have been a copy of this letter of information and consent form.

I agree of my own free will to participate in the study.

Participant’s name: ____________________________

Participant’s signature: ______________________ Date: ____________________

Researcher’s signature: ______________________ Date: ____________________