GENDERED COACHING

THE IMPACT OF GENDER
ON ROLES AND QUALITIES OF ELITE
WOMEN’S FIELD HOCKEY COACHES

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree of

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THIS THESIS IS DEDICATED TO

THE MEMORY OF

Associate Professor G. Ross Cochrane
(DSc. PhD. MSc.)

AND

The subjects of this present study:
The coaches of elite women’s field hockey
in New Zealand
ABSTRACT

Field hockey in New Zealand is gender balanced in terms of numbers of female and male participants, but gender biased towards males, in terms of coaching appointments. The trend towards men increasingly dominating leadership positions in elite women’s coaching, has been the focus of concerned feminist researchers for over a decade. This current study examined the early roots of field hockey history in New Zealand, noted the trend towards hegemonic male domination of coaching roles, and sought to elucidate the roles and qualities of actual elite coaches and, in particular, examine the impact of gender on the stage of elite women’s field hockey.

The elite level of competition, familiar to the researcher as a past field hockey international player, has been defined as one that occurs at the highest internal national (usually provincial), or international (test) levels, of sport. It is within this elite sporting setting that the impact of gender has been studied in the present research, whereby gender is viewed as a socially constructed concept, based on culturally reinforced images of masculinity and femininity, as expressed by accepted traits, roles and qualities.

A variety of qualitative methods was used, each underpinned with the basal intention of capturing participant voices and portraying images of perceived realities as they emerged from a variety of scenes, including matches, team meetings, warm-ups and post-match evaluations. The study concentrated on three provincial women’s teams over a period spanning three years. Participant images were also captured from observations with the New Zealand women’s hockey team during their build up to World Cup in Holland in 1998. Furthermore, interviews with provincial women’s hockey coaches, and a questionnaire of provincial hockey players, added further data for analysis. Integral to the research process was the systematic critical reflection of the researcher, her chief supervisor, and main subjects of the study.

Participant observation, semi-structured coach interviews, and player questionnaires generated data from a variety of research settings. These data were subjected to grounded theory analysis to create a master list of categories and properties that, in turn, generated theoretical propositions about coach roles, coach qualities, the impact of gender, and coach development.

The theoretical propositions became the basis of a model explicating the impact of gender on the setting of elite women’ field hockey. Critical to this model were the three realms of administrators, coaches, and players. Interactions between each realm were perceived by the researcher as occurring through a centrally placed ‘gender archetype’ proposed as a domain of social field moderation. The degree to which the archetype impacted on each setting varied, according to societal and individual perceptions of gender. Critical gender issues were raised through this study in terms of men coaching women at the elite level. These were especially noted in terms of: gendered beliefs and attitudes, physical myths and realities, confidence and competence, and sex and sexuality.

Significant aspects of this research’s findings included: the large number of roles undertaken by elite women’s hockey coaches; the prime importance of communication and leadership in terms of both roles and qualities; and the lack of support mechanisms utilised by, and provided for, coaches. The study noted the difficulties associated with recruitment and retention of women in elite roles and highlighted the need for administrators to develop proactive programmes to foster women in such roles, and to educate men committed to women’s hockey, about gender issues raised in this study.
AKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My sincere and heartfelt thanks go to my chief supervisor, Professor Robin McConnell, who has guided my progress with unwavering interest since the project's inception. During that time he has read countless drafts, constantly reinforced the importance of critical reflection, and shared the excitement of unfolding images, especially those unravelling past stories like that of hockey pioneer, Pearl Dawson. His extremely high standards have, sensibly, slowed the progress of the completed project, and ensured that the end result is not just a printed work, but rather, a mid-life journey from which there will be no return.

Similarly, my sincere thanks also goes to my thesis advisor, Associate Professor Marilyn Waring, who has followed the progress of my research with genuine interest, and provided great assistance whenever it was needed. I very much appreciated her full support.

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Any journey, when it is a solo effort, can be very lonely experience. As a team person, I struggled constantly with the seclusion of a project, which required a significant time input - at hockey or in my study - over five years of my life. Had it not been for the overwhelming love, support and patience of my partner Dave Milne, and my two sons Tony and Mike, I would have long since given up my research dreams. I am so grateful to you all.

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<tr>
<td>AEWHA</td>
<td>All England Women’s Hockey Association.</td>
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<td>ALHA</td>
<td>Auckland Ladies Hockey Association.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Astroturf</td>
<td>Artificial grass surface on a hockey pitch. Also called turf.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bunt</td>
<td>Occurs when the ball is moved forward a short distance, after it has been trapped using the lay-down stick trap at penalty corners.</td>
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<td>CANZ</td>
<td>Coaching Association of New Zealand.</td>
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<tr>
<td>CWHA</td>
<td>Canterbury Women’s Hockey Association.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dugout</td>
<td>Small covered area on the side of the hockey turf for non-playing team members. Normally the turf has a dugout for each team.</td>
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<td>FIH</td>
<td>Fédération Internationale de Hockey.</td>
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<td>Fives</td>
<td>Drills or sprints designed to get the players physiologically warm, five minutes before the team begins the match. Same as Hots.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Giving and going</td>
<td>Occurs on the field when one player gives a pass and then runs to receive the ball in a different position.</td>
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<td>Haka</td>
<td>A traditional Maori war dance or choreographed challenge to a visiting or intruding group.</td>
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<td>Hospital passes</td>
<td>A poor pass that puts the receiver at risk of losing the ball or getting hurt.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hots</td>
<td>Drills or sprints designed to get the players physiologically warm, five minutes before the team begins the match. Same as Fives.</td>
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<td>IFWHA</td>
<td>International Federation of Women’s Hockey Associations.</td>
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<td>Iwi</td>
<td>Maori tribal sub-group.</td>
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<td>JCC</td>
<td>Joint consultative committee formed by representatives of the FIH and IFWHA to promote hockey.</td>
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<td>Man-to-man marking</td>
<td>Term used to describe a defensive strategy where one player is responsible for another and stays with them to prevent an attack.</td>
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<td>Mana</td>
<td>A Maori term denoting special prestige.</td>
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<td>Maori</td>
<td>Indigenous or native person of New Zealand.</td>
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Marae Village meeting place or surrounds.

NZHF New Zealand Hockey Federation.

NZHF Winning Women Programme
Mentoring programme developed by the NZHF to encourage female coaches to progress to elite level coaching positions.

NZLHA New Zealand Ladies Hockey Association.

NZWHA New Zealand Women’s Hockey Association.

Pakeha A Maori word denoting, broadly, a person of European or white descent.

Penalty corner
An attacking opportunity provided by an umpiring decision for an infringement (by defenders) inside the circle or a deliberate infringement inside the attacking 25-yard line. The attacking team pull the ball out from the back line to a point outside the attacking circle. The ball must be stopped dead by the attackers before a shot at goal is taken. The opposing team are allowed five players (including the goalkeeper), confined to the base line until the ball is played, to defend the goal.

Penalty stroke
A goal scoring opportunity awarded by the umpire for a deliberate infringement inside the attacking circle or for an infringement that prevents a certain goal. One attacker places the ball on the penalty spot (inside the circle) and has a shot at goal defended by the opposing team’s goalkeeper.

Poi Flax ball suspended on a string. Used by Maori in ‘Haka Poi’ cultural performances.

Read the game
To scan the play, determine pattern or movement, and plan related field moves if necessary.

Rohe Maori word for region.

Roll-around Move where a player turns around with the ball on the stick.

Roopu Maori word for group.

Sweat box Practice drill where one defender tries to take the ball off an attacker. This drill takes place in a confined area normally marked by cones.

Tane Maori man.

Taonga Maori treasures, and/or valuable material possession.

The arrow Defensive arrow arrangement of players, designed to stop an opponent’s free hit.
The box  A defensive formation used to position players during penalty corners.

The press  Same as the squeeze. A positional defensive tactic used by teams to isolate the ball on one side of the field.

The squeeze  A positional defensive tactic used by teams to isolate the ball on one side of the field.

Three-minute-syndrome  A term used by one coach to describe a situation where the opposition scored in the last three minutes of a match.

Tikanga  Custom(s).

Wahine  Maori woman.

Waiata  Maori song.

Wharenui  Maori sleeping hut.

33311  A particular formation of playing positions where there are three strikers (forwards), three midfielders (halves), three defenders (backs), one sweeper (deep defender) and one goalkeeper.

5321  A particular formation of playing positions where there are five strikers (forwards), three midfielders (halves), two defenders (backs) and one goalkeeper.