WOMEN’S CRICKET SPACES:
AN EXAMINATION OF FEMALE PLAYERS’ EXPERIENCES IN CANADA

By

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Presently the literature available on women’s cricket is very limited. This thesis attempts to redress this gap by telling a story about the experiences of women’s club cricket in Toronto and Victoria. The player’s social spaces were examined, as were the intersections of gender, race and culture. Using qualitative methods, narratives were interpreted and analyzed using post-colonial, spatial and feminist theoretical frameworks. Major findings indicated that there are specific challenges to women’s participation in cricket in Canada and revealed differences between players due to geography, access to resources, ethnicity and race. Women also experienced inclusions and exclusions based on gendered reproductions. The results indicate that much more support is needed for women’s cricket to flourish in Canada. One strong recommendation this study makes is that we pay more attention to, and develop better strategies for, the integration of Canadian immigrant and racialized women into the Canadian sport and recreation system.
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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCING THE RESEARCH STUDY

My desire to pursue a research project on women’s cricket in Canada was based on wanting to explore and analyze the history, development and current status of this relatively unknown sport for women. In researching the topic I discovered that few previous studies are available regarding women’s involvement in cricket within Canada. My research aimed to investigate the history of Canadian women’s cricket and examine how current female players in Canada experience cricket spaces.

In researching women’s cricket involvement in Canada, there is the risk of reproducing generalizations and stereotypes. Ideas about gendered cultural norms remain prevalent in sport today. Therefore, one of my goals as a researcher was to uncover some of the untold stories which challenge these supposed norms. Although women have made significant advancements in sport with increased opportunities, media coverage and access to leadership positions, many inequities persist (Dabovic, 2002; Hall, 1997a; Kidd, 1995; Lenskyj, 1991, 1994, 2003; Vertinsky, 2004). The social spaces of sport are still replete with blatant gender discrimination and homophobia. Since this thesis sits within the realm of gender and sport, I was careful to plan a project that explored women’s sport spaces without reproducing some of the problematic knowledge that already exists in the research literature. This thesis examined ideologies and theories that can help answer some of the questions that often surface when investigating the intersections of gender, race and sport. Some questions were: Why does gender inequity prevail in sport? What does the future hold for women in sport?
In this thesis I argue that different approaches to investigating sport participation need to be adopted in order to address issues of culture and gender in relation to cricket spaces. Across Canada, female cricket players represent multiple cultures and ethnic backgrounds (Dutchin, 2007). In Victoria, British Columbia, there is a women’s cricket club comprised mainly of white Canadians and immigrants from New Zealand, England and Australia. In Ontario, women’s cricket clubs generally have players with South Asian and Caribbean backgrounds with only a small portion of them coming from European nationalities and other ethnicities. Globally, the migration to and from countries continues to have an impact on the socio-cultural composition of nations and this is certainly true in Canada. Such migration between nations has resulted in people having multiple identities and has meant that ‘home’ may mean more than one place (Ashcroft, 1995; Handa, 2003; Said, 1997; Shami, 1998). The cricket pitch in Canada, then, is a unique space where immigrant players and many nationalities come together to play a game that they feel is part of their culture (Dutchin, 2007; James, 1991).

My choice to study this topic was grounded in the many complexities and unanswered questions surrounding women’s cricket experiences in Canada. There are several additional reasons I chose to do my project on women’s cricket. First, I was interested in how Indo-Canadian women living in Canada experience playing cricket and how their identity was influenced by their participation in the sport. My own experience with cricket has mostly involved women from the Caribbean and Canada. I was also drawn to cricket due to my familial ties to the sport. My parent’s Trinidadian descent and personal sport histories were

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1 I choose to de-capitalize white to decentralize the power of whiteness. Whiteness will be examined within my review of literature, and through the theories and methodology I use.  
2 Indo-Canadian is a label more specifically designed for my study while South Asian comes mainly from the secondary resources utilized in my literature review and theoretical methods. The definition will be further discussed in the review of literature section.
similar to many of the immigrant women who I encountered in this study. I uncovered many complex stories about sport participation among children of immigrants and I found their experiences similar, but also very different, than my own journey through sport.

Growing up in Kitchener, Ontario, I was marginalized because of my skin colour and cultural differences. I experienced repeated racist name-calling and racial discrimination in and outside of the school system. In addition, I was labelled a ‘tomboy’ due to my physical appearance (dressing with loose fitting clothes, hair always in a ponytail) and my involvement and aptitude in sports and physical activity. Despite being labelled and constantly harassed in sport spaces, I appreciated the benefits of my athletic involvement and my abilities and success helped me to make decisions about on-going participation. The motivation to inspire others to play sports began to flourish as I entered the high school sports arena. I chose to become involved in sports administration in order to encourage more girls to participate. I also began to notice the lack of participation in sports among visible minority girls, in particular. This inspired a longstanding interest in the topic of why so few racialized girls and women participate in sport and physical activity.

Since coming to university, I have continued to stay involved in helping racialized young girls and women participate in sport. After completing a dance leadership program for racialized young women, I realized that there were particular desires, needs and requirements concerning minority women’s participation in sports. I decided that a critical empirical analysis was needed to address such questions.

The purpose of this research then was to conduct a feminist, post-colonial and spatial analysis of how the game of cricket has impacted the identities of Indo-Canadian females and
other women club players living in the Greater Toronto Area\(^3\) and British Columbia. More specifically, I wanted to know how women experience Canadian cricket spaces. The three main research questions I investigated were: **What is the history of women’s cricket in Canada and how did the game develop?** **How do South Asian\(^4\) women view their participation in cricket?** **What role do current notions of Canadian nationalisms play in shaping the game and social environments of women’s cricket?**

My interest in doing a thesis project on this topic was further piqued because of how the sport of cricket is beginning to evolve in Canada. The recent emergence of a women’s and men’s national cricket team has increased the sport’s exposure (Dutchin, 2007). A continued rise in club membership and participation rates, specifically among South Asian populations, made me interested in how women, who are new to Canada, fit into the increasingly popular sport. Traditionally, cricket has not been one of Canada’s mainstream sports, although historically it did have a dominant role in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Since cricket is not one of the dominant sports played in this country at present, I was curious about how women are negotiating and creating places to play, and if the game is having a resurgence among women as well as men.

The current participation demographic in cricket also led me to wonder how it is that non-white, and especially Indo-Canadian women, come to play the sport, especially since they are usually underrepresented in organized sport (Ifedi, 2005). As a physical educator, I have noticed more racialized girls being interested in non-traditional North American sports

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\(^3\) The Greater Toronto Area refers to the city of Toronto and four surrounding regions. These include the region of Peel, Halton, York and Durham. The Greater Toronto Area, or GTA, boasts a population of roughly 5.6 million people. Currently the GTA is the most populous metropolitan in Canada (Fenlon, 2008).

\(^4\) I have categorized South Asian populations as people with nationalities from India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Pakistan. I have interchangeably used South Asian and Indo-Canadian. Indo-Canadian is a label more specifically designed for my study, while South Asian is used in relation to the secondary resources utilized in my literature review and theoretical methods.
such as cricket. I was curious to find out more about the culture of cricket and how this might be influential in women’s decisions to play this particular game.

I hope that the knowledge acquired through this research serves as an important gateway for women to be recognized and valued for their efforts to organize, develop and advance the game of women’s cricket. Researching the histories, struggles and triumphs in women’s cricket is essential to understanding the game today. In addition, such data can be useful in relation to considering potential policies and/or practices within sports organizations and administrations that can be modified to make sports more inclusive. Since cricket is one of the fastest growing sports in Canada, a critical investigation can highlight areas of potential change and create more equitable and sustainable programs (Dutchin, 2007).
CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Although there is a vast amount of information available on women’s sport (Birrell & Cole, 1994; Hargreaves, 1994; Lenskyj, 2003; Theberge, 2000) there is very little on women’s cricket. In contrast, men’s cricket is well researched in Canada and internationally (James, 1993; Malcolm, 2001; Marqusee, 1994; Majumdar, 2008; Stoddart & Sandiford, 1998; Wagg, 2005). Furthermore, the social factors that are related to men’s cricket have also been investigated. Information regarding women playing cricket in Canada is especially limited and, to my knowledge, a post-colonial analysis of the women’s game does not exist in the research and neither does an exploration of issues of space, race, class and sexism.

This review of literature is divided into six sections: Women in Sport; Race and Sport; South Asian Women in Sport; Cricket and Women’s Participation: A Brief History; Canadian Cricket; and Women’s Cricket in Canada.

**Women in Sport**

The dominant ideology of prevailing masculinity in sport has been well researched (Birrell & Cole, 1994; Creedon, 1994; Lenskyj, 1994, 2003; Messner, 2002; Theberge, 2000, 2003). Historically, women were denied entry into sports spaces and access continues to be a challenge for female athletes (Brady, 2005; Hargreaves, 1994; van Ingen, 2003; Vertinsky, 2004). Traits that are associated with sport such as physical strength, competitiveness, aggression, and determination are considered masculine traits (Messner, 2003; Messner & Sabo, 1990). Consequently, when females decide to participate in any type of sport their femininity is often questioned. Young’s (1990) seminal article “Throwing like a girl” examines the socialization of women and how femininity is associated with being timid,
fragile, graceful, soft and taking up as little physical space as possible. Not surprisingly then, women have not been encouraged to play sports, in contrast to boys, whose participation is expected. Historically, this has resulted in limited sports opportunities for women, as it is males who have usually received more affirmation about the physical capabilities of their bodies (Theberge, 2003; Young, 1990). Competitiveness, along with pressure to win, playing through injury, male style, dress, verbal and non-verbal behaviours and hypermasculine performances are pervasive in sports (Messner, 2003; Messner & Sabo, 1990; Lenskyj, 1994). Birrell and Cole (1994) insist that the only way sport can move beyond the ideologies of heteronormativity and masculinity is if a ‘re-conceptualization of sport’ occurs. Currently, fear of adopting masculine traits acts as a major deterrent for women’s participation in athletic activities.

When women do decide to enter the ‘contested terrain’ of sports there are a multitude of challenges that exist, including the sexualization of their bodies (Burroughs, Ashburn & Seebohm, 1995; Lenskyj, 2003). Women’s corporeality and dress are heavily scrutinized while their athletic accomplishments are minimized. In recent years for example, Anna Kournikova was the highest paid women’s professional tennis player on the women’s tennis circuit (appearance fees combined with sponsorship deals), yet she had never won a single grand-slam tournament. Her “attractiveness” garnered her great media attention along with a strong fan base. Several endorsements celebrated her “sexiness” and appearance, not her athletic ability (Douglas, 2005). The patriarchal structure of sport places the woman’s body as an object to be looked at for pleasure by men. Birrell and Cole (1994) explain this ideology and attest that:

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5 Heteronormativity can be defined as punitive rules (social, familial, and legal) that force us to conform to hegemonic, heterosexual standards of identity. The term is a short version of "normative heterosexuality" (Burroughs, Ashburn & Seebohm, 1995).
The female athlete is rendered a sex object – a body which may excel in sport, but which is primarily an object of pleasure for man. A useful technique, for if a woman seems to be encroaching too far, and too threateningly, into male sanctuaries, she can be symbolically vaporized and reconstituted as an object, a butt for smutty jokes and complacent elbow nudging (p.35).

Women are susceptible to unwanted sexualization and sexual attention from coaches, journalists, spectators and other athletes. Coupled with this attention to female athletes’ sexualities, is the requirement that women also embrace heterosexuality (Burroughs et al., 1995; Lenskyj, 1994, 2003).

Compulsory heterosexuality has been widely studied in sport (Birrell & Cole, 1994; Creedon, 1993; Dabovic, 2002; Lenskyj, 1994, 2003; Messner & Sabo, 1990; Messner, 2002). In Burroughs et al.’s (1995) study of women’s cricket coverage, evidence showed that journalists over-emphasized notions of heteronormativity. Women who risk participating in sports that are deemed too masculine (hockey, basketball, rugby, cricket) are placed under automatic suspicion of being lesbians (Burroughs et al., 1995). Sport is a site where sex divisions are reproduced and participation of females in male dominated sports is seen as deviant. The patriarchy that is entrenched in sport continues to reaffirm a heterosexist sport structure (Burroughs et al., 1995; Messner & Sabo, 1990; Messner, 2002). Since sport is a site where heterosexuality must be demonstrated, female athletes are faced with constant pressure to conform to gender expectations, display their femininity and defend their heterosexuality.

Once on a team, female athletes must continuously prove their heterosexuality and femininity in sport spaces to secure their right to play (Lenskyj, 1994). Many women
participating in sport strive to construct an appearance that accentuates their ‘heterosexual femininity’ (Lenskyj, 2003; Messner & Sabo, 1990). A number of adaptations of uniforms have taken place in cricket, netball, basketball and beach volleyball with the aim of using female player’s bodies to attract the media and increase public interest (Burroughs et al, 1995; Creedon, 1994; Lenskyj, 2003, 2008; Morrow, Keyes, Simpson, Cosentino & Lappage, 1989; Theberge, 2003). Repeatedly, female athletes have been depicted in calendars revealing their bodies in sexually suggestive poses while male athletes’ calendars usually depict men in action shots (see Burroughs et al, 1995; Lenskyj, 2008). Although such efforts can be financially rewarding, critics of these photos argue that the selected images reproduce narrow standards of heterosexual attractiveness, and, also serve to minimize athletic accomplishments.

The fact that both the media and sports organization’s are preoccupied with preserving heterosexuality in sport conversely allows heterosexism and the masculine hegemonic process to function and influence the prevailing social views that determine what sports and physical activities are viewed as appropriate for women (Creedon, 1994; Lenskyj, 1994, 2008; Messner & Sabo 1990). Conventional femininity is rewarded in and outside of sport and only certain behaviours are seen as suitable for female athletes. Women continually fear being labeled as too aggressive and masculine, however such traits are often seen as a requirement for certain sports.

Women in traditional male sports such as cricket, football, hockey, rugby and basketball are more prone to homophobic innuendoes due to the classification of such sports being gender specific to males (Lenskyj, 1994; Theberge, 2000). This is true even though in recent times there have been significant advancements within women’s sport including
soaring participation rates and rising financial rewards for professional female athletes. Performances of hyperfemininity continue to be the norm within the environment of women’s sports, especially those deemed male-dominated sports. For example, Danica Patrick, a female race car driver, has achieved success on the track but she is often sexualized by the media. She is able to participate in the sport but her gender constrains and restricts her participation. The gendered spaces of sport enable her to be involved and receive multiple benefits but her heteronormative behaviour is closely monitored (Winchester, 2008).

There is a dearth of women in leadership positions in sport spaces (Canadian Association for the Advancement of Women in Sport, 2009; Lenskyj, 2003). Historically, Canadian women have had to form separate sports organizations due to the inability to break through the barriers of male sport structures (Kidd, 1996). Several feminist sport conferences and organizations⁶ were formed throughout the 1980’s and 1990’s that aimed to increase women’s participation and recognition in sport; to effectively deal with their lack of presence in leadership positions; to acquire spaces to play and to combat homophobia. Hargreaves calls this type of structure ‘separatists sports feminism’ and describes it as “the attempts by women to achieve liberation not by seeking inclusion in hitherto male sporting domains, but by establishing alternative sporting structures and opportunities exclusively for women” (Hargreaves, 1994, p. 53). Hargreaves (1994) further argues that having separate men’s and women’s structures within sport does not really fit with the ideology of equal opportunity, however she notes it does offer a way of balancing advantages that men have had

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⁶ Fitness and Amateur Sport (FAS) in 1974 held the first National Conference on Women in Sport; The Recreation Committee of the Mayor’s Task Force on the Status of Women (Toronto) conducted a study which identified sex discrimination in community recreation program and career opportunities; In 1980 the Female Athletes Conference; In 1981in Hamilton the Canadian Association for the Advancement for Women in Sport was formed (name was later changed to Canadian Association for the Advancement for Women in Sport and Physical Activity (Lenskyj, 2003).
historically. She also believes that “separate organizations provide women with opportunities to administer and control their own activities” (Hargreaves, 1994, p. 54). Many of Canada’s women’s sporting clubs have been very successful. At different time periods they have enjoyed public interest, support and resources and they have recently seen increasing participation rates (Kidd, 1996).

After the Second World War male and female sports leagues were integrated and brought under the umbrella of unified sports organizations. While the process of this change was slow, and typically unwelcomed by male dominated sports clubs, it soon became the norm in Canada. Once amalgamation of men’s and women’s sport structures was complete there was a serious decline in all areas of women’s sports. Women now had to compete with men for resources, facilities, coaching opportunities and administrative positions within sports organizations (Kidd, 1996; Lenskyj, 2003). Lenskyj’s research has documented “blatant sex discrimination in government and institutional funding, policies and programs, facilities, equipment, media coverage, training and competitive opportunities for women”, no wonder then that women’s sports are not on equal footing with men’s (2003, p. 66).

The Canadian government itself restricted women’s access to sport and physical activity when sections 19(1) and (2)7 of the Human Rights Code were revised. These sections “specifically exempted membership in athletic organizations, participation in athletic activities and access to the services and facilities of the recreational clubs from its sex-

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7 Holmes (1997) wrote that: In the case of Blainey v. Ontario Hockey Association (1986), 26 D.L.R. (4th) 728 (Ont. C.A.) (leave to appeal to the Supreme Court of Canada denied), section 19(2) of the Ontario Human Rights Code, which barred sex discrimination complaints from being filed by sports organizations, was challenged by a 12-year-old female athlete as violating her equality rights under section 15(1) of the Charter. The Court found that section 19(2) was inconsistent with section 15(1) of the Charter and, pursuant to section 52 of the Constitution Act, 1982, held the section of the Code to be of no force or effect. The section was subsequently repealed. This case illustrates the fact that the Charter can have an impact on the content of human rights statutes (p.1).
equality provisions” (Lenskyj, 2003, p. 67). This change, more or less, sanctioned the continued exclusion of girls and women in male-dominated sports organizations, even if they met the requirements to tryout or be selected for a team. Despite intense lobbying from feminist sport groups the code was not struck down until 1986 by the Supreme Court (Lenskyj, 2003). The feminist sports movement in Canada has gained some power since the reversal of this decision. Feminist sport organizations, such as the Canadian Association for the Advancement of Women in Sport (CAAWS), have increased awareness about women’s athletic issues and continue to promote the advancement of women in sport.

The federal government is largely responsible for funding Canadian amateur sport organizations and also continues to provide (limited) funding for feminist sport organizations (Lenskyj, 2003). Although there are still many inequities, gains have been made in women’s sport such as increased participation rates and leadership opportunities, the creation of women’s sport organizations, success at world competitions and the Olympics and an overall improvement in sport accessibility (CAAWS, 2009; Lenskyj, 2003). In addition, small achievements have resulted in the establishment of more equitable practices and policies for sport organizations. Such accomplishments have also slightly improved the conditions for females participating in sport. However, a gendered hierarchy continues to be evident in Canadian sport structures as most of the administrative, coaching and officiating positions are held by males even in sports with high female participation (Lenskyj, 2003).

Despite collective lobbying for equality by feminist sport organizations, club memberships have been critiqued because they have been demonstrated to primarily serve the interests of white middle to upper class women (Lenskyj, 2003; Hargreaves, 1985, 1994). Consequently, white middle to upper class women’s sport and physical activity agendas have
been pushed forward while racialized and lower income women’s voices have been missing. The struggle to acquire equal access in sport has often been tailored to the needs of white middle class girls and women and has failed to address issues of race and class. Slowly, women’s sports organizations are becoming more diverse and they have started to focus on the lack of access to sport for non-white women, and, to examine how race, class, sexual orientation, ability and environment impact on women’s involvement in sport and physical activity (Lenskyj, 2003). However, there is currently little research available on non-white women in sport and scholars have noted that more studies are needed in order to deepen our understanding of this population (Birrell, 1990; Theberge, 2000). As more non-white women began to participate in sport, new challenges arise in the struggle to find a place for women within male hegemonic sport structures. The next section examines some of these challenges.

Race and Sport

The growing cultural heterogeneity of society has led to greater discussion on ethnic and cultural differences in Canada (James, 2003, 2005). Before attempting to understand the South Asian athlete, it is important to review studies about race and sport in order to determine how western hegemonic views came to be believed as ‘truths’. There have been many sport studies that focus on race but many of them are problematic in that they have sought to prove that certain racial characteristics influence athletic performance (Burfoot, 1999; Bale, 1994; Entine & Smith, 2000; Hoberman, 1997; Monk, 2001). These so-called ‘scientific’ studies (Burfoot, 1999; Entine & Smith, 2000; Hoberman, 1997) reinforce ideologies about certain ‘races’, most commonly Black, having superior athletic ability due to their genetic composition. These authors’ findings have been critiqued and they have been accused of masking racist ideologies in pseudo- ‘scientific’ theory.
The research design of these studies on racial superiority within certain sports is flawed (Carrington & Macdonald, 2001; Carrington 2007a; Fleming, 1991, 1994; St Louis, 2003). For instance, St Louis (2003) argues that “such objective scientific analysis of the racial distribution of athletic ability depend on the continual reification of racial biological heredity with a social and cultural hierarchy that is analogous with the standard ideas expressed in the longer tradition of racial science” (p. 77). On the one hand, these studies try to naturalize Black athletes’ athletic accomplishments while simultaneously promoting the discourse that Blacks are intellectually inferior (Carrington, 2007a). On the other hand, when white athletes achieve athletic success, their accomplishments are attributed to intelligence and hard work (Carrington, 2007a; St. Louis, 2003).

Scientific racism ignores the social, cultural and economic markers that are important to sporting performances. These studies also focus on men in sport (see Burfoot, 1999; Entine & Smith, 2000; Hoberman, 1997), and fail to account for women athletes (St Louis, 2003). In addition to focusing solely on males, classifying anyone on the basis of racialized characteristics is extremely problematic. The struggle to identify race as a single indicator for athletic success is deeply flawed since ‘race’ as an identity category itself is scientifically impossible and ideologically problematic.

Entine and Smith (2000) and Burfoot (1999) acknowledge that race is difficult to determine physically yet they persist in using the category and equating race with skin colour. Critical race scholars contest that race is a social construct and to genetically differentiate between people is completely unrealistic and unscientific (St Louis, 2003; Carrington & Macdonald, 2001; Ifekwunigwe, 1999). Despite this claim, many scholars (Burfoot, 1999; Entine & Smith 2000; Hoberman, 1997) are still involved in the
classification of ‘races’ and ‘subraces’ with continued failure to come to any sort of consensus (Carrington & Macdonald, 2001; St Louis, 2003). In addition to the inherent falsity of ‘race’, migratory patterns and mixed race unions make attempts to identify cohesive racial categories continually inconclusive (St Louis, 2003). Nevertheless, Blacks, as well as South Asians, are consistently classified and categorized differently with respect to sporting performances.

Scholars argue that racialization, together with culture, is a strong predictor for explaining ethnic differences in sport (Carrington, 1999, 2004; Abdel-Shehid, 2005; James, 2005; St Louis, 2003). The social, economic, cultural and political structures that affirm and reinforce class, race and gender are key factors in explaining people’s attraction to certain sports (Carrington, 1999; James, 2005; St. Louis, 2003). Racialized beliefs, for example, have classified South Asian athletes as being weak, unnaturally athletic and lacking muscles (James, 2005; Carrington & McDonald, 2001). Different ‘races’ are assumed to play particular sports well and the perception of the racialized body often translates to categorizing what sports South Asians and others are built to play (James, 2005; Carrington & McDonald, 2001). Prevailing beliefs and stereotypes are limiting for racialized groups and produce narrow expectations of their place in sport and physical activity. For example, South Asians are typically viewed in reference to what sports they ‘should’ play as the following quotes suggest:

South Asian girls are ‘usually small and quite frail” (Lewis 1979: 132); South Asian boys and girls are ‘generally of small stature and of a slight physique’ (Wills 1980: 42); South Asian boys were characterized by being of ‘generally smaller stature and slighter physique’ (Leaman 1984: 214); ‘The Asian pupil is typically seen as
physically frail lacking for contact sports’ (Bayliss 1989: 20); ingredients in food, or their nutrition that they take, [is] not ideal for building up a physical frame’ – Dave Basett, former manager of Sheffield United Football Club, BBC TV 1995 (Cited in Carrington & McDonald, 2001, p.114).

These generalizations cited by Carrington and McDonald (2001) demonstrate how the (in)abilities of South Asians have been naturalized. Hall (1997a) states that generalizations become stereotypes when there are reduced, exaggerated, simplified and/or fixed. For South Asians, and other racialized bodies, athletic abilities are constructed and developed into representations that reaffirm identities and cultural expectations (Carrington, 2004; James, 2005). Racial stereotypes can reduce certain characteristics, magnify or caricature others, strip individuality and fail to acknowledge changes, developments or passage of time (Hall, 1997a, 1997b). Stereotypes are often internalized by the group they target. Internalized racism within communities can constrain those communities’ potential for sport participation and athletic accomplishments (James, 2005).

Due to this process of stereotyping, invisible barriers are raised when certain ‘races’ attempt to participate in sports and physical activities that are not deemed ‘acceptable’ for their culture (James, 2005). The myth that certain races should play particular sports is also internalized by athletes themselves (Abdel-Shehid, 2005; Carrington, 1999; Carrington & McDonald, 2001; James, 2005). For example, Vijay Amritraj\(^8\) has stated: ‘As a race, we are handsomely endowed with hand-to-eye co-ordination, which is why so many of our youngsters excel naturally at ball sports like cricket, squash and tennis’ (Carrington & Macdonald, 2001, p. 116). ‘Race’ stereotypes produce legitimacy for certain expectations in

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\(^8\) A male tennis player from India who also starred in a James Bond Hollywood movie (Carrington & Macdonald, 2001).
sport and physical activity and repeated exposure to such stereotypes may cause racialized
groups to internalize these beliefs (Abdel-Shehid, 2005; Carrington, 1999; Carrington &
Macdonald, 2001; James, 2005). James contends that a “persuasive racialized script” is not
only adopted by the general public, but also by coaches, teachers and the athletes themselves
(2005). Not contesting such notions often leads to a lack of representation in sport cultures
and to repressive attitudes towards, and within, ethnic communities.

There has been some research conducted that illustrates how South Asian females are
The South Asian population, particularly South Asian females, have historically been
portrayed as weak, repressed and ‘traditional’ (Brah 1985; Nakamura, 2002; James, 2005;
Sandhu, 2005; Tomlinson, 1984). As I stated previously, western sport ideologies contain
notions of hyper-masculinity that conflict with stereotypes about South Asians and sports
(Nakamura, 2002; Taylor & Toohey, 1998). Furthermore, studies on South Asians have
uncovered certain ideologies that describe sports participation within this group as minimal,
segregated and selective (Carrington & MacDonald, 2001; James, 2005; Vertinsky et al.,
1996).

According to Raval (1989), it is impossible to talk about the level of participation of
South Asian women in sport without looking at socio-political institutions of racism, sexism
and colonialism within India. He states:

By attributing lack of participation in leisure of women of South Asian descent to
their culture, religion and parental constraints, the authors serve to deny the political
management of sexual division through leisure. They use common-sense stereotypical assumptions to attribute parental constraint, religion and culture as root
causes for lack of participation. Through these generalizations, they account for all women of South Asian descent, without adequately accounting for their country or culture of migration (p. 256).

Raval is arguing that universal claims, by academics, regarding the participation of South Asians in sport reproduce stereotypes and do not critically examine the complexities of socio-cultural factors. Raval, among others (Brah 1985; Nakamura, 2002; James, 2005; Sandhu 2005; Tomlinson, 1997; Vertinsky, Batth & Naidu, 1996), also critiques the reductionist view that South Asian families are overly concerned with educational achievements, and not with sport and physical activity, because of culturally held beliefs. In fact, the strong pressure to excel and acquire educational success may be correlated to parental notions that better preparation can minimize the possibility of their children facing discrimination, and increase the chances of them securing a better future (Dabovic, 2002; James, 2005; Nakamura, 2002). The dominant discourses about South Asian females’ abilities and willingness to participate in sport and physical activity also contribute to further (mis)representation about this population. Other factors intersecting with their environment such as access, racism, culture and colonialism, can be better indicators of South Asian females’ low levels of involvement in sport and physical activity.

**South Asian Women and Sport**

Women’s participation in sport is often a contested terrain, no matter what their cultural background or geographic location is (Birrell & Cole, 1994; Kumar, 2004). This is important to remember when studying issues related to women in sport. The relationships between gender, race and class have not been fully examined in the literature on sport (Birrell, 1990; Theberge, 2000; Vertinsky et al., 1996). George and Rail (2005) argue that
“life experiences of some groups of women seem to differ markedly from those of others and of the female population as a whole” (p. 45). There are many cross-cultural inequities that exist in sport and physical activity. Intersections of gender with class, race and ethnicity produce different gender inequalities in sport and physical activities, for different groups of women (George & Rail, 2005). A closer examination of the literature related to South Asians in sport and physical activity can reveal the intricacies and nuances related to their participation. There are many complexities surrounding South Asian female participation, since South Asian women experience double jeopardy in facing gender and racial discrimination (George & Rail, 2005). Most of the studies of South Asians in sport have either been reductionist (Rublee & Shaw, 1991; Sfeir 1985) or have only attempted to explain constraints of participation (Nakamura, 2002; Tirone, 1999; Tirone & Pedlar, 1999; Vertinsky, et al., 1996).

Western sport and physical education ideologies are often incompatible with South Asian culture and fail to take into account their cultural and social realities. A number of studies (Burrows, 2004; Tirone & Shaw, 1997; Tirone, 1999; Tirone & Pedlar, 1999; Taylor & Toohey, 1998; Wright 1995; Vertinsky et al., 1996) have examined the obstacles that result in a disengagement from physical activity by South Asian girls in North America and Britain. Findings indicate that the white and masculine ideologies dominant in sport, contribute to their lack of involvement and interest. The studies also reveal that physical education teachers often increase their exclusion by assuming truth in dominant colonial stereotypes of South Asian females as repressed and controlled by men. Therefore, young South Asian girls are commonly seen as too “weak” and “passive” to be interested or
successful in sport. Indeed little research has been conducted to analyze South Asian participation in sport and physical activity (George & Rail, 2005; Tirone, 1999).

South Asian women who engage in sport and physical activity receive mixed messages about their participation which impacts their sense of identity. Sandhu contends that “South Asian women are receiving multiple messages about their femininity in relation to sport and this is presented as contradictory, not just in Indian society” (2005, p. 23). Handa (2003) also asserts that South Asians are in constant negotiation with the dominant culture; they must balance participation in sport with certain ideals deemed necessary for maintaining a South Asian female identity within their cultural groups. Handa (2003) and Sandhu (2005) conclude that there are many factors, such as cultural, social and gender expectations, which need to be taken into account when considering South Asian female participation in sport in Canada. Interrogating the history of the game of cricket in Canada is one avenue through which to theorize and analyze South Asian women’s participation in sport.

**Cricket and Women’s Participation: A Brief History**

Cricket was first codified by the British in the early thirteen hundreds (Williams, 2001, 1999) and was played predominantly by elite white men. Clubs and participation continued to grow throughout the centuries despite a lack of formal organization. In England, the Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC) became the first cricket organization when it formed in 1797. The club still exists today as a private, male only members club. In its early days, ownership of land and property were a requirement of membership. Historically, the MCC was responsible for establishing the ‘laws of cricket’ and giving countries ‘test’ status.\(^9\)

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\(^9\) Test matches are a subset of first class cricket. The skill gap between Test and normal first-class cricket is considerable - many players who had excelled in the first class game were unable to handle Test cricket when given the chance. The games are played between national representative teams which have "Test status" as
(Stoddard & Sandiford, 1998). Due to cricket’s popularity, it is not surprising that the British exported cricket to the places they were colonizing. By the eighteenth century, Britain had colonized almost three quarters of the globe. This resulted in the migration of thousands of missionaries and lay people who exported British values, traditions and activities, including the game of cricket, as they settled around the globe (Cooper, 1995; Hall, Slack, Smith & Whitson, 1991; Marqusee, 1994).

Historically, women who were involved in cricket typically adopted subordinate roles. Men’s cricket depended on women for several components of the game and these components reinforced socio-cultural gender expectations (Cashman & Weaver, 1991; Williams, 1999). For example, women took care of children and also prepared all the drinks, tea and sandwiches needed for men’s matches. They usually assisted in coaching and playing cricket with their children which contributed to the development of future players (Cashman & Weaver, 1991; Williams, 1999).

Historically, cricket has been a male only sport and women who did play were criticized (Cashman & Weaver, 1991; Hall, 2002; Hargreaves, 1994; Morrow & Wamsley, 2005; Morrow et al., 1989). Common beliefs were that cricket was too physically demanding on women’s bodies and that because the games were so long (some matches lasted up to five days), women could not afford the time away from household duties and child rearing. This only left space for women who were unmarried and childless to play (Cashman & Weaver, 1991; Hall, 2002; Hargreaves, 1994; Morrow et al., 1989).

Past research on women in cricket illustrates how men have viewed women’s participation in the game, and, has revealed the inner struggles of women cricketers determined by the International Cricket Council (ICC). As of 2005, ten national teams have been given Test Status, the most recent being Bangladesh in 2000 (Women’s Cricket, 2007).
Issues such as compulsory heterosexuality, appropriate dress of cricket players, lack of funding, domestic demands, trivialization of athletic accomplishments and questions of sexual preference are some of the topics that have been examined. Women cricket players were often under constant scrutiny by the media. Newspaper articles about cricket in the early nineteen hundreds overtly discriminated against athletes who did not conform to heteronormative behaviours and appearance. Descriptions of the players’ uniforms, and the kinds of modifications made for women, were widely discussed within cricket clubs and in print media. Female cricketers also struggled to garner support from their families, and the public, who equated playing the sport with escaping responsibilities at home (Cashman & Weaver, 1991; Hall, 2002; Morrow et al., 1989).

In the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century cricket served as an emancipatory and liberating tool for some women (Hargreaves, 1994; Williams, 1999). Although women did play the sport in the early 1800’s they were not welcomed on cricket pitches. The pitches were spaces of gendered and privileged male participation. Hargreaves (1994) argues that women who played sports in the eighteen hundreds debunked the assumption they were too physically frail to handle sports. Women cricket players challenged the belief that women should not be included in social activities controlled solely by men.

Due to the inequities and barriers that existed in cricket, women were forced to create their own opportunities to play. Some historical information is available about women’s cricket in England and Australia, however there is a lack of similar information from other countries, including Canada. The contributions that women have made to the game
historically have been documented although they are not widely recognized or acknowledged. Women are responsible for the development of a major change in bowling style in cricket. In 1786 over-arm bowling was first introduced by Christine Willes, who, while coaching her two sons, found that underarm bowling was too cumbersome while wearing a dress. Willes developed this style of pitch and made it popular in men’s cricket. Today over-arm bowling is the only style of bowling used in cricket (Williams, 2001), but we are rarely told that this was the invention of a woman.

As the number of female players grew in England, the need for organization and leadership was met through the Women’s Cricket Association (WCA). Formed in 1926, the WCA’s purpose was “to provide an organization for the furtherance of Women’s Cricket” (Williams, 2001, p. 24). Although women’s cricket organizations were established, public acceptance of female participation in the game was not achieved.

Although female participation in cricket was still frowned upon, women’s clubs organized international tours to Australia, South Africa and England, followed by tours to India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Canada, and the United States in the early 19th century. Tours began amongst elite women from the colonized countries, although a few players from different social classes were included (Cashman & Weaver, 1991). Although Cashman and Weaver claim that several colonies came together harmoniously to play cricket, there is a lack of analysis in their research on who was excluded from the game and how colonization shaped participation. A critical discourse surrounding race, culture and privilege is absent in their review of international tournaments.

The original international cricket governing body, the Imperial Cricket Conference, was established in 1909. It was renamed the ‘International Cricket Council’ (ICC) in 1965.
During this time period, men’s absences due to the World wars provided more opportunities and *spaces* for women to play sports. The number of women playing cricket increased exponentially between the two World Wars. Many more women in England, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and Canada began to play cricket. Finally, in 1958, the International Women’s Cricket Association (IWCC) was created.

Shortly after the IWCC was founded, women established the first World Cup event for cricket. Since women, unlike men, had very few funds to travel to nations for tournaments throughout the year, organizing a large international tournament served as a better option. The IWCC launched the first cricket World Cup in 1973. The men quickly followed two years later. The women’s game has evolved, altered and gone through many transformations over time. Changes include style of play, uniforms, where women play, support, fans and funding. In 2005, the IWCC joined together with the ICC and now both associations are under one structure.

To date, there are no analyses of the effects of racialization on women’s cricket using a post-colonial theoretical framework. The available literature on women’s cricket focuses on history, sporting records, matches played, as well as how the teams and organizations were formed (Cashman & Weaver, 1991; Hall, 2002). There is very limited research available on women’s cricket in South Asian countries and the Caribbean. Cricket has a long history that is tied to British imperialism, empire, classism, racism and sexism. Even today scholars assert that cricket embodies contemporary forms of these ideologies and oppressions and researchers need to account for these in their studies of the game (Williams, 1999; Wagg, 2005).
Canadian Cricket

British immigrants were responsible for introducing cricket to Canada as they sought to play a game that reminded them of their homeland (Cooper, 1995; Hall, 1992; Hall, 2002; Metcalfe, 1987). In Canada, cricket was first played informally by British males of the dominant class, which was comprised of colonial estate-holders and landowners, military officers and the mercantile class (retailers, bankers, and exporters) (Hall, 2002; Metcalfe, 1987). Historically, cricket in Canada was a sport for the elite since they had more time for leisure than people in lower socio-economic classes. Most of the employment in Canada for non-dominant classes involved physical labour with long hours which did not necessarily permit much time for recreational activities (Hall, 1992; Hall, 2002; Kidd, 1996; Metcalfe, 1987; Morrow & Wamsley, 2005).

Mr. George Anthony Barber is known as the ‘father of cricket’ in Canada and was responsible for introducing the game to private schools in the early eighteen hundreds. Cricket gained legitimacy as a sport when it entered the private school system. Most of the private schools in Canada, including Upper Canada College, Trinity College, Ridley College, Lakefield College and St. Johns College, were built on the British private school model. Physical education was promoted as a means to encourage physical fitness and, most importantly, as a way to ensure that boys adopted ‘masculine’ characteristics of strength, aggressiveness and leadership (Hall, 2002; Metcalfe, 1987; Morrow & Wamsley, 2005; Morrow et al., 1989). Private school adoption of the game helped to establish a foundation for cricket in Canada. Players from schools continued to compete after graduation and thus the game was introduced at universities. Cricket was becoming immensely popular and clubs were formed across the nation. The Toronto Cricket Club was formed in 1834; Montreal
Cricket Club in 1843 and the Maritimes had clubs in Halifax, Saint John and Fredericton. Men in Canada regularly played cricket in the mid to late eighteen hundreds (Hall, 2002; Metcalfe, 1987).

In the mid 1900’s cricket participation in Canada started to decline as young men began to have access to other sports, such as baseball and lacrosse, which were less expensive (Morrow & Wamsley, 2005). Cricket presented a financial challenge for schools due to the cost of good pitches with suitable conditions. While private schools such as Upper Canada College had the money to build and maintain cricket fields, other less wealthy schools were unable to provide the level of pitches that were recommended by sport governing bodies, who felt that cricket should not be attempted if the facilities were not adequate (Hall, 2002). This, of course, was a way of securing the symbolic capital of cricket. Since cricket required a certain amount of funds in order to be formally played, lower class participation was limited. The expense of cricket, and the resulting inaccessibility of the game to the general population, along with little interest among people without British descent, led to the eventual decline of cricket in Canada (Cooper, 1995; Hall, 2002; Morrow & Wamsley, 2005). Despite this decline, the social elite and British immigrants kept cricket alive in Canada (Cooper, 1995; Hall, 1992; Hall, 2002; Morrow & Wamsley, 2005). Cricket became a symbol of holding onto British culture, it provided an environment for the elite who shared similar political and social values to instill these in their Anglo-Saxon children. Morrow and Wamsley (2005) explain the function of cricket in maintaining British culture in the following excerpt:

A cricket match presented a safer opportunity for the display of a civilized, British masculinity that required physical competence, yet remained cultured at a time when
a call to arms was not imminent. A sense of preserved, a refined physical masculinity, among peers, through cultural activities remained more significant to men and women of the same station that it did for citizens of the lower classes, for whom physical exertion was an integral part of daily life. Through these formal social occasions men, women and children learned the proper, gendered codes of conduct (p. 154).

This quote demonstrates how “civility” was a goal that the elite sought to acquire through the game of cricket. During cricket games, ladies and gentleman would sip tea and sit in their comfortable tent-covered stands. Both men and women dressed in their finest clothes to watch matches. The ‘civilizing’ process included instilling ethnocentric notions of the superiority of British culture among players and spectators alike. These attitudes of superiority ultimately acted as a detriment to the game. The closed society of cricket contributed to the eventual decline of the game. Moreover, its popularity was short-lived because there was a lack of competition for many of the clubs (Cooper, 1995; Hall, 1992; Metcalfe, 1987; Morrow & Wamsley, 2005). The majority of the games were usually exhibition or challenge matches. Although leagues were established in the 1880’s, getting cricket teams together was difficult. The print media wrote in glowing terms about teams of the past and insisted that cricket garnered little interest in Canada because the clubs lacked sustained competition. By 1905 the coverage of cricket had dropped from 12% to 3% in the sports section of the newspaper (Morrow & Wamsley, 2005). When the British immigrant population declined, upon whom cricket depended for sustainability, the game suffered further (Cooper, 1995). Clubs remained intact throughout the early and mid 1900’s but
league participation was limited. This history explains why the game of cricket failed to be embedded into Canadian sport culture.

After a lull of almost 60-70 years, new waves of immigrants in the 1970s resulted in a re-emergence of cricket in Canada. Migrants struggled and faced some difficulties in their attempts to continue their tradition of playing cricket and yet they persevered (Cooper, 1995). The immigrants of the 1970’s, including Anglo-Europeans, maintained the game of cricket in Canada (Metcalf, 1987; Morrow & Wamsley, 2005). However there was conflict as some of the remaining Canadian cricket clubs resisted offering membership to immigrants who came from South Asia, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and the West-Indies (Cooper, 1995). This resistance resulted in power struggles that led to the eventual dissipation of these historical clubs. More research is needed to adequately investigate the complexities of past relationships between new immigrant cricket players and established Canadian cricket clubs (Cooper, 1995).

More recently, in the past 30 years, new immigrants and first generation Canadians (both parents who immigrated in the seventies and their children) have revitalized the game of cricket in Canada for both men and women (Dutchin, 2007). Canada now boasts a national team for both men and women with the majority of players on both teams being of South Asian descent. The male squad has one white player who was born in England; the women’s team has several Indo-Canadians along with women who are born in Canada of European descent (Dutchin, 2007).

**Women’s Cricket in Canada**

Women play cricket in Ontario, Manitoba, Alberta and British Columbia; however it is most popular in British Columbia and Ontario (Canadian Women’s History, 2007). In
British Columbia, a number of European and Australian immigrants, along with South Asians, are working to sustain the game. Within Ontario, South Asians dominate the game. A small minority of players from the Caribbean, along with an even smaller cadre of Europeans and Australians, also actively participate in the game (Dutchin, 2007).

The Ontario Cricket Association has provided a short chronological account of women’s cricket history in Toronto. There is a record of a test match being played between the Kilowatt Women’s Cricket Club of Jamaica and the Commonwealth Cricket Club at Eglinton Park and King City in 1972. The Toronto Cricket Club staged a prestigious event when English women came to mark the 150th anniversary of the club in 1973. They played against both a men’s and women’s team during that event. The next milestone came with the arrival of Christina Mogan in 1979 from Guyana. Mogan changed the face of women’s cricket in Canada and quickly made her presence known in both male and female cricket leagues. She impressed the men’s Caribbean Limers Cricket Club so much, they eventually promoted her to captain once they realized her superior cricketing skills. Mogan was shocked to find hardly any organized leagues in Canada and ultimately became a pioneer for women’s cricket, alongside Andrena Baksh. Baksh served as the women’s cricket coordinator for the country and was heavily involved in the Ontario Cricket Association. Another Canadian cricket pioneer is Lenore Davis who was one of the first women to establish a cricket club in British Columbia. Today both Mogan and Davis are still involved in women’s cricket in Canada as players, sports administrators and advocates (Canadian Women’s History, 2007; Dutchin, 2007).

The lack of further details on women’s cricket in Canada shows that the sport has not been adequately researched. In this section I have given a brief account of some of the
histories of cricket, yet many stories remain uncovered. There is a lack of racial analysis, and
the limited information that is available is generally only from, and about, commonwealth
countries, specifically England and Australia. The voices of women are missing within the
literature on cricket. How they experienced the game of cricket, what prompted them to
decide to play cricket, and what some of the barriers they faced were, are not included in the
research. The social spaces of cricket have also not been carefully examined. Therefore I
have decided to employ post-colonial spatial theory, within a feminist framework, to address
some of these gaps in cricket research. The next chapter outlines the theoretical frameworks
that I believe enable us to uncover women’s, and especially South Asian women’s, cricketing
stories.
CHAPTER THREE: THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Researching cricket as it relates to South Asian women requires taking into account issues of race, gender, class, ability and sexuality. This thesis utilized three theoretical frameworks to help uncover some of the complexities of women’s cricketing experiences: spatial, post-colonial and feminist theory.

One of the main functions of spatial theory is to explore how identities are (re)produced in social spaces. This allows for an interrogation of sport spaces. In particular, spatial theory allows us to consider how sport spaces have historically been gendered and racialized and how this affects the types of social relations that occur there. Post-colonial theory examines personal narratives thereby giving voice to marginalized women’s stories, which have often been ignored. It also considers the influences of colonialism (Said, 1997). Feminist sports theory attempts to explain and explore female experiences in the realm of sport. Feminist theory deconstructs patriarchy and its role in the ongoing unequal treatment of women in sports. Feminist sport theories also examine how whiteness is constructed in sport. These theoretical frameworks assist in explaining the complexities of South Asian women’s sport participation, paying close attention to issues of race, ethnicity, class and sexuality.

Spatial Theory

Spatial theorist Henri Lefebvre (1991) suggests we look beyond the physical dimensions of space and see places as sites that enable social relations. In The Production of Space (1991) Lefebvre investigates the social constructions of space to uncover how power relations are played out. Lefebvre creates a discourse around social space by examining three
components: spatial practices, representations of space and spaces of representation. For the purpose of this thesis I focused primarily on the representation of space (conceived space) and spaces of representation (actual lived space). This focus allowed for a critical examination of a) how social relations are produced within spaces, b) how sites are constructed and c) how social spaces are gendered, sexualized and racialized.

Scholars who study sport spaces discuss how social relations can be enabled or constrained in those spaces (Fusco, 2004, 2005; Shane, 2007; Unan, 2003; Vertinsky, 2004). Historically, sport was designed by males who “drew up the spatial rules of sports, defining the spatial limits” (Vertinsky, 2004, p. 13). Certain bodies, including racialized and gendered bodies (women), were excluded from sport spaces, because of their gender and/or race identity. Vertinsky (2004) argues that the male construction of sport spaces determined who “count[ed] as an athlete” and who did not. Women were usually viewed as spectators or consumers of sport and were not permitted to use places to play sports (Bale, 1994). The history of inequities women have faced in sport spaces continue into the present era and many (in)visible barriers remain. This reality has restricted women within particular sport places and contributes to the continuing construction of masculinist discourses (Vertinsky, 2004).

Several sport scholars have researched how the spaces in which sports are played are sites where social relations can be investigated (Carrington, 1999; Fusco, 2004; Joseph, 2005, 2008; Nakamura, 2005; van Ingen, 2003, 2004). Formations of sport spaces produce signs and codes that represent, regulate and control sport and sporting bodies in particular ways (van Ingen, 2003). Van Ingen (2003) argues that sport is understood partially through its representation. For example, cricket represents a certain ideology - a sport culture that
embodies particular notions of politics, gender, race, language, economics and history. The way that cricket spaces are conceived illustrates how power has been constructed in these spaces, and, how they have traditionally been masculine, white, nationalist and heterosexual spaces.

Another facet of spatial theory is spaces of representation or actual lived spaces. Lived space can be a site of social struggle and resistance (Lefebvre, 1991) and this is certainly true for sport sites which can be both oppressive and enabling (van Ingen, 2003, 2004; Vertinsky, 2004). Sport spaces are places where racism, sexism and homophobia are (re)produced, however, spaces of representation can also “produce critically important counter spaces that are spaces for diverse resistant and oppositional practices” (van Ingen, 2003, p. 204). Studies by sport sociologists reveal that marginalized spaces created by a collective of individuals and communities enable new representations of space (Carrington, 1999; Joseph, 2008; Nakamura, 2005; van Ingen, 2003). hooks (1990) also contests that sexually or racially excluded subjects who are pushed to the margins can create new counter spaces that represent sites of resistance. However, alternative spaces still remain sexualized and racialized and an interrogation into power relations must be contextualized (hooks, 1990; van Ingen, 2004).

Spatial theory helps to analyze how women, and other racialized bodies, have been spatially ordered and contained; it also looks at the ways in which colonization is always involved in the creation of spatial projects (Razack, 2002). Goldberg (1993) postulates that when racialized bodies enter urban spaces, they are viewed as polluting the places they choose to occupy. This is an interesting notion to consider when we look at cricket. The spaces of cricket have historically been depicted as spaces for white males playing in white
clothing. This depiction seeks to represent and reproduce the pure and privileged culture of Britain (Bale, 1994). The colour white often signifies purity, cleanliness and innocence, and the clothing is arguably representative of cricket’s idealist image as a gentlemanly game for Englishmen that adhere to the social and moral codes of Britain (Bale, 1994). Cricket spaces are therefore constituted and influenced by notions of race, colonialism and imperialism (Lefebvre, 1991).

Within a sport space there is a symbolic relationship between identity and space and spatial theory attempts to discuss this (Lefebvre, 1991). Sport sites serve as critical places where racialized identities are produced and reaffirmed (Fusco, 2005; Joseph, 2005, 2008; Nakamura, 2005; van Ingen, 2003). The integral role of migration patterns and multiple identities are also reaffirmed and created in sport spaces. Critical space scholars claim that sport spaces (re)produce identities within a gendered and racial hierarchy and argue that some academics (Fraser, 2000; Sacks, 1984) fail to signify the importance of identity formation that involves intersectional notions of gender, race and sexuality (Carrington, 1999, 2007a, 2007b; van Ingen, 2003).

A number of theorists argue that spatial theory can help to explain how spaces are imagined and how white and racialized bodies are viewed differently in those spaces (Bannerji, 2000; Dei, 2000; Fleras & Elliott, 2002; James, 2005, Razack, 2002). Mohanran states that “place and landscape are not inert but things which actively participate in the identity formation of the individual” (1999, p. xii). Space, therefore, is central to the formation of a racialized identity. When non-white newcomers arrive to Canada, where they are no longer part of the dominant culture, they, along with non-white Canadians, adopt a racialized status (Dei, 2000; Fleras & Elliott, 2002; James, 2005; Razack, 2002). Racialized
groups in Canada consist of individuals who are categorized as visible minorities. Critical space theory reflects on how space is imagined, organized and socially constructed by racialized Canadians.

In addition, constructed spaces produce meanings about who belongs and who does not, and how securely one occupies a particular space and place (Grewal & Kaplan, 2005; Razack, 2004; Vertinsky, 2004). Spatial theory can help us understand how different bodies are viewed as they migrate from what are considered subordinate locations (homeland country), where their identity and skin colour may go unquestioned, to spaces in which they are marginalized for these very reasons (Grewal & Kaplan, 2005; Razack, 2004). Although Canada claims to be a multicultural country, often pointing to such policies as the Multicultural Act10, racism still exists in the country (Fleras, 1995).

Space, of course, is not only racialized but is also gendered. McDowell and Sharp (1997) illustrate how gender relations are situated within the structure and meaning of place:

The spaces in which social practices occur affect the nature of those practices, who is ‘in place’, who is ‘out of place’, and even who is allowed to be there at all. But the spaces themselves in turn are constructed and given meaning through the social practices that define men and women as different and unequal. Physical and social boundaries reinforce each other and spatial relations act to socialize people into acceptance and gendered power relations – they reinforce power, privileges and oppression. (p. 3)

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10 Passage of this legislation in 1988 enshrined the principles of racial and cultural equality in Canadian law. The Act recognizes the need to increase minority participation in society by ensuring that federal institutions are responsive to the multicultural reality of Canada. Moreover, all government agencies, departments and Crown corporations – not just the ministry responsible for multiculturalism – are expected to provide leadership in advancing Canada’s multicultural mix (Bannerji, 2000).
A gender analysis makes it possible to investigate multiple dimensions of how social relations are spatialized. For example, Stoler (1997) discusses how women were forced into ambiguous positions in British and Dutch colonial lands as they were subordinate to white men while also active agents in making imperial culture. Spatial theory provides a platform upon which to create a discourse about how sport spaces are gendered and racialized.

Sport spaces must also be critically examined in relation to the (re)production of power (Fusco, 2005; van Ingen, 2003) and how both dominant and subordinate identities are produced. Vertinsky (2004) discusses how power relations operate in sport spaces when she states that “different sporting places can be distinguished from each other through the operation of the relations of power that construct boundaries around them creating spaces with certain meanings in which some relationships are facilitated, others discouraged” (p. 9).

A crucial component of spatial theory is the exploration of differential power relations and hierarchal structures. Spatial theorists have criticized geographers for failing to adequately examine power relations and failing to acknowledge the white masculine hegemonic model of sports (van Ingen, 2003). In her spatial analysis of a queer running club, van Ingen (2004), concludes that non-white bodies are dislocated and displaced in urban spaces. Furthermore, membership in the running club was conceptualized in multiple, differing ways which produced feelings of inclusion or exclusion based on individual experiences within the club (van Ingen, 2004). Her study also demonstrates that gender, sexuality and race are produced, negotiated and contested in social spaces. Sport spaces are

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11 See Stoler (1997) for an analysis of how gender inequalities are essential to the structure of colonial racism and imperial authority.
sites that can both reproduce, and resist, hegemonic sport structures (Carrington, 1999; Fusco, 2005; Shane, 2007; Unan, 2003; van Ingen, 2003).

Spatial theory can be deepened by combining it with a post-colonial analysis. The social spaces within cricket that are gendered and racialized also include a colonial history that impacts the game and those who play it. Post-colonial theory aids us in uncovering the important stories of marginalized groups within the cricket community.

**Post-Colonial Theory**

Post-colonial theory developed during the period of de-colonization after World War II (O’Connell, 2005). Post-colonial theory created space for the voices and points of view of the colonized. Developed originally by the Subaltern Studies group in Indian history\(^1\), authors such as Fanon (1992) and Said (1997) were key figures in establishing post-colonial studies. Post-colonialist theory discusses the struggles of the colonized and explores how race, ethnicity, culture\(^1\) and human identities are contested and represented (Ashcroft, 1995; Hall, 2000; Loomba, 1998; Shohat, 1992).

The world of sport is dominated by white, male, capitalistic ideologies, which are grounded in colonial legacies (Hartmann, 2003; Stoddard, 2006; Wagg, 2005; Williams, 1999, 2001). Striving for equity within sport must involve challenging exclusionary practices, including the dominance of colonial influences in western sport. By utilizing a

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\(^{12}\) ‘Subalternity focused on ‘reading against the grain’, reading for the silences and absences in colonial texts so that subaltern voices could be heard. It was established by Indian authors who decided to study Indian history from their point of view in an attempt to fill the many gaps of what was already written about their culture (Hall, 2000).

\(^{13}\) Stuart Hall argues that “culture is not so much about a set of things, novels, painting or television programs as about a process, a set of practices. Culture is associated primarily with the production and exchange of meanings, how we make sense of the world. But it is not simply about ideas in the head, it is also about how those ideas organize and regulate social and institutional worlds. Meanings are constructed in languages and languages work through representation. They use signs and symbols to stand for or represent ideas and feelings in ways that allow others to decode and interpret them. Meaning is constructed through language, and language is therefore crucial to culture. ‘It is through culture and language that the production and circulation of meaning take place’” (S. Hall quoted in Hall, 2000, p.11).
post-colonial approach, scholars can examine how the legacies of colonization, including social, economic and political realities, continue to shape women in sport.

Fanon (1992) and Said (1978) explain how racial hierarchies were built and how disciplines of studying ‘others’14 were created. In describing his experience as an ‘other’, Fanon notes, “For not only must the black man be black; he must be black in relation to the white man” (1992, p. 240). Fanon’s very identity is thus created by the white man as defined by being the ‘other’. After the world wars, Western universities began to launch disciplines such as ‘Middle Eastern Studies’ or ‘Indian Studies’ to acquire knowledge about these ‘others’. However, many of the studies conducted in these new disciplines, such as intelligence studies, were aimed at proving the superiority of whites (Said, 1978). In addition, these disciplines usually focused on critiquing the ‘other’ and their chosen way of life, and studies repeatedly depicted ‘other’ cultural practices as backwards, ‘uncivilized’ and largely inferior to western practices (Said, 1978).

In addition to the production of racialized knowledge about cultures, ‘colour lines’ were expanded on in order to generate clear divisions between races. Black was only seen in relation to white and the west (Occident) wrote about the east (Orient) but not visa versa (Fanon, 1992; Said, 1997). Novelists, professors, as well as many other subjects from the ‘orient’, were not seen as credible witnesses or documenters of their own stories (Said, 1997).

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14 The concept of ‘other’ has been used in social science to understand the processes by which societies and groups exclude ‘Others’ who they want to subordinate or who do not fit into their society. For example, Edward Said’s (1978) book *Orientalism* demonstrates how this was done by western societies—particularly England and France—to ‘other’ people in the ‘Orient’ who they wanted to control. The concept of ‘otherness’ is also integral to the understanding of identities, as people construct roles for themselves in relation to an ‘other’ as part of a fluid process of action-reaction that is not necessarily related with subjugation or stigmatization (Said, 1978).
Post-colonialist theory refutes western ideologies about the inferiority of diverse cultures and allows the histories of previously colonized countries, nations, and places to be heard and told from both sides (Asgharzadeh & Dei, 2000; Said, 1997; Shohat, 1992). Post-colonial theory moves beyond the binaries of black/white or east/west and examines how categories exist as a product of colonialism whereby subjects needed to be defined and classified in a hierarchal order.

Western scholars who employ post-colonial theory should identify their social position and take into account that while they are attempting to give the subaltern a voice, the research and writing they are producing is being created through a western lens. Post-colonial theorists should be aware of the complexities of both their own various social locations and the histories and realities of the populations they are analyzing. It is important to bridge connections between differently positioned subjects (Mohanty, 2003).

The forced (and voluntary) movement of populations during and after the colonial period has shaped post-colonial theory (Loomba, 1998; Loomba, Kaul, Bunzl, Burton, & Etsy, 2005). Investigating diasporic communities of minority or marginalized populations in various locations is critical to post-colonial theory. The relationship between postcolonial theory and multiculturalism is as complex, as it is key. Ella Shohat and Robert Stam (1994) urge post-colonial writers to engage more seriously in the debates about multiculturalism, which they note have been “dismissed by the far left as too soft and co-optive and denounced by the right as too radical and incendiary”, (p. 23). Racial and ethnic blending, and differences in the colonial experiences of individual countries, have sometimes not been well enough attended to by post-colonial scholars. Indeed, some thinkers assert that post-colonial scholarship has not thoroughly engaged with the complex histories of empire and race.
However scholars are now beginning to understand the significance of the intersections of race, gender and class, as well as the problematic implications of excluding histories (Appiah, 1994; Gilroy, 2005; Loomba et al., 2005; Prakesh, 1994).

Some critical race scholars deem the term “post-colonialism” inappropriate since ‘post’ implies that occupation by the West is now over (Appiah, 1994; Dei & Asgharzadeh, 2000; Goldberg, 2002; Hall, 2001; Prakesh, 1994). These critics argue that a ‘new imperialism’ (Hardt & Negri, 2001) has taken the place of traditional ‘empires’ making the prefix ‘post’ a misleading connotation (Appiah, 1994; Asgharzadeh & Dei, 2000; Hall, 2000; Loomba et al., 2005). Today the word ‘colonialism’ is more fluid and requires further explanation since researchers cannot assume European colonialism is the only kind. People are still being colonized today especially in Africa, Iraq, Haiti and many other places in the world (Hall, 2001; Dei & Asgharzadeh, 2000). New imperialistic agendas, for instance and especially, the foreign policies of the United States (Hardt & Negri, 2001; Razack, 2008), have made postcolonial studies more necessary than ever.

Loomba et al. (2005) urges post-colonial scholars to critically discuss dominant notions of colonization that affect globalization instead of “glossing over (or endlessly belabouring)” historical difference (p. 5). Reframing key concepts from thinkers such as C.L.R. James and Frantz Fanon are also ways postcolonial theory continues to be utilized (Loomba et al., 2005; Hartmann, 2003; Stoddard, 2006). Loomba et al. (2005) argues that “new” post-colonialism theory:

…cannot abandon, and must raise with new urgency, the epistemological questions that have animated the field from its inception; question about the shifting and often interrelated forms of dominance and resistance; about the constitution of the colonial
archive; about the search for alternative traces of social being; about the interdependent play of race and class; about the significance of gender and sexuality; about the complex forms in which subjectivities are experienced and collectivities mobilized; about representation itself, and about the ethnographic translation of cultures. (p. 13)

The quote above illustrates how post-colonial theory can be beneficial in interrogating new and old forms of dominance in relation to race, class, gender and sexuality. Learning and writing about the histories of colonization must also include an examination of the conditions of nations after independence (Loomba et al., 2005; Razack, 2008). Such an analysis is necessary to understand current situations. When investigating the stories of subjects, post-colonial theory reminds us it is important to consider their colonial histories. Economic, political and social realities need to be historicized in order to contextualize current struggles and conditions (Appiah, 1994; Loomba et al., 2005; Shohat, 1992).

Postcolonial theory aims to address the non-Western world yet it is sometimes received with hostility (Loomba et al., 2005). Many scholars from the west continue to research and publish knowledge they have gained from encounters with colonized populations. Although many academics recognize their positionality and elevated status, they fail to include the subaltern in the production of knowledge. Studies are often written through the researcher’s hegemonic interpretations and translations (Nagar & Ali, 2003). Hulme (1995) contends that post-colonial theory must broaden its scope and depth of analysis. He states:

if there is one particular stance I take with respect to the current state of post-colonial studies, it is that we are still discovering, slowly perhaps, and unmethodically, but - as
far as I am concerned - with a sense of excitement, the dimension of the field...encouragement to strip off the straitjacket of those accounts and definitions of postcolonial studies that simplify and narrow its range to the work of a handful theorists and a handful of novelist…in the past some of those who work with the field, or have a productive relationship to it, have even accepted that oversimplified picture of postcolonial studies. Fortunately, as this volume suggests, the picture is now beginning to broaden.  (p. 118)

Hulme recommends that post-colonial theorists move beyond the contributions of early scholars while continuing to recognize the significance of their work to the field. Early post-colonial figures have been instrumental in establishing post-colonial theory.

Said (1997) explores the notion of hybridity and posits that all countries are affected by colonialism and no one subject is free of such influence. Continued migration between borders has produced encounters which Mary Louise Pratt (1992) labels as “contact zones”. This kind of exchange consists of borrowing and lending in both directions, attempts which can be either accommodated and/or resisted. This notion posits that British subjects have also been culturally affected by the countries they have colonized (Said, 1997). In this vein, Fanon repeatedly insists that ‘Europe is literally the creation of the Third World’ (1992, p. 15). Fanon also believes that all cultures and countries of the world have been influenced by colonialism (Hall, 2000; Fanon, 1992). Said (1997) accounts for the pre-contact history of colonized nations and argues that the cultures of the colonized began long before migrants from the ‘west’ arrived. A post-colonial study allows for a close examination of the histories of colonized peoples and improves our knowledge about the formation of cultures and nations.
I believe it is essential to adopt a post-colonial analysis when conducting research on cricket in Canada. Post-colonial theory has not been adequately applied to the literature written about cricket (Carrington, 1999; Hartmann, 2003; Wagg, 2005). C.L.R. James, who wrote the highly acclaimed and seminal book, Beyond a Boundary in 1963, was “ahead of his time” when he focused on issues of race and colonialism. James knew that cricket was a game where race, politics and colonialism were evident and his work described how society’s inequities were played out on the cricket pitch. He states: “The British tradition that soaked deep into me was that when you entered the sporting arena you left behind the sordid compromises of everyday existence. Yet for us to do that we would have to divest ourselves of our skins’ (James, 1993, p. 66). His book Beyond a Boundary was one of the first texts to theorize race and sport interactions.

Wagg (2005) suggests that too few academics have studied the relationship between sport and colonialism and encourages researchers to consider the ‘postcolonial’ in relation to sport. Analyzing the relationship between the colonizer and colonized may allow for different meanings and challenge dominant readings of sport culture and history. Post-colonial discourses might also reveal resistances to colonization which could deepen our current understandings. The research on men’s cricket has lacked a post-colonial perspective and issues of racism need to be further interrogated (Hartmann, 2003; Stoddard, 2006; Wagg, 2005). Post-colonialist theory is essential for studying populations since colonialism affected both the colonized and the colonizers. Post-colonial theory provides a powerful analytical framework for this study.
**Feminist Post-Colonial Theory**

A system of patriarchy, which benefited men historically, has created gender inequities that are still present today. The discrimination that women face around the world has been, and continues to be, actively resisted. This thesis sought to examine the experiences of South Asian women cricketers who are doubly disadvantaged, by both race and gender, in Canada. Feminist post-colonial theory provided a framework for studying their personal histories and examining how gender has impacted their sporting experiences.

Feminist theory has seen many changes over the past several decades (Abbott, Wallace & Tyler, 2005; hooks, 2000; Mohanty, 2003, 2006; Herrman & Stewart, 2001; Razack, 2000). Various forms of feminism have persisted and new strands continue to emerge. Black, liberal and queer feminist theories are examples of some of the types of feminisms utilized by academics (hooks, 2000; Bulter, 2000; Herrman & Stewart, 2001). Although definitions of feminism fluctuate across thinkers, the main ideology of feminist theory is that women experience many inequities because of their gender. Additionally, feminists argue that women must continue to fight for political, social and economic equality (Abbot et al., 2005; Mohanty, 2003).

Feminist scholarship has paid special attention to questions of inter-sectionality, that is how gender intersects with race, class, ability and sexuality (hooks, 2000; MaCall, 2005; Mohanty, 2003; Razack, 2000). Black and post-colonial feminist theorists contest that more attention needs to be paid to issues of ethnic difference, racialization, colonialism and racism (Anwar, 1998; hooks, 2000; Mohanty, 2003; Razack, 2000). Post-colonial feminist theory focuses on groups of women whose identity is shaped partly by a shared history of colonialism and possible voluntary or forced migration (Mohanty, 2003, Loomba et al.,
Identity formation is a product of many social factors including location, colonial history, gender, sexuality, race and class, environment and so on. The history of groups is critical to developing an understanding of one’s social location (age, race, class, ethnicity, education, religion, ability, place of residence etc.). In struggling to resist patriarchy, women have won a number of rights however such gains have often been achieved for certain groups of privileged women while other groups of marginalized women are left behind in the race for equality.

**Racialized South Asian Women**

Second wave feminism was established when marginalized women realized that greater equality was being achieved for white, middle class women (Abbot et al., 2005; hooks, 2000). The needs and rights of racialized communities were being ignored and non-white women began to rally to establish a feminism that would addressed their inequities (hooks, 2000; Mohanty, 2003; Herrman & Stewart, 2001). White feminist claims of a universal female experience did not provide adequate theoretical explanations for the unique experiences and structural locations of post-colonial women (Herrman & Stewart, 2001). Post-colonial feminism addresses this gap by looking at how racial subjects come into existence through gender hierarchies and vice versa. Unpacking encounters between powerful and powerless groups, including colonial encounters, are central to post-colonial feminist theory (Abbot et al., 2005; Herrman & Stewart, 2001; hooks, 2000; Mohanty, 2003).

Researching post-colonial populations requires that an analysis of their acquired multiple identities be taken into consideration. Cultural theorists contend that transnational\(^{15}\) individuals and diasporic communities embody multiple subject positions and identities.

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\(^{15}\) Transnationality refers to the movement of people, good and ideas across national borders. The term focuses on the cultural, social and economic interconnectedness, interrelations and cross border and cross mobilizations of power language, resources and people (Lee, 2006).
(Alcoff, 2007; Hall, 1992, 1996; Rattansi, 2000). People who live outside their ancestral homeland cannot automatically be considered diasporic (Dickinson & Bailey, 2008). Shifting migration patterns have made classifying and categorizing problematic. The Indian Diaspora\textsuperscript{16} within North America varies from region to region (Bhattacharyaa, 2008) and in order to understand these communities, researchers must closely examine personal histories and cultural differences.

Cultural differences can serve as a source of tensions for immigrants. For instance, some Indo-Canadian females face the challenge of trying to balance holding on to traditional values with fulfilling role expectations in contemporary Canadian society (Handa, 2003; Kumar, 2004; Sandhu, 2005). The imposition of binary relationships like east/west, traditional/modern must be examined and problematized when theorizing South Asians (Rattansi, 2000; Sandhu, 2005). South Asian studies are often built around these binaries however academics must be careful not to reproduce cultural stereotypes when this perspective is utilized (Hall & Gay, 1996; Handa, 2003). Sharon Sandhu (2005) postulates that:

South Asians are often constructed as so-called ‘generation’ gap’, ‘culture clash’, ‘intergenerational conflict’ and ‘between two cultures’. These binary relationships, embedded in discussions of ‘culture clash’ have become quite prevalent in studies of South Asians in the academic world. (p. 28)

Handa (2003) reminds us that these binaries create unattainable expectations for South Asian women whereby they are expected to continuously negotiate their identities to exist within these binaries (Handa, 2003; Rattansi, 2000; Sandhu, 2005). For instance, a

\textsuperscript{16} Diaspora can be defined as the migration (forced or voluntary) of people with similar ethnicities to countries other than their homeland (Bhattacharya, 2008).
‘modern’ working woman is encouraged to fulfill expectations of both a traditional and non-traditional woman. While immigrant women may benefit from greater gender equality in North America they have to constantly negotiate between here and there, past and present, homeland and host land, self and other (Handa, 2003; Safran, Sahoo & Lal, 2008; Rattansi, 2000). The modernization of the world has many ‘Indian’ women working outside of their homes and obtaining education, however certain traditions are still expected by some cultures (Bhattacharya, 2008; Safran et al., 2008; Handa, 2003). Handa explains that the ‘modern’ woman must meet domestic demands and also be representative of their culture:

They proposed a new kind of woman, one who could enjoy the freedoms of the modern world, such as education and paid employment, while at the same time attending to the responsibilities of the home and upholding cultural norms and the virtues associated with spirituality. (p. 62)

Generally, Indian women in Canada are caught in the web of living in the ‘modern’ world but having to prove ongoing commitment to their homeland culture (Handa, 2003; Sandhu, 2005). The ideology of “Indian femininity” is rooted in a history of cultural norms. Indian femininity is embedded within the national culture of India and has also been affected by British colonialism (Brah, 1992; Bhattacharya, 2008). Indian women were seen as integral to the social fabric of their culture. In addition, British ideals about how women in India should act served to reinforce and preserve cultural norms (Brah, 1992). Examining this history can help us to understand female expectations and the social factors that influence their behaviour and chosen social activities.

Identities among Indo-Canadians can be further interrogated by studying how migration patterns influence culture. Transnationalism can lead to the diminishing of
nationalism and boundaries (Shami, 1998). When newcomers come to Canada, many do so seeking a better life for their children which includes the adoption of Western cultural values (James, 2005; Nakamura, 2003). Usually, racialized young women of immigrant parents learn both Canadian and homeland cultural customs, however role expectations and behaviours can sometimes be unclear. As a result, their identities shift and become more hybridized. There are limitations to the term ‘hybridized’ as it does not reveal the interplay of intergenerational cultural tensions. Identity theorists argue that referring to hybridized cultures oversimplifies the complexity and limitations of hyphenated labels (Alcoff, 2007; Rattansi, 2000).

Post-colonial, spatial and feminist theories greatly influenced the conception, interpretation and analysis that I brought to this study. I wanted to hear the voices of women, especially South Asian women, within Canadian cricket spaces and I decided that a qualitative methodology would best help me extrapolate their stories and experiences. A detailed account of these women’s cricket experiences, and the contributions they have made to the game, is an area of rich primary research which has not been previously published.
CHAPTER FOUR: METHODOLOGY

Ethical Issues: Self-Reflexivity

There are several risks inherent in conducting a study about Indo-Canadian females including the potential problem of essentializing these populations. Anne duCille comments on how complicated this can be:

How do we negotiate an intellectually charged space for experience in a way that is not totalizing and essentializing – a space that acknowledges the constructedness of, and the differences within, our lived experiences while at the same time attending to the inclining, rather than declining, significance of race, class, culture, and gender?


Positioning an ‘Indo-Canadian’ female category versus a white female category assumes fixed identities. Although there may be some similarities between Indo-Canadian diasporic communities, ‘categorizing’ Indo-Canadian women as monolithic can be problematic. In addition, the hyphen in Indo-Canadian represents dual identities but runs the risk of hiding unique cultural histories and complexities (Alcoff, 2007). Feminist scholars often urge thinkers to examine female stories through a feminist lens to illustrate the connections between women and to realize common struggles among all women (Nagar & Ali, 2003; Mohanty, 2003, 2006). However the feminist lens is often biased towards white and western understandings of the world and this should be kept in mind. It is important not to label Indo-Canadian communities as ‘inferior’ or ‘backward’. Chandra Mohanty (2003) challenges the first world to see interlocking systems of oppression including systems of
patriarchy, colonialism, racism and sexism instead of focusing on women in the ‘Third World’ and judging their existence.

Although I am a racialized Canadian and categorize myself as Indo-Caribbean Canadian, as a researcher I was not immune to some of the pitfalls of mis-representation mentioned above. Like other researchers I had to juggle the tensions around “voice”, “authority” and “representation” (Spivak, 1988). Throughout this study I questioned my ability to ‘represent’ Indo-Canadians and tried to remain reflexive in my research into, and writing about, their struggles for representation and self-determination in cricket. Nagar and Ali (2003) note that “discussions about the politics of representation and of reflexivity, positionality and identity as a way to address these politics – have reached an impasse” (p. 358). Alcoff argues that identity designations are the product of learned cognitive maps and learned modes of perception. She also believes that society reads visible physical features and characteristics and thus one cannot simply “rise above” or ignore them (2006). Certain bodies are still discriminated against, economically, socially and politically and physical appearances are still markers of a disadvantage in a racial hierarchy that remains globally dominant (Alcoff, 2006, 2007; Carrington, 2007a, 2007b). This underscores the fact that my social location would inevitably directly influence my interpretations of the research collected.

As a researcher, I also had to problematize how I used the term white. I chose ‘white’ to encompass a racial identity that is perceived as normative in North American society. Although whiteness is also a ‘race’, it is not often acknowledged as such, and yet it is shaped by social norms and expectations that are based on historical events and current practices (Dyer, 1997). The social impact of whiteness and “white privilege” highlights
differences in power between whites and non-whites. Dyer (1997) argues that ‘white people create the dominant images of the world, and don’t quite see that they thus construct the world in their image” (p. 9). Although some of the white women participants in my study were from different ethnic groups, I chose to classify these participants as white. Historically, there has been a common racialized pattern of privilege, power, knowledge and wealth among white populations. Whites are often seen as having no colour, their "white" skin signifying an absence of ethnicity. Dyer (1997) postulates that whites rarely consider themselves racially marked. Since "whites are everywhere in representation... they seem not to be represented to themselves as whites” (p. 3). Therefore, as a researcher, I made the decision to categorize participants who self-identified as being of European descent as white and/or ‘Canadian’ in this thesis.

Since I was undertaking a multi-ethnic research project, it was important for me to consider how my data would be collected, analyzed and disseminated in a responsive, inclusive way. Said (1997) points out that typically a “native informant” remains only a “native informant”, as opposed to a co-creator/co-owner, when producing knowledge for universities. My own social location as a racialized academic in the North produced an interesting tension in this regard. While I hold a dominant position as a Western academic, as a racialized researcher I am also a “native informant” given my marginal status within the institution. Racialized women have been constructed in Western nation-states as native informants and are expected to engage in a process of informing the dominant culture about their own culture. Nagar and Ali (2003) note that increased scrutiny about research and representation has led to calls for better accessibility and harmonization between the researcher and whom they choose to study. This notion of native informant takes into
account the histories of colonialism and knowledge production whereby Third World peoples have been conquered and become artifacts and objects (Spivak, 1999). Given this history, I approached the task of analyzing the narratives of the participants, especially the minority participants, cautiously. However, I believe that my racialized status was beneficial in helping me to understand the sensitivities and complexities of the participant’s stories.

Because many inequities still exist in this country, emphasizing differences between Indo-Canadians and white Canadians, could lead to reproducing essentialist notions of Indo-Canadians females as ‘more oppressed’. Spivak (1998) makes the argument that the use of strategic essentialisms can serve as a way to acquire power and privileges, for instance, understandings of some of the attributes of groups can be used as a political tool. On the other hand, Mohanty (2006) calls for a shift to a “model [that] focuses on the mutuality and common interests across borders, on understanding the historical and experiential particularities and differences as well as the connections between women’s lives around the world, and on the connection and division between forms of women’s activism and organizing across racial, national, sexual borders” (p. 7). The important question Razack (1998) asks is, ‘How does essentialism or anti-essentialism contribute to anti-subordination?’ (p. 162). This question led me to reflect about how researchers, myself included, might fall into the trap of reinforcing stereotypes about Indo-Canadians’ and their participation in sport.

As stated previously, current literature documents that both Westerners and South Asians have internalized perceptions and ideologies of South Asian athletic abilities (Carrington & MacDonald, 2001). Fleming (1994) states that “crude stereotypes about the sporting aptitude and preferences of young South Asians” can become internalized by Indo-Canadians themselves (p. 159). Notions of Indo-Canadian femininity are also linked with notions of
athletic ability and conducting research concerning their involvement in sport can result in highlighting ‘differences’. When studying ‘the other’ many authors complicate notions of internal and external meanings of South Asian athletic participation. Brah (1996), Raval (1989), and Nakamura (2002, 2005) contend that those who conclude that South Asians are not fit for sport only serve to perpetuate notions of ‘otherness’. I wanted to avoid such stereotypes especially given my own social location and athletic history.

My interest in women’s cricket stemmed from my motivation to foster participation in sport and recreation among racialized girls and young women. I also believe I have acquired a certain sensitivity and understanding about Indo-Canadians because of my own cultural background and journey through Canadian sport and recreation. Since I have immigrant parents from Trinidad, I grew up with West-Indian customs. My parents and extended family have shaped my identity, enhanced my awareness of my ethnicity and taught me to integrate a distinct Indo-Caribbean culture into my life. This allowed me to be knowledgeable about certain subject matters related to Caribbean and South Asian culture.

Therefore, when studying Indo-Canadian women cricketers, I was careful of how I positioned their ‘issues’. Questions about their culture, race, gender and identity were contextualized within a post-colonial, spatial and feminist framework; in turn, this placed their experiences within a broader framework of power and hierarchy. Sandhu (2005) argues that the “portrayal of the South Asian culture as repressive and the source of South Asian women’s so-called ‘problems’ is based on a reductionist approach to culture” (p. 26). Additionally, using the notion that “ethnicity heightens gender differences” within the context of sport can result in gendered bodies being more scrutinized (Carroll & Hollinshead, 1993, p. 156).
I was also cognizant of the power that exists between researcher and interviewee and the possible exploitative nature of that relationship. Mason (2002) views listening and interpreting interviews as a theoretical project and challenges researchers to politicize talk and text, to question what counts as language and to pay attention to what cannot be expressed. As a researcher, the challenge for me was to avoid essentializing participants or reproducing stereotypes and generalizations. I was aware that I was a researcher from the ‘west’ who was studying women of different cultures, backgrounds and heritages. My biases and perceptions therefore would be very different from someone who lives in another Canadian province, or who is from another country. As such, I tried to analyze the data very carefully and interpret it to highlight players’ experiences of cricket while simultaneously avoiding assumptions based on stereotypes and myths. Using a post-colonial and spatial analysis, as well as post-colonial feminist theory, helped me complexify the representation and perceptions of ethnicities within Canada and beyond.

Finally, as a researcher, I had a certain insider status because I am brown-skinned and identify as Indo-Caribbean Canadian. Thus people make certain assumptions about me and this may have caused participants (including those who chose not to take part) not to disclose certain experiences or explain certain realities to me. I also have experience playing sport in Canada with both women and men, which gave me additional background knowledge and an increased level of understanding of women’s sporting experiences. Interestingly, the Indo-Canadians I interviewed made the assumption that I had some athletic ability so they asked me out to their practices. The Indo-Caribbean Canadians also used certain language and phrases in my presence and during the interviews due to an assumed knowledge regarding my nationality and/or heritage.
But, I also had outsider status in relation to this research project. For example, my cultural background, education level and age might have created a hierarchy between myself and the interviewees.

**Research Design**

I used interviews and qualitative analysis as the methodology for this project. Post-colonialist, spatial and feminist theorists often use qualitative research. I found this approach a useful way to uncover and interpret the complexities experienced by women cricket players in Canada. Kumar (2004) explains that feminist qualitative research emphasizes understanding the structural inequities faced by marginalized groups, and looks at how space, histories and cultures affect issues of class, race, sex and ability. As discussed above, I chose to employ post-colonial and spatial theoretical frameworks to help me uncover stories that have traditionally been ignored. Using qualitative techniques, I was able to gather participant narratives and carefully analyze them within a post-colonial framework. Through qualitative methods, I sought to understand the social factors that influenced women’s participation in the game of cricket in Canada.

Qualitative methodology serves to give voice to groups often ignored in the research process and usually involves some form of ‘conversation’ with a purpose (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Qualitative interviewing is conversational, flexible and fluid, and is characterized by active engagement between the interviewer and interviewee as they discuss relevant issues and topics (Mason, 2002). This approach provides an opportunity for stories to be shared and gives an account of the factors that contextualize ways of knowing the social world (Mason, 2002). I wanted to examine the experiences of women players and hear about their histories with the game of cricket in Canada. Interviewing participants allowed for free flowing
conversations that could go beyond the guiding questions as needed. However, there is little agreement among researchers about how well interviewing can illuminate issues “and perhaps most importantly about how well (or badly) they do what they say they do” (Mason, p.226).

I chose to conduct interviews because this research tactic allowed me to investigate social elements. By asking people to talk in order to gather information, the researcher is able to construct knowledge by listening to, and interpreting, what they say and how they say it (Mason, 2002). Using qualitative methods within a post-colonial theoretical model assisted in providing space for previously ignored groups to share their stories, and allowed for narrative analysis in order to uncover the complexities of the social world and interpret experiences (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). In order to examine a range of experiences, I wanted to recruit South Asian cricket players nineteen years or older who had played the game for at least one year in Canada.

**Interviews: Recruitment and Selection**

A research letter was crafted outlining the full details of my study (see Appendix A). This letter included background information, intentions of the research and my expectations of the interviewees, should they choose to participate. By signing this letter participants stipulated that they understood the information contained within and consented to the terms and conditions of the research project (see Appendix E). As a researcher, I made myself available to all of the participants, letting them know I would be happy to address any questions or concerns they had regarding the study. The letter also stated that participants would have the opportunity to review the data I collected from them and could remove any content that they did not wish to make public.
Initially, the scope of my study was limited to investigating the experiences of young South Asian female cricket players in Toronto. My recruitment letter (Appendix A) stated that I was specifically looking for South Asian females. My assumption was that since the majority of male cricket players in Toronto were South Asian, the same would hold true for female cricket players. In addition to email outreach, I followed up with phone calls to potential participants. Many South Asian women cricket players expressed interest in talking to me about their experiences. I felt confident that I could find enough South Asian women to participate in my study.

After an email was sent to the women’s cricket community, a number of significant events happened that slightly altered the course of my study. Several of the people who responded to the email did not identify as South Asian women. Despite the disclaimer of my study being about females, three males also responded to my recruitment letter. The first was a male Caribbean-Canadian cricket player who was in his forties and wanted to share his experiences. The second was a South Asian male in his late twenties who contacted me to ask if he could help my research by talking to me about his experiences with cricket. Finally, a cricket club coach, a man in his forties who came from Guyana, also contacted me. In addition to these three men, there was also a white male whom I interviewed through a personal contact. These male participants provided information about their own experiences playing cricket and they shared their thoughts on Indo-Canadian female cricket players. I chose not to include their data in my analysis as it was beyond the scope of this study but their stories did provide me with valuable contextual information regarding playing cricket in Canada, coaching women cricket players and administrative structures in Canadian cricket.
In addition to these males, four women cricket players who were not South Asian wrote to me indicating they were interested in my project. All of them were willing to assist me in my research even though they knew the study was marketed to South Asian women. In the end I interviewed three white women, one woman of mixed heritage (half-Japanese, half-Danish) and three Indo-Canadian women, who I was able to recruit. Unfortunately, I was unable to recruit Indo-Canadian women from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh or Sri Lanka. I managed to speak to a couple of players from these communities informally and though some of them verbally committed to an interview, they did not end up taking part. I also spoke with two South Asian women on the phone who were willing to participate in my study but were unavailable for an interview.

I initially made contact with more than eight South Asian female cricket players. Despite verbal commitments from many of them, I was ultimately unable to finalize a face-to-face interview or phone interview. The Indo-Canadians who I did interview came from Indo-Caribbean and East African communities. The definition of who is, and who is not, South Asian is complex as I stated earlier; therefore for the purposes of this study, I categorized the Indo-Caribbean and East-African participants as Indo-Canadian due to their Indian ancestral heritage. However, I recognize that this term does not adequately address the fluidity of their identities.

The transnationality that exists within South Asian populations contributes to the complexities of this diasporic population in Canada. Bhattacharya (2008) describes persons of Indian origin as a citizen of any country, besides Bangladesh, Pakistan or Sri Lanka, who at anytime held an Indian passport or who has either a parent, grandparent or ancestors who was a citizen of India. Persons who originate from India vary culturally and have migrated
(forced and voluntarily) to a wide range of other countries including Guyana, Trinidad, Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Dubai and England (Bhattacharya, 2008; Safran, Sahoo & Lal, 2008; Dickinson & Bailey, 2008). People who come to Canada directly from the Caribbean or Africa tend to identify their country of birth, such as Guyana or Tanzania, as their home country – not India. Therefore cultural ties to India are generally far less immediate for them (Bhattacharya, 2008). The term ‘Indo-Canadian’ can represent multiple identities and it is important to remember that socio-cultural contexts differ within the Indian diaspora (Bhattacharya, 2008; Hall, 1992; Rattansi, 2000). There is substantial diversity in Indo-Canadian individuals who may come from places as different as the Caribbean, Africa, and South Asia and this makes naming, categorizing, and classifying hazardous and almost unattainable (Bhattacharya, 2008; Dickinson & Bailey, 2008; Rattansi, 2000; Safran et al., 2008).

Intersectionality

This thesis uses intersectionality as a methodology to interrogate both the multiple identities of the women participants and the resulting themes of inequity in their narratives. Intersectionality as a theoretical and research paradigm offers an alternative to more traditional disciplinary approaches. Although spatial, post-colonial feminist theory claims to account for differences among women, hooks argues that feminists have not accounted for the complexity and diversity of female experiences (hooks, 1984).

Applying an intersectional approach allows researchers to consider how diverse factors such as race, class, gender and ability interact with each other and affect individuals and communities. However there are challenges to undertaking an intersectional analysis. McCall (2005) acknowledges that there is a need to manage the complexity of such a
methodology. She comments that intersectionality sometimes brushes over ‘intracategorical
complexity’ since it “requires that scholars provisionally adopt existing analytical categories
to document relationships of inequality among social groups and changing configurations of
inequality along multiple and conflicting dimensions” (McCall, 2005, p. 1773).
Intersectionality uses group identities strategically and several authors point out that this can
result in a neglect of certain points of intersections and/or a lack of attention to “people
whose identity crosses the boundaries of traditionally constructed groups” (Dill, 2002, p. 5).

In utilizing an intersectional approach I recognize “that it is impossible to fully
escape the normalizing confines of language because new relations of power/knowledge are
continuously reinscribed in new systems of classification and yet it is impossible to avoid
using categories strategically”. (McCall, 2005, p. 1777) Authors have also noted that the
crisis of representation seems unavoidable in epistemological terms. (Visweswaran, 1994).
McCall argues that feminists of colour lean more towards the intracategorical approach,
typically using finer intersections of categories. Intersectionality allowed me to acknowledge
the multiple identities of the participants, especially in relation to notions of race and gender,
and to ’classify’ their narratives in recognition of their broader social locations.

McCall (2005) further analyzes the complexities in adopting an intracategorical
approach when she notes:

Often such [categorized] groups are “new” groups in the sense of having been named,
defined, or elaborated upon in the process of deconstructing the original dimensions
of the master category. A key way that complexity is managed in such narratives is
by focusing on the signal group represented by the individual. How does this
minimize complexity? Individuals usually share the characteristics of only one group
or dimension of each category defining their social position. The intersection of identities takes place through the articulation of a single dimension of each category. That is, the “multiple” in these intersectional analyses refers not to dimensions within categories but to dimensions across categories. (p. 1781)

I use the categories of ‘white’ and ‘Indo-Canadian’ in this thesis to define the subjects of analysis and to articulate the broader structural dynamics that they represent in cricket spaces (McCall, 2005, p. 1783). I wanted to focus on the process by which identities are produced, experienced, reproduced and resisted in the social spaces of cricket.

The intracategorical approach to intersectionality recognizes the “relationships of inequality among already constituted social groups, as imperfect and ever changing as they are, and takes those relationships as the centre of analysis. The main task of the categorical approach is to “explicate those relationships and doing so requires the provisional use of categories” (McCall, 2005, p. 1785). In my study I have utilized race, culture and gender categories as “anchor” points and I acknowledge that such points are fluid. McCall (2005) argues that if you are studying structural relationships, categorization is inevitable.

In order to apply some limits to the study I chose to focus on the intersections of race, ethnicity, culture and gender and read the participant narratives with an eye to how these issues were raised and articulated. I recognize that there are many other points of intersection, for example class, sexuality and religion, which I did not have the time or scope to consider in this study.

In the end, I interviewed two distinct sets of women (distinct with respect to ethnicity) – whites and non-whites. All of the white women, except for a woman who identifies as a half white/half Japanese, lived in Victoria. The Indo-Canadians I interviewed
all lived in Toronto. The total number of participants interviewed was eleven – four males and seven females. Given my focus on women cricketers, I chose only to transcribe and analyze the seven female interviews. Within each group of participants there were differences and similarities according to socio-economic status, age, ability, culture, education, sexuality, and place of residence. Participants ranged from 19-60 years of age. These two distinct groups of interviewees (Victoria and Toronto) helped me contextualize the various histories and developments of women’s cricket in Canada. Participants had played cricket for at least one season in Canada, so they were able to reflect upon the experience of playing cricket in this country.

Profiling the Research Participants

There were seven women interviewed for this study and each of them were from unique socio-cultural backgrounds. Below, I offer a description of each of the participants, though I try to maintain their anonymity in doing so. Since there are not many female cricket players in Canada, I had to carefully select what information to disclose to ensure confidentiality was maintained.

Christina - Christina is over 50 years of age and a highly skilled cricket player. She comes from the English speaking country of Guyana which is located in South America, east of Venezuela. She has been in Canada for nearly 30 years and has obtained a college degree and lives on her own in an apartment in Toronto. Christina is one of the pioneers of women’s cricket in Canada and has played on a men’s team for most of her cricket career. In addition to establishing her own women’s club, she is also a member of the national team and highly respected within the national and international cricket community.
**Punam** - Punam is a passionate young cricketer who regrets not playing cricket as soon as she arrived from Kenya. Under 20 years of age and determined, Punam is currently in university and speaks 5 languages: English, Urdu, Guadrati, Swahili, Hindi, and Punjabi. Both her parents are from Kenya and are descendants from India. Her parents own a business in Canada.

**Rhea** – Rhea also immigrated to Canada from Guyana as a teenager and attended high school in a town 45 minutes west of Toronto. She completed her university degree, has a professional job and now resides in the GTA. Her first introduction to cricket was during her childhood years in Guyana. She is a member of the Canadian national team and plays a key administrative role of the Toronto Women’s Cricket Club. Rhea is in her late twenties and believes that ‘cricket is life’.

**Janet** - Janet adopted cricket after some coercion from a friend. She found the sport interesting and has managed to play it for two years. According to Janet, she lacks natural athletic ability and struggles to sometimes belong and fit in with the group. Her father is from Denmark and her mother from Japan. She speaks English, French and some Japanese. She grew up in Vancouver and experienced some racism growing up, including within the physical activity and sport realm – ‘I was always the last one picked in gym class’.

**Joy** - Joy is under 25 years of age and is currently a master’s student. Her parents are both Anglo-Canadians from small towns. She grew up in a middle/upper income household in Toronto but now plays women’s cricket in Vancouver. Joy has great admiration for her teammates and is grateful for the experience of playing cricket and does not understand why her friends will not join her to play the game. She does not get too involved in the politics of the game but is keenly aware that cricket is a masculine space. She is content with playing
the game recreationally and does not have any long term achievement goals related to cricket.

*Annika* - Annika is a skilled cricket player who also volunteers in numerous leadership positions within the sport. As a national team member, she is eager to make sacrifices to improve her skills especially if it means more women will join in and play cricket. Annika is 35 years of age and practices law in Victoria. Although her parents are from England, the ‘birthplace’ of cricket, they show very little interest in her participation.

*Sandy* - Sandy is over 50 years of age and has participated in multiple sports at an elite level. In addition to playing sports, she is also a dedicated and committed advocate for women’s sports. Her tireless efforts have resulted in building a successful women’s cricket club in Victoria. She confidently self-identifies as English-Canadian and has acquired a master’s degree. She can speak both French and English and has a deep understanding of women and sport.
## Participant Profile Chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Approximate Age</th>
<th>Self Identified Background</th>
<th>Birthplace</th>
<th>Number of Years in Canada</th>
<th>Number of Years Playing Club Cricket</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Christina</td>
<td>Late forties</td>
<td>South American – Guyanese-Canadian</td>
<td>Georgetown, Guyana</td>
<td>Close to 30 years</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punam</td>
<td>Early Twenties</td>
<td>Indian/Kenyan/Canadian</td>
<td>Kenya</td>
<td>Eight</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhea</td>
<td>Late twenties</td>
<td>South American – Guyanese</td>
<td>Albion, Guyana</td>
<td>Over 10 Years</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Janet</td>
<td>Early Thirties</td>
<td>Half Danish/Half Japanese/Canadian</td>
<td>Kelowna, Canada</td>
<td>Most of Life</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joy</td>
<td>Mid Twenties</td>
<td>Canadian with British Heritage</td>
<td>Toronto, Canada</td>
<td>Most of Life</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annika</td>
<td>Early Thirties</td>
<td>Canadian</td>
<td>Victoria, Canada</td>
<td>Most of Life</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sandy</td>
<td>Early fifties</td>
<td>English Canadian</td>
<td>Victoria, Canada</td>
<td>Most of Life</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Semi-Structured Interviews**

As discussed above, I used semi-structured interviews which allowed for flexibility within discussions (Lindloff & Taylor, 2002; Mason, 2002). This method enabled me to ask questions as they arose in the context of conversation that is depending on what the interviewee said (Docherty & Sandelowski, 1999). Posing open-ended questions about the player’s participation in the sport of cricket allowed me to uncover their stories (Silverman, 2000). Guided questions helped focus the discussion (see Appendix C) but were flexible enough to allow women to expand on and contextualize their individual experiences.

Once participants signed the letter of consent, all the usual procedures (e.g. opportunity to withdraw any information, confidentiality, application of pseudonyms etc.) were applied. Participants were also given the opportunity to contact me to further discuss any matters arising from their interview or the project in general. The interviews were approximately one hour in length and were conducted over the phone or at a convenient location, such as a practice facility or in one case, a participant’s home. Once all the participants were interviewed the process of data synthesizing and analysis began.

**Interview Process**

Conversations were free flowing and I allowed participants to clarify meanings and interpret their experiences though I was guided by the interview schedule. In order to achieve full confidentiality, pseudonyms are used for all participants. When I conducted phone interviews, there was no one else present with me and I also asked the participants to adhere to this.

The structure of the interview questions was based on categories regarding women’s cricket, identity and sport in a Canadian context. The questions allowed the interviewees to
describe their particular cricketing social spaces and relationships, how they experienced their participation in cricket in Canada and, where applicable, their country of origin (see Appendix C). I had a brief conversation with the participants before the formal interviews to establish a rapport and to create a comfortable setting. I invited them to ask me questions about the project including the reasons why I decided to conduct research on women’s cricket. By engaging in a short discussion like this, the participants and I were able to share common stories about women in sport. Also, many of the Indo-Canadian women were curious about my identity and seemed more comfortable when I disclosed that my parents were also immigrants from the Caribbean. Nagar and Ali (2003) advocate for feminist research to be viewed as a collaborative project which can help to deepen understandings about the complexities surrounding women’s stories and struggles within a post-colonial theoretical framework.

**Method of Analysis**

Each interview was tape recorded and then transcribed verbatim. I also took notes during the interviews to capture non-verbal communications such as facial expressions, pitch of voice and intonation. The purpose of interviews was to give participants the opportunity to a) narrate and explore their experiences and b) provide a description of the norms and values that lay beneath their cricketing experiences (Rubin & Rubin, 2000). These narratives were then critically analyzed using spatial, post-colonial and feminist frameworks, which helped to understand the various ideologies pertaining to constructions of the space of women’s cricket in Canada. Asking, listening and interpreting the narratives of these women cricket players, made these theories come alive. During the analysis, I was able to see patterns with respect to their involvement and experiences relating to their participation in cricket.
Once the interview data was collected I began the analysis stage with a manual, inductive content analysis. This involved comparing the raw data from the transcripts with my hand written notes and journal. An inductive approach allows research findings to emerge by noting frequent, dominant or significant themes in the raw data, without having to contend with the restraints imposed by more structured methodologies (Rubin & Rubin, 2000). My first reading of these texts gave me an overall picture of the data, a sense of some of the similarities and differences among participants. My next step was to code the data which I did by adopting a clustering scheme to identify emerging themes from the transcripts. Following this a second reading was preformed to further identify categories and uncover patterns in the texts.

These multiple readings helped me find key relationships and connections in the data patterns and themes. My process of textual analysis was also discussed with thesis committee members who helped to corroborate potential interpretations. Following these discussions a coding frame was developed. This frame was used to track categories, which were then conceptualized into broader themes.

**Coding**

The outcome of an inductive analysis is a set of categories which are then developed into a model or framework that summarizes the raw data and conveys key themes and processes. The process of coming up with categories, which is core to an inductive analysis, is typically characterized by four key features. The first is *Labeling for category*: As I read through and analyzed the transcripts, I put words in brackets, underlined or marked off phrases, sentences or extended quotes that illustrated examples that fit into my coding categories. *Description of category* involved describing the meaning of each category
including key characteristics and limitations. For example, I carefully analyzed how each of the participants was first exposed to the game of cricket. Each of the responses was further problematized and framed under the subcategory of history of involvement. Links were established to denote categories that had links or relationships with other categories. Within the findings, multiple issues of gender and its implications in the social spaces of cricket were found. Links are often based on commonalities in meanings between categories or assumed causal relationships. Finally, the categories were applied to a Type of model (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005), which in my case involved placing them within spatial, post-colonial and feminist theoretical frameworks.

During the coding of the interviews, I primarily focused on women’s attitudes and beliefs about cricket in order to open up a new site of knowledge about the construction of Canadian identity (Owen, 2000). The intention was to contextualize the narratives in order to contribute to the literature on women’s cricket experiences (their struggles and accomplishments) in Canada and to possibly provide some recommendations. Although the sample size was small, I believe the data collected can inform theory and policy (Yin, 1994) with respect to women’s cricket in Canada. I will return to this later.
CHAPTER FIVE: RACIALIZED SPACES OF CRICKET

Themes

My interview questions were presented in a chronological order and were comprised for an open-ended style of inquiry (Appendix A). The overarching themes that were distilled from my interview analysis include: (1) History of participation; (2) Gendered spaces; (3) Accessibility issues in the social spaces of cricket. The participants provided a wealth of information regarding their involvement in cricket.

The participants began by sharing how they initially came to be involved in physical activity and the sport of cricket. Differences of experiences due to cultural differences were examined in this section. The participants also contributed thoughts about the discourses of multiculturalism within a Canadian context. A sub-theme of this discussion was contesting meanings of a ‘tolerant’ Canadian society. There were a diversity of opinions among the participants that included tensions and varying definitions regarding the idea of ‘tolerance’. In spite of their differences, there were shared agreements on certain components of multiculturalism including the need to embrace the benefits of multicultural policies.

The second sub-theme related to multiculturalism was the participants’ identity formations. Discourses on identity were investigated in relation to the participants’ experiences in cricket. There are a number of ways that identity can be understood and I attempted to interrogate culture/race issues and existing hierarchies that impacted the development of cricket. The two distinct groups of women examined were also from two distinct urban sites, Victoria and Toronto. This geographical difference directly affected the social spaces of cricket.
There were similarities present across participants when discussing the current challenges within women’s cricket. The topic of cricket as a gendered space raised issues about the barriers and challenges these women faced when playing cricket. All of the participants experienced obstacles and discrimination while playing cricket which affected their involvement and perception of the game. Patriarchy within cricket still remains intact and women are constantly negotiating with men in order to gain acceptance and validity in the sporting realm of cricket. There was also internalized gender oppression for both groups of women which sometimes resulted in a denial of discrimination and also a generalized belief that males were biologically superior when it comes to athletic ability. Additionally, participants understood cricket to be a masculine space. This meant that the women felt they had to engage in certain behaviours in the social spaces of cricket. The women who did not adequately perform these behaviours were not readily accepted on the pitch.

The last theme discussed accessibility issues for women in sport including a lack of resources, leadership opportunities, education and recognition. Issues of access and contested spaces were explored, as well as participants’ frustrations and struggles with these issues. When the participants talked about overcoming these barriers and actually forming a club team, it was clear that Canadian born players had achieved greater success in achieving equality in the cricket world than the racialized participants. The political maneuvering that occurs in cricket clubs was discussed in relation to power. Recruitment of women cricket players continues to be difficult for a number of complex reasons related to power and authority. Few women have had the opportunity to gain the expertise, and devote the time, needed to play a role in promoting and developing women’s cricket. Consequently, while there have been gains over time, the pace of change has been very slow. The fight to acquire
space to play cricket is also an area where the women revealed their accomplishments, frustrations and continued insecurities.

**History of Participation in Cricket, Sport and Physical Activity**

I was interested in learning how women were first introduced to sport and physical activity. All of the women were introduced to sport by a male who had a close relationship to them. Whether cricket featured highly in their introduction to sport was influenced by race and culture. The participants’ particular historical connections to cricket played an integral role in determining how they viewed their participation in the game. White women viewed their participation in cricket as a non-normative sporting activity but for the Indo-Canadian participants, playing cricket elicited a sense of belonging to their community and culture.

In addition, the history of cricket in Canada (introduction of the game by the British) had colonial implications still felt today. The participants all recognized the relationship cricket had to England and attempted to conceptualize how the game of cricket travelled to colonized countries including Canada. All of the Indo-Canadian participants provided narratives about how their ‘home’ countries contributed to their passion for the game. They also shared their experiences of immigrating and the differences between playing cricket in their homeland versus Canada.

As I stated in the review of literature, cricket has historically existed as a homogeneous masculinist space that excluded women (Cashman, 1988; Cashman & Weaver, 1991; Cooper, 1995; Mangan, 1988; Morrow & Wamsley, 2005; Wagg, 2005). During the interview process it was interesting to see that many of the women compared their experiences to male players’ experiences and seemed to seek validity from males within their cricket circles. Establishing and building a foundation for women’s cricket has been a hard
fought battle both in Victoria and Toronto, however the Victoria cricket club members have had a much easier time navigating through the Canadian sport system. Frustrations about a lack of accessibility within cricket spaces were voiced by all of the participants however many more gains have been made by the women who played in Victoria.

While there were women playing cricket in Canada in the 1800’s, more recently, Canada has witnessed a resurrection of the sport for women within the past 30-40 years (Women’s Cricket, 2007). The women based in Victoria knew little about the historical development of the game and were usually first exposed to cricket through a close relationship with a male. For instance, Joy recounts:

I like trying new things and I do like being involved in team sports. I hadn’t done so in a number of years and my partner had been interested in joining cricket as well. He joined a team and when I was invited to join a team, I thought it was a good opportunity to meet some new people. (Joy)

The Toronto players were first introduced to cricket in their childhoods as it was a part of their culture growing up. Punam was first exposed to cricket growing up in Kenya while Christina and Rhea saw it played from an early age in Guyana. When these women immigrated to Canada, they had a strong desire to pursue and/or continue playing the game. The fact that cricket was a national sport in each of their homelands has affected how they play the game. Cultural differences have influenced their values, perceptions and beliefs about cricket.

Since cricket has traditionally been viewed as a masculine space, when women play the game they are entering a male arena. Many of the women said that a male friend or partner facilitated their participation in cricket. All of the participants, with the exception of
one of them, received an invitation to play cricket from a male friend. In fact their introduction to the game depended on this link to a male player. Rhea, who has three brothers, noted that she was first introduced to physical activity by these siblings:

…well growing up I had like three brothers so I would always play sports. I would always play with them ever since I was little. (Rhea)

When Christina was asked how she first became involved in cricket she answered by saying:

Cricket, well I have been playing cricket since I was old enough to run behind my brother (laughs) as a kid when I was about four or five years old. Everything he did, I did because we were close in age, [he was] just a year and a half older than me. My other sisters were much older than me. Everything he did I had to do. So if he played soccer with the boys, I was there, play cricket, I was there holding onto his shirt tail. (Christina)

Both Rhea and Christina gave recognition to their brothers and credited them with igniting a love of cricket but Christina also felt that her own hard work and perseverance led to her eventual success and continued participation in the sport.

So I think it grew out of my brother, and my mom and dad were really supportive of whatever we did. So Greg [brother] played cricket and I played cricket. All throughout primary school I was up there playing with the boys and as I got older I started to gravitate towards that sport [cricket]. (Christina)

Christina’s brother provided her with an opportunity to join a team and thus she entered the masculine space of sports and physical activity.

Both Christina and Rhea felt that West Indian cricket culture was an integral part of the story of their participation in the game. Growing up Guyana, both of them recalled
watching the West Indies team play and knowing all of the players on the team. Rhea states, “that’s all we talked about was the West Indies team”. Caribbean citizens were introduced to cricket by the British colonists. Therefore, the game signified British imperialism and both Christina and Rhea explained that watching the West Indies beat England, and then participating in the subsequent celebrations, contributed to their growing passion for the game. Wagg (2005) suggests that this narrative of euphoria after ‘beating England’ has weakened slightly in contemporary Caribbean sports culture. England is less of a competitor and the migration of players has resulted in hybridized cultures on many teams.

When Rhea and Christina arrived in Canada, they both joined teams consisting mostly of Caribbean immigrants. Walseth and Fasting (2004) contend that immigrants usually join clubs that reaffirm or reinforce their identity. However, this argument falls short of critically examining how racism may play a role in this trend, for instance the existence of cricket clubs that prevent or discourage immigrant membership. Caribbean cricket teams have never been able to achieve a foothold in Canadian sporting structures. Many of the early Canadian-Caribbean teams no longer exist (Cooper, 1995; Dutchin, 2007). Cooper (1995) did note that racism was one of the reasons Caribbean players were denied entry into certain clubs and believes further research is needed to uncover this history.

Currently, Canada is experiencing a resurgence in cricket and the number of teams has increased noticeably. Teams now consist mostly of Indo-Canadian players. Caribbean players are still playing but the sport is now predominantly played by Indian, Pakistani, Sri Lankan and Bangladeshi players (Dutchin, 2007). Since men comprise the majority of players, a gender order, as well as a racialized order, is being reproduced. Men continue to be the dominant visible presence in this sport, however, continued female participation
represents a resistance to this reality. The women know they are in an institutionalized masculine space and as a result are often trying to create new spaces. Annika expressed that the main reason she decided to play cricket was to disassociate from an expected gender role as she describes below:

Through my husband, who at the time was my boyfriend, I enjoyed watching [cricket] but I knew I would like to play more and it was a really good excuse to get out of the kitchen. They kept trying to put the wives and girlfriends who came out to watch [into the kitchen]...They put pressure on them to prepare the tea breaks and that’s where I learned to keep score and also how I learned the rules of the game.

(Annika)

This quote demonstrates Annika’s desire to establish a separate cricket space since she did not want to be ‘in the kitchen’. Historically, a common women’s role in cricket involved preparing the tea and sandwiches and this tradition was present in Annika’s husband’s club. Annika demonstrated some resistance to being excluded from playing and that inspired her to create a new space for women in cricket.

Sandy, who has played a multitude of organized women’s sports, also commented on how she felt it necessary to produce her own space to play cricket:

It started as a social endeavour, we met a bunch of fellas who were stationed here on a cable laying ship and they wanted to have some social interaction with women, so we started off meeting them by playing rugby and soccer. One day they decided “why don’t we start off by playing a cricket game?” So we thought that might be an interesting idea so we picked up a few things and started to learn about cricket.

(Sandy)
Sandy went on to explain that she wanted to continue playing the game after the men left. She describes herself as an ‘athlete’ and even though cricket was new to her, she was interested in learning how to play the sport. Cricket is a sport that is challenging to her and she will continue to play until she feels that she has mastered it. Hargreaves (1994) contends that women seek to gain acceptance into male sport domains in order to feel validated as an athlete. Sandy has excelled in hockey and has established herself as an elite athlete. She conveyed how she worked hard on building the reputation of women’s cricket in order to be taken seriously by men:

Well the Victoria and District Cricket Association has always been very welcoming to women’s cricket. I think that when it started they thought “oh goodie we are going to have a women’s auxiliary” but then we quickly disabused them of that knowledge or that intent and we have been steadily growing in influence. (Sandy)

The women’s club team, Wicket Maidens, was formed in the early 1990’s and holds a place in the Victoria and District Cricket Association. Sandy, along with other women, battled and negotiated to secure a place in a previously male only sport domain in order to establish a foothold within cricket in Victoria and remain competitive. The Wicket Maidens remains the only women’s club in the Victoria league.

Like most of the other women, Joy also had a male link to the cricket world. She explains that:

…my partner had been interested in joining cricket as well…when we first moved out here [Victoria] he was interested in joining a team. When I was invited to join a team, I thought it was a good opportunity to meet some new people...learn a new sport and yeah, just find out what it’s all about. (Joy)
For Joy and all of the Victoria participants, cricket was not seen as a sport that women or Canadians typically play. In the Caribbean, Christina and Rhea attested that the sports usually played by women were netball, track, volleyball and soccer. Within Canada, cricket is seen as an immigrant sport. The women playing in British Columbia view their participation as unique since few women in Canada play cricket. There were diverse approaches and attitudes towards cricket among the participants.

When asked about the history of cricket, and specifically about women’s cricket, most of the women had little knowledge. The two participants with the most knowledge had played the longest and were key figures in the creation of the women’s clubs The Wicket Maidens in Victoria and the Toronto Ladies in Toronto. One white woman and one Indo-Canadian woman were both pioneers of women’s cricket in Canada and revealed a lot about how women’s club teams were formed and organized in Victoria and Toronto. Both of these participants knew about the development of cricket and the history of British influence in the game. When asked about the history of cricket, England was seen as the most influential cricketing nation by most of the participants. There were a number of reasons why England was still perceived this way. When asked what countries had an impact on the game Christina answered:

   Oh, definitely England, since they were actually the ones who started the game.
   
   (Christina)

Janet also described England, along with Australia, as the most powerful countries in relation to cricket - when asked why she said:

   Because…I guess that’s where the money is?…anytime I ever watched cricket it seems as though it’s those countries playing. And all the news is coming out of those
two places...all of the equipment is coming out of those places. And I just figured they are the wealthy countries. (Janet)

The above quotes illustrate the enduring ideology of dominance, superiority and power which England has sustained over the years when it comes to cricket. Although competitively England has lost its grip on the game, some of the women still believed that England’s wealth and dominance in the sport remains intact.

Conversely, all of the participants agreed that the countries who currently dominate the game are South Asian nations and Australia. When I asked Punam what countries had cricket as their national sport, she commented on how some of the British colonized countries have built a strong foundation and now lead the world in cricket:

...well there are a few countries that dominate the sport of women’s cricket. Australia of course is number one and then India, New Zealand, South Africa, England and I guess you could say that Zimbabwe and Bangladesh are in there too but they’re not as developed. And then there are the West Indian countries that have amazing programs for women. (Punam)

Punam believes that colonized countries are not as well equipped or as skillful as the western countries. James (1963) postulates that cricket spaces are sites that reproduce inequities and highlight existing racial and colonial politics. Most of the participants were aware of cricket’s long history in Britain which contributed to their belief that England and Western countries still hold the most power and influence over the game (Wagg, 2005). Although England might have historically been a dominant force in cricket, Rhea, a native of Guyana, explained how it was her home region’s cricket teams who inspired her:
And growing up we used to pretend that we were the West Indies players. We used to give ourselves names of West Indian players and tried to be like them. (Rhea)

Rhea attempted to position herself as a West Indian cricket player despite the fact that the team was not fully representative of her identity; she celebrated an exclusively male version of cricket that did not include her gender. West Indian male prowess on the cricket pitch was internationally recognized while female participation was ignored (Wagg, 2005; Williams, 2001).

Rhea and Sandy noted that today the West Indies, South Asia, Australia and England are all producing great women cricket players. In contrast, most of the participants agreed that in Canada, the game is predominantly played by South Asian men. When asked who had contributed to the development of the game in Canada, Sandy disclosed that:

…it appears to be headed up by West Indian men who keep the program alive in the schools. And it seems to be an evolution that is also led by South Asian men. This is where most of the players are coming from. (Sandy)

Sandy noted that cricket used to be a dominant sport in early Canada and was aware that women had played the game in British Columbia during the 1800s. She knew there were records of women’s clubs in the 1800’s and had seen pictures of women cricketers in the Vancouver archival library.

In contrast, Rhea admitted she was unaware of women’s cricket history in Canada but she knew that certain countries had had more of an influence in this area:

I know a little but not a lot [of cricket history] because there isn’t that much to read [but] now it’s starting to get popular and you can go online and read up on it. I know in Guyana that England had a great impact maybe because you read about women’s
cricket in their news, as well as Australia. Those are the two countries that you will always read about in women’s cricket. (Rhea)

Rhea related her knowledge about cricket to her homeland rather than Canada. She also felt that two western countries were the most dominant and created the standard in women’s cricket. The internet has provided an avenue for Rhea to find more information about the women’s game, however limited historical content is available through the web. This quote also demonstrates how some of the women continued to perceive countries from the west as the most powerful.

The original rules of cricket were designed to accentuate a ‘gentlemanly game’ and the language throughout the rule books refers only to men (Stoddart & Sandiford, 1998). Christina was aware of the rules and particular behaviours historically expected in cricket but she attested that the constitution has now changed to include women. She stated that:

The rule book in cricket said “man or woman”. Now, all the rule books say “player”.

My dad always brought me up to be fair, and cricket is about fair play, and that’s why I made that decision [to continue cricket]. (Christina)

This statement illustrates how cricket was used by colonizers as a means to get their subjects to adhere to a moral code based on British culture (James, 1963; Morrow, 2005). For example, one of the guidelines in the rule book is that questioning the umpire is not permitted. Such behaviour is deemed unacceptable and ‘ungentlemanly’. Christina felt she had adopted some of the behaviours of ‘fair play’ which she believed had also benefited her off the field. She has worked hard at creating a good image and is quite proud of the reputation she has built up within the cricket community. On the pitch she displays ‘appropriate’ behaviour that she believes she learnt from her participation in cricket. One
might argue that the historical moral code of cricket that Britain exported has been reproduced in a player such as Christina. Although South Asian countries and Australia have dominated cricket competitions over the past 30 years (Canadian Women’s History, 2007), Christina, along with several other participants, continues to see England as the place that sets the standard and produces some of the top players and facilities.

The cricket grounds in England were rated by some of the participants as the best pitches in the world. The perception of the participants is that England is the most powerful and wealthiest country, and remains a prevailing force in cricket. Punam commented on her belief that the cricket grounds in the Caribbean are inferior to those in Britain. England’s historical dominance in cricket has made a lasting impression on Punam who believes that playing in and/or for England would be a great honour. Two of the Indo-Canadian participants, Punam and Christina, spoke of their dreams of playing in England, thus perpetuating the discourse of colonial superiority.

And honestly if I could go to med school in England, I would go and play there…even their leagues are so much better than ours…the women’s league… if I get good enough to and if I move to England I would love to play for their team. (Punam)

Punam wishes to go abroad to England to experience ‘better’ cricket and improve her skills. I believe that Punam thinks playing for England would give her an elevated status in Canada and within her cricket community. When I further asked Punam about this dream of playing in England, she shared that while she is about to do “three weeks of personal training in India”, she feels that it is in England that her efforts to become a world class cricket player will be realized.
Christina also dreams of playing in England and believes such a trip would be of great historical significance.

Because that is the cricketing hub of the world [England]! It still is because they were the founders of cricket. The English...right?! A lot of the grounds over in England have historical significance. So the dreams for men and women, boys and girls are to play in England and to play at Lords possibly. (Christina)

Like Punam, Christina aspires to play in England. Fanon (1967) argues that the ‘other’ desires to be seen by whites and perhaps that is at play here. In the above quote Christina mentions the significance of playing at Lords, a historical and iconic cricket stadium. The historical reality is that those grounds were built in a time when non-whites and females were denied access. Yet Christina feels that playing in this stadium would be an incredible experience that she could share with cricketers around the world, including some of the most prolific players of the game.

While the participants were aware of England’s involvement in the game, they were unacquainted with women’s contributions to cricket in Canada or any other country. However, several of the women from Victoria knew the recent history of the women’s game in their city since one of the founders of the Wicket Maidens is still currently playing on the team. The story of the formation of the Wicket Maidens is well documented by past club administrators and existing club members. Every member who joins the club is usually told the history of the team.

Similarly, one of the Toronto participants was able to give a full account of the founding of the Toronto Ladies’ cricket club due to her personal involvement in establishing it. The other Indo-Canadian participants from Toronto, however, were unaware of the history
and development of women’s cricket in the GTA. The Victoria and Toronto teams had differing histories. The club formation in the GTA was a more informal process. The Toronto Ladies club has had difficulty in sustaining their players and gaining access to privileges that have been successfully attained by the Wicket Maidens. There are multiple reasons for the inequities and disparities that exist between these two clubs including racialization, class, social capital and the longevity of the programs. Providing a critical analysis of the two clubs provides further insights about this.

Racialized Differences

Racialized differences were most apparent in how white and Indo-Canadian players conceptualized their participation in the game. The white players described playing cricket as a unique physical activity. Their participation was linked to culturally assimilating into a sport that they believed was not typically Canadian. The white participants were quite proud of their distinctiveness in choosing to play cricket. Since cricket was understood to be an immigrant sport, mostly played by Indo-Canadians, the white women players felt that their participation was unique. Within Canadian cricket spaces, the women in Victoria seem to enjoy the benefits of a distinctive public status as ‘women cricketers’. Sandy who has played a number of different Canadian sports viewed cricket as ‘unusual’:

They think I’m rather weird [when asked what her friends think of her participation in cricket]. It’s fun, it’s unusual, I see and feel different then how I felt being a woman ice hockey player. I’ve also played rugby and a lot of other non-traditional women’s sports. (Sandy)

Sandy’s unique status as a cricket player can be linked to a lack of knowledge about cricket culture by her peers. Although she contends that she is used to playing non-traditional
women’s sports, the reality is that ice hockey and rugby are played by significantly more Canadian women than cricket. Many established women’s leagues and championships currently exist in those sports. Interestingly, hockey and rugby are played by predominately white players (Ifedi, 2005). Sandy marvels at the diversity of players cricket attracts and acknowledges that cricket is played “by all kinds of different cultures”. Sandy feels special to be part of something she sees as different and diverse. hooks (2000) argues that when white people acknowledge ‘difference’, it is linked with their enjoyment of the ‘other’. Similarly, Joseph (2005) concludes that white participation in capoeira\(^\text{17}\), permits “people regardless of nationality, ethnicity, or skin colour to consume, relish and exhibit Afro-Brazilian culture” (p. 13). Sandy receives pleasure in having direct contact with a sport that is, as she says, ‘mostly played by immigrants’.

Like Sandy, Annika views cricket as ‘different’ since many Canadians have not adopted the sport and know little about the game: “Cricket seems more of a quirky thing…the fact is that cricket is just kind of a quirky thing”. The ‘quirky’ aspect of cricket seems to give Annika a sense of pride. She goes on to talk about how proud she is to be a female cricketer and that she feels privileged to hold a place on the national team. Annika explains that securing a spot on the national soccer or hockey team would have been a much more difficult, if not impossible, task since so many more women play these sports. Canadian women’s cricket is an emerging sport and Annika notes that being on the national team affords her the opportunity to travel and to maintain the prestigious status of an elite athlete in Canada.

\(^{17}\) Capoeira is a martial art that was started by Afro-Brazilians who lived in the poorer areas of the country. It combines dance, artistic movement and martial arts and was originally created to express notions of freedom (Joseph, 2005).
Joy also expresses that playing cricket demonstrates her uniqueness. She describes how her participation, both as a player and consumer of cricket, marks her as ‘different’ and ‘strange’:

I think that everyone just views it as an oddity. They think it’s kind of funny actually. They think it’s totally out of the blue in a way, like why would you choose cricket out of all of the things you could play? I think they just find it kind of funny. Amusing but also in a strange way. (Joy)

Joy reveals that people ask her why she would choose to play cricket and implicit in this question may be another one about why a white woman would choose to play a sport mostly played by immigrants. Ironically, historically the sport was created by the British specifically to provide a space for white bodies to play in Canada. However today, the Victoria participants see cricket as an immigrant sport since it is viewed as being played by non-white bodies and thus their decision to play the game is depicted as ‘odd’, ‘funny’ and ‘strange’ by their peers.

Janet recognizes that playing cricket is not seen as an oddity in other countries, but notes that in Canada, playing cricket is observed as a non-Canadian activity. Her involvement in cricket is marked by assumptions about “who” should be playing the game. When asked to discuss on how cricket relates to her socio-cultural identify Janet answers:

…in a Canadian community I would say it’s unique. Well, it kind of fits in because I have that kind of international background and I just find it funny because my husband is Scottish. ….I’m like oh, I’m going to play the English sport. So it just kind of fits in, everything I do is kind of unique and I think it’s because I am fortunate to have a mixed heritage which just fits. (Janet)
Janet makes a link between her diverse heritage and how this kind of identity “fits” with her participation in cricket. She explains that as a visible minority woman (Japanese/Danish) she experienced forms of racism while growing up in Victoria. In the example above it is precisely these same multiple identities that make her ‘fit’ comfortably into the space of cricket as the sport is seen as unique.

As discussed above, within Canada, cricket is mostly played by immigrants from Pakistan, India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and the Caribbean (Dutchin, 2007). South Asians are portrayed by the media as cricket players (Carrington & McDonald, 2001; Fleming, 1994; James, 2005; Rattansi, 2000; Wagg, 2005). Although men have dominated the game cricket is now more accessible to women internationally and is continuing to gain momentum globally (Women’s Cricket, 2007). Opportunities for organized games and competition have increased for females in Canada and internationally (Women’s Cricket, 2007). This increased interest in women’s cricket internationally has impacted Canadian cricket culture. Migrants from the Eastern Caribbean and South Asia have carried their traditions of cricket to Canada (Dutchin, 2007). Rhea communicates that playing cricket is directly related to the shaping of her identity:

…most of us that are playing are from West Indian, Indian or Pakistani backgrounds, like from an Asian background. For us growing up, cricket is our culture and playing. Even here, our family will look at it as a family outing. A lot of people will look forward to the weekends just to come out like to watch us play….every player that I have spoken with when I would ask what is cricket to them, they would be like cricket is their culture. (Rhea)
Most of the players on Rhea’s team are from either the West Indies or South Asia. Cricket is part of family traditions and a valued sport that represents their culture. Punam has a similar experience and explains how cricket was integrated into her family’s activities:

…when we were young we would play everyday with my parents since they have the knowledge and the background of playing cricket. You know, they have grown up in India so they know how crazy cricket is there…it’s always been pretty big in the family. They would always be watching games and stuff or going to games. Cricket’s pretty big in my family. (Punam)

Punam’s Indian identity (her parents moved from India to Kenya) and growing up with cricket demonstrate the cultural expectations for playing and being involved in the sport. Nevertheless, Punam has to constantly negotiate her belonging in masculine cricket spaces. She describes how when she joined her first male club, she was not welcome:

…okay well I started working out with 18Moonlight in Kitchener…but that didn’t end up working out too well, it was just not welcoming enough for me. It was an all boys club. Then I quit after that and then I decided to find another coach in Toronto.

(Punam)

Punam says she felt more secure and encouraged in pursuing cricket in Toronto. After a childhood in Kenya in which her family fostered a love of cricket Punam is glad to be re-finding her passion for the game.

Having cricket part of their family culture helped instill a sense of pride within the Indo-Canadian women cricketers. Punam, Rhea and Christina all had families, and social networks, that strongly supported them as cricket players and this reinforced their great love

18Pseudonyms have been used for names or places to protect the identity of the individuals.
for the game. Christina’s brother and father used to take her to practices and she explains that her “first ever cricket club was in Guyana, an all men’s cricket club. I joined that at 14”.

Rhea also started playing cricket young with her brothers and father and attributes their support not only to her success, but also her acquired passion for the game:

My brothers, they have had a great impact on me, especially my oldest brother, he lives in Cambridge. When I came here he asked me to play in his club. When the guys practice he will make sure I have a ride to go to practice, and make sure I have a knock with the guys. When I’m home the night before I have to go to game or if I have any big tournament coming up and I’m over there, he will give me as much coaching and practicing as he can. Back in Guyana I have two other brothers and they would do the same as well. They are pretty much supportive. (Rhea)

Both Rhea and Christina played in masculine spaces that usually felt safe since their family was supporting their efforts. Rhea believes that the sport is part of how she defines herself and her family and she has attempted to reproduce a culture of cricket in Canada:

It’s something they [her family] know I am passionate about and love doing…like my friends are pretty supportive, they always look forward to hearing about my cricketing stories and they’re always interested. (Rhea)

In summary, the Indo-Canadian players placed high significance and importance on their involvement in cricket. Friends and family knew and understand that cricket was prominent in their lives. The white participants did not seem to connect cricket with their families in this same way. For the white women, playing the sport was a great way to meet people, be social and participate in a unique activity. All of the white participants’ families knew about their participation but showed little interest in the game of cricket.
The Indo-Canadian women had all played cricket in their homeland and were motivated to continue the tradition when they migrated. Canada provided a space for them to play cricket. Their narratives can show us something about multiculturalism and integration among immigrant and racialized groups. The next section examines how cricket fits into the Canadian landscape and considers how this relates to multiculturalism.

**Multiculturalism: Contested Meanings**

Multiculturalism is a term that requires critical analysis. Fleras and Kunz (2001) contend that multiculturalism can be understood as a fact, an ideology, a policy, a practice and a critical discourse. Canada’s multiculturalism policy was implemented over 30 years ago - during this time period the policy’s focus shifted from cultural retention in the 1970s to racial equality in the 1980s and finally, social inclusion in the 1990s (Fleras & Kunz, 2001). The Canadian federal government adopted a multiculturalism policy with the intention of boosting minority participation in Canadian society. All government organizations must ensure their policies and day to day operations are in accordance with the Multiculturalism Act.

As mentioned above, there have been three broad phases in the history of Canada’s multiculturalism policy. The first phase dates back to 1971 when the Prime Minister at the time, Pierre Elliott Trudeau, announced that Canada would embrace a policy of multiculturalism. The focus of the policy at the time was on ethnicity. In 1988, the government of the day passed *The Canadian Multiculturalism Act* making Canada the first country to have national laws on this topic. The Act focused on equity and eliminating discriminatory practices at the institutional level. In more recent times, multiculturalism
efforts have focused on creating an inclusive society, especially by helping immigrants acquire a sense of belonging through the granting of citizenship.

Although Canada receives international recognition for its diversity policies, there have been many critiques of multiculturalism over the years. Multiculturalism is a highly contested domain. There are struggles to define the term and reach consensus regarding the aims of the policy (Bannerji, 2000; Fleras, 1995; Fleras & Kunz, 2001). One of the features of multiculturalism is an endorsement of diversity, a concept which enables diverse individuals to retain their cultural identities while living in Canada. However, this provision is conditional in the sense that individuals must adhere to all Canadian law. It can be argued that multiculturalism is both a benefit and a hindrance to Canada, a source of social tension and a method for managing clashes between minorities (Fleras, 1995). Fleras and Elliott (2002) argue that multiculturalism can neither be the sole reason for existing social problems, nor the solution. Rather, multiculturalism needs to be viewed as a useful tool for managing diversity in Canada’s complex society where power is unequally distributed (Fleras & Elliott, 2002).

There are many misconceptions surrounding multiculturalism (Bannerji, 2000; Dei, 2000; Fleras, 1995; Fleras & Elliott, 2002). The narratives of the participants revealed many different interpretations of multiculturalism. Canada is promoted as a multicultural country and yet the tensions surrounding immigrant groups in Canada have become more pronounced since 9/11 (Razack, 2008). Interest in protecting Canada’s homeland and security has also increased. Some citizens are becoming more vocal about their dislike of multiculturalism and the ‘right’ of newcomers to preserve their cultures (Razack, 2008). I believe conducting my Victoria interviews over the phone helped the white participants feel more at ease talking
about race, sport and culture than they might have been had we been sitting face to face.

Although my name signifies me as an ethnic minority, the fact that I was born and grew up in Canada means my identity includes a culture that could be named ‘Canadian’.

**Perception of Cricket as a Multicultural Sport in Canada**

Part of my discussions with participants focused on whether cricket was a multicultural sport and whether it was even considered a Canadian sport. When asked to consider this one of the Indo-Canadian participants, Rhea, shared that:

> I would definitely say that cricket is a multicultural sport because you have people from every culture and that’s the one thing they have in common. So everybody comes together and participates in that one sport so that is pretty amazing to see.

(Rhea)

Rhea seems to believe in the ideology that multiculturalism means people from various cultures functioning as a harmonious group or society. She feels that cricket is proof that multiculturalism exists in Canada. Punam echoes Rhea’s belief that cricket is a place where multiculturalism comes to life since so many different ethnicities participate in the sport together. Punam further attests that cricket in Canada is “the most multicultural, [more] than anywhere in the world”. Joy points out that cricket can be an effective way to assimilate newcomers to Canada. But assimilation, and creating a sense of belonging, is not guaranteed through sport participation (Jarvie, 2000). James (2003) and Fleras and Elliott (2002) argue that achieving true diversity is not about celebrating food, festivals, activities and holidays. Rather, diversity should be concerned with relationships of interdependence between groups in the context of unequal power. Academics need to find new approaches to analyzing diversity that focus on power relations (Bannerji, 2000; Fleras & Elliott, 2002; James, 2003).
The perception among some of the participants was that cricket is a welcoming sport and available to anybody who wants to play the game. The visible diversity of the players leads to assumptions that the sport is accessible to everyone regardless of gender or ethnicity.

Commenting on cricket’s multiculturalism Annika says:

I think it’s very inclusive…there are a lot of people of different cultural backgrounds that understand the game. And I think it’s really good, certainly in terms of the men’s game, it’s a really good way to become integrated into the community and have people around that are still from your home base, your original country. Because within the men’s team it is incredibly diverse in terms of where people are from. So, I do think it sort of helps them to stay connected to their original country while becoming involved in Canada at the same time. (Annika)

The three white participants all agreed that cricket gives newcomers to Canada a way to stay connected to their homeland and culture. In the statement above, Annika assumes that anyone who joins cricket can have a positive experience no matter their nationality or ethnicity. She argues that the sport is a site that helps immigrants feel a sense of belonging. Similarly, Sandy also contends that cricket “provides a place for women of many backgrounds to come together and have some fun doing physical activity”. Jarvie (2000) critiques the notion that sport is always an effective tool for integration and community cohesion. While cricket may appear inclusive since there are players from different ethnic groups, inequities and power relations may not have been taken into account. Although Annika believes that the sport can be a tool for integration, assimilation is not guaranteed off the field. Ties between diverse players on the field do not necessarily translate to connections and belonging in the wider society. Additionally, minority and immigrant experiences are not
monolithic and there are varying expectations. Some immigrants seek to shed their culture and fully assimilate, others might want to keep to themselves, while still others may seek out people of similar cultural background to have familiarity in their lives (Fleras & Elliott, 2002).

The participants argued that cricket can bring people from different cultures and nationalities together. However, does the sport of cricket unite citizens under the banner of becoming more ‘Canadian’? In a white settler society such as Canada, immigrants are still viewed as guests and even when they adhere to Canadian culture and customs, this is no guarantee of acceptance (Bannerji, 2000; Fleras & Elliott, 2002; Razack, 2002). Joy, a white participant thinks that cricket is a multicultural sport but did attempt to explain some of the challenges:

I think it is a multicultural sport. At least in Victoria it is dominated by people from England, Australia and New Zealand. So it’s not, you know visible minorities. Although I know that in other cities that are more multicultural like Toronto maybe it would be. So I do think that it is a multicultural sport. But in Victoria we do get people from like the commonwealth countries coming out, but for places like India there are not as many people. And I think that Vancouver might have a lot more people who are from an Indian background that would be playing cricket over there.

(Joy)

Joy’s quote uncovers some of the challenges in defining ‘multicultural’. The three white participants were aware that Toronto cricket teams were comprised of mostly non-white players. Annika’s experience playing cricket in Toronto led her to the conclusion that “most of the women who play in Toronto are from Guyana”.
Although cricket teams may diverse in some places Joy’s observations point to the fact that setting up a cricket team does not automatically mean that marginalized groups will participate. Dei (2000) reminds us that celebrating differences instead of removing discriminatory practices does not solve problems but in fact prevents us from solving them. People may look at cricket teams with their diverse membership and conclude that multiculturalism is a success, and yet if further interrogation is carried out hierarchies of power and inequitable institutional practices may well come to light.

**Cricket…a Canadian Game?**

Most of the participants stated that since cricket is played primarily by immigrants and only in pockets of the country, the game is not deemed a “Canadian sport”. However, Rhea used history to make a case why cricket is a Canadian sport. She comments:

I believe that it is a Canadian game, like if you go, way, way, way back to the roots like in the 1700 and 1800’s you will see that when the British came to Canada they brought it with them. Only when the men went to war a lot of people forgot the sport and they started developing hockey. But I’m saying it’s a Canadian sport. Canada is built on immigrants, people coming from different countries and people coming, they come here and want common sports. I would say definitely yeah, it has become a Canadian sport. (Rhea)

Rhea has a different interpretation than most of the other participants. It may be that her experience playing in Toronto has given her this perspective. Within the GTA, the argument can be made that cricket is a common sport because of the significant number of existing cricket clubs. Cricket’s popularity is soaring amongst South Asian, West Indian and other immigrant groups in the city and it is increasingly being played at educational institutions.
The multicultural landscape of cricket represents the various identities that exist in Canada, especially Toronto.

Canada appears to be an international leader in multiculturalism despite the argued shortcomings of the policy. Among Canadians the policy garners a range of interpretations. The assumed aim of multiculturalism is to embrace diversity, however, a negative reaction to this policy can sometimes make citizens very protective of dominant ideologies of “Canadianess”. The majority of Canadians are not familiar with the sport of cricket and for that reason categorizing it as a Canadian sport remains questionable. Transforming cricket into a national sport might require changing the dominant ideology of what kinds of sports can be deemed ‘Canadian’.

Acquiring national citizenship is usually defined as having social membership in a society and belonging to a particular territory whose laws and regulations you adhere to. The international mobility of residents, migrant workers and non-citizens has complicated the definition of citizen (Stasiulis & Bakan, 2005). New Canadian laws and regulations make acquiring citizenship a much more gradual process and lead to the existence of a hierarchy of citizenship levels (Fleras & Elliott, 2002; Razack, 2008; Stasiulis & Bakan, 2005). English speaking citizens of European descent typically have the highest status in Canada following by French speaking Canadians with European heritage. Multiple visible minorities follow and the bottom status position is occupied by Aboriginal peoples (Bannerji, 2000; Fleras & Elliott, 2002).

One participant strongly believed that cricket is an immigrant sport and until other citizens begin to adopt the sport, Canadians will never see cricket as their game. The
participants contested the idea that cricket can be named a “Canadian game”, for instance

Punam notes:

I would say it is an immigrant sport. Even the white people that play here, they’re not
of Canadian descent, they are either British, South African or Australian. (Punam)

Punam posits that since mostly immigrants play the sport, cricket cannot be a Canadian
game. The quote demonstrates that high immigrant participation contributes to how cricket
is perceived and represented in Canada. Bannerji explains that the non-white body is seen by
Canadians as “essentially religious, traditional, pre-modern and thus civilizationally
backward” (2000, p.7).

Joy notes that until more white Canadian born people play cricket, the sport will
never be widely adopted outside of immigrant populations.

I don’t think it is a Canadian game. I think it would be great if it would become a
Canadian game but I see it as being really below the radar for the majority of people
here. I think there are a lot of people in Canada that are very dedicated and passionate
about the game, but it’s just not something that any Canadian born people play except
for if it’s a big part of their culture. I don’t think they know anything about it really.

(Joy)

Most of the participants agreed with Joy that cricket is not a national sport and has not yet
gained acceptance in Canadian society.

Janet contests that the diversity of cricket players in this country demonstrates a
multicultural harmony that is representative of Canada:
...it’s from Britain after all but when you see the mix of people out on the field having fun, racism doesn’t exist. Political and religious enemies don’t exist and they are all happily playing together. Then, that does symbolize Canada that way. (Janet)

As with many Canadians, Janet believes that racism is not present in this nation and that we live in a harmonious country. She believes that a diverse group on the pitch symbolizes the acceptance and tolerance of difference that exists in Canada. It is a common myth that multiculturalism automatically occurs, or ‘happens’ easily, despite differences between citizens (Fleras & Elliott, 2002). The goal of the policy is to carefully balance “culture” with “equity” and “inclusion” (Bannerji, 2000). The cricket pitch does represent multicultural bodies but each player’s experience is different in relation to race, sex, class, gender and religion. C.L.R. James (1993) contested that cricket mirrors the political, economical and social climates that exist in a society. He further noted that divisions related to race and class can also be illustrated through cricket. Janet’s participation in the sport of cricket might involve playing with people from diverse backgrounds but this does not necessarily translate into having achieved multiculturalism.

Evidence from the latest census in the GTA proves more starkly than ever that neighbourhoods can be classified by race (Fenlon, 2008). Further, neighbourhoods with a high number of racialized residents experience many inequities such as poverty and poor living conditions. Many of Canada’s recent policies on national interest do not make it easy for racialized people to feel a sense of belonging in Canada (Fleras and Elliott, 2002; Razack, 2008). The attacks of 9/11 and a resulting rise in resistance to multiculturalism have led to increased fear among Canadians that their rights and culture are being threatened, especially by migrants from Middle Eastern and South Asian countries (Razack, 2008). Some citizens
are claiming that multiculturalism policies have gone too far and polarized Canadian society (Fleras & Elliott, 2002; Razack, 2008; Stasiulis & Bakan, 2005). This context has led to minorities reporting an increase in race-based hate crimes, police surveillance of their communities and prejudice and discrimination which cannot adequately be solved by multicultural policy (Fleras & Elliott 2002; Razack, 2008; Stasiulis & Bakan, 2005). An interrogation of the participants’ views on multiculturalism in Canada uncovered their thoughts about their own identity and sense of ‘Canadianess’.

Some of the participants were proud that cricket brought so many different nations and people together and saw this as an example of successful multiculturalism. For the most part, none of the participants saw any disadvantages to the diversity in cricket. Some of them believed that racism did not exist on the cricket pitch, and shared the popular notion, which has been highly critiqued, that sport can unify nations and people (Jarvie, 2000). While sport can bring diverse cultures together, Fleras and Kunz (2001) contend that multiculturalism has moved beyond this kind of tolerance to look at issues of inclusive citizenship. Several authors have critiqued the argument that the integration of citizens into a community is facilitated through sport (Fleming, 1991; Stasiulis & Bakan, 2005; Walseth, 2008). The Canadian government defines successful integration by looking at such factors as employment rates, level of education and residential concentration (Fleras & Elliott, 2002).

The latest census reveals that educational levels lag behind, and joblessness is higher, in visible minority populations – even among first and second generation born Canadians (Fenlon, 2008). In Canada, visible minority men and white men and women participate more in sports than visible minority women. Immigrant sport participation rates are also lower, they participate three times less than their Canadian born counterparts (Ifedi,
Given these realities, perhaps the minority women cricket players felt more of sense of belonging by participating in this particular sport? Aizlewood and Pendakur, (2006) contend that visible minority individuals are more likely to feel comfortable in groups of people with similar ethnicities to their own. However, belonging and engaging in sport activities with players who share a similar cultural background does not necessarily equate to a sense of belonging to the nation (Abraham, 2006; Aizlewood & Pendakur, 2006).

Belonging to the nation can occur at various micro-levels. Acquiring friendship within a sports club is an example of social integration at the micro level (Walseth, 2008). Rhea, an Indo-Canadian participant communicated that cricket assisted her in learning about Canadian life, while Sandy felt that was not a role that cricket needed to play. Nevertheless, most of the white participants agreed that cricket did assist non-whites in learning about Canadian culture. Rhea shares how cricket helped her in this respect:

…yes it has helped because when you are going out to represent Canada [she played for the national team] you have to take the Canadian culture with you. You have to know more about Canada, and know about the people in Canada because people ask you. The media asks you questions and the locals ask you questions. (Rhea)

In the above quote, Rhea demonstrates how cricket assisted her in learning about Canada and its customs. In contrast, Sandy advocates that cricket is a place where diverse women can come together and play – she does not see the pitch as a space to learn about what it means to be Canadian:

I don’t think that’s the role of cricket. I think that we provide a place for women of many backgrounds to come together and have some fun doing physical activity. But did they learn anything about Canadian culture from us? Um it maybe is an offshoot
of it but it’s not the goal. It’s not our goal to do anything but be welcoming and provide a venue for women who want to meet some new people and play some sport.

(Sandy)

Sandy believes that cricket creates social support, a way for women to make friends and enjoy sport. Even though Sandy denied that cricket provides an opportunity to learn about Canadian culture, many immigrant players who join sports find their teammates do teach them some of the cultural norms of the host country (Jarvie, 2000). Annika gave evidence of this argument:

…um, yeah I think it did actually [assist in learning about Canadian culture]. Yeah, it was a fellow South African who was living in Victoria who told him about cricket going on in Victoria. Now a lot of his friends are on a cricket team. I really do think that’s the best way to get acclimatized to a culture is to get to know people. And a sports team is just a great way to get to know people and it helps to be around people who speak your accent. (Annika)

Annika recognizes that there are people with non-Canadian backgrounds on her team and believes the game has helped them learn about Canadian culture. The quote also demonstrates that the South African players felt comfortable due to the presence of other players of their ethnicity. Sports clubs that immigrants join are usually places that confirm their existing identity and culture (Walseth, 2004, 2006). All of the participants shared that interacting with people from different backgrounds and learning about their cultures was a positive feature of playing cricket. Each of the participants also discussed how the cultural make up of their teams contributed to their sense of belonging.
The Toronto Ladies practice at a Caribbean sports club facility that was formed in the 1970’s and the majority of players on the team are from the West Indies. The Wicket Maidens attract players of mostly European descent. In these examples you can see how sport can operate as a site of identity reinforcement. The participants made it evident that playing with other people of similar backgrounds promoted feelings of belonging and helped to preserve one’s identity.

**Multiculturalism and Belonging**

The conversations about diversity and multicultural policy produced a variety of feelings, tensions and thoughts about who belongs in Canada. A persistent discourse about the strong value of multiculturalism was present in some of the participants’ narratives:

> I think it’s great. I think it’s pretty amazing that you could share your experience with someone from another country, geographically speaking. I think it’s great that you could share a common thing such as cricket with them and I think that multiculturalism is one of the greatest things and one of the reasons I love Canada. Because you could go out there and talk to people from different walks of life. You can appreciate your culture, so its one of the most amazing things. (Rhea)

Rhea’s belief is that multiculturalism is a blueprint for Canadians on how to live together harmoniously across difference. She trusts that embracing diversity can enrich the lives of Canadians. However, two of the white participants were cautious about celebrating multiculturalism and they believed that when newcomers come to Canada they should not preserve their culture. Sandy felt strongly that when immigrants fight to maintain their culture instead of assimilating, they are threatening the existing Canadian cultural identity:
I think it’s a crock [multiculturalism]…I think we should be Canadians…And the fact that it is all these little pockets of cultures that all want preservation of their previous life is a detriment to creating a Canadian identity….it’s really hard to create a Canadian identity when everybody’s trying to preserve their external identity. I think that we end up with a lot of cultural tensions that exist, and that’s mainly it. (Sandy)

Sandy, who is a fourth generation Canadian, felt that her Canadian culture should be adopted by newcomers to Canada. She attributed cultural tensions to immigrants who don’t wish to do this. Sandy might have failed to understand her own role in creating cultural tensions by insisting that others should lose their cultural customs and beliefs to assume an ascribed Canadian culture. Does preserving one’s culture polarize citizens? This is a question answered variously by different Canadians. After the multiculturalism policy was enacted, more citizens welcomed diversity however others became more protective of the imagined ‘Canadian’ identity (Bannerji, 2000; Fleras & Elliott, 2002).

The events of 9/11 resulted in governments increasing border control and creating new laws that encourage racial profiling (Razack, 2002). More Canadians are beginning to feel that multiculturalism is a threat to their sense of belonging and the constructed Canadian identity (Fleras & Elliott, 2002). Increasing pressure to preserve ‘Canadian culture’ is resulting in resistance to the implementation of multiculturalism. Multiculturalism aims to erase discriminatory practices and prejudices (Fleras & Elliott, 2002; Stasiulis & Bakan, 2005). This process can be complicated since the policy is interpreted and implemented at a local level. Every region is different and may enact multiculturalism in a different way (Breton, 2000). Annika explores this phenomenon as she shares her caution in crediting multiculturalism with the creation of a harmonious country:
I think it varies a lot from place to place, I think some places don’t necessary view multiculturalism as a positive in the community. I am just thinking about how some towns are in the interior, that sort of thing. But in Canada in general I don’t know. Victoria has a very strong multicultural community, it’s very open. What I have heard from people who have not come from larger cities is that there just aren’t enough people of any one group, any non-white group for it to be a really easy transition to come here. But it’s all part of the way that cricket helps because the vast majority of the cricket players in Victoria are from somewhere else and not born in Canada. And a lot of them are mostly non-white. (Annika)

Annika assumes that newcomers who migrate to large cities will find representatives from their culture and therefore have an easier transition playing cricket within a club. She is in the privileged position of being from the majority race and culture so that her place in Canada is rarely questioned. She expresses sympathy towards non-whites who choose to reside in smaller cities/towns. Annika is aware that non-whites might feel more comfortable with people of similar cultures. However, she did not see that her club might not be as inclusive to non-whites as it is to herself and she was unable to recognize how she might have a role in welcoming immigrants. Her whiteness positions her as having more power and privilege than non-whites (Ahmed, 2007). She is able to join a team in Victoria that is reflective of her race and is part of the dominant culture. I suggest that this position affords her the opportunity to feel a sense of belonging as a Canadian. In contrast, racialized groups in Canada are not readily accepted and their visible identity forcibly denotes them as being in opposition to Canadian culture (Bannerji, 2000; Fleras & Elliott, 2002; Razack, 2004). Annika assumes that non-whites want to be part of a particular cricket club only because it is
representative of their homeland, she does not consider that they may choose this to avoid racism or feelings of un-belonging in mainly white clubs. Annika’s thoughts reveal the complexities surrounding multiculturalism.

Janet praised Canada’s multiculturalism policy and recognized the value in diversity but also expressed how the threat of becoming a ‘melting pot’ is always looming:

I think it’s great. I get discouraged when people refer to us as a melting pot and not a mosaic or a multicultural country, because I think that that’s what makes Canada so unique. I’d hate to lose that. I think it’s great that we can live in a country where people can keep their cultural identity and not be afraid or be killed because of it. We continue to embrace integration, it just has to be remembered well, which is why people come here and we are fortunate to have people come here. (Janet)

Janet’s perspective on multiculturalism touches on the ambiguities that exist when various cultures come together. Dichotomies also surround the various discourses on multiculturalism. Some of the white cricket players seemed uncomfortable talking about multiculturalism. They might have been hesitant out of a possible fear of appearing racist and/or unwelcoming to other ethnicities. Also, participants might not have had to think about diversity in the past as multiculturalism and issues of inclusion might not relate to their everyday experience.

When asked what she thought of multiculturalism in Canada, Joy admitted that she thought there were advantages and disadvantages to it:

That’s a really broad question. I don’t know, I think there’s a lot of advantages, I mean growing up in Toronto and living in Ottawa as well. I really, really enjoy having people from all different cultures around. I think it contributes so much to
people’s quality of life and the atmosphere of where you live and that kind of thing. Saying that, I think that there is a lot of racism in Canada as well and that’s really sad. I don’t think people appreciate people from other cultures or other countries and how people from other countries can really, really give and realize they are a part of Canada. (Joy)

Joy has a markedly different opinion than Sandy, who believed that immigrants should assume and adopt a ‘Canadian way of life’. In general, the participants’ responses varied depending on their social and geographic locations, illustrating that multiculturalism may be constructed in varied ways depending on a number of factors including age, social class, race, culture and number of years in Canada. Joy claimed that in large cities like ‘Toronto’, multiculturalism works, while smaller populations have difficulty addressing the needs of diverse populations. Unlike Sandy and Annika, Joy was able to recognize that race and racism are factors that determine peoples’ feelings of belonging and acceptance in Canada.

Punam, who resides in a city outside of Toronto, also discussed some of the benefits and challenges with multiculturalism:

It [multiculturalism] has its disadvantages and advantages. I could never live in Toronto. I find it really dirty and really smelly. I just could not. I like Kitchener and the clean atmosphere. That’s where multiculturalism has its downfall. But then people over here [in Kitchener] are mostly South Asian people from Africa. (Punam)

Punam correlates cities that are multicultural with being ‘dirty’ and prefers living in a smaller town where there are less visible minorities. She was unable to list any more advantages or disadvantages and seemed to take pride in the fact that Indo-Canadians in Kitchener were mainly from her parent’s homeland of Kenya. This seemed to make her feel like she
belonged in her town. Small towns with less diversity were somehow linked to cleanliness
and Punam postulates that an increase in marginalized groups contributes negatively to the
overall environment. Punam’s views illustrate her internalized racism towards particular
minority groups. Space theory argues that places occupied by minority groups are depicted as
being polluted (Fusco, 2005). The racialized body is marked as being a ‘polluter’ in Punam’s
mind and her ethnocentrism surfaces when she states that ‘Kitchener is clean… and most of
the South Asians are from Africa….” positioning her identity as more superior than
minories residing in Toronto.

As mentioned above, the Wicket Maidens in Victoria are comprised mostly of white
players who were born in Canada, while in Toronto the majority of players are from
racialized groups. In addition, the Toronto players have varying nationalities and many of
them have migrated to Canada from other countries. The cultural composition of the players
is more homogeneous in British Columbia, while in Ontario several ethnicities exist in the
same club. This presents interesting differences within the teams that can be theorized when
considering discourses of identity.

Identity

The multiple identities that exist within any one individual are fluid and scholars
must examine structural power relations created by globalization and migration (Safran et al.,
and in order not to reify identities more understanding of historical and contextual nature is
required” (p. 8). Many academics believe that identity politics have gone too far and can
serve to polarize groups (Fraser, 1996, 2000). Such scholars claim that further equality could
be achieved if groups joined together and ‘let go’ of their individual identities. However,
Alcoff (2006) points out that identity designations are the product of learned cognitive maps and modes of perception; since societies operate through visible physical features and characteristics, one who is marked in this way cannot simply “rise above” or ignore this reality.

Certain bodies are still being discriminated against economically, socially and politically. Non-white physical appearances are a disadvantage since a racial hierarchy remains dominant worldwide (Alcoff, 2006, 2007; Carrington, 2007a, 2007b). Fanon discussed the politics of physical identity and contented: “I am the slave not of the ‘idea’ that others have of me but of my own appearance” (1967, p. 116). Although multicultural efforts have been made in Canada, racialized females continue to be held against a standard of white Canadians who embody a different social and historical position (Bannerji, 2000; Fleras & Elliott, 2002). Being white secures access to a position of power and a white identity is associated with acquired social and cultural capital19 (Dyer, 1997; McIntosh, 1988; Ahmed, 2004). Given this, researchers must continue to investigate the significance of how identities and power are (re)produced.

Canadian identity discourse has been theorized by many scholars (Bannerji, 2000; Fleras & Elliott, 2002; Hall, 2000; James; 2005). Many authors have found that Canadians typically define themselves as being ‘not American’. Immigrants who come to Canada may find themselves struggling to find the balance between fitting in with the Canadian way of life and preserving their own culture (Handa, 2003). Sandy’s negative sentiments about

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19 Social capital includes ‘features of social organization such as networks, norms, and social trust that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit’ (Putnam & Feldstein & Cohen, 2004, p.67). Bourdieu (1986) also argued that acquired social capital provides individuals with the opportunity to gain power, status, reciprocity and recognition. Cultural capital is the acquisition of knowledge, skills, and objects an individual possess in order to achieve privilege, products, income, or wealth (Bourdieu, 1986).
immigrants who choose to maintain their culture shows a lack of understanding about the complexities of negotiating identity. Shedding one’s nationality is not a simple process and belonging to a racialized group isn’t a category of choice. Nevertheless, Sandy’s belief that newcomers should only adopt Canadian culture is shared by a number of white Canadians. Growing tension between white settlers and visible minorities has been documented (Razack, 2008). The construction of a Canadian identity, and who can claim one, is the subject of much discussion (Fleras & Elliott, 2002; Razack, 2008). Canada is becoming more diverse and is often seen as a leader when it comes to integrating varying ethnicities. Within the context of the GTA, there has been a shift in language from ‘visible minority’ to ‘racialized majority’ since in some areas of the city, racialized people outnumber white Canadians. The GTA has the largest percent of racialized groups in Canada. The rest of Canada’s visible minority population stands at 16.2 percent (Fenlon, 2008).

Racialized minorities, especially newcomers, often end up being ‘in between two cultures’. This reality can also lead to intergenerational conflict within the family because of a clash of cultures between different generations. The argument of who belongs in Canada is now more deeply policed via stricter immigration laws, tougher deportation laws and increased border controls. Quebec has introduced new legislation that, as in the United States, gives the government the right to detain individuals who are suspected of terrorist activity (Razack, 2008). Racialized Canadians find their presence is being questioned more and they are receiving more pressure to assimilate into the dominant culture (Razack, 2008). Handa (2003) notes that in looking at non-mainstream cultures you cannot “treat the culture in question as being on the same level as the dominant culture, as an equal competitor” (p. 13). The dominant culture in Canada is also a privilege played out within sport. The
participants’ experiences varied depending on their social locations. The women participants each had a unique identity in relation to cricket and this affected their experiences playing the game.

The sporting identities of women are complex and fluid. Identities are formed through a variety of factors including place of origin, culture, religion, gender, race, nationality, sexuality, class and individual characteristics. Each of these social categories is brought to bear on athletes and will also contribute to their decisions about how and why they choose to play a sport. The participants defined themselves in relation to cricket differently. However, within each subgroup there were patterns. Janet (Canadian born half-Japanese/half-Danish), Joy, Sandy and Annika had all been introduced to cricket in Canada and began playing in their twenties, thirties, or forties. Sandy and Annika were not familiar with the game of cricket until they started playing as adults. Joy and Janet had been exposed to the game for a couple of years (through their male partners) before they started playing. For all these participants, there was little value placed on cricket within their families and culture. Most of the white participants did express satisfaction about playing the game but stated that the game did not contribute to their sense of identity. Annika pointed out that though her parents came from England no one else in her family is involved in the sport:

No, not at all [when asked if any of her family members participate in the sport of cricket]. My sister, until a couple of years ago, and until I explained it to her, wouldn’t know what was going on in a game. She wouldn’t be able to watch a game and follow it. It just isn’t something we grew up being aware of, having been raised in Canada. My parents grew up being aware of it because they grew up in England
but it was never a sport that either of them played or watched on TV or anything like that, so they didn’t really follow it. (Annika)

Cricket does not have a presence in her family, nor does her family have much interest in the game. This factor, a lack of family support, can have an influence on how people develop their sporting identity (James, 2005). Playing sports is a contested terrain for women, indeed cricket is often deemed a ‘gentleman’s game’. Historically, women have faced heavy resistance to playing the sport. Ideologies of femininity have been seen as incongruent with playing sports, especially sports deemed appropriate for men. Many ‘contact’ sports are still viewed as ‘male’ sports. The women participants demonstrate their resistance to these notions by being involved at all levels of cricket from participation to administration.

Annika’s husband is supportive of her involvement in the game and his South African family is ‘mildly interested’ in her participation. Janet said she did receive support to participate in physical activity, although cricket was not recognized in her household. Despite this lack of family interest, Janet and Annika made a link between their participation in the game and cricket being from their parent’s homeland. This suggests that cricket remains loosely linked to England for Canadian’s of British heritage. The white participants all explained how new the sport of cricket was to them and how it was like being exposed to a culture that was different than what they had experienced before, yet Annika and Janet still connected cricket to their family history. Their participation in cricket provided an opportunity to re-identify with their heritage. Yuval-Davis and Helm (1997) postulated that as identities move across generations people have to negotiate between choosing continuity of their culture and implementing change.
By examining the social construction of whiteness, identities and a sense of belonging in certain spaces can be examined (Dyer, 1997). Whiteness is an ideology which is connected to the history of cricket. The history of the game can be traced back to an elite group of white, British men with whom Annika and Janet claim a cultural affiliation. This kind of status secures one a position of power and privilege (Dyer, 1997; McIntosh, 1988) and while the participants may not be aware of this, their whiteness reaffirms their right to belong in cricket spaces.

The Toronto and Victoria clubs have distinct differences when it comes to their team’s racial and cultural make-up. Interestingly however, when each of the participants was asked to discuss their team player’s identities, they all initially identified their teams as being filled with women from diverse backgrounds. In the next section I explore the cultural make-up of each team and discuss the participant’s responses to this context.

The main difference between the two clubs was between the personal identities (heritage, nationality, culture) of each team’s players. In Victoria most of players were born in Canada and those who were not were from other European or Western countries, with the exception of one participant. In the GTA the players were exclusively from Caribbean and South Asian cultural backgrounds. Discussions revealed that, with the exclusion of one player, the entire Wicket Maidens team is comprised of white, English speaking players of European descent. The females on the Wicket Maidens were unable to explain why their team did not attract or recruit any visible minorities. Sandy is forthright about the breakdown of the team:
We have one American, I guess we’ve got one New Zealander, one Australian, one South African and the rest are Canadian. But almost all are landed immigrants. I think there is only one who is not a citizen. (Sandy)

Research indicates that minority representation in Canadian sports clubs is less than five percent (Ifedi, 2005). This data does not account for the over representation of some ethnic minorities within some sports in urban centres (James, 2005). Sandy knew that other cricket clubs in Toronto and Vancouver were more diverse but she was surprised to find in Calgary that there were not any ‘white skinned men’ represented on the cricket pitch:

I was astounded to find when we went to Calgary, when we were watching the men’s games that were taking place in the same park that we played at, that there was only one western man. There was no white skinned man playing the game when we were there. I found that interesting because in Victoria there are more white people playing it than brown skinned people. (Sandy)

Sandy observes that the people playing cricket in Calgary are mostly ‘brown skinned’. Her response to her discovery was: “it certainly tells you whose game it is”. Sandy feels that the game does not ‘belong’ to her, although in her hometown cricket spaces are predominately ‘white’ and this affirms her participation and reflects her identity. Sport has historically been a representation of the cultural identity of a nation (Walseth, 2008). However this traditional tie between nationality and sport culture is quickly being eroded with the flow of migrants across nations (Poli, 2007). Sandy argues that cricket does not ‘belong’ to Canadians:

I do [think it is an immigrant sport] but I don’t find that shocking. I find it tells about the perception of the game and whose game it is…It’s a West Indian and South Asian game in Canada. In the world it maybe a little different but even on the international
stage it’s being taken over by those identities…I think that’s the only place where it’s going to develop because it comes from their culture. (Sandy)

Earlier, Sandy stated that cricket was invented by the British but here she says cricket “comes from their culture” (emphasis added). She is aware that today the international cricket stage is dominated by South Asian countries. Despite this however, the recent men’s and women’s World Cups have been won exclusively by Australia. Interestingly, Australia has claimed cricket as a national sport and all levels of government, along with corporations, have invested in the sport at a grassroots level by sponsoring school, club and national programs. This support has resulted in global cricket victories. In Victoria, the Wicket Maidens are majority white and born in Canada, and therefore offer resistance to the notion that cricket is an immigrant sport yet Sandy seems to not want to take ownership of the game as ‘her own’ and feels development can only come from ‘their culture’.

Both the men’s and women’s Canadian national cricket teams are diverse, with players from multiple nationalities. Joy feels a part of this kind of diverse cricket community and believes she is assisting immigrants in settling into their new country:

It’s just been really great, you know. Victoria is a pretty white city, they’re not as many people from other cultures as in Toronto or Montréal or Vancouver or places like that. But, I think that when people do come from other countries, obviously they’re going to be homesick and there’s going to be special things that were just routine in those countries that they don’t have anymore. So I think it’s really great for me personally to be able to connect around [playing cricket] something that’s really special to them from their culture. (Joy)
Joy asserts that cricket can be a place to help welcome newcomers and assist them with their assimilation to Canadian culture and customs. Poli (2007) comments that ‘sport assumes a role of precursor in the identity deterritorialization process – challenging the correspondence between a state, a territory and an individual identity’ (p. 3). Cricket, like other sports in Canada, is experiencing a slight increase in the diversity of its players which correlates to the same pattern happening in the Canadian population. Minority populations in Canada have higher birth rates than Canada’s overall birth rate which is declining, and at the same time, immigration influx remains constant (Fenlon, 2008).

When I probed the white participants to further describe each of the players on their team, they each told me that the players who joined their club were majority white Canadians of European descent or immigrants from developed commonwealth countries. Participants explained that in the past there were some visible minority players but they were not sure what happened to them. Joy contends that there is diversity among the white players and attempts to explain why Toronto would possibly attract more non-white players:

I think I do see a distinction between Canadian culture and Australian and New Zealand and England. I know they’re all alike, and can be perceived as similar but I do see a distinction. So those are some of the cultures, but also I think there are more [ethnicities] in Toronto. I think there is more people from Pakistan playing cricket that are women. (Joy)

Joy links culture to one’s national affiliation, illustrating how the transnationality of players from commonwealth countries interconnects with Canadian culture. She describes the cultures as “all like” but then notices their “distinction”. Cultures are not fixed but rather fluid and the loosening of borders has led to exchanges between nationalities (Pratt, 1992).
Joy assumes that the bigger cities have a greater diversity on their teams solely due to the more multicultural population base from which they can choose, recruit and draw players. This view bypasses the fact that the organizational dynamics (including recruitment strategies) of her club may also affect the lack of diversity on their team. The Wicket Maiden’s marketing includes mainly ‘word of mouth’ recruiting to their friends, along with outreach to players on softball teams. In Toronto, the Indo-Canadian players also ask their friends to play and try to utilize their social networks to assist in recruitment. This indicates that when immigrants or minorities do join clubs, they are attracted to those where they can receive positive identity reinforcement (Walseth, 2006). Each of the teams has created a unique club culture that attracts only players of certain backgrounds to join.

Janet, a player of Japanese and Danish background realized the whiteness of the Wicket Maidens as soon as she joined the team, whereas she assumes her teammates did not notice race:

I would say when I first joined, the team seemed quite spread [diverse]. Like, there were a few women that I think were from India, that were studying and were playing but I would say they’ve now moved to other universities. And then I think when I left, aside from this woman who was half Korean and Japanese everyone was pretty much white. They were all white. There was a lot of players that were from New Zealand and had been up here playing, and um yeah, it would seem that most of the people that came had played cricket before. Either that way, or because they went to St. Michael’s University, they played it in Wales when they were going to school there or they played it in New Zealand or Australia where it’s part of the curriculum.
Or they were introduced to it here. Aside from the couple of women from India, I
didn’t meet anyone that was not white except for me and that other girl. (Janet)

Janet is forthright in her answer about the ethnicities represented on the Wicket Maidens. She
names herself as belonging to an “ethnic group” and does not name white as a race.

Whiteness here is functioning as the norm, which is quite common (Dyer, 1997). She is
aware that the club has failed to attract and/or keep non-white players – a contrast to other
British Columbia teams like the Vancouver men’s teams which is filled with players from
various cricket playing nations. In her study of minority women playing sports, Walseth
(2006) found that participation correlated with a slight rise in positive identity confirmation
on a nationalistic scale, however at a micro level, minority women shared that team player
interactions could be challenging. Many felt they did not entirely belong and felt
marginalized due to social and cultural differences between players and coaches (Walseth,
2006). Factors such as these, may also have contributed to ethnic minorities leaving the
Wicket Maidens, however, more data is needed to confirm such claims.

The Victoria players noted that there were visible minorities who had joined the club
but they failed to remain members. Most of the participants felt uneasy about speculating
why such women did not return to their club. For instance, Sandy says:

I wouldn’t even presume to say anything about those reasons, I am not from that
culture. (Sandy)

After this comment, I probed Sandy further for an explanation about the lack of Indo-
Canadian women playing cricket in Victoria. Later in our discussion, she finally shared
something about a newspaper article that speculated why certain populations were not
participating in women’s cricket:
There was one South Asian woman who played back in the 90’s but we haven’t seen her since but we know that she is still in town. We know her husband is still around but she doesn’t come out. There are two very talented women whose father coaches us, they came out for two practices, one game, and we haven’t seen them since. We just don’t seem to know why. The only thing I can think of is a comment made by a fellow in Calgary when we went out there to play and that was “I don’t want my daughters playing, they might get hurt and then who would want to marry them”. That wasn’t Calgary [where the quote originated] that was out of Kitchener-Waterloo and Saira was running an event up there and it was quoted. I can’t remember where I read it but I read it in an article. (Sandy)

Sandy is quick to make it clear that it is not she who made such a statement that could suggest she has assumptions about a particular group. Thus she avoided implicating herself in the stereotypical belief that Indo-Canadian women athletes are constrained by their cultures and that is the reason behind their lack of involvement in sport. Sandy did not offer any other reasons regarding their lack of participation. There is a certain subtle racism that persists in these kinds of everyday discourses of difference. Comments like the one above about particular ethnic groups can lead to exclusion and discriminatory practices. Castles (1996) claims that there are new types of racisms in an era of globalization and we need to examine these as they relate to particular groups temporally and spatially. In addition, cultural forms of racism, especially when linked to gender, function to oppress minority women as evidenced in Sandy’s comment above. The possibility of this kind of racism was discounted by the Wicket Maidens. In contrast, they spoke with a sense of pride about their
players and their ‘specialness’ and Annika and Sandy rationalized their team selection and justified the team’s make up based on geography.

In Toronto, the cultural composition of the team was notably different. Although the team boasted representation of several cultures, there was a sense that West-Indian culture dominated the team’s organizational structure. Rhea celebrated and talked proudly about the diversity of her team:

Yeah, it’s like West Indian, Indian, Guyana, Trinidadians, some of the other girls are from the Caribbean countries like Grenada, St. Lucia. We have people from Sri Lanka, India, Pakistan and we have one girl from England but we never see her. I keep communicating back and forth with her. And we have some girl from Canada, like who grew up here and we have one girl from New Zealand so it’s pretty dynamic, the cultures. (Rhea)

Rhea’s team has managed to attract Indo-Caribbean and Black players from the Caribbean, along with some players from South Asian countries, but they seem unable to retain any white Canadian or commonwealth country immigrants on the team. The main discourses that arise about the cultural make ups of the two clubs center on who rightfully belonged to the sport. Should cricket be played primarily by certain groups, and how does a sport that is dominated by non-whites qualify as a Canadian sport?

Indo-Canadian women revealed that cricket was a big part of their identity formation. Playing cricket was normalized and a part of their immediate and extended family culture. The Indo-Canadian women felt that they were more connected to their own culture and country of origin because of their participation in the sport of cricket. Rhea explains this:
It’s something I don’t know, you’re born into. When you say cricket, I don’t know you are describing me….Yeah of course like everybody lives for cricket. Everybody growing up, either they want to become a cricketer or their parents want them to become a cricketer. I’m talking for boys, for girls I don’t know it’s somewhat different. There is not much there to show them how far they could go. It’s starting to develop now so hopefully in the future we will be like the men and little girls will want to be cricketers as well. (Rhea)

Rhea is choosing to reproduce cultural expectations by adopting a sport her community has embraced. At the same time she resists gender expectations in choosing to become a female cricketer. When Rhea was growing up there were limited opportunities for women cricket players. She hopes the example of her playing, and recent changes in cricket culture, will help to rectify this situation so more girls, both in Guyana and Canada, choose to play the sport. Like Rhea, Punam also grew up with cricket as part of her family’s traditions and culture:

It’s just kind of like on family days. When we were in Kenya, we used to play with all of our relatives and stuff because we have family there. We would go out to the park and actually play cricket and stuff… (Punam)

In Kenya, there was no organized cricket for women. At age 11, when she came to Canada, Punam did not think there was any cricket in Canada. She (re)discovered cricket when she was 16 but feels robbed of the critical years she missed when she could have been playing and learning about the sport. Today Punam cannot imagine herself without cricket and believes it plays an important role in constructing her identity:
I definitely don’t have much of social life outside of school and cricket. I don’t have time for it, so I guess you could say that’s my identity, that’s how people know me. It’s a huge part, I’m always playing cricket. (Punam)

Punam takes the role of being a cricketer very seriously. In addition to regularly scheduled practices, she dedicates several hours a week to working with a personal trainer with the goal of improving her cricket game. She is also booked to go to India for a cricket training camp. In contrast, the Victoria players do not link family culture with their cricket playing, rather most view their participation as an individual athletic endeavour. The Victoria women expressed interest in improving their skills, however they did not place as much value on playing the game and nor did their families. Sandy explains how her participation in cricket is viewed by her family:

Uhh...I don’t think it’s made much difference to my family. My family is typically English in the sense that it’s not about family, it’s about individuals and if you want to do something you get off your duff and do it and the family will share in the success and in your failure, but they are not going to be out there watching and cheering you on. (Sandy)

Sandy cited aspects of her parent’s English culture to explain how they view her participation in cricket. She believes that individualism is celebrated as opposed to family engagement and encouragement. This lack of family involvement might explain her feelings that cricket is just another sport she is deciding to play rather than a large part of her identity, as it is for Punam. However, her family does acknowledge her impressive athletic capabilities.

The identities that were socially constructed in cricket spaces by the players involved many dynamic processes. Player’s social locations influenced how they approached and
experienced the game. Participants who have a homeland connection to cricket seem to identify more with cricket culture in general, although two of the players from Victoria, Annika and Sandy, developed a strong affinity towards the game based on their high level of involvement. Each club appears to represent a distinct culture. The membership of both of the clubs reaffirmed the cultural backgrounds of their players, that is each club reproduced some racial homogeneity. Within both spaces, the cultural mix of the group was taken for granted and rarely questioned. All of the participants spoke highly of diversity and celebrated its existence on their teams, however more discussions about possible exclusionary practices might be useful to determine why certain individuals did not join or maintain their membership in the clubs. More research is needed to uncover the factors involved in, and affecting, the process of attracting and keeping players who represent a minority within their clubs.

In summary, this chapter explored the history of the player’s participation and looked at issues of multiculturalism, identity and belonging in cricket. The participants shared their stories about how they first got involved in the sport. Cricket was tied to England’s colonial past and some of the participants revealed how exposure to cricket in their homelands shaped their sport identity and desires to continue playing cricket in Canada. Determining if cricket is a multicultural sport remains complex. Participants also reflected on the challenges, limits and benefits of multiculturalism. Finally, a look at how the participant’s identities were constructed through cricket was briefly discussed. The following chapter, in which an analysis of how the participants’ gender influences and impacts their experiences in the game is carried out, will further deepen our understanding of women cricket players in Canada.
CHAPTER SIX: GENDERED SPACES OF CRICKET I: A (Hetero)Sexist Sports

Culture

Introduction

Studying gender in sport reveals a set of multi-layered, complex social processes and unequal relationships. For this research, I was interested in the reproduction of forms of masculinity/femininity in cricket spaces and how this process affects women players. In this section I will show evidence of gender discrimination in cricket spaces. Sport spaces often naturalize gender segregations, and as a result, are rife with tensions and struggles (Vertinsky, 2004). These tensions were evident in the experiences of the women cricketers I interviewed. The conservative ideology of sport has produced negative consequences for women. Issues of gender come up in the interviews as the participants speak of discrimination, relations with males and the challenges of building a women’s cricket club. Cricket spaces are gendered. Both the white and the Indo-Canadian participants expressed not being welcomed within this male sports arena. Yuval-Davis and Helm (1997) argue that a reproduction of gender relations is passed from generation to generation. All of the women interviewed manage multiple identities (student, daughter, mother, club manager, occupational roles) within their daily lives, one of which is being a female cricketer. There are several barriers and challenges to negotiating a female identity in cricket spaces, as I discuss next.

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20 Scholars have argued that sport reproduces hegemonic masculinity, perpetuates gender power differences, reifies heteronormativity and demonizes queer sexuality, and in doing so, maintains a conservative ideology (Messner, 1996; Theberge, 2003).
Discrimination

Systemic discrimination can be explained using a triangular model in which individual behaviours, systems and biases are examined (Lopes & Thomas, 2006). Although there was some hesitancy on the part of participants to admit that gender discrimination existed within the sport, all of them discussed discriminatory incidents that had happened to them while playing cricket. Hearing derogatory remarks, dealing with the problematic politics of coaches and being questioned regarding their athletic ability and their sexuality, were common experiences to the women cricketers. Every participant could remember a time when males questioned their abilities and involvement in the sport. Similar incidents were reported from both the Toronto and Victoria participants. Interestingly, participants always prefaced their responses about these incidents with positive remarks about men. They praised men and said that they understood that most men were advocates for women’s cricket. For instance Rhea shares how supportive other men’s teams are when she sets up friendly matches:

Um no [when asked if there is discrimination]. Actually, it’s quite interesting that you brought it up because the clubs we play against, like the guys we were introduced to, were some old cricketers and these guys are really friendly and really supportive. We play them year after year and I haven’t heard anything negative, the only thing I will hear will be they are scared to be out by a woman and they don’t want to be bowled [out] by a woman. And that’s expected because you’re playing against women. Otherwise, any degrading comments, I’ve never heard any. I don’t know if anyone else has ever heard, I’ve never heard anyone complain about that. So we’ve had really good experiences in playing against guys. (Rhea)
Here Rhea excuses the men’s discriminatory expectations and views herself as inferior by saying “that’s expected because you’re playing against women”. The belief that males possess an innate athletic advantage seems to have been internalized by Rhea and many of the other women. Although she knows that such attitudes are discriminatory, she describes them as acceptable since the men are “being nice enough to play against the women’s team”.

Women have challenged the gendered hegemonic structure of cricket by creating spaces where they can play – however generally women and men still occupy separate spaces. When first asked, Annika also denied gender discrimination, but she later told me that some men felt that the women were getting too many advantages in the club league:

There was at first [gender discrimination], eight or nine years ago but there did used to be some people who [did]. They weren’t heckling out loud but they’d be the people on the balcony who were always watching cricket. Apparently, I wasn’t there for most of it, but my husband was there listening and they were saying that ‘women shouldn’t be playing cricket’, ‘they’re getting too many advantages, why should they have a key to the pavilion and not the other midweek teams?’ But nothing that I’ve actually witnessed directly…I don’t really experience any of that….not at all.

(Annika)

Annika denies that discrimination exists. But in fact, the information relayed in this quote suggests that these men may feel threatened with having to share their sport space with women. Annika and Rhea’s comments about the positive support their clubs have recently received from males may also support the claim by some researchers that institutional sexism is on the decline (Anderson, 2008).
Rhea echoes Annika’s sentiments and wishes that people could see past her gender and respect her as a cricketer:

It’s something I love doing [playing cricket] and like being. I wouldn’t put myself as a female cricketer, I am a cricketer, I play against guys, I played up to their capabilities, so it shouldn’t be a matter of gender, it should be a matter of capabilities of playing the sport so I don’t take gender into consideration, when I’m playing. (Rhea)

Here Rhea resists the dominant ideology of women as inferior athletes. She recognizes the challenges in refuting gender roles, and admits to the difficulties in changing people’s perceptions. While inequities continue to persist, including the discriminatory practice of taunting and teasing by males, gender boundaries do appear to be softening as more women are starting to play and their clubs are becoming competitive. The hegemonic space that existed within cricket appears to be losing strength with the visibly increasing participation of women.

Sandy shares that the male cricketers in Victoria are now very supportive but confesses that in the past men used to treat them as inferior athletes:

Oh we’ve got big fans, the guys love us. When we started off playing in the mid-week league they were a bit condescending. (Sandy)

She explains that when the club first entered the league sexism was present, but feels that once the Wicket Maidens established themselves they acquired a level of respect from the men’s teams. Christina, another senior player, also comments that historically being a female cricketer in Canada was not an easy road. Unless you had a strong sense of self, were highly
skilled and came equipped with a large support network, battling your way onto the pitch was very difficult for women:

    In 1980, I received a lot of resistance about being a female playing cricket…Because they figure that a women’s place is in the bedroom or the kitchen. Even in Guyana, people tried to stop me from playing because they thought I wasn’t capable. “You’re a girl, you shouldn’t be doing this” “Women shouldn’t be playing cricket”…
    (Christina)

The fact that people tried to prevent Christina from playing cricket is evidence of sexism within the culture, which was then mirrored in sport spaces. When Christina persisted, attempts were made to convince her that she did not belong in sport. Christina has been around cricket spaces for a long time and has seen attitudes slowly shifting. Her long cricket career has persevered partly because of continued support from key males in her life. Her father, brother and coaches encouraged her to fight her opponents by excelling on the cricket pitch. The media was also supportive and acknowledged her exceptional efforts in cricket which also reaffirmed her sense of belonging in the sport.

The ideology that ideal femininity is in direct opposition to sport, which is seen as a masculine prerogative, is an entrenched notion (Hargreaves, 1994; Lenskyj, 1994, 2003; Theberge, 2000). Punam gives us an example of this when she speaks of a time she was 16 and had to quit a men’s cricket club because of bad treatment:

    It was just that the guys (in the cricket club) were very sexist over all. It was, like, just them looking down on me every time I played the game. I couldn’t take it, I was like if you’re going to look down on me the entire time, and if I have no respect here then I don’t want this. (Punam)
Punam was just starting to play the game again after a five year hiatus when she joined this all male club in Kitchener, unfortunately she received little encouragement from her teammates. This type of negative treatment is one of the factors in lower levels of female participation, and over representation of men, in physical activities. Christina has also faced harsh discrimination during her years playing high level cricket in Guyana and Canada. Her dominance on the field often threatened boys and girls and she explains that she was not always welcomed:

I did receive a lot of derogatory remarks while playing the game of cricket both in Guyana and in Canada. Many believed that women should not be playing cricket. Those comments made me stronger and I tried to let my talent speak for itself. Ricky, my big brother, was my protector when I would play. If anyone said “What’s your sister doing here,” he would defend me. A lot of people respected the way I conducted myself. Guys would attack me verbally, accusing me of being a lesbian or sleeping with the men on the team, since I played with the guys. Usually all of the women are respectable, maybe one or two women cuddle up to the guys, but not usually. (Christina)

Christina’s sexuality was likely questioned for a number of reasons. While males enjoy social prestige and are publicly recognized for their athletic feats, women are traditionally expected to be supporters on the sidelines not participants on the field (Hargreaves, 1994). Christina not only resisted this expectation by playing, due to her superior skills, she was sharing men’s cricket spaces. This stepping out of expectations led to her sexuality being scrutinized. Elling and Janssens (2009) argue that hegemonic masculinity remains in place by privileging femininity in women. By displaying behaviours of competitiveness and
playing hard, which are associated with masculinity and sport, Christina transgressed traditional gender boundaries and experienced lesbophobia and homophobia as a consequence (Elling & Janssens, 2009; van Ingen, 2004). A disruption occurs in sport spaces with the increase of female participation and their integration into men’s teams/leagues.

Christina talks about the reactions she received when she first began playing in Canada:

When I played in Canada, I was exposed to men from different parts of the world who now make Toronto their home. Playing with them or against them…most of them have never seen a woman playing cricket. When I first started playing cricket here in 1980… that reaction was mixed right?! And also because in their own homeland, wherever, New Zealand or Australia there was no established women’s cricket at the time in 1980, other than England. (Christina)

As noted earlier, women are usually accepted in certain sports but challenged when they try to participate in sports that are deemed aggressive or ‘masculine’. When they do so, additional pressures are placed on them to prove their heterosexuality (Birrell & Cole, 1994). Christina talks about how her mother dealt with her choice to continue in sport:

My mother gave up the dream a long time ago that I was going to be married and have kids. I think she was a little disappointed. (Christina)

Christina never expanded on her relationship status, but indicated she lives alone and has no children. For Christina, the choice to play sport seriously appears to be a decision that could not be reconciled with having a family and/or getting married. It is not clear if, or how cricket actually prevented her from being married or having children. Her statement also
brings her sexuality into question as Christina did not further explain her choices surrounding marriage or finding a partner. Sexuality in sport is read through a lens of homophobic ideologies and (hetero)sexist expectations of female athletes (Elling & Janssens, 2009; Lenskyj, 1994). Discriminatory practices within sport pressure female athletes to conform to heteronormative behaviours (Lenskyj, 1994, 2003). While sexuality is often discussed in relation to gender, Sykes (2006) cautious us that race and ethnicity must also be included within discourses of homophobia in sport.

Punam often referred to ‘her community’ and their expectations of her, stating that their standards might be different than the ‘norm’. She realizes that she can participate in sport, but at the same time, works hard to maintain her ‘femininity’ and adhere to her ‘community’s standards. Punam appears to have internalized a gendered and heterosexist discourse of particular expectations related to being female. The notion of walking a ‘tightrope of culture’ is discussed by Handa (2003) who believes that Indo-Canadians are faced with multiple pressures to exist within the binaries of traditional woman versus modern women. Punam talked about the aggravation women face from some men who do not necessarily respect or understand the great lengths women go to in order to be on the pitch:

[some men] don’t understand that we have to go through all of this just to get recognized. They just make it sound so easy to take it away from someone like that, you can’t do that. (Punam)

Here Punam is talking about a time she was chatting to some male players who were saying that they did not believe women should have a place on the field since they might get hurt and this could ruin their chances of getting married. She goes on to comment:
It’s hard for me to relate to those people [who believe that a woman should not play cricket], I get frustrated with people like that. Here I am trying to make a point about how women should be out there, doing these things and they just…And they were talking about how they would be so much more stricter on their daughters then they would be on their sons and I was like “why is that?” And they were like “it’s just because she’s a girl, I just wouldn’t want her out playing with so many guys on her own, kinda thing”. I just don’t understand, I don’t relate to them. It’s frustrating because they don’t understand what we have to go through. (Punam)

Punam’s frustrations seem to stem from the lack of recognition and respect for the sacrifices she has had to make in order to play cricket. Her statement “they don’t understand what we have to go through” implies the challenges of being a woman participating in cricket. Interestingly, some of the comments Punam hears from male players, about cricket playing leading to injury and then unsuitability for marriage, echo Sandy’s earlier reference to a newspaper article in which she read just such an argument being made. This kind of male opinion reinforces the notion that women cannot be feminine and play cricket. Punam’s narrative also suggests that some males make it clear they think there is a problem with ‘playing with so many guys’ – as if this will make a woman less attractive, more masculine or increase the risk of her becoming a lesbian. Punam illustrates her resistance to these dominant ideologies by continuing to play cricket and on occasion by verbally challenging the men’s beliefs about women and sport. The cultural make-up of the men’s cricket team that Punam’s plays on consists of mainly West-Indian and some South Asian members. Therefore a critical race discourse might also be useful in explaining the men’s responses.
The social spaces of racialized women have historically been controlled by white males with racialized men holding little power within their lived spaces. hooks (1984) argues that like women, men have been socialized historically to passively accept sexist ideology. Such ideology is perpetuated in cricket spaces as men conform to heteronormative behaviours and expect women to do the same. Men who do not have power and privilege, especially in a postcolonial society, often struggle with feelings of alienation. Given the ongoing reality of white privilege and racial oppression, marginalized men may be unable to live up to expected notions of masculinity, to what a “real man” is supposed to be and possess. One response to this is to put even more emphasis on male dominance and strict adherence to heterosexist ideologies. However, as long as racialized men reproduce patriarchal notions of masculinity and femininity, sexist ideology is reaffirmed and maintained, with the result being that the status quo of white patriarchy remains in place. hooks contends that continued interrogate of sexist ideology is required, and that in doing so one often finds that marginalized males are both oppressor and oppressed. The marginalized men who confessed their desire to keep women out of cricket spaces might illustrate their continued struggle to live up to hegemonic notions of masculinity. Further discussions of heterosexist ideologies are also evident in other social spaces.

During the interview, Christina articulated her recognition that women risk straining relations at home when they make sport a priority in their lives:

I believe that women have to make more of a sacrifice because we are seen as the bearer of kids and the homemakers. They [women] have to work it into their schedule and have to compromise more then men. They have to learn how to drive and
sacrifice family time. I had to sacrifice more to excel. A guy can practice once a week and make the team. A girl like myself had to practice 5 times a week. (Christina)

Here Christina refers to growing up and having to battle for positions on men’s cricket teams. She explains that she had to prove herself every time she stepped out on the field and this required extra practice and hard work. Men had the advantage of making the team even when they were just average players, while she had to be exceptional to secure a spot. Christina’s comments also indicate that she is aware of gendered cultural norms in which women have to ‘compromise more than men’, have to ‘sacrifice more’ and have to live with an unequal division of labour in the home. All of these factors make it even more challenging to find the time and determination to reach the highly set bar of athletic excellence.

Each of the women praised how ‘far men have come’ in terms of supporting women’s cricket and they were vigilant about sharing how encouraging, motivating and instrumental significant men in their lives had been, in helping them establish their cricket careers. Some of the women felt that men had assisted them in their cricket careers more than women:

We don’t have a coach. That’s another really neat thing about our team is that often we’ll have women’s partners who also play on cricket leagues in the city and they’ll come out to help us train. So we’ll usually have from two to five men who play in the league who are more skilled than us. And they’ll come and they’ll help run our practices with us. I think that is really neat because they just totally volunteer their time to help us improve as a team. And so although we don’t have a coach we have lots of people who are willing to, you know, give us advice and guidance. I also found that neat because they’ve never been condescending. Like I never get that feeling like I get in my co-ed soccer league. People think that they’re better than you
Joy, who as she mentions above also plays on a co-ed soccer team, feels that the men who play cricket are somehow more supportive than those who play other sports:

I think that overall the experience has been better [in cricket]. I think that our team and the women on our team...well as far as I perceive are well respected by the other teams. Perhaps they don’t look at us [male cricket teams] as equals but I haven’t really got that feeling from them. Whereas in the soccer league I do get that feeling so, I think in the cricket league, they respect us, even though our abilities are different than theirs. But I guess in the soccer league I just don’t feel that there is respect, everyone has different abilities in the soccer league but I believe that certain ones are valued more and others are not valued. (Joy)

Men are still perceived, by Joy, Janet, Annika and Sandy, as possessing greater athletic abilities than them. Perhaps it is not surprising then, that all of the participants reported that their coaches were male, typically volunteers and/or partners of female players on the team. Men continue to have power and influence over these women by holding the coaching positions; they are seen as the experts. The participant’s automatic respect for male volunteers was coupled with feelings that men were usually more encouraging than female coaches and/or players they may have had in the past. The males who “helped” out were typically very welcomed and appreciated.

However, male support for the women’s cricket appears to be conditional, that is, it is freely given as long as the women pose little threat to the men’s space and competitive edge. The all male league to which the Wicket Maidens belong, doubles the women’s score during
competitive matches. So even if men lose a match, they can attribute this double score provision as an explanation for their loss. Acceptance of this kind of situation, along with statements regarding their athletic inferiority, was common among all the participants and points to internalized gender oppression. That the women participants hold these beliefs enables the continuance of masculinized space in cricket. In addition, these beliefs sometimes affected the women’s ability to cooperate with their teammates leading to occasionally strained relationships with other female players.

**Relations with Female Teammates**

Initially, I did not think I would be discussing relations between women in cricket. I assumed the women’s experiences would only centre on their struggles to find equity with males in cricket. However, throughout the interviews all the participants spoke about the challenges of being on an exclusively female team. Every team has to work out social dynamics and the women’s cricket teams were no exception. The issues participants raise about their teams provided useful material for considering heterosexual gender politics. This area can be broken down into the following categories: declaring respect for male athletes’ behaviour and expressing disapproval of female athletes.

Some of the participants interviewed currently play on both women’s and men’s teams. The women viewed holding a position as a player on a men’s team in very high regard. Punam and Christina go further and note they sometimes enjoy playing on a men’s team more than on a women’s team. The women who were highly skilled expressed that they were able to improve their abilities further by participating on a male team. Punam comments:
It’s extremely frustrating [playing with females]. When I think about my future with cricket, I see myself playing with guys not so much with the girls. (Punam)

Janet spoke about enjoying the male presence in cricket clubs she’s joined and declared that men were more helpful than women. Along with being more helpful, many of the women felt that playing with males was the best option if they wanted to become better players. Given the paucity of women’s clubs, it is true that there are limited choices available for women who want to join all female clubs. Theberge (1994) pointed to a similar trend in hockey when she noted that many female hockey players in small towns joined men’s teams since female clubs were less established or non-existent. She also discussed the complexities of being a female on a man’s team by exploring the female goaltender, Manon Rheaume’s, experiences playing in the NHL and on professional men’s teams. Theberge (1994) concluded that there remains cultural ambivalence about female participation on male sports teams.

Females are still measured against male standards in the social constructions of sport and many women internalize these standards. The fact that Punam sees herself ‘playing with the guys,’ may confirm her internalized belief in masculine superiority. In addition to this though, Punam also feels a sense of aggravation when playing/practicing with female teammates. Both Janet and Punam shared that they did not manage to make good friends/alliances within the women’s team. In contrast, their experiences were often frustrating, isolating and unpleasant:

I can’t say I got any support from them [other female players] necessarily. Kinda harsh but it’s true. I don’t think I got any support from them…it’s hard to explain. I have had some really bad practices with them. I have left the pitch crying in a few
practices with them. That never really happened with me when I’ve played with the guys. (Punam)

I found the men to be very helpful, a lot of guys helped us in practices. They would come and either coach or throw the ball for us, very supportive I felt. I think that unfortunately the women were unhelpful that way. (Janet)

Janet perceived herself as not being athletic and felt she had to continuously prove herself on the pitch. She felt more harshly criticized for this by her female teammates than her male ones. A similar situation occurred with Punam who described a time she felt she was giving her best effort but did not feel she was getting respect from her female teammates.

A number of the participants shared stories which suggest that female players may sometimes be overly scrutinizing of each other. Janet talked about how some of her female teammates had issues with her looks. Specifically, the women assumed that her feminine looks must translate into her being less talented at playing cricket. In the following quote Janet talks about feeling judged in this way:

Well, sometimes women are too harsh and would harshly criticize each other. Like I remember once going down after I came off of work and my hair’s done, my makeup is done and they’d be like, “here’s another pretty girl who can’t throw”. (Janet)

Displaying dominant forms of ‘ideal femininity’ was not accepted on the pitch and Janet was frustrated that teammates made assumptions about her athletic ability based on her looks.

There are two heterosexual gender cultural norms operating here. Janet is displaying publicly accepted forms of femininity by doing her ‘hair’ and ‘makeup’. Yet on the pitch her appearance is frowned upon due to her overt display of femininity. Once out on the field, the
other female athletes expect her to adopt more ‘masculine’ gendered behaviours and appearances.

Janet also talked about another incident when the media came to a practice and ended up using her picture for a newspaper article about women’s cricket in British Columbia. She was aware that others on the team were not impressed that the media decided to use her picture for the article because she was apparently holding the bat incorrectly. The media’s consumption of heteronormative images of women in sport seemed to frustrate the other players. For Janet, the social practices within her cricket club demand that she reproduce the hegemonic masculine traits expected in sport spaces. The other women have internalized beliefs about what behaviours are deemed acceptable within their cricket space. Janet challenged these beliefs through her language, appearance and behaviour. Her overt display of ‘privileged femininity’ was constantly questioned. Scholars postulate that some female sport sites are supportive of subversions of heteronormativity (Ravel & Rail, 2006) and the Wicket Maidens appear to be more accepting of displays of heteronormative sport behaviours.

Like Janet, Christina also had some struggles with her female teammates. She felt that they were jealous and envious of her above average talent in cricket. She was able to beat a lot of the men and also received regular media attention while playing on the women’s team because of her abilities. She felt ‘a number of girls’ were unfriendly and did not ever fully support her as a team member. In her interview she explained:

Well, I was constantly in the press and my cricket performances kept improving. Practically every match I would excel or do something that would stand out of the other performances of the other women…And I don’t know if people got jealous or
envious, or mad. I have had some bad experiences with the women in my club and in my country, Guyana...and I didn’t want to get back into that kind of situation. (Christina)

Here when Christina states: “I didn’t want to get back into that kind of situation,” she is discussing her decision about whether to begin playing with women again. She is hesitant to do so because of previous bad experiences in Guyana. She eventually did decide to return to women’s cricket and appears to be cautious when describing how she feels playing with her own sex.

Many of the other participants also had complaints about their women teammates. Two of them noted that women were “harsher” than men with their criticism and judgments and common grievances included last minute canceling and coming to games late due to family conflicts, lack of skill level and motivation, and differences of opinion. Here the participants demonstrate that dominant discourses of sexist culture not only exist within their cricket spaces but are also reproduced by the women themselves. The current spaces of cricket are overwhelmingly occupied by males and this puts in place a set of expectations based on masculinity that are inadvertently assumed and adopted by the women’s teams. All of this is testimony to the complexities underlying participation in women’s cricket.

Finally, my research confirmed Anderson, Hall and Krane’s findings that sport sites remain spaces where women experience gender discrimination (2008; 2002; 2001). The masculine space of cricket still limits what types of gender expressions are acceptable. Men are depicted as supporters despite evidence that they display insecurities and displeasure when women demonstrate athletic prowess or acquire privileges that used to be exclusively their domain. By creating sites of resistance where women play sport, male hegemonic sport
models and norms are challenged. The establishment of women’s cricket clubs dislodges the
traditional cricket model and has the potential to change the existing institution, however this
is a difficult task given the persistent sexist / racialized / heteronormative culture in cricket
spaces.

Space theory reminds us that social spaces like the cricket pitch are sites where
people are both enabled and constrained. The women acknowledged that cricket spaces were
masculine spaces and controlled by men. New spaces had been created due to their
participation in the game however the existing sport structure remained unchallenged. The
constrained relations between some of the players revealed the struggle for women to accept
varying behaviours and sport practices. Dominant discourses of male hegemony in sport
were demonstrated through some of the women’s perception of how cricketers should play,
practice and view the game.

One example of acceptance of dominant gender discourse is found in the team names
chosen by the women cricketers. Each respective club’s name reinforces heterosexual
gendered norms. The Victoria club is named the *Wicket Maidens*; a maiden is a term that
usually refers to a virgin or an unmarried woman. The Toronto team is named the *Toronto
Ladies*; the term ‘ladies’ has multiple definitions including, a women who is well-mannered,
polite, a mistress, a women of high regard, a women of British royalty. Both club names then
reproduce heteronormative and racialized ideologies.

The women also displayed their own complicity in the reproduction of
heteronormativity through their discussions about male involvement in cricket spaces. Most
of the women believed that only through contact with men, either through participation on
male teams or having a male coach, would their own skills improve. The particular sports
behaviours the women expected of each other on the cricket pitch were also aligned with the hegemonic male sport model. Displays of aggressiveness, competitiveness and above average cricket skills were rewarded within the social spaces of cricket. Any attributes displayed outside of these kinds of normative sport behaviours were not welcomed and the participants were at times unforgiving to women who did not choose to and/or were unable to perform such behaviours. This kind of atmosphere also made the women compete against each other to prove themselves as more worthy or serious as cricket players. As a result of these differences many of the women seemed unable to agree on how the spaces of cricket should be organized. Their differing opinions of what behaviours and actions were appropriate within cricket spaces resulted in explicit and implicit tensions among women.

Many of the participants disclosed negative sentiments about the men who have high levels of control over the organization of cricket in Canada. Some of the women felt that there was blatant discrimination towards their clubs, and women players in general, within the federal and provincial cricket sporting organizations. Feelings were mixed on whether the provincial and federal sport organizations were supportive of women’s athletic pursuits or not. These issues will be examined in the next chapter.
CHAPTER SEVEN: GENDERED SPACES OF CRICKET II:
Inclusion/Exclusion and Administration, Ability, Access

Introduction

There are a multitude of challenges associated with women’s access to participation in cricket. Problems of access can be divided into two main stages: barriers to signing up for a cricket team and issues that arise once on a team. Lack of access plays itself out in factors like non-inclusive governance, lack of resources, inequitable recruitment strategies, lack of leadership opportunities, and perhaps most importantly, lack of power. All of these issues have been documented as contributing factors in women’s poor access to the world of sport (Kidd, 1995; Theberge, 2000). Women who decide they would like to change some of these access barriers, and assist in the overall development of cricket, find a large time commitment is required, change is slow and the work is carried out with very few rewards. Most of the participants knew of other women who had quit because they were ‘burnt out’ or had received little guidance and support from other teammates and provincial/federal organizations.

Support within Sport Structures

Inequities are apparent in Canadian cricket’s overall organizational structures. Males still hold the vast majority of power within cricket. Punam explains her dissatisfaction with these inequities:

But I don’t understand, the men go all over the world and they get funding for everything and their going and playing everywhere. And this funding that they are
getting, it’s not for men’s cricket, it’s for cricket. So, women’s cricket should be getting just as much money as men’s cricket. (Punam)

Clearly Punam is well aware there is no parity in the funding of the men’s and women’s national teams. While the men’s national team is well funded, the same cannot be said of the women’s national team. This situation is replicated in the non-professional cricket sphere where financial aid for women’s cricket is seriously lacking. Sandy, from British Columbia, did not have much faith in the Canadian Cricket Association’s (CCA) ability to improve support for the women’s program:

It’s the Canadian Men’s Cricket Association…Because all of the funding that goes to them goes to the men’s program. And there’s very little…I mean it strikes me as a cricket playing member that I ought to be able to get on to the CCA website and get a copy of the constitution and the bylaws and the financial statements. That stuff should all be public knowledge. (Sandy)

Sandy goes on to further discuss her frustrations with the CCA’s lack of communication and integrity. She has made various attempts to work within the organization in order to improve women’s cricket but has repeatedly faced resistance:

I certainly haven’t been able to get any of the information [I need]. I mean even to ask who is a member is a difficult question and to understand the political structure of it is even worse. I can’t even judge, all I know is for the past three years when we’ve asked for funding the CCA wants us to provide them with a budget for Canadian activities. We’ve done so and every year they’ve come back and said “you’ve got to be kidding”. And, then we say, “well okay tell us how much money you can give us and we will put together a budget to spend it. And they say “oh no no no you guys
put together a budget and tell us what you want”. So it becomes a battle. Well okay, I want a budget to get these goals and put together a $75,000 budget and they come back and laugh. And then we say “come on tell us how much you are going to give us, is it $5000? $15,000? Tell us how much money you can give us and then we’ll build a program”. Then, to say “build a program” when they have no intention of financing it, well, they are not following up with the funding. (Sandy)

The CCA appears unwilling to provide any concrete funding to the women’s program and seems to feels justified in treating their budget submissions dismissively. Christina concurs with Sandy that for the last three years the CCA’s response to their funding requests for women’s cricket has been troubling. Frustrations are mounting among women cricketers. As Theberge (1994) notes the hegemonic masculine stratification that still exists in sport overwhelmingly favours men over women. Cricket, along with other sports such as hockey and basketball, reproduces men’s social, political and financial dominance over women (Anderson, 2008; Cunningham, 2008; Fink, 2008; Hall, 2002; Theberge, 1994).

Within the CCA, there is one female representative, a women’s cricket coordinator, who works from a satellite office, but she has little power in decision-making. The men in the organization claim that women are playing cricket across Canada and use this to receive support from the International Cricket Council (ICC) but it is not clear in what ways they pass on this support to women cricketers. Sandy feels the CCA’s claims to the ICC are false and when they are pressed to provide the details of their communications with the ICC they become vague and elusive:

They pay lip service by saying that they have all these women playing cricket across Canada and yet I don’t know where they are. These old boys in the CCA are
repeating stuff from 10-15 years ago. They give us names of guys who were running women’s program 10 or 15 years ago, and they are no longer involved. They have to tell the ICC that they are running women’s programs in order to get the funding from the ICC. So by telling the ICC that they’ve got a certain number of women playing, ‘the boys’ tend to believe it. But they are doing nothing to make it improve. (Sandy)

Sandy calls the CCA ‘an old boys club’ where women do not have equal access. Her narrative illustrates that male hegemonic sport systems are being reproduced within cricket. Sandy has made countless attempts to contact the CCA but says the organization usually does not reply when being asked ‘uncomfortable questions’. This situation illustrates the control men still have over the development of women’s cricket. The CCA’s lack of commitment to growing and supporting women’s cricket is evident in the limited funding they offer women’s teams and this prevents the women’s game from developing further. The continued devaluation of female athletes and the dominance of male sports ideologies are definitely visible within cricket.

Annika has a different point of view. When asked how she feels about the Canadian Cricket Association Annika responds:

Incredibly supportive…they have not been incredibly supportive when it comes to the budget, up until now. But there’s a new CEO and a new national coach and they were hired with the mandate of improving cricket in Canada in all its facets and that includes the women’s programs as much as the men’s. …they are really treating the women as equal to the men. We have yet to see the steps, so far its all verbal, but it’s very promising anyway…there’s limited cash for cricket in Canada and our men’s team happened to make a fairly high ranking among the associate members of the
ICC and because of that the men had to spend certain money just to meet their ICC obligations which didn’t leave a lot left over, which made it look like they [the women] were getting less, which in fact they were, but its because the men had done well and the women haven’t yet. So hopefully, I think that will change, to some extent. (Annika)

Annika attributes the inequities in CCA funding to male athletic achievements, specifically, the current success of the men’s national cricket team. She believes that until women become successful by winning tournaments and world cups, they do not have the right to expect funds. However research demonstrates that it is precisely by providing resources and building from the grassroots that a pool of talented players is created and chances of winning increase (Lenskyj, 2008). Only funding elite cricket players might increase the exposure of the game however it probably does little to grow the sport.

The participants in this study have personally invested in cricket and yet to date they have received little acknowledgment, cooperation or support. Although their concerns are valid, their voices are often silenced and requests left unanswered. Sandy feared there would be negative backlash to some of her comments but felt so strongly about the injustices she saw within the cricket organizational structure that she felt she needed to speak out. She believes that change will most likely occur when family members step up to fight for the right of their girlfriend, wife, lover or daughter to play sports:

I’ve probably said quite enough to get myself blackballed. Strikes me that the guys that are in it, as with any amateur sport, it starts because they have got their own agenda, they have a son that wants to play or they’ve got a husband or a girlfriend who wants to play and that’s how it works. Women’s softball, hockey it was always
like that. The coaches were always the husbands or fathers, lover of somebody on the team. In order for the CCA to decide they want something to happen in cricket either the ICC has to withhold funding till the CCA proves that they spend some on women’s cricket or they gotta have somebody’s [one of the CCA’s members’] daughter who wants to play for her country and then the guys will make it happen. I enjoy the sport, I hate the politics. That’s why our focus here in Victoria is about getting women to play a sport that I think is a really neat sport and I just want women to play. And we got a really supportive group. The Victoria and District Cricket Association loves us and gives us all the support we ask for. We just have to make sure we ask for it. (Sandy)

Sandy is dedicated to cricket and committed to promoting the sport to other women. She sees the value in cricket and truly believes that women can benefit from playing the game. This passion is shared amongst many of the participants. The women have struggled to find opportunities to play and are willing to spend their time, energy and money to do so.

Females who participate in sport still have multiple obstacles to overcome due to many factors which are often interwoven with male dominance in sports structures (Cunningham, 2008; Fink 2008; Wellard, 2002). The social, political and financial dominance of men in sport serves as a constraining force to the advancement of women’s cricket. Female cricketers have to repeatedly push, confront and challenge their cricket institutions in order to achieve the same privileges and opportunities afforded their male counterparts. This pressure requires dedication, commitment and passion for the game. Women have to take an interest in the development of women’s cricket. This process can result in impressive feats but there are often high costs such as burnout and stress. In the
following section I will address the difficulties of sustaining the struggle for women’s cricket.

**Burnout and Stress/Lack of Ownership/Leadership**

Many women have been pioneers in the revitalization of Canadian women’s cricket in the modern era. Two important names in this regard are Ave Mogan and Lenore Davis. However the participants declare that the majority of female cricketers are usually not interested in becoming involved in recruitment, administration and seeing to the overall longevity of the sport. These players just want to play the game and then go home without having to put in extra time. Unfortunately, if women do not choose to invest in the overall development of women’s cricket, this can lead to declining memberships and even clubs closing down. Because not many women are interested in volunteering off the cricket pitch, those women who do get involved are often asked to do a lot and they burnout quickly. Most of the women have too much responsibility and that is usually coupled with inadequate funding. Janet attests to this:

Challenges like any small volunteer organization, are keeping that momentum up and not getting discouraged. That’s the problem, until more and more people take up the reigns, it doesn’t go anywhere. There is no funding. There is not a paid person making this happen, it’s ‘individuals’. It’s taking care of those people so they don’t burn out and other people have to step up to the plate. A lot of people just want to show up and play, they don’t want to do anything else. That’s gonna have an impact, a negative one if that continues. (Janet)

Clearly Janet understands the challenges of the continuous struggle to keep women’s cricket alive and functioning. Most sports clubs are run in a fashion similar to a small business. A
club’s organizational structure usually includes some form of a president, vice president, treasurer and secretary. In addition to playing the sport, a player can either be elected, appointed or simply perform executive duties. Undersized businesses run the risk of dying out since they are usually driven by a small number of dedicated individuals who can burn out and the same thing happens in sports clubs (Coalter, 2007; Cunningham, 2008).

Currently a few women are at the helm of women’s cricket in Canada and they have both witnessed and experienced burnout, which has resulted in a significant loss of players. Four of the participants noted that women’s cricket has a history of periods of activity followed by periods of inactivity when it “dies” due to a lack of interest, ownership and leadership. It is quite apparent that women often have to work much harder at maintaining their clubs than do men. Joy spoke of the high level of organization in the Wicket Maidens. She was amazed at the sacrifices her teammates made to ensure they were all pitching in for the club’s success. In contrast, the Toronto team continues to struggle with organizing a viable system. Many of the participants opined that because women’s cricket was fairly new, being organized was even more critical as a strong foundation could ensure their long term success. A couple of the participants had husbands and boyfriends who played the game and they noticed how their partner’s teams were disorganized but still seemed able to function and be taken seriously. On this topic Joy explained:

I would say just comparing his experiences to my experience, his team doesn’t practice at all and I think that it’s a little bit less organized. He’ll often get a phone call the night before saying this is when their game is, this is what time it is and can you show up. He has gone to games where he actually didn’t know where the cricket pitch was so he just kinda had to drive around and find it…And this is a team in the
same league as me…Just speaking from our league the women’s team, the people on them [the women’s team] are a bit more committed…(Joy)

Joy believes that the need for women to be more organized is a sign of the gender disparities that are still present within cricket clubs.

As a senior athlete, Sandy has been involved in many organized sports teams. She has been an executive member on a variety of teams and has chosen to be an administrative leader throughout her athletic career. She strongly believes that in order for women’s teams to flourish, especially in a “man’s environment”, staying organized is essential to survival. She sees this organizational role as the responsibility of the ‘older’ players. Since the structures of sport have been created by men and benefit men, (Messner, 2002) women have to work harder to maintain their sports clubs in the face of unequal treatment and male hegemony (Kidd, 1995; Messner, 2002). Sandy divulges some of the unfortunate outcomes when women’s sports teams fail to organize:

I’ve seen a lot of things. I’ve also been on the organizational side of a lot of sport and there has to, for women’s sports to survive, there has to be organization. That’s the role of the older people, they have to keep it organized. If the sport is not organized then there’s nobody recruiting, there’s nobody teaching and there’s nobody getting the word out that the sport’s interesting. And that’s the stumbling block for development of women’s cricket across the country….I again just come back to the fact that Vancouver has probably the second largest population of men playing cricket aside from Toronto and Vancouver can’t even get one women’s team. And that’s because nobody’s taken ownership of making it happen. And ours died in the early 90’s because no one would take ownership. (Sandy)
For Sandy ownership, leadership and organization are key factors in predicting the success of women’s clubs.

Joy notices that the leaders of her club often seem burnt out and although she is not involved in any of the executive positions, she expresses empathy towards the women who give so much back to the sport but consequently end up leaving the game:

…previously she [president of the Wicket Maidens] was the one who was trying to get funding from cricket organizations for our team and she found it really exhausting. And also she was, saying how in other countries, women who were doing what she was doing were paid, you know, to organize the funding for women’s cricket. In those countries they are paid positions but here it’s a volunteer position. But it was almost like a full time position for her…basically she got burnt out and found it discouraging because it was very difficult to get funding for women’s cricket in Canada. (Joy)

Joy’s observation underscores the fact that female sports club administrators are not valued in Canada. The sports model typically privileges white males and men’s club administrators are seen are more legitimate (Lenskyj, 2003; Theberge, 2000).

There is a proven history of racism and sexism in the Canadian sporting landscape which results in a lack of access to local, provincial and national resources for sports played by women and minorities (Sport Canada, 2007). This often translates to unequal distribution of government grant monies, sponsorships, funding for tournaments, sports apparel, equipment, human resources and use of facilities. For example, money allotted from lotto earnings, cultural grants and parks and recreation funds have not been distributed equitably (Sport Canada, 2007). Furthermore, the corporatization of recreation has exacerbated these
funding inequities since corporate funding tends to go to already dominant and popular sports.

Trying to organize and grow women’s sports clubs in this kind of environment is a challenge yet Sandy believes that when women are passionate and feel a sense of responsibility for their clubs good things can happen. She comments:

Why does anybody take ownership in developing an organization? Because they believe in it, because they want something out of it or they want to give something back to it. You know it [women’s cricket club] died in the 90’s because the people who were playing were too busy to organize and we couldn’t find somebody at the time to keep it organized. And now we have a good core that is dedicated to keeping it going. And it should survive. (Sandy)

However, Sandy’s unprecedented commitment and dedication to the game is not typical amongst all players. Annika, who is also involved in an administrative capacity within women’s cricket, has ongoing concerns about recruiting enough players to sustain her cricket club. She believes that building a strong foundation of women players will assist in inspiring new players to join and thus spawn the creation of more women’s teams. Annika is fearful of not having enough players in the years to come:

…we would like to be able to play against other women and until we can do that we need more players not just playing but getting better. I mean the existing people are only going to last so long…(small laugh)...so we want new people in and keep improving their skills not just so that it doesn’t die out after us. Although that is a factor…(Annika)
Annika’s goal of creating separate leagues for women reproduces the ideology of a gender segregated sport system. There is a common belief that women and men should occupy different sport spaces in order to be functional (Hargreaves, 1994). Visions for women’s sport vary; some women want to focus on being competitive, some want to play exclusively with women, others do not mind playing with men and some women only want to play with men (Lenskyj, 1994; Theberge, 2000).

Sandy explains that building a sustainable women’s team can be tedious and that only if women commit to a common vision will sustainability be achieved:

I think its tenuous [leadership, administrative work]. It all depends on the degree of commitment of the women who want to develop it [cricket], then they have to keep their personal agenda’s out of it. They’ve got to create a vision for the sport and create places for women to learn and to play. But if there is leadership then it requires someone to take ownership to develop the programs. And if we get that kind of leadership the sport will be okay. But if that leadership wavers it will disappear and it could disappear in a year …all you need is for the people who have been leading the charge to say okay I had enough I have been doing it for so long. If no one fills the vacuum it will disappear again. (Sandy)

Leadership deficits within women’s cricket are similar to those found in other women’s sports leagues. Traditional organizational sports models are based on a male approach to social, political and financial processes and may not speak to the realities of organizing and sustaining women’s sports (Krane, 2001; Theberge, 1994).

The women I interviewed believe women in sport need to adopt a sense of responsibility and give back to cricket in order to sustain their clubs. Creating a common
vision for a club can pose difficulties since each of the players may have a different outlook on how and why they wish to participate in cricket. Each individual brings a unique set of values when they step onto the pitch. Recruiting players is a major challenge since most people are unaware that cricket even exists in Canada. This lack of awareness of cricket acts as an invisible barrier to participation because if women don’t know about the sport they will not have the opportunity to play it. More public recognition of women’s cricket is needed to attract female players and maintain the women’s game.

Sandy reflects on the comparisons between women’s cricket and other traditionally male sports played by women:

Traditionally women didn’t play ice hockey in this country, it was played by men, same with rugby, same with soccer. But I mean those are body contact sports which have been traditions that took a long time to break down. And I think cricket is also one step ahead of a body contact sport because of the perception of how tough it is catching a ball with your bare hands. (Sandy)

Hockey is Canada’s national sport and girls and women have broken down many barriers that historically prevented their participation (Theberge, 2000, 2003). Women were playing hockey on men’s teams in the early 1900’s; by the end of the 20th century the game had became so popular that women’s leagues were established in almost every city and today Canada boasts an extremely successful women’s national team that has won both Olympic and World Cup gold medals. In contrast, cricket is a little known sport in Canada (Dutchin, 2007). Women who are interested in playing cricket would first need to learn about the game. Increasing public awareness of the sport for women might result in heightened participation. Research has indicated that the media influences which sports people choose
to play (James, 2005). After the Canadian under-19 women’s soccer team won the FIFA Women’s Championship, and thereby garnered a lot of media attention, registration of girls and women in soccer shot up (Kowal, 2004). Other studies have documented that exposure to the Olympics through television, internet, billboards, newspapers, and school curricula results in increased membership in those sports featured in the Olympics (O’Dwyer, 2008).

Although relatively unknown, women’s cricket in Canada is slowly gaining some recognition. Since the Canadian men’s national team qualified and played in the 2007 Men’s Cricket World Cup there has been increasing exposure to the game in Canada (Dutchin, 2007). Canada’s women’s national cricket team recently won an international tournament, unfortunately there was very little press to report this feat. The women are gaining some ground but have yet to achieve wide public acceptance.

In addition to problems of invisibility, cricket also struggles with the reputation and image of being ‘dangerous’ to play. Historically women were prevented from playing cricket precisely due to this perceived roughness of the sport (Morrow et al., 1989). Sandy notes that while she has seen hurdles overcome by females in sports like ice hockey and rugby, overall the prejudices about women playing contact sports persist. Indeed, research documents that women are more harshly judged when they play ‘masculine’ sports as opposed to traditional ‘feminine’ sports such as golf, tennis and swimming (Hall, 2002). Heteronormativity within the sport, coupled with homophobic tensions, contribute to low levels of female participation in traditionally ‘masculine’ sports. Joy’s comments above on how her overtly ‘feminine’ appearance was not welcomed on the pitch, is an example of this. Women are also more hesitant to join sports seen as ‘male’, such as cricket, for fear of being labelled too aggressive or appearing too ‘masculine’.
Creating Women’s Cricket Clubs in Canada: Challenges and Successes

Sport is viewed by governments as a tool for assimilating immigrants and integrating communities (Coalter, 2007; Cunningham, 2008). Individual sport organizations are primarily voluntary based in Canada; 50 million dollars are distributed annually to provincial and national sport organizations (Coalter, 2007; Sport Canada, 2007). Historically, sports organizations in Canada have been controlled by white men, and this has also been reflected in player composition. Thus, racism and sexism have become institutionally normalized in sport spaces (McNamee & Fleming, 2007; Spracklen, Hylton & Long, 2006). As stated earlier, my research revealed evidence of racialized hierarchies and cultural hegemony operating in women’s cricket clubs. Vertinsky (2004) notes that “different sporting places can be distinguished from each other through the operation of the relations of power that construct boundaries around them, creating spaces with certain meanings in which some relationships are facilitated, other discouraged” (p. 9). The Wicket Maidens club is currently integrated into their local men’s cricket league and thereby operates with a certain acceptance of men’s sporting dominance. The Indo-Canadian women in Toronto are struggling to secure their position within men’s cricketing culture. This section will focus on racialized differences between the Wicket Maidens and the Toronto Ladies and examine how cricket space is both gendered and racialized in ways that echo Canadian sporting culture. Finally, a spatial and post-colonial interrogation of the organizational structures of both of these women’s cricket clubs is carried out.

The Toronto Ladies recently secured a place to practice indoors. Currently, they have no outside practice facility. Since they do not belong to a league, they only play friendly
matches which are set up through the personal networks of the two executive members.

Christina explains this situation:

There is not a [women’s only] league. That is one of the things that people have to look out for, whoever is going to be responsible for establishing women’s cricket in Canada. It was an idea of mine that we kind of have to liaise first with the men’s leagues and work on establishing clubs around the country or around Ontario. Getting in the Toronto District league and getting cricket ground is a very hard process.

(Christina)

In this quote Christina reveals the uphill battle she faces in setting up and maintaining a women’s club and attempting to create partnerships with her local cricket association. Thus far, members of the Toronto District Cricket League (TDCL), who are all male, have prevented the women’s team from joining their league. Christina is well connected in the cricket community and her skills and playing abilities have earned her respect from both men and women within Canada, and internationally. Despite this reputation, she has been denied access and is unable to obtain the support her club needs to secure a place in league.

Christina’s main ally is another female player, and to date they have not received enough assistance from the national cricket governing body for their efforts. The ongoing process of establishing a women’s club is frustrating, isolating, humiliating and sometime debilitating. When asked why despite these obstacles she continues in her efforts Christina answers:

…because there are cricket lovers in Canada who have actually been supporters of me as a women playing cricket in Canada like Mike and Justin Keller ….and a couple of other folks including some of my former teammates, some of the Limer’s [former Caribbean Cricket Club] and stuff…My family who have always said “you should do
it yourself, you should get the women’s cricket going…only with your drive and ambition maybe we can stand up…there is not going to be another women to take on that initiative. (Christina)

Christina made a conscious choice to take on the task of establishing women’s cricket in Toronto. Christina values the networks she has made through participation in cricket and she speaks positively about specific individuals who have continually shown her support. She believes she has acquired a substantial amount of social capital within the sport of cricket. Social capital is defined as valuable networks between people and includes notions of citizenship, democracy, community, well being, trust, intercultural knowledge and social networks (Perks, 2007). Governments also believe that taking part in sport increases social capital21 among participants (Seippel, 2008; Spracklen et al., 2006). However Walseth and Fasting (2004, 2008) caution that social capital only increases in certain conditions and is highly dependant on the social locations of players.

Christina has created networks within cricket and these relationships have sometimes translated into future positive benefits. For instance, the women’s national team once needed money for a tournament and the CCA was not responding to their repeated attempts to contact them. Christina states: “I just called him [CCA representative] and asked him for money and his response was, ‘how much you need?’ and I told him and then he calls back and says ‘pick up a cheque next week’”. In this case she was successfully able to utilize her networks within the cricket community to support women’s cricket.

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21 Bourdieu (1986) also claims that social capital is “the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance or recognition” (p. 248); and is “made up of social obligations (‘connections’), which is convertible, in certain conditions, into economic capital and may be institutionalized in the form of a title of nobility” (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 243).
Putnam et al. (2004) point out that when diversity exists in a group, before social capital can be acquired, a process of bridging needs to occur. Bridging is defined as creating relationships across difference as opposed to bonding which is engaging in relationships with people similar to oneself. Many groups bond along some social dimensions and bridge across others (Putnam et al., 2004). Establishing wide-ranging social capital in the cricket community might give Christina more power to fulfill the needs of her club. Christina explains why the club disbanded in the late eighties:

I tried to keep the club going but in 1998 I couldn’t keep it going anymore, most of the girls lost interest and most of them had come from different sports, tennis, rugby, right? The club only had 5 members left who were still interested. I was going through problems with [my job at the bank], I didn’t know what was going on, whether or not I was going to be outsourced, cut, whatever, I didn’t know what was happening. I was under a lot of stress at work. I knew it was too much work for me alone right then to try and continue it. So in 1998 I said that’s it…(Christina)

Perhaps if Christina had had more social capital she would not have been so alone in trying to sustain the club. Christina admits that while sustaining the Toronto Ladies is an uphill battle that remains tough, unrewarding and frustrating, she also finds the work gratifying, fulfilling and worthwhile.

Most of the participants identified challenges in committing and continuing to play on a women’s cricket team. Janet explains that the “commute into Victoria” is something she does not like having to do on the weekends. Punnam is struggling to get along with her teammates and says; “I play my cricket and I leave, don’t involve me with all that other drama”. Christina feels that the cost of trying to foster women’s cricket is that her skills are
depleting, she says her supporters say “you could play these girls with your eyes closed” and she feels it is necessary to play with males to “keep her skills up”. Despite these hindrances, most of the participants voiced their dedication to the development of the sport in Canada.

Rhea is hopeful about the possibilities of expanding the women’s cricket program and feels optimistic about the future:

Basically they don’t have any other women’s club…not that we know of…so now they are starting to build up...Everybody trying to build up their own clubs. I am hoping in the future that we will have more women’s competition. (Rhea)

Rhea is challenging the existing male hegemonic model of cricket by participating in the game and she is confident that the future will bring more places for other women to join the game. Historically, women have been spectators and caretakers in cricket spaces. Do these newly articulated spaces (women’s cricket clubs), which are more inclusive of women, represent a resistance to historic exclusionary practices of sexism and racism in cricket spaces? Do they demonstrate how structural inequities based on sexist cultural practices, which excluded women, are being challenged?

The women’s club in Victoria has successfully created a partnership with the men’s cricket league however issues of equity require ongoing discussion and strategizing. Sandy remembers that when the Wicket Maidens first joined the league sometimes the men’s teams would not show up to play them or would play with little effort:

They would intentionally drop a catch or not try to get us out or something like that. But then we created a system of scoring in the mid week league, that caused them to have to play harder against us and play real cricket against us and it helped on all
levels. And it’s turned out that several of the women have been asked to play for weekend men’s teams. So it’s been very good. (Sandy)

This example shows that it was not enough for the Wicket Maidens to simply join the men’s league – they had to press for structural changes (the implementation of mid-week scoring) to ensure the male teams would compete equally with them. The Wicket Maidens seems to have won partial acceptance into the male hegemonic cricket system in Victoria. They are the only women’s team and have to continuously fight to earn and keep the male player’s respect. The women are still constrained by having to operate within a male-dominated cricket space since the Victoria and District Cricket Association does not include any other women’s teams. Vertinsky (2004) labels this kind of situation as experiencing ‘homelessness within the home itself’ (p. 20).

**Varying Athletic Ability**

The predominant organized sports in Canada are hockey, baseball, basketball, soccer and volleyball (Ifedi, 2005). The women’s leagues of these sports usually have limited access to resources, funding and levels of competition. When organizations have fewer participants, which is the case for many women’s leagues, resources tend to decrease (Lenskyj, 2003). Although cricket was played in the early 1800’s, it went through a period of dormancy and hence is a fairly new addition to the modern Canadian sport scene. Consequently, cricket is played by only small numbers of Canadians and leagues often have trouble recruiting players. Although Canadian women’s cricket now boasts a national team, the pool of athletes to choose from is very limited despite repeated attempts at recruitment. At the club level, drafting and ability levels are challenges for women’s cricket clubs.
This section focuses on how differences in athletic ability impact a club’s culture and its players’ sense of belonging. Most of the participants described themselves as athletic and cricket was usually the second, third or sometimes even fourth, sport they had played. In contrast, Janet confesses that she was never really good at sports and felt that some of the better players in the club used the team for their individual benefit. For instance, when asked if she agreed with the strategy of playing the best players first Janet answers:

No… you were maybe the last person to bat, which means you may or may not get to bat depending on how the game goes. So it got kind of boring and my attention started to wander. And other people were like; “I want a chance I’m not getting it, I don’t think I will come back.” So it wasn’t the best strategy. (Janet)

A number of the Wicket Maiden players are on the women’s national team so the team is quite competitive. These same national players are the executives within the club so they decide on batting order and playing time. Sometimes their decisions have resulted in frustration and discouragement for Janet and other players of lesser ability.

It did [discourage me] because some people were new and weren’t there when that [batting order] decision was made and maybe you didn’t know about it. I got frustrated myself because I’m putting in a lot of time and energy and I was thinking; “you could just let me play once okay?” (Janet)

Joining a team sport was new to Janet and she was initially excited about the opportunity of playing within a women’s cricket league. She talks about her experience growing up in Alberta where her first exposure to sport in a high school physical education class was an unpleasant one:
Gym class. I went to a very white, red neck school in Alberta. Gym class was not a very pleasant experience at all. So I was like the very shy awkward child. Yeah, that was horrible. I mean I was the only non-white, well I’m half white. Gym was awkward, I took it because I had to up until grade 10 then I never wanted anything to do with it again. (Janet)

Janet did not feel welcomed in physical education spaces and dropped the subject as soon as possible. She felt racialized in gym class as if she did not belong there. Despite this lack of an athletic background, Janet expresses her frustration about not being taken seriously as an athlete; she notes that although she might not be ‘athletic’, she still values health and fitness:

I would say I always do at least 3 hours of exercise a week, and then I got into weight lifting and such. So I was going in the morning and running in the afternoons and all this stuff. So I was very fit. (Janet)

When Janet joined the cricket club, although she lacked cricketing ability she was in good physical shape. Her initial awkwardness in cricket reminded her of gym class where she was always the last to be picked for teams. She described herself as having less athletic ability than her teammates and did not feel she was treated fairly on the team. Her lower athletic ability gave her an outsider status in the club.

Janet’s lack of acceptance in gym class was compounded by racialization and gender and this experience was reproduced for her within cricket spaces. Janet’s physical appearance was different from her teammates and she stated that she received “looks” when coming from work, dressed in her work clothes with make-up, or when she received extra attention from the media. Janet believed that her physical appearance contributed to her not being equally accepted within the club. She remembers one playing season where she did not
receive any playing time – although she asked repeatedly to be put on the field she kept getting relegated to the position of scorekeeper giving her little chance to improve her skills.

By playing the stronger players, the Wicket Maidens did win a tournament they entered, however this strategy came at a high cost as relationships were strained and there were no new recruits for the next season:

They did win but at the sacrifice of….well there was nine that were playing all the time and they didn’t attract any new players and they didn’t keep anyone new that they attracted. So it wasn’t the best decision no. (Janet)

Janet noticed that the club put a priority on recruiting women who already possessed the necessary skills of cricket such as batting, catching and throwing. She believed the club was not as welcoming to athletes who did not come already equipped with the essential skills to play cricket. Janet remembers that even during practices where the last task involved playing a mini-game, when the two captains of the club picked teams she was always picked last:

It reminded me of high school, like junior high like; “okay like being the last one picked for the team” and that sort of kept happening. And I’m like “omigod this is so interesting. (uncomfortable laugh) I hate being the last person picked for the team.”

(Janet)

Janet shares that other player’s treatment of her reinforced her belief that she did not really belong. She felt that her mixed race identity and appearance, along with a lack of necessary skills, hampered her acceptance on the team. Role conflicts and shifting identities have different meanings on and off the field since the meanings attached to identities are fluid and change in different contexts (Walseth, 2004, 2008). This shifting produced role conflict for Janet.
When asked if there were stereotypes about her athletic ability based on her looks she replies:

Yeah, like I think sometimes like if you don’t ugh...how can I word this.

I don’t look like an athlete, so when people look, they’re like “she’s not physically capable”. I don’t know what an athlete should look like. (Janet)

When further prompted about what she believes a female athlete should look like, her response was, “butchy I guess”. Janet’s narrative here and her discomfort with articulating it may mean that she is worried about appearing homophobic. She certainly appears to be uncomfortable with what might be described as the unfeminine (read non-normative) appearances of her teammates. Furthermore, her teammates might have felt some resentment towards Janet since she appeared to be displaying hyperfemininity in a space where it was not welcomed (Lenskyj, 2003). Janet felt constrained by having to live up to the expectations of ‘looking’ like a female athlete. In addition, her bi-racial identity, consistently made her feel out of place within sport spaces. Her ‘feminine’ looks and heteronormativity were not welcome on her team. The intersectionality of race, gender and sexuality was further complicated by her below average ability in the sport.

Janet is not currently playing with the Wicket Maidens since she moved out of the city. She does not want to join a team unless she is unable to give 100% commitment. She just got married and moved into a new home and has chosen to focus on her relationship and her house. She contends that because she was not ‘good enough’ to miss practices and just show up for the games, the time commitment became too onerous so she decided to quit the team.
Punam’s experience contrasts with Janet’s. Punam feels frustrated playing with the women in her club because she believes she is more committed to the game than they are:

I continuously improve my game with my other coach. Like even right now I am the only other girl that’s even in training. None of the other girls are doing any kind of training, no working out, no cricket, no nothing…It’s up to the women to show the world that they can do it. (Punam)

Punam describes herself as a more dedicated and worthy woman cricketer than her club teammates. When she travelled to British Columbia to train with the national team, she marveled at the organization and fitness levels of the Wicket Maidens. Their tenacity impressed Punam who felt that the women who played in Victoria were better suited to representing Canada than players in the GTA. Punam is convinced that she is harder working and more deserving than the other women on her team. She describes how she feels cheated when her teammates are given opportunities to play and complete:

It was my first year with the Canadian team so people didn’t really know I could play and that I play with a guys’ team. So I definitely didn’t get enough recognition and I was dropped for two games and I only played one game. And even in the one game I played, I didn’t get to bat and I only got one ball to bowl. (Punam)

Punam believes her cricketing skills are superior to both her club and national teammates. She is frustrated because she feels she is not getting the opportunities she should, to showcase her talent. The quote above also demonstrates her belief in the ideology that males are athletically superior to females; in her eyes, playing ‘with a guy’s team’ automatically increases her status and makes her a better player.
Unlike Punam and Janet, most of the other participants who were interviewed find that their club suits their needs. The players seemed satisfied with the social aspects and level of play in their respective clubs. Some of the women did articulate that they feared their skill level could plateau or decrease if they continued playing only with women. The gendered stereotype of males possessing inherently better athletic ability is internalized by these women. Punam, Rhea, Christina, Sandy and Annika all had experience playing with men, or on a man’s team. Punam and Christina plan to pursue playing with men in the future, to ‘stay competitive’.

When the Wicket Maidens face the men’s teams in their league, they are allowed to double the score when they make one run. There are conflicting views within the team about this rule. Janet believes that this strategy levels out the playing field and eliminates some of the uneasiness she feels when playing against men:

And I know some women didn’t want that to continue [doubling of the score]. But in the end I don’t know. Some of the guys have been playing cricket their whole life you know, almost on a semi-professional level and they can throw the ball so hard, like I wouldn’t even bother to catch it because it’s just too fast. (Janet)

Janet feels intimidated by the male players - the scoring accommodation helps her believe she has enough of an advantage to compete fairly. Certainly some of the other players also acknowledge that this scoring structure is a useful way to attract and convince women players that they will be joining a club that has a chance at being competitive.

The Wicket Maidens presently have quite a number of players who have developed their skills to the point that they now play at the national level and/or on competitive men’s teams. Being highly skilled on the team presents challenges. Annika recognizes the varying
abilities within the club. As one of the players with superior skills, she is torn between improving her own skills and helping to develop other players:

There is a whole dispute whether we should go to the higher men’s league. I would very much from an individual playing point of view, like to play at a higher level. Would love to do that, but do I vote in favour of it? I don’t know because it will take away from the development of our team if we do that. I don’t know where I stand on that. I might consider sacrificing what I see as improving my cricket ability to help it [the team] expand instead. (Annika)

This decision, about whether to move the club into the more competitive weekend league (as opposed to remaining in the mid-week league), is currently one of the major conflicts within the club. Annika goes on to explain:

The trouble with the mid-week league is that it is not the right league for us ideally…and I think people agree with accepting that it is the lower level cricket in Victoria. The idea isn’t that we would take ourselves out of the lower league [altogether] but we would just have some women who would play weekends as well. But the concern there is, is that people are going to be choosing to play only on the weekends and they won’t be coming to all to the development practice sessions and games that we have for the new players. So the concern is, you know that people will just want to go to the higher league and give up on their responsibilities for development. So there’s some disagreement on that. (Annika)

Annika recognizes the challenges in creating a club that both allows women to excel, and leaves space for newer, or less able, players to develop their skills. Adding a team to the
weekend league might lead to the loss of players, a risk that could result in the dismantling of the Wicket Maidens.

Janet is one of the players who enjoys playing cricket for recreational and leisure reasons. For her, friendly matches are sufficient:

…I like competition but for somebody new at this sport it’s like ‘whoa, can’t we just have a fun game?’ It was a bit too competitive that way. I think that even in the fun games they were still very competitive. (Janet)

Janet prefers the recreational aspects of the game rather than the competitive aspects. She is new to the sport and feels she has not required the necessary skills to be really competitive.

Like Annika, Sandy is also cautious about balancing the desire to be competitive with keeping the club accessible enough to attract and sustain new members. She knows the Wicket Maidens must somehow find the equilibrium between accepting women’s varying athletic abilities and keeping the women who want to be more competitive engaged. The scarce funding and heavy reliance on volunteer labour in women’s cricket tends to lead to high member turnover rates, hence recruitment and retention of new players is extremely important for a club’s survival. Sandy insists that women’s cricket clubs should focus on a team model where everyone can participate:

All of the cricket organizations appear to be league oriented, team oriented, not participation oriented. And that’s the one thing we’ve tried to do with the Wicket Maidens in Victoria, is create a club not a team and the club concept is participation, getting women to play the game and develop cricket [skills], not just being competitive. Because the minute you start being competitive you eliminate the players in the learning stages. (Sandy)
Sandy, Punam, Christina and Janet’s comments all point to the complexities of starting and sustaining a women’s cricket club in Canada. Competing visions between individual players, high turnover rates, a lack of resources and the small pool of potential players are all factors the put pressure on women’s cricket clubs. The Canadian sport system would do well to better recognize and study the barriers, inequities and complexities that continue to persist within women’s cricket to see what remedies or supports can be offered.

**Acquiring Spaces to Play**

In general, finding spaces for women to play cricket in Canada is not an easy task. That said, there was a stark discrepancy between the availability of playing space for the Victoria team versus the Toronto team. The women in Victoria had worked hard at building a relationship with the Victoria and District Cricket Association (VDCA) and as a result had achieved a position on their board, and a place in their leagues. The women still do not hold any voting rights but they have managed to lobby the organization to their advantage. The women receive keys to the main cricket house pavilion, and in recognition of their limited resources, have not been charged a fee for joining the league. No other club receives keys or has unlimited access to the pitches. The Wicket Maidens have established themselves in a men’s league and are fairly well integrated into Victoria’s cricket culture. They are well organized and have a good reputation which they work hard to maintain. When asked how they pay for use of the cricket pitches Sandy shares:

> They pay for them [the VDCA covers the fees required for use of the fields]. We don’t pay anything. We pay a fee to join the league but the VDCA pays the city for the use of the park. It’s laughably small the amount that we pay. (Sandy)
It is impressive that the VDCA has agreed to pay for the Wicket Maidens’ pitch use along with giving them a spot in the league. To often this kind of support is not offered, as Cunningham (2008) points out sport organizations fail to recognize the benefits of gender diversity in sports. The benefits of creating a gender diverse sport organization include a broadened perspective, increased membership and enhanced overall image of the sport organization (Cunningham, 2008; Fink, 2008). By providing space, the VDCA is perhaps trying to change the impression that sports spaces are sexist. The fact that the Wicket Maidens have Sandy at their helm is helpful. She has achieved elite athlete status in Victoria and played hockey and rugby at very advanced levels. She has accumulated enough respect in the Canadian sport system that she has been able to bridge and build networks to her advantage. Her involvement in national hockey, rugby and now cricket teams, has contributed to her knowledge of sport organizations in Canada. Her husband is also an elite athlete and has experience navigating the Canadian sport system.

Annika is also grateful for the VDCA’s partnership and spoke about the unlimited access to the cricket facilities the Wicket Maidens have acquired:

Umm, unless the clubhouse is specifically booked for something then yeah [we get to use it], I am interchanging between [use of] the pavilion and clubhouse, it’s the same thing. But whenever the pavilion is booked we don’t go in there but we can still go in and use the change rooms whenever we want. One person on our team has the key for it and if there is a specific function that we want to use it for, it is a good idea to book it ahead of time just so there is no one else there at the time... Essentially it’s almost unlimited access. (Annika)
Annika believes this unlimited access is an advantage but something she feels the women’s team deserves:

We have a bit of an advantage. I mean we play on the exact same field in the exact same clubhouse, that sort of thing. But we are the only team in the midweek league that has their own key to the pavilion…we need all the advantages we can get to try and get ahead…they [the VDCA] are trying to encourage women’s cricket. (Annika)

Annika postulates that the VDCA is attempting to ‘encourage women’s cricket’, and this is the reason the Wicket Maidens receive certain benefits.

However Sandy points out that the women’s club has to work hard at being organized and communicating with the VDCA to ensure they don’t lose the benefits that they have:

…the Victoria and District Cricket Association has always been very welcoming to women’s cricket. I think that when it started they thought “oh goodie we are going to have a women’s auxiliary,” but then we quickly disabused them of that knowledge or that intent and we have been steadily growing in influence. There’s certainly no discrimination against us, they certainly welcome us. We do have to be really, really organized to make sure that we get our fair share of the grounds and access to the facilities. We have to make sure that if we want certain dates for certain games that we get our request sent in early. And that they accommodate us...we definitely fight to keep our practice time because there are always people who want them [the pitches] for a special event…We are way more organized than of any the men’s team. (Sandy)

The fact that the women have to be more organized, make sure their requests are ‘sent in early’ and ‘fight to keep our practice time’ suggests that discrimination in the league is
present and that men still have ultimate control of their cricket spaces. The VDCA is a highly
gendered space, defined and controlled by men. These men tell women how and when they
can play. There is one Wicket Maidens representative on the VDCA however she does not
have a vote at the table and hence has little real power. If at any time the men decided they
did not want the women to play, they could vote to remove from the VDCA. The men who
currently control the organization are committed to the development of women’s cricket,
however if new administrators with a different vision for the VDCA were put in place the
women could quickly become a marginalized group once again. In this way, the threat of
losing their privileges is always looming. The women’s club team is a ‘guest’ in the men’s
league and is ‘permitted’ by the VDCA to use the fields. Every opportunity to acquire more
space, power or a change in the rules must first be negotiated with, and approved by, the
men’s organization. Dominant gendered social relations are reproduced in this cricket space
which in turn results in the reproduction of barriers to women’s cricket participation.

The Wicket Maidens have been granted permission to hold socials / fundraisers after
their games at the clubhouse. Their proposal to have the VDCA double the Wicket Maidens
runs scored was scrutinized and debated by the Board before being passed. The ‘good
reputation’ and ‘strong relationships’ the Wicket Maidens have within the VDCA has
permitted such changes to occur. Once a decision to support the women’s team is made at the
VDCA, the Board works hard to uphold it. For example, if any of the men do not show up
for their game against the women, or refuse to follow the rules, they forfeit the game. The
women did not achieve these feats easily. Intensive lobbying, hard work, diligence and a
commitment to increasing their skill level was required to achieve these positive
developments. The Victoria women have succeeded in creating a small but significantly
transformative space for women’s cricket. Their example is inspiring for other women’s clubs.

When comparing the experiences of the Toronto Ladies and the Victoria Wicket Maidens, a number of social interactions and complex processes need to be taken into account. The Toronto team has not been as successful in acquiring space to play or partnering with their respective men’s leagues. Over the past few years the team has struggled to find a consistent practice facility however they have recently gained a foothold in remedying this situation and acquiring space. Currently, the team has a practice facility in the west end of Toronto that is shared by another men’s team. They also have a verbal agreement with a second, indoor, cricket facility in the west end. I attended one of their practices on a Saturday night; Rhea was the only player to attend. Retention of players appears to be a significant issue for the Toronto Ladies. The two individuals who are responsible for finding space for the Toronto Ladies have struggled to find a regular place for the women to play. Unfortunately, their social networks and good image in the cricket community has not translated into obtaining a permanent space. The lack of a home space for their team has negatively affected player retention on the Toronto Ladies team.

The main differences between the Wicket Maidens and the Toronto Ladies club are geography and racialization. Toronto is often touted as the most multicultural city in the world (Fenlon, 2008), while in contrast, Victoria is primarily white. Canada has multiple multicultural policies in place in order to prevent inequities from occurring within organizations. However, notions of hegemonic whiteness can still be seen within these two sites. Racialized immigrant communities are marginalized and do not have as much power as non-immigrants and white Canadians. It is more difficult for racialized immigrants to attain
power, resources and privileges within sports organizations (McNamee & Fleming, 2007; Spracklen et al., 2006).

Material differences are clearly evident between the Toronto and Victoria clubs. For instance, the Toronto Ladies use the public nets at Sunnybrook Park for their outdoor practice and playing facility. As there is no set time for the club to use the nets, they must show up and hope that they are free for them to use. In contrast, the Wicket Maidens have access to a secure facility and are assured of their space and time to practice. Although there is no overt empirical evidence to demonstrate racism in this disparity, the inequities in access to space can be seen as an example of systemic racism. The team of racialized women (Toronto Ladies) has not managed to receive the same material advantages as the Wicket Maidens, a team consisting of mostly non immigrant, white women. Unlike the Wicket Maidens, the Toronto Ladies do not have a male league partner and hence must take on the administrative and financial responsibility of running the team on their own. Members repeatedly employ their social capital to try to convince men’s teams to play them in friendly matches. These matches, when they can be secured, are usually played on the men’s club practice fields giving them a home field advantage.

Perceptions about the quality of the fields they play on differed among the Toronto Ladies. Rhea comments that:

The grounds are pretty good. I wish they’d take better care. Some of the grounds are good like some of the pitches are really good. But some of them, the mat, the pitch itself is really bad. It’s really slow or bumpy or it’s not up to like a good cricketing standard but I hope that they are working on that stuff now. (Rhea)

Punam, who plays on the same team, has quite a different account then Rhea:
...we don’t have our own personal home ground for our practices. We don’t even have unlimited access, we just go there on a particular date that we are scheduled to play, and we just go there and practice. We basically have to travel to every team’s home ground. (Punam)

These disparate accounts demonstrate the different ways social spaces of cricket can be interpreted.

Although the Toronto women are challenging the discourse of cricket as a male game by playing, they still lack the ability to secure a stronghold in the community. Each club’s organizational structure demonstrates how men still control the social, political and spatial resources in cricket. hooks (1984) argues that second wave feminism, by excluding men from the feminist movement, inadvertently reinforced sexual divisions. Women became solely responsible for securing and promoting women’s equality (hooks, 1984). When women lobby men they can sometimes gain rights within cricket spaces but in this model the men are certainly not advocates for women’s equality. The challenges of achieving equality in cricket appear different for each region. The Wicket Maidens are working within the VDCA and in lobbying the men there, have been able to secure far more privileges than the Toronto Ladies. hooks (1984) contends that white, middle class feminists validate the status quo by obtaining power and prestige within existing social structures rather than questioning and dismantling these structures which are inherently inequitable.

The Wicket Maidens have the following privileges for their team: regularly available spaces to play, a functioning organizational structure, integration within a men’s league, an accommodation in the scoring system, representation within the league’s organizational structure, fundraising support, and a key to the clubhouse, a provision given only to their
team. In comparison, the Toronto Ladies have significant deficits including: no regular practice facility, no guarantee of recreational games, a limited organizational structure, no fundraising support and no representation within the Toronto and District Cricket Association (TDCA). The disadvantageous position of the Toronto Ladies may be related to the fact they are a group of racialized women. hooks (1984) points out, “Race and class identity creates differences in the quality of life, social status and lifestyle, that take precedence over the common experience that women share – differences that are rarely transcended. The motives of materially privileged, educated, white women, with a variety of career and lifestyle options available to them, must be questioned” (p. 7). She goes on to note that if non-white women have not developed an ability to recognize their own definitions of their reality, they will be unable to exercise any resistance (hooks, 1996). A case can be made that the disparities between these two clubs exist in part because as a racialized group, the Toronto Ladies struggle to exist within a sports model that privileges specific populations and some individuals might also have more cultural knowledge about how to navigate the Canadian sport system for their benefit.

The structural hierarchy of Canadian sport remains hegemonic because it is dominated by white men and women who continue to reproduce white norms and practices within sport (McNamee & Fleming, 2007; Spracklen et al., 2006, Walseth, 2004, 2008). The Toronto women’s cricket club is a collection of visible minority women and so their place in this system will always be marginalized based on their status within a white dominant society. Racialized women were largely unaware of their gross underrepresentation within the cricket sphere. Their demands for equality were not understood as a basic right by all the players. The Toronto Ladies were complicit in accepting male control of cricket by blaming other
factors such as disorganization and lack of available funding for their low status position within cricket spaces. However, given the nature of sexism, visible minority women will continue to face discrimination and might fear resisting current sport structures, whether the clubs are dominated by white or racialized men.

Interestingly, the TDCA organization is dominated by Indo-Canadian men and yet the Toronto Ladies have not been able to forge a beneficial relationship with them. It may be that cultural expectations of masculinity and femininity on the part of the TDCA men have doubly disadvantaged the Toronto Ladies with respect to gender and racialization. On the other hand, the women’s shared cultural background may help them make inroads into the TDCA in the future. More research is needed about the men who control the TDCA and their opinions on women’s cricket in general, and the Toronto Ladies in particular.

Rhea shares her hope that the team will soon secure an indoor practice facility through the contact of a supportive male who is also an immigrant and passionate about cricket:

No [we won’t have to pay for the space]...the Canadian National Men’s team practices there as well. So he was able to give us the space for free. Normally we would have to pay. He told us not to...Every time I offer he told us not to. Because it’s a women’s team and there is only one women’s team...I think he just wants to contribute towards women’s development. (Rhea)

Rhea later mentions that this contact is unable to give them specific practice times but rather slots them into whatever spaces are left after the men’s teams have booked their times. In addition, the relationship with this contact is loose and informal and therefore not guaranteed for any length of time. It is likely that Rhea’s inability to formally locate a space with set
practice times will eventually lead to more disappointment and frustration among the Toronto Ladies.

Punam comments on her current dissatisfaction with the availability of pitch space:

I’ve played at amazing grounds this summer but then I’ve also played at grounds which are just not very good for cricket. And I think the program in general needs a lot of funding to get it developed. The thing is that in Toronto, there are so many soccer programs running at the same time so they end up taking over the cricket spaces. And then you either give up your entire space or soccer field or stay with what you have. (Punam)

Christina is aware that the best way to secure stable access to practice space would be to formally join the TDCA, however the Toronto Ladies club is unable to afford the $6000 fee required:

It’s not an easy answer [how do you plan on joining the TDCA] there are only so many cricket grounds in Toronto, that’s dedicated cricket grounds. Some grounds have various purposes including baseball, and soccer. Fortunately since the year of 1918 Parks and Rec has given the Toronto and District Cricket league, the major league in Toronto, better facilities but that comes with a price tag. To be able to use these major cricket grounds in Toronto [there] is a very hefty fee. (Christina)

As a club of racialized women the Toronto Ladies face financial disadvantages that result in them being unable to secure cricket space. This example illustrates why minority women should be receiving more provisions in order to level the playing field so they can participate in cricket. Unfortunately, multicultural policies of equality and inclusion are not being practiced at the grassroots level in Canadian sport. While the Canadian Cricket Association
claims they are committed to the development of women’s cricket, in reality they appear to be doing very little to facilitate the participation of women, especially racialized women. Little support has been given to the Toronto Ladies who are struggling to find a space to play and gain a foothold within the local Toronto cricket scene. This confirms that sport spaces in Canada are gendered and racialized (Fusco, 2005).

Minority women are disproportionately underrepresented in organized sport in Canada, more so than any other group (Ifedi, 2005). Despite this reality, little to no support, funding or accommodations are given to these groups and as a result clubs like the Toronto Ladies are struggling to sustain their membership and very existence. Christina, who came to Canada when she was very young, has experienced a number of obstacles in trying to establish a women’s cricket club in Toronto. The $6000 cost of joining the TDCA is money the Toronto Ladies cannot afford and hence represents a barrier to their participation. The women are investigating whether they can obtain funding from the Canadian Cricket Association, or secure sponsorship by a corporation to cover this cost but thus far have been unsuccessful. The barriers they face are real but they receive little sympathy when they ask for help.

Punam expresses her frustration with the lack of progress of the Toronto Ladies club: The girls don’t have access to anything, they don’t even have a home ground. We just practice at these nets, we don’t even practice on a cricket field. We don’t have access to anything. They’re [executive members of the Toronto Ladies] definitely not organized…I think it’s that there’s a couple people trying to take the initiative but the couple of people who tried, they kind of get on the nerves of everyone else and that’s
when the whole drama thing comes in. I don’t think there is really any respect for anyone on the team. (Punam)

Punam’s frustrations with the Toronto Ladies are exacerbated by the fact that she compares it with her more positive experiences on other club teams and in other organized sports. She shares that the other club teams she’s involved with do not operate like the Toronto Ladies and are more ‘organized’. Punam “swam competitively” until she was “eight years of age” and also has “always been involved in sprinting, 100-200 metre dashes and long jump”. Punam may not be taking into account the social, political and economic complexities surrounding the Toronto women’s club and their lack of ability to achieve equity within cricket. The social interactions that are present in the Toronto Ladies also contribute to Punam’s attitude towards the club. The dynamics of the specific culture within the women’s cricket clubs is discussed next.

**Cultural Practices in the Clubs**

The term ‘culture’ is highly contested among scholars, some argue that the term can be essentialist when groups are unfairly categorized and characterized (Bhabha, 1994; Giddens, 1989). Giddens interprets culture as ‘the values the members of a given group hold, the norms they follow and the material goods they create’ (1989, p. 310). Bhabha (1994) argues that the idea of ‘culture’ is transformed into a number of dynamic social processes operating in contested terrains in which different voices become more or less hegemonic in their offered interpretation of the world. This section analyzes how the Wicket Maidens, and the Toronto Ladies, create cultures that are shaped by their ethnicities and national background.

The Toronto Ladies and the Wicket Maidens have different club cultures, this is especially apparent in the way they socialize and celebrate after games. The members of both
groups meet for a social get together after a game. The post game get together is enjoyed by most of the players of both clubs who feel like it contributes to building a positive, welcoming atmosphere. The Wicket Maiden players shared that their team displays cohesion and a ‘warm’ culture. There is evidence to support these feelings however there is also an example of one player who struggled to gain acceptance and a sense of belonging in the club. Janet feels that she “wasn’t graceful” and did not come equipped with cricketing skills. She believes this prevented her from becoming fully accepted into the club. Like Janet, Punam has struggled with feeling estranged from her Toronto Ladies teammates as she describes below:

I don’t really get along with most of the girls. It’s not that like we don’t talk or anything. I can’t relate to them, they’re different. They’re out there partying having fun when I’m getting serious about cricket. (Punam)

Punam shares that she rarely participates in ‘parties,’ and in this way is different from her teammates. She believes that participating in the social activities takes away from the seriousness of the sport and shows you are less of a player. The quote illustrates her apparent disapproval of her teammates and their social activities.

The day to day procedures of playing also varied from one club to the other. The Wicket Maidens are in a league and hence being ready to play on time is important because each side shares the cost of the umpire. Also, if you do not have enough players to field a team by a certain time then you risk forfeiting the game and consequently receiving a loss. The Wicket Maidens appoint one person responsible for bringing the equipment to the game and the club also designates women as scorekeepers. There is a rotation of these roles at every game. Usually a veteran pairs up with a newer player to assist in the scorekeeping.
After the game there is usually a social hosted by the home team. If the Wicket Maidens are hosting they go to the clubhouse where they serve beer. The women buy and serve their own beer which they have found more financially advantageous (since they get to keep the profits) than getting a pub to sponsor them. The male teams usually have a pub sponsor them or their whole clubhouse. Since they play in the midweek league, the players are usually not out that late and in fact some women leave directly after the game because of family obligations. Here feminine normative behaviours dictate how able women are to participate in expected cricket behaviour such as after game socials.

The Wicket Maidens club appears very organized and seems to have developed a well functioning system. The after game socials serve as fundraisers for the club. In order to accumulate as many funds as possible, the women asked the VDCA, along with the individual teams, if they could host the social each time they played at the clubhouse (even if the team they faced also belonged to the clubhouse making them technically co-hosts of the social). The VDCA and teams all agreed. Where the male teams more regularly hold and host their after game socials at various local pubs, the women have created a new space and tradition by holding their socials at the clubhouse. The women players in the league are making an attempt to integrate with the prevailing male norms and traditions (e.g., drinking after the game) but tweaking them slightly to better fit their needs.

The Toronto Ladies have a very different culture than the Wicket Maidens. The club has limited resources and much less funding than their Victoria counterparts and these shortcomings sometimes result in tensions amongst the players. The organizational procedures for the games they play are quite informal which annoys some of the players. The main organizers of the team typically call everyone on the day of the game to make sure they
are coming. They usually have to deal with a number of last minute cancellations. Many of the players have to wait for a call to see if there is a game and find out the location. Rhea discusses some of the challenges of this situation:

Well, for men they just have so many players, so many players to choose from compared to the women. For women, we … have to try to make up the team before the game starts. A lot of people will cancel, before the game starts, they’ll say their kids [need them]. A lot of guys, unlike the girls, could leave home and play cricket. For the girls it’s really hard for them to leave home. Some of them really have good husbands and boyfriends and stuff. Some of them it’s very difficult to leave home and come and play cricket all day and just go back. And as well for the men, they have so much more support and for us it’s just a matter of going out there and getting it. It’s a totally different playing field for the men and women. (Rhea)

The frequency of last minute cancellations suggests there is not as strong a commitment to the Toronto Ladies by their players. Again the tenuous and stressful situation the team finds itself in may contribute to this. Another factor affecting the cancellation rate is the struggle women have in trying to balance work, home and leisure activities such as playing cricket. The organizational structures of a women’s club are often affected by domestic demands. Sandy comments on this challenge:

I mean that’s [the reality of] women’s sport. Ice hockey, basketball, softball, golf, women come and go because frankly family is more important to them than sport. As it should be, absolutely. But that’s the reality of women’s sport. So, if it survives it requires the organization to triumph over player’s other responsibilities. You need to have lots of people being trained to take on the reins and build the structure so that
you aren’t negatively impacted when you get 5 out of your 20 women on maternity
leave. (Sandy)

In Canada, women cricket players are mostly in their mid-thirties, just the time when many
women are either planning families or already have young children. Rhea and Sandy’s
narratives above reveal that the heteronormative and/or sexist realities of women’s lives
effect their participation in cricket.

Maintaining club membership is critical, as previously discussed, and yet as Sandy
comments pregnancy and family obligations often prevent women from making complete
and long term commitments to a club:

It [having families] doesn’t have as big of an affect on the men as it does on the
women. The men might go from, you know, only playing three times a week to twice
a week if they have families. The significant impact is always on the women. They
are the family people. We lose them in all sports, in particular I see that in the golf
club. The guys are playing there every Saturday and Sunday but the wife, as soon as
she has a baby she gets one day. (Sandy)

Family responsibilities are a well documented challenge for any woman who chooses to play
any sport (Hall, 2002). By joining cricket teams women challenge hegemonic sports models
that assume women cannot take part in sport precisely because they ‘belong’ in the home. At
the same time Sandy and Rhea discuss the reality of how domestic demands often place
constraints upon women that make it difficult for them to leave the home and come out to the
cricket pitch. In addition, women are commonly ‘expected’ to leave sport after the birth of a
child. The heteronormative and/or sexist conditions under which women live their lives
affect both their individual participation in cricket and also the organizational stability and sustainability of their clubs.

    The Toronto Ladies cricket club struggles with issues of sustainability. The club’s present organizational framework is based on two key individuals who consequently hold most of the power in the club. Rhea discusses the toil of building and sustaining a women’s cricket club in Toronto:

    When we first started in 2003, there was just the two [organizers]…then in 2004-2005 we tried to get members from the club involved so we had like a president, vice-president, treasurer, vice president for finance, a coordinator…But in 2006 we lost some of the people so it was just [two players] holding the club together. That’s pretty much it…. We are going to try to get some volunteers to take up those spots for the people we lost in 2006. (Rhea)

    Currently the Toronto club is being run by two individuals who are responsible for the overall execution of club business. The women’s club in Toronto is fighting to stay afloat. Punam admits that she is not very clear about the structure of her club:

    I don’t know if there is an organization. I think Fiona is supposed to be the president and I don’t who the treasurer is, I don’t know… I don’t know anything about the club. I think there isn’t much about the club. When I joined all they needed from me was a $25 membership fee. And that was it. There was no form indicating that I was going to be playing with them... (Punam)

    The above two quotes illustrate the challenges minority women are experiencing as they try to develop an organizational system within their club. The Toronto Ladies would benefit from equal opportunity policies within the Canadian Cricket Association that would ensure
they have access to as much funding as other women’s teams. The fact that the Wicket Maidens get a substantial subsidy from the VDCA while the Toronto team has no financial support makes for an uneven playing field between the two teams. Access to resources, playing fields and funds are absolutely critical for fostering team spirit and involvement and putting an organizational structure into place.

The subsidies the Wicket Maidens receive allow them to cover most of the club costs as well as purchase equipment to share, making their club very affordable for individual players. This helps in attracting new players. Janet notes:

There just wasn’t a lot of expenses I don’t think? I think the team had to pay money to the organization to play in everything. The team itself is successful from fundraising...like a lot of players had their own equipment but then there is also team equipment, so if you didn’t have anything there were always things to borrow. So there was sort of an abundance of those things, but most of the regular people had just started acquiring their own. So I think during the indoor games you had to pay an extra $5 for practice just to contribute towards rental. They wanted to keep the dues affordable so that it wasn’t a barrier. But then if someone did come and was strapped for cash, then they would wave the dues to get the players. (Janet)

Although both of the teams have low membership costs, the Wicket Maidens are able to offer more equipment and chances to play to their members. An argument can be made that the disparities between the two clubs are partly a result of differing levels of acquired social and cultural capital. That is, being primarily white the Wicket Maidens have more cultural and social currency in Canada. Whiteness may assist them in securing better funding and resources. Shane (2007) argues that “whiteness is produced through a series of processes
(e.g. institutionalization), practices (e.g. assimilation or cultural homogenization) and epistemological knowledges (e.g. white supremacy) that provide the ground upon which to structure the skills and capabilities used to navigate daily social lives” (p. 222). Dyer (1997) also postulates that whiteness codifies itself as organized, rational and in control while non-whites are deemed chaotic, disorganized, irrational and out of control. The minority women in the Toronto Ladies, a marginalized group in Canadian society, do not receive adequate funding to maintain a sports club.

The Toronto Ladies appear “disorganized” to Punam however the conditions in which they operate should be closely considered. Their inability to acquire certain resources cannot be simply explained through lack of individual effort. Several of the Toronto Ladies have worked extremely hard over the years to keep the club going. Most of the women playing on the team are immigrants or so called first generation Canadians. They have failed to acquire or effectively utilize their social and cultural capital within cricket spaces. Some of the women might not have attained enough social or cultural capital to make such gains in the cricket community. Another barrier may be their lack of familiarity with, and knowledge about, the Canadian sport system making it difficult for them use this structure to their benefit when seeking resources.

Sandy and Joy both express disbelief about the lack of female cricket clubs in Toronto and the fact a ‘proper’ league does not exist. Sandy states: “I find it curious that Toronto has not got a women’s league when they have so many more women that we have”, while Joy comments, “I know there’s a lot of women who play in Toronto but as far as I know um there’s no women specific teams”. Their narratives fail to recognize or address the privileges they have because of their social and cultural capital, as well as their racial,
citizenship and class advantages. They are not cognizant of the barriers that Toronto minority women cricketers face.

The majority of the Victoria women have previous experience playing organized sport in Canada and thus are more familiar with the sport system. In addition, they have lived all their lives in Canada and often have partners or husbands who have participated in various levels of organized sport. Navigating through the Canadian sport system is likely far easier for the Victoria women than it would be for the Toronto Ladies players. Ahmed (2004) contests that when you are familiar with the space that surrounds you, you are able better negotiate the world you live in. She also argues that white bodies are orientated in a white world and thus inhabiting a place that is constructed to their form (Ahmed, 2007). Therefore, whiteness gives the Wicket Maidens a tangible advantage over the racialized Toronto players when it comes to building and sustaining a cricket club.

In summary, the cultures of the Toronto Ladies and the Wicket Maidens are complex and must be contextualized by looking at such issues as race, ethnicity, and social and cultural capital. The survival and day to day operations of both clubs is dependant upon integrating and negotiating with the male hegemonic cricket system. By instituting the double score for runs, the Wicket Maidens have come up with a system that allows them to compete in an engaging way in the men’s league. They believe that doubling the scoring levels the playing field, however this system might contribute to notions of female athletic inferiority among both men and women players. The Toronto women are still playing recreationally and players are anxious to be taken seriously by local cricket organizations and the teams they play. Finally, the different structures, activities and resource levels of each
club are related to differences in geography and player composition resulting in the unique social dynamics of each of these female cricket sites.
CHAPTER EIGHT: CONCLUSIONS

Introduction

The experiences of the women participants of this study expose the complexities that currently exist in Canadian cricket. This research project provided a platform for these women cricketers to tell their stories. The initial purpose of this study was to conduct a feminist, post-colonial and spatial analysis of how the game of cricket impacted the identities of Indo-Canadian females living in the Greater Toronto Area. During the participant recruitment phase, a number of male, and white women, cricketers expressed interest in this study. I made a choice to interview both of these groups along with my initial target group of Indo-Canadian women. Since my main objective was to uncover the histories and stories of women’s participation in Canadian cricket, in the end, I did not analyze the men’s interviews. However the men provided information about their involvement in, and coaching of, women’s cricket and this was useful contextual data. Having both Indo-Canadian and white women in the study, from two different regions, allowed me to compare and contrast how women’s cricket was experienced in two distinct geographical spaces by two distinct cultural groups. I found that these spaces were highly gendered and racialized and there were definite differences across social locations.

The primary purpose of the research was to explore how women experience cricket spaces in Canada. A second aim was to examine whether participation in cricket was implicated in the (re)production of national and local identities. I conducted a post-colonial analysis which allowed me to interpret the impact of cricket on the identities and experiences of women cricketers in Canada. Some of the main research questions investigated were: How
do South Asian women view their participation in cricket? What role does the notion of Canada play in shaping the game, and the social environments, of women’s cricket? What is the history of women’s cricket in Canada and how did the game develop? Specifically, I was interested in examining how women’s cricket clubs have been integrated into the Canadian sport system. I also researched how the women perceived themselves in relation to being cricket players in Canada. Since the game is being played mostly by male immigrants in Canada, I wanted to investigate what kinds of experiences women have had carving out a place for themselves in male dominated cricket spaces.

Summary

The findings of my research can be divided into three main themes: the story of women’s participation in Canadian cricket; the influence of race and gender on their experiences; and lastly accessibility issues in cricket. A critical spatial, feminist and postcolonial theoretical analysis was integrated throughout the discussion. A comparative analysis of the experiences of the women from the Victoria and Toronto clubs was also interwoven throughout the findings.

Main Findings of the Study

The first theme uncovered in my research was the history of women’s cricket participation in Canada. The focus was on the social processes of women’s experience within cricket, all the while keeping note of such issues as culture, space and gender. Findings indicated that geography, culture and aptitude in sports and physical activity affected how women participated in cricket. The journey to playing women’s cricket in Canada, shared by the participants, revealed a rich history. Canada’s colonial past influenced how many of them viewed their ties to, and participation in, the game. Several Indo-Canadian participants
shared how their homeland’s cricket histories played an integral role in establishing their passion for the game. The Indo-Canadian’s all migrated from former British colonies and that history influenced their participation in different ways.

The Indo-Canadians were exposed to the sport in their homeland countries from an early age while the Victoria women were only introduced to the sport in Canada in their mid twenties or thirties. In both groups a man (fathers, brothers, uncles) often facilitated their entry into the male dominated sport of cricket. All of the participants expressed that cricket was always, or became, a part of their identity. The Indo-Canadian players placed more value on their involvement and had more affirmation and support within their families and communities. In comparison, the Victoria women viewed cricket as unusual and considered their cricket identity unique. They also felt an elevated status because of their involvement in a non-traditional Canadian sport. The Indo-Canadians viewed their participation as part of their culture and when coming to Canada, they wanted to continue to pursuing the sport to sustain their cultural and community ties to the game.

A second major theme illustrated how Canada’s policy and practices of multiculturalism affected the interviewees’ perceptions about cricket. All of the participants agreed, with the exception of one participant, that cricket did not qualify as a ‘Canadian’ sport. The one participant who disagreed was an Indo-Canadian who concluded that cricket was a Canadian sport due to Canada’s colonial links with the game. My findings suggest that cricket in Canada is racialized because it is viewed as an immigrant sport played by non-whites. Participants felt that since the majority of players are racialized immigrants, cricket could not be validated as a ‘true’ Canadian sport. This echoes current discourses which usually correlate ‘Canadian identity’ with English or French speaking white settlers of
European descent - any other race or cultures, (non-white) are seen as guests in Canada (Razack, 2004). Although Canada claims to be a multicultural country that is accepting of all people, the women’s sense of belonging within cricket spaces and within Canada was highly dependent upon their age, sexuality, race, athletic ability, ethnic, culture and citizenship status.

The participant’s narratives revealed several tensions surrounding multiculturalism. Their understandings of multiculturalism and diversity were influenced by the dynamic social interactions within their cricket clubs and the larger cricket community. Most of the interviewees believed Canada was a country that is accepting of people from different cultures and ethnicities. Some of them pointed to Canadian cricket, and the diversity of the people who play the game, as proof of Canada’s multiculturalism. Some of the women in Victoria spoke about the challenges of creating a nation with people from so many different ethnicities but their explanations as to why this was so failed to take up issues of race and power. One of the goals of multiculturalism is to endorse diversity and enable individuals to identify with, and retain, their culture while at the same time be integrated into Canadian culture. Some of the women challenged the idea that cricket should be a site to help newcomers learn about Canadian culture – they believed it was solely an interesting game. Most of the participants did not believe that cricket was accepted as a national sport, in contrast several of them classified it as an immigrant sport. Since so many male immigrants from South Asian and Caribbean countries play the game, cricket spaces in Canada appear to be racialized and gendered. While most of the women professed the spaces of cricket were multicultural they were unable to accept that a sport dominated by immigrants could be legitimized as being Canadian. The varying cultures and ethnicities represented influenced
the customs and cultural practices of each club.

The composition of the teams revealed that each club had distinct cultural practices that were affected by the backgrounds of their team players. The Wicket Maidens consisted of mostly Euro-Canadians and players from ‘developed’ commonwealth countries. The Toronto Ladies had players who represented nationalities from the Caribbean and South Asia. My analysis showed that the Wicket Maidens club had more social and cultural capital which translated into the acquisition of more support and resources towards the development of their club. In contrast, the Toronto Ladies club had few resources and was struggling to survive. I argue that racialization is a key factor in the different statuses of these two clubs although I acknowledge that other influences such as social class, geographic location and education levels may have played a part. The differences in power and privilege also contributed to the well-established structure of the Wicket Maidens. The different structures also created particular social relations in cricket spaces that were (re)produced.

The lived space of cricket was different than other spaces the women ‘inhabit’. The conceived spaces of cricket remained highly gendered, classed and racialized. However, both clubs had resisted the wholesale reproduction of a masculine cricket space. In addition to just deciding to play the game, which itself disrupts the male space of cricket, women have made several adjustments to the game thus showing that spatial practices are always evolving. New rules, styles of play, social conventions and language have been introduced due to female participation. These alterations have changed the game of cricket.

In terms of the organizational structures of cricket however, both the Wicket Maidens and the Toronto Ladies continue to support the male hegemonic sport structures of the game within their cities. Although the female players do not feel valued within either the local or
national spaces of ‘official’ cricket they continue to slowly resist and battle to secure a foothold within existing cricket governing bodies.

Although cricket spaces remain gendered, there now exists opportunities for women in various communities to play the game. Carving out a space can empower members of a given group to participate in socio-spatial events that contributes to (re)organizing the power dynamics of particular social relations. Lefebvre (1991) discusses how representations of space (lived spaces) play a significant role in the (re)production of social space. Lefebvre suggests that our lived experience of an environment plays an integral part in ensuring successful social interactions. The women all revealed their joy for playing the game and being involved in a sport. Indo-Canadians especially felt a strong sense of culture and community as a result of playing cricket. Although the women in Victoria did not feel cultural or family ties to the game they professed their enjoyment in playing a fun game with other Canadian women.

Another finding was that each club embodied a distinct culture which was played out in the everyday procedures of the club, and which served to exclude those who did not follow the expected norms and practices. Strained relations amongst females existed in both clubs. Opinions about player abilities and performances ranged and depended upon how individual players negotiated their belonging within the social spaces of the club.

The last significant theme in my research considered the area of access which is a critical factor in predicting the success and challenges of a women’s cricket team. The participants revealed that provincial and federal sports organizations were doing very little to assist them in the development of their programs. Both clubs relied on heavily on volunteer labour and suffered from high turnover and burnout rates. The women’s cricket clubs
received little media attention or public recognition, the lion’s share of it going to men’s cricket. Although immigrant women might have been introduced to cricket in their childhoods, their skill levels varied greatly, and this was equally true of the Victoria team. The clubs attracted women of varying athletic abilities and this sometimes caused tensions. The weaker players sometimes felt judged and that they did not get enough playing time while the highly skilled players believed their skills might depreciate from a lack of high level competition.

Each club’s organizational structure was unique. The Victoria team had successfully integrated themselves within a men’s cricket league. Their executive positions were clear, as were their expectations of each member. In contrast, the Toronto club relied on two members who juggled all the administrative positions and the rest of the players were often not aware of what the club structure was or how they might contribute. Both of the women’s clubs have less access to pitches than their male counterparts which demonstrates that cricket continues to be a male hegemonic space. The situation was especially precarious for the Toronto club who had been unable to secure regular, stable practice space.

The interviews revealed that women’s cricket experiences are varied and often influenced by their geography and culture. However all of the participants had similar experiences around access issues in the sport of cricket. The spatial configuration of cricket remains dominated by men and this constrains women’s participation in the game. Although women cricketers continue to enter cricket spaces, and are grateful for men’s support, overt discrimination still exists in the sport. The sport of cricket continues to reproduce a space where masculinity is never questioned and men control how and when women play the game. Some of the interviews revealed that stereotypical notions of masculinity and
femininity were internalized by the players and that expectations of heteronormativity and homophobia, were persistent in cricket spaces.

**Unique Contributions**

My research provides a unique study of women and cricket in Canada. Neither cricket club had ever been involved in an academic study before. Cricket is having a resurgence in the modern era however women’s participation has remained minimal and invisible. This project offers new information about the history of women in cricket in Canada. In addition, this thesis contributes to literature that considers the role of colonialism and multiculturalism in sport. The women’s experiences were linked to Canada’s multiculturalism policy such that they exposed the limited gains, and visible lack of diversity initiatives, within sports clubs and organizations in this country. The narratives of these women cricketers provide rich insights into how gender and race operate in the Canadian sport landscape. Their stories also illustrated how their identities were shaped by their participation in cricket. This thesis also gives voice to marginalized women who have not had many opportunities to talk about their participation in sport, in this case cricket. Qualitatively documenting marginalized women’s Canadian sport experiences are an important contribution.

Although barriers for women in sport have been previously critically analyzed and studied, my project offers a new perspective given its emphasis on cricket as a subject, and on feminist, post-colonial and spatial analysis. The unique experiences of these women cricketers from opposite ends of Canada provided a rich account of women in cricket spaces. Much research is available on men’s cricket however minimal attention has been dedicated to women’s cricket – especially to non-white female cricketers.
Limitations of the Study

‘All knowledge is produced from a position’
Donna Haraway, 1988

When embarking on this project my intention was to study the experiences of Canadian women cricketers from South Asian counties (India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka). When the pool of my participants expanded to include white and Indo-Canadian women from the Caribbean and East Africa, the focus of my research changed. Although my sample size was small, the participants had a wide range of backgrounds and experiences. Within the two groups there were a number of differences, such as age, geography, culture, skill level and experience with cricket. To group the participant’s experiences into overarching themes was quite a challenge due to their varied responses.

In the end, I decided I could best analyze their narratives for key themes by using a spatial, post-colonial and feminist theoretical framework to review the data. A post-colonial framework aims to look at personal histories and consider how notions of colonialism have shaped personal experiences. Adopting a post-colonial lens allowed me to take into account new imperialisms and fully grasp the complexities of the shifting spaces and identities experienced by female cricketers. Ideologies of nation building and acquiring a sense belonging can also be interrogated through a critical discourse of the new imperialism (Hardt and Negri, 2001). This study concentrated on the colonial era but even more focus on new imperialism in future studies would improve the analysis.

In deciding to also use a feminist framework, I was cognizant that feminism can sometimes be exclusionary to certain groups of women. I wanted to use feminist theory in way that would allow me to capture the range of perspectives of women who categorize themselves differently, for example white vs. non-white women, liberal vs. conservative or
queer vs. straight etc. I was also aware that my own social location would play into the data I collected and the way I interpreted it. How did the fact I was a non-white woman impact the kinds of question I asked, and those I did not, and the conclusions I came to? Did my status as a racialized woman allow me to better research women or, as Macdonald and King (2007) suggest, did it lead me to ‘bestow epistemic privilege upon the female subject” (p. 2)? Achieving universal consensus or making universal claims was difficult due to the differences among the women.

The amount of data collected may also have affected the vigor of the conclusions I could draw about women’s cricket. I only conducted one interview with each participant. Due to time constraints for both the participants and myself, a second and/or third interview was not possible to arrange. In addition, due to financial restrictions, I was unable to travel to Victoria to interview the Wicket Maidens in person. Conducting interviews over the phone doesn’t allow for viewing facial expression and body language, which can also contribute to analysis. Also, although I did phone interviews with two of the Indo-Canadian participants, they had met me on two separate occasions so unlike the women in Victoria, they were aware of my identity. This may have inhibited their answers. The opposite may also have occurred with some of the other phone interviews as the anonymity of the phone can result in participants answering questions more freely. The Indo-Canadian women were aware of my identity and social position. Each of them asked, without prompting, about the details of my cultural background. These women may have felt a sense of familiarity with my background that might have made them assume I knew what they were talking about.
Recommendations and Future Research

Upon completion of the research and analysis of women’s cricket in Canada, several questions remained. Why were Indo-Canadian women from particular countries resistant to participating in the study? What is the future for women’s cricket? What kind of policies and practices can be implemented to help support, maintain and develop women’s cricket?

Further investigation of the history and current status of women’s cricket in Canada and internationally is needed to fill gaps in the literature. Archival records on women’s cricket are available in Victoria and should be researched as rich history could be illuminated.

Patterns of gender discrimination uncovered in this study calls for new sport policies and practices to directly address barriers that prevent women from participating equally in cricket. A media campaign might assist in both contesting male dominant images of cricket, and introducing women to the sport. Such a campaign could point out that cricket is not only played by men, it is not violent and it can be a lot fun. This could help with attracting more women to the sport. Cricket culture needs to be studied further to critically assess the experiences of women, especially minority women. The efforts described above could enable more women to participate in cricket and improve the experiences of those, especially minority women, who are already currently playing the game.

Cricket is an up-and-coming sport in Canada that is beginning to garner some public attention. Due to its increasing popularity new policies and practices have to be created in order to meet the demands on the sport. The section on ‘access’ illustrated that support and resources are not equitably distributed between men’s and women’s teams. This situation should be rectified. Specific funding and support resources for women’s cricket should be introduced in Canada. Looking to the model of women’s hockey might be useful in
considering how to support the growth and development of women’s cricket. Although
gendered inequities persist in hockey, tremendous gains have been made with regards to
exposure, funding, leagues and support resources across the country (Theberge, 2000).

The findings in my study raise a number of interesting questions and possibilities
about gender, race and sport in Canada. The data collected, and stories therein, contribute to
the academic literature in the field of physical activity and sport. The knowledge of women’s
 cricket in Canada has also been expanded. This body of literature can also speak to
governmental and voluntary sports policy makers. The narratives suggest a number of
changes that could be introduced and implemented to improve cricket, and other sports, in
Canada. A number of changes could be made to make cricket more equitable and thus
increase the number of people who join and then remain playing the game. Changes could
happen to cricket’s governing organizations at the local, provincial, federal and possibly
international level.

The federally adopted multiculturalism policy acts as a model for provincial and
municipal sports organizations yet there is quite a distance to go to achieve the goals of
multiculturalism. An inclusive sport policy has not been widely adopted with the exception
of one on aboriginal sport (Canadian Heritage, 2005). Sport Canada should take the
leadership in adopting a diversity strategy in relation to sport participation in this country. In
addition to writing policies, implementation procedures with measureable outcomes should
also be adopted. Other sport governing bodies could then use the Sport Canada example as a
model and tailor diversity efforts to their local realities. As a first phase, more focus groups
and research should be done at the federal level regarding minority women and sport
participation in Canada. This would illuminate areas of need, challenges and best practices.
This research would be helpful in making sport organizations more accountable to equity in their recruitment, marketing and governing practices.

I also intend to go beyond being a 'native informant' with the knowledge I have gained in this study. I plan to disseminate my research outside the university and hope to mobilize those who would like to see changes to make sport in Canada more inclusive and equitable. In addition to publishing in scholarly journals and presenting my findings at academic conferences, I also want to create a shortened version of this thesis in the form of a report. Synthesizing and rewriting this thesis in accessible language and with an eye to highlighting the main findings and recommendations, it is my hope this could become a useful research document for cricket players, cricket organizations and the Canadian Cricket Association (CCA). I am aware that both the CCA and Ontario Cricket Association’s cricket league have a newsletter and submitting an article to these is another avenue for dissemination.

Finally, the cricket spaces in this country are dominated by immigrants who have created a unique sport culture within Canada. Although the participants did not see the game as Canadian, the more recognition and exposure the sport receives, along with international success of the Canadian national team, the more participations rates will increase. The ongoing tensions around multiculturalism and who belongs in the nation will continue to be reflected in the Canadian population’s understanding of, and attitudes towards, cricket. It is unclear if cricket will ever be fully accepted into Canadian sports culture. For now, cricket remains on the margins, similar to field hockey and other sports that are not seen as North American.
The gendered and racialized relations that exist in sport and cricket spaces need to be continually problematized, resisted and challenged. I hope this thesis will encourage more scholars to engage in research that specifically interrogates the gendered, racialized, cultural, spatial and colonialist histories and practices in sports like cricket, which have shaped the experiences and identities of women cricket players in Canada.
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RECRUITMENT LETTER MAILED TO
WOMEN'S CRICKET CLUBS AND THE ONTARIO CRICKET ASSOCIATION
(on University of Toronto, Department of Exercise Sciences letterhead)

Re: Request for participation in a qualitative research study about women’s cricket in the GTA

(insert date here)

(insert club/organization address here)

Dear: (insert name here)

I am a Master’s student in the Faculty of Physical Education and Health at the University of Toronto. My research project is about women’s cricket in Canada, and will specifically examine South Asian women’s experiences of cricket in Canada. This study aims to discuss how South Asian women’s participation in the sport of cricket contributes to their social and cultural identities. Other aspects to be investigated will include women’s involvement in the sport, including an exploration of their participation in cricket clubs, how cricket spaces are used, and how identities are developed. If you have played cricket in Canada for at least one year I would like to invite you to participate. Participants must also be nineteen years of age or older.

Please distribute this letter to any club, coach or players of women’s cricket who might be interested in participating.

This project has been approved by my research advisory committee, including Dr. Caroline Fusco, Dr. Margaret MacNeil and Dean, Dr. Bruce Kidd and the University of Toronto Ethics Review Board. If you would like to have more information about the project and/or if you are interested in participating, please contact me via email at sabrina.razack@utoronto.ca or by phone at the University of Toronto Exercise Sciences Graduate Office (416) 978-5548.

Sincerely,

Sabrina Razack
Graduate Student
Department of Exercise Sciences, University of Toronto
905.903.5447
sabrina.razack@utoronto.ca

Co-Supervisors: Dr. Margaret MacNeill  Dr. Caroline Fusco
416.978.0598  416.946.7717
margaret.macneill@utoronto.ca  c.fusco@utoronto.ca
Appendix B

FOLLOW UP RECRUITMENT EMAIL

Dear Cricket Player,

I am contacting you via email because you have demonstrated that you are interested in participating in a study that I am conducting on women’s cricket in GTA. Details of the study are available in the ‘Participation Information Letter’ and ‘Research Consent Form’. I can send these to you so that you can read in greater detail about the study and find out what your involvement in the study would entail.

I would like to interview you about your participation in cricket and how it has contributed to your social and cultural identity. In the interviews, I would also like to find out about your experience of the game and of the spaces where you play. I am hoping that we can also discuss how your family, friends and ethno-racial community are linked to your cricket playing. Finally, I would also like to find out about how you became involved in the sport of cricket, and about what influences you to continue to play the sport.

Finally, if you do participate in an interview I would like to tape-record the interview with your consent, unless you request otherwise. I will take every step to protect your confidentiality. Details about the steps I will take to ensure your anonymity are listed in a more detailed information letter and the consent form. I would like to interview you by phone or face-to-face during October and November of 2007 whenever it is convenient to you. These interviews can take place on the St. George campus at the University of Toronto or at a location of your choosing. I am hoping to interview a total of 8 participants and selection will be on the first eight people who express interest in participating in the study. The interviews may last between one to two hours. You will be reimbursed for any travel or parking costs that you incur as a result of the research interview.

Should you have any further questions or comments, and if you would like a ‘Participant Information Letter’, please do not hesitate to contact me by telephone or email.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Sabrina Razack
Graduate Student
Department of Exercise Sciences, University of Toronto
905.903.5447
sabrina.razack@utoronto.ca

Co-Supervisors:  Dr. Margaret MacNeill  Dr. Caroline Fusco
416.978.0598  416.946.7717
margaret.macneill@utoronto.ca  c.fusco@utoronto.ca
Appendix C

INTERVIEW GUIDE

Demographics and background data: Cricket Club affiliations, education level, Socio-Economic Status, place of residence, number of years living in Canada, number of languages, birthplace, birthplace of parents, landed immigrant or Canadian citizen, cultural background

SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

History of Participation

1. How did you become involved in physical activity or sport?
2. How did you become involved in playing cricket?
3. Why was it important for you to be involved in cricket?
4. Do you know of any countries that have impacted on the development and history of the game of cricket?
5. Do you know anything about the history of women’s cricket in GTA or across Canada?
6. Do you know of any other countries that play women’s cricket? Do you know anything about their histories? [if participant answers that they have were born in another country or have lived in another country where they played cricket, follow up with a questions– about what influence that country has had on the history of cricket in general and/or on the way they play the game in the GTA and Canada.]

Experience of Cricket Spaces

1. Where do you play? Can you describe what you remember about the space where you play?
2. Describe your cricket matches. For instance, what happens before and after matches? Who do you play with and against? Are there other people at the games too?
3. Do you have unlimited access to the fields and club house where you play? Why? Why not?
4. Describe your practices? Where are they held? Are they different from matches? Does everybody come?
5. Where do you usually play the game of cricket?
6. What are some of the procedures relating to the games and or practices? How was this established?
7. How do you obtain the space to play cricket in Toronto and/or GTA?
8. Where do you practice? Describe the process to acquiring this facility?
9. Describe your club’s organizational structure?
10. Are there any differences between the men and the women in your cricket spaces?
11. Is there any difference with the women of different ages play?
12. How much does it cost you to play one season of cricket?
13. Have you ever been financially compensated to play cricket?
14. What about the level of competition within your league, is it recreational or more competitive? Do you like it?
15. Describe the ability of the players on your team.
16. Are your experiences of your cricket spaces mostly positive? Have you experience any negative things in your cricket spaces? (Probe-Have you ever been negatively stereotyped during your involvement in cricket?)
17. Is there anything else about the space where you play cricket that you would like to tell me?

**Cricket and Socio-Cultural Identity**

1. Is physical activity and, more importantly cricket considered important in your religious community? Ethnocultural community? To your parents? Siblings? Extended family? Why or why not? Are any members in your family active?
2. Have your family’s / community’s feelings about cricket impact either positively or negatively on your experience of playing cricket? Why or why not?
3. Did/do your parents, siblings or extended family also participate in cricket within your ethnocultural community?
4. How do your parents view your participation in cricket? How do your friends view your participation in cricket?
5. How has participation in the sport of cricket influenced how your friends or family relate to you?
6. In your culture, do you think that playing cricket is valued? In your culture, how is athletic participation valued?
7. Do you think there are unique ways that sport and cricket is understood (i.e. talked about) in your culture? [Do these differences ever impact on how sport and cricket is understood in Canada?]
8. What about being a woman playing sport in you community, do you think there are specific expectations around physically active behaviour in your ethnocultural community? Religious community? What are they? Does this impact your participation? Why or why not? Are these expectations the same for men/boys and for women/girls with respect to playing sports, especially cricket? Do these expectations affect your involvement in cricket?
9. Have you heard of any stereotypes about your ethnocultural, religious community? Do any of them relate specifically to physical ability or athleticism? Do you think these stereotypes are the same for all women/girls or men/boys in your community? Are there any differences within these stereotypes?
10. How did you feel about being a women cricket player?
11. Do you have many friends or family members that play cricket? How are these relationships different that other friends and family members?
12. How is playing cricket related to your sense of identity? To your socio-cultural and ethnic identity?
13. What are the differences in your behaviours on and off the cricket pitch?
14. How long do you anticipate playing the sport of cricket? Why?
**Cricket and Canadian Society**

1. How did you reach the decision to play women’s cricket in Canada?
2. What is your impression of women cricket players in Canada?
3. What are the benefits of participating in playing cricket in Canada?
4. How have you changed as a result of your participation in cricket in Canada?
5. What are some of the customs relating to the game of women’s cricket in Canada that are the same or different than other places where you have played or been involved with the game?
6. Can you describe your team? Is it a diverse group of women? To your knowledge, are there many players who are of the same ethnic background as you, who play the game of cricket? If no or yes, then where do you think there are more players of the same ethnic group?
7. Would you say that cricket in Canada is a multicultural sport? Why or why not?
8. What do you think of multiculturalism in Canada?
9. Do you believe that Cricket is a Canadian game? Why or why not?
10. Has your involvement in cricket assisted in learning about Canadian sport and culture? Why or why not?
Appendix D

RESEARCH INFORMATION LETTER

(on University of Toronto, Department of Exercise Sciences letterhead)

Project Title: Changing Identities within Women’s Cricket in Canada
A critical examination of the history and development

Investigator: Sabrina Razack (MSc., Year II, Department of Exercise Science)

Co-Supervisors: Margaret MacNeill, Ph.D, Caroline Fusco, Ph.D, Faculty of Physical Education and Health

Dear Cricket Player:

I am a Master’s student in the Department of Exercise Science, University of Toronto, under the supervision of Dr. Margaret MacNeill and Dr. Caroline Fusco. I am conducting a qualitative research study on the experiences of women’s cricket players in Canada of South Asian descent. This letter documents what your involvement in the study will be if you agree to participate in this study. In order to participate you must be 19 years of age or older, and you should have been playing cricket in Canada for at least one year.

I am proposing to conduct this research because currently we do not know much about the history and development of women’s cricket in the GTA or Canada. There are very few studies available that tell us about the women’s game, especially within Canada. This research project, which will investigate some historical, social and cultural aspects of the women’s game and which will examine how players experience the sport in Canada will add to the knowledge on women’s sport and on women’s cricket, more specifically.

Your participation will involve one face-to-face or phone interview that will be scheduled at your convenience during October and November 2007. I would like to tape-record the interview with your consent, unless you request otherwise. I will take every step to protect your anonymity. You will find details about the steps I will take to ensure your confidentiality on the next page. These interviews can take place on the St. George campus at the University of Toronto, or at a meeting place of your choosing or over the telephone. The interviews may last between 1-2 hours. You will be reimbursed for any travel or parking costs that you incur as a result of the research interview.

I would like to interview you about your participation in cricket and how it has contributed to your social and cultural identity. In the interviews, I would also like to find out about your experience of the game and of the spaces where you play. I am hoping that we can also discuss how your family, friends and ethno-racial community are linked to your cricket playing. Finally, I would also like to find out about how you became involved in the sport of cricket, and about what influences you to continue to play the sport.

Your participation in this study is strictly voluntary and you may withdraw at anytime. You also have the option to refuse to answer any questions presented in the interview. If you
withdraw you also have the option of withdrawing any information that you have provided to the researcher. You are free to ask questions of the researcher at anytime during the study. As a result of your participation in the study, you will experience no physical harm, discomfort or inconvenience. You will not be expected to disclose any information that you do not offer voluntarily. If, at any time, you feel uncomfortable during the interview or the study, you can stop the interview or your participation. If you withdraw from the study at any time you can do so without penalty. Withdrawal will not impact on your cricket playing or your club membership. You will be reimbursed for any public transportation costs (2 TTC tokens per interview) or parking costs that you may incur while attending an interview of the St. George, University of Toronto campus or to a location of your choosing.

There is no direct benefit to you by participating in this project. However, a goal of this project is to increase awareness of women’s cricket in Canada, and the project may assist in developing and supporting the sport in locally and across Canada. Additionally, this project will fill a gap in knowledge about women’s cricket experience in the FTA. So, although the findings in this study will not benefit you directly, your participation will add to existing knowledge and your story may add to our understanding of the experiences of women cricket players. Furthermore, I have offered administrative support to the Ontario Cricket Association when I complete the project. I have experience in sports marketing and promotion and therefore may be able to assist in developing a strategic plan, based on the findings of the project, about how to increase awareness and support for women’s cricket in Canada.

All interviews will be tape-recorded upon your consent and will take place in a private setting or by phone. Audio-tapes will be transcribed for later analysis. In order to protect your confidentiality, a pseudonym of your choice will be assigned to all notes, transcripts and drafts, and any information that could identify you will be removed from the transcripts and any publications or presentations. Files identifying you or your institution or club will be password protected on my computer, and taped interviews, as well as interview transcripts will be kept in a locked filing cabinet in my department at a University of Toronto. Audio-tape recordings will be destroyed after five years by dubbing over them. Transcripts will also be shredded after five years.

I should let you know that I also intend to publish some or all of the results of my study in scholarly or professional journals and/or make public presentations at academic conferences. Your identity will remain anonymous in all academic presentations or publications. Information that could identify participants will be removed from the transcripts and any publications or presentations.

Once a final draft of the study is completed, you will have an opportunity to review the written draft and transcript. You can then decide if you want to have any information included or removed in the final draft.

I am looking forward to your participation in the study. Thank you for your consideration. Any further questions regarding your rights as a participant in this study can be directed to the Ethics Review Office at ethics_review@utoronto.ca or 416-946-3273. You can also
contact me at (905) 903-5447 or one of my supervisors if you have any concerns and if you
would like to schedule an interview.

Sincerely,

Sabrina Razack
Graduate Student
Department of Exercise Sciences, University of Toronto
905.903.5447
sabrina.razack@utoronto.ca

Co-Supervisors: 
Dr. Margaret MacNeill
416.978.0598
margaret.macneill@utoronto.ca

Dr. Caroline Fusco
416.946.7717
c.fusco@utoronto.ca
Appendix E

RESEARCH CONSENT FORM

Project Title: Changing Identities within Women’s Cricket in Canada: A critical examination of the history and development

Investigator: Sabrina Razack (MSc., Year II, Department of Exercise Science)

Co-Supervisors: Margaret MacNeill, Ph.D, Caroline Fusco, Ph.D, Faculty of Physical Education and Health

This is to certify that I, __________________________ (please print) have read the information letter and been asked to participate in this study because I have played women’s cricket in Canada for at least one year and I am over 19 years old.

As a participant in this study I understand that:

1) I am consenting to a phone or face-to-face interview with the researcher that will be scheduled at my convenience during October and November 2007, which will be tape-recorded. This interview can take place on the St. George campus at the University of Toronto, or at a location of my choosing or over the telephone. The interview may last between 1-2 hours. I will be reimbursed for any public transportation costs (2 TTC tokens per interview) or parking costs that I incur while attending the interview of the St. George, University of Toronto campus.

2) All records relating to me will be kept confidential and that no information will be released or printed that will disclose my personal identity.

3) Once a final draft of the study is completed, I will have an opportunity to review the written draft. At that point, I can decide if I want to have any information included or removed in the final draft.

4) I know that I may ask now, or in the future, any questions I have about the study or the research procedures. If I have any further questions regarding my rights as a participant in this study I contact a) the Ethics Review Office at ethics_review@utoronto.ca or 416-946-3273; b) Co-Supervisors: Dr. Margaret MacNeill at 416.978.0598 / margaret.macneill@utoronto.ca or Dr. Caroline Fusco at 416.946.7717 / c.fusco@utoronto.ca; c) the researcher, Sabrina Razack at the Department of Exercise Sciences, University of Toronto, 905.903.5447 / sabrina.razack@utoronto.ca

5) The possible harms and discomforts and the possible benefits (if any) of this study have been explained to me, and in no way does signing this consent form waive my legal rights nor does it relieve the researchers or involved institutions from their legal and professional responsibilities. I have been given a copy of this consent form for my records.
PARTICIPANT CONSENT

I have received and read this consent form.

I understand my role as a research participant in the study called “Changing Identities within Women’s Cricket in the GTA: A critical examination of the history and development.” I agree to take part in this project based on the conditions for confidentiality that the researcher has established. I understand all the research procedures that have been explained to me and I any questions that I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction.

PARTICIPANT CONSENT:

I, ___________________________ (print name), agree to participate in the study entitled “Changing Identities within Women’s Cricket in Canada: A critical examination of the history and development” by Sabrina Razack (Graduate Student, University of Toronto).

_________________________ (signature) _____________________________ (date)

In addition, I also grant permission to the researcher to tape record my interview.

______________________________ YES (signature required) ____ NO (check)

I, the undersigned, have, to the best of my ability, fully explained the nature of this study to the participant. I believe that the person whose signature appears above understands the implications and voluntary nature of his/her participation in the research procedures.

____________________________
Researcher’s signature

____________________________
Location Date
Appendix G

ETHICS APPROVAL FORM

University of Toronto
Office of the Vice-President, Research
Office of Research Ethics

PROTOCOL REFERENCE #21232

Dr. Margaret MacNeill
Faculty of Physical Education and Health
55 Harbord St.
Toronto, ON M5S 2W6

Ma. Sabrina Razack
Faculty of Physical Education and Health
55 Harbord St.
Toronto, ON M5S 2W6

Dear Dr. MacNeill and Ms. Razack:

Re: Your research protocol entitled "Changing Identities within Women's Cricket in Canada: A critical examination of the history and development" by Dr. M. MacNeill (supervisor), Ms. S. Razack (Master's student)

ETHICS APPROVAL

Original Approval Date: October 9, 2007
Expiry Date: October 8, 2009
Continuing Review Level: 1*
Renewal: 1 of 4

We are writing to advise you that the Health Sciences Research Ethics Board has granted annual renewal of ethics approval to the above referenced research study through the REB's expedited process. Please note that all protocols involving ongoing data collection or interaction with human subjects are subject to re-evaluation after 5 years. Ongoing projects must be renewed prior to the expiry date.

Any changes to the approved protocol or consent materials must be reviewed and approved through the amendment process prior to its implementation. Any adverse or unanticipated events should be reported to the Office of Research Ethics as soon as possible.

Best wishes for the successful completion of your project.

Yours sincerely,

Marianna Richardson
Research Ethics Coordinator

*See Continuing Review Guidelines on the Office of Research Ethics website -